Solapur: Lokmangal Cooperative Bank here has launched Islamic banking on interest-free basis which will be operated in compliance with the Shariah. Surprisingly, the Bank is headed by Mr. Subhash Deshmukh, Minister of Cooperation in the Maharashtra Government. He is a BJP MLA representing Solapur, South. Twelve businessmen were given personal loans on September 16 totalling to Rs. 2.50 lakh. The bank will neither give interest to the depositors nor will take interest from the borrowers. The Lokmangal Cooperative Bank has nine branches, eight of them in the parent location of Solapur while a single operates in the city of Pune.

In 2015, a report by the RBI committee on 'Medium-term path on financial inclusion' – led by Deepak Mohanty – had noted that “One area that has not been adequately addressed is the role of interest-free banking in financial inclusion. Globally, interest-free banking, also known as Islamic banking, has witnessed a significant increase, especially in the wake of the financial crisis. According to Lagarde (2015), total Islamic finance assets are estimated at around $2 trillion, practically a ten-fold increase from a decade ago, and outperforming the growth of conventional finance in many places.”

While a single operates in the city of Pune, the Lokmangal Cooperative Bank which launched the interest-free bank, is headed by a BJP Minister in Maharashtra cabinet. The Lokmangal Cooperative Bank, said Deshmukh, would give personal loans at the rate of 10 per cent per annum on the basis of interest-free loan. In addition, it offered fixed deposits at the rate of 6 per cent per annum.

Mr. Rajnath Singh that they would go to Kashmir Calling on the Union Home Minister, they assured the Government to return normalcy in the state. Valley to keep calm and peace there and help dargah and dargahs led by the Chief of the Ajmer Sharif dargah have appealed to the people in the Kashmir Valley to keep calm and peace there and help the Government to return normalcy in the state.

Calling on the Union Home Minister, they assured Mr. Rajnath Singh that they would go to Kashmir to request their brothers and sisters to contribute in creating peace.

The delegation of heads of eminent Sufi khanqahs and dargahs led by the Chief of the Ajmer Sharif dargah have appealed to the people in the Kashmir Valley to keep calm and peace there and help the Government to return normalcy in the state.

Calling on the Union Home Minister, they assured Mr. Rajnath Singh that they would go to Kashmir to request their brothers and sisters to contribute in creating peace. The delegation of heads of eminent Sufi khanqahs and dargahs led by the Chief of the Ajmer Sharif dargah have appealed to the people in the Kashmir Valley to keep calm and peace there and help the Government to return normalcy in the state.

Calling on the Union Home Minister, they assured Mr. Rajnath Singh that they would go to Kashmir to request their brothers and sisters to contribute in creating peace. The delegation of heads of eminent Sufi khanqahs and dargahs led by the Chief of the Ajmer Sharif dargah have appealed to the people in the Kashmir Valley to keep calm and peace there and help the Government to return normalcy in the state.

Calling on the Union Home Minister, they assured Mr. Rajnath Singh that they would go to Kashmir to request their brothers and sisters to contribute in creating peace. The delegation of heads of eminent Sufi khanqahs and dargahs led by the Chief of the Ajmer Sharif dargah have appealed to the people in the Kashmir Valley to keep calm and peace there and help the Government to return normalcy in the state.
Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas are a string of schools run by an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Human Resources Development. Every district in India has one such school where high standard of coaching is provided to students in Hindi and English medium till 8th standard and through English medium for 9th and 10th standard. There are currently 598 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalas across the country where 1.5 lakh students are receiving education. These schools provide residential facilities from 6th standard onwards. Coaching, uniform, stay and food are provided free of cost. The admission is done through open entrance test which is conducted in 21 different languages including Urdu.

Fee is charged at the rate of Rs. 200 a month from 9th to 12th standard. However, girls and students belonging to SC, ST and those belonging to BPL families are exempt from these fees which also includes the students suffering from some disability. All JNV students must stay at the hostel. At the Plus Two level, these schools provide education in all three major disciplines i.e., Arts, Science, and Commerce together with computer learning. As per the norms, every district is supposed to have one Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya. So far, Assam has 28 such schools, Bihar 39, Jharkhand 24, Delhi 52, Uttar Pradesh 71, West Bengal 18, Maharashtra 33, Karnataka 28, Jammu and Kashmir 18, Andhra Pradesh 14 and Rajasthan 34. In order to seek admissions into these schools, a student should have studied till 3rd, 4th or 5th standard in either Government schools or a Government-aided school.

Objective: JNVs are meant to provide opportunity for high quality education to underprivileged classes. Muslims should have benefitted from these schools. But lack of awareness has not allowed them to benefit from them in due measure. The Muslim students who seek admissions into these schools, are very few. Very few Muslims could be found in these schools. The representation of Muslim girls is still lesser. A survey of JNVs in Patna region reveals that only 3.8% of the students were Muslims. Even at the registration stage, the representation of Muslim students was only 4%, while among those who appeared for the test and interview, the percentage was 4%.

These schools provide all essentials of stationary, facilities for games and sports, exercise, entertainment and outings. There are separate hostels for girls and boys.

The applications for participation in the selection tests for the forthcoming session should be filled by September 30. The application forms can be obtained from Block Education Officer, District Education Officer, branches of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan or JNVs. The details of the JNVs can be found on www.navodaya.nic.in.

The filled-up applications have to be signed by the Headmaster of the Government School where the student is studying and have to be submitted to the BEO or DEO. The results of the selection will be announced on May 17, 2017.

The students are eligible for admission into the JNV of the district in which they reside. The age of the student should be between 9 and 13. There is a rural quota for students studying in Government or Govt-aided schools in rural area. Those eligible for admission under rural quota should have studied their 5th, 6th and 7th standard in a rural school.

The Entrance Test consists of 100 marks. Of this 60% marks are assigned for objective type questions. Questions from Mathematics carry 20 marks, while another 20 marks are for language. The medium for test would be the one in which the student has studied the 5th standard class.

Lack of knowledge about Indian Muslim freedom fighters has prompted a city-based techie to initiate an application that focuses solely on their role in India’s freedom struggle. The mobile app named ‘Muslim Freedom Fighters’ was launched on the eve of the 70th year of the country’s independence. "I felt that Muslims in the country do not have role models from their own community", says said Syed Khalid Saifullah, the founder, who says that they should know about the people who sacrificed for India’s freedom. “When I googled Muslim freedom fighters, I could find only a handful of names like Tipu Sultan”, he says. The aim of the app is to change the prevailing notion that Muslims did not contribute to the struggle for India’s freedom.

Khalid designed the app in a way that makes learning interesting and fun. The app has 155 different levels dedicated to the same number of Indian Muslim freedom fighters, with each level containing stories, pictures and a quiz based on the information provided. The 155 freedom fighters are divided into various categories with rulers, martyrs, bureaucrats, journalists and poets among others. Each level has a quiz comprising five questions and if a player answers three of them correctly, he or she advances to the next level, although the information from all the levels can be accessed without taking up the quiz. Once one clears all the levels, a certificate of appreciation will be sent to the user, says Khalid, who adds that more than 60 per cent of the downloads have been from people of other communities.
By A Staff Writer

Bengaluru: Tardiness mars the efficacy of the Scheme for Providing Quality Education in Madrassas (SPQEM). The Scheme was launched in 2009 under the Eleventh Five-Year Plan with Rs. 325 crore being allocated for the purpose. It envisaged modernization of the madrassas through assistance towards salaries for teachers teaching Mathematics, English, Sciences and Languages relevant to the state or the students. But a cursory survey of madrassas opting for the scheme in Karnataka reveals that the teachers appointed under the scheme have not been paid salaries for the last two years. The last payment was disbursed in February-March 2016 towards salaries falling due in 2013.

The scheme proposed enhancement of quality of learning in madrassas on par with curriculum followed in mainstream schools by providing teachers in the above mentioned subjects. It aimed at enabling the teachers in the above mentioned mainstream schools by providing teachers in the above mentioned subjects. It aimed at enabling the mainstream schools by providing teachers in the above mentioned subjects.

But cursory survey of madrassas opting for the scheme in Karnataka reveals that the teachers appointed under the scheme have not been paid salaries for the last two years. The last payment was disbursed in February-March 2016 towards salaries falling due in 2013. The scheme proposed enhancement of quality of learning in madrassas on par with curriculum followed in mainstream schools by providing teachers in the above mentioned subjects. It aimed at enabling the teachers in the above mentioned mainstream schools by providing teachers in the above mentioned subjects. It aimed at enabling the teachers in the above mentioned mainstream schools by providing teachers in the above mentioned subjects. It aimed at enabling the teachers in the above mentioned mainstream schools.

The scheme now seems to be in doldrums as late payments have bred frustration and teachers are not willing to work. Mohammed Shafiuddin, President of the Darul Uloom Arabic College in Muhammadpur village of Chinthmani district informed *Islamic Voice* that the teachers were recruited in 2013-14 to teach Kannada, English, Sciences and Mathematics. But they have received payments only for the first six months of the 2013-14 session. The payment was made in February this year. The madrassa has 110 children who undergo the Hifz, Diniyat course for eight years. However, he confirmed that they received three computer systems under the programme.

Similar account is related to Rashidiya, Bidar too had employed three graduates to teach these subjects to nearly 107 children doing Hifz and Diniyat course. They are also paying the teachers from their own funds as they have received only six months of salary during the last three years.

Mr. Akbar Sharrif informed that since they had paid the salary in cash, they could not fulfill the requirements of the scheme. He said the madrassa received Rs. 1.90 lakh just once to pay out salaries for six months.

When approached Mr. Raghvendra, the officer incharge for SPQEM, in the State’s Directorate for Minorities Welfare, said the funds had not been released from the Centre and in some cases the madrassas too had not submitted the Utilisation Certificate.

The Scheme had proposed holding training sessions for the teachers employed for the purpose. But such is the air of uncertainty over the continuance of the scheme that no such training program was possible.

---

**SPQEM**

**Scheme is Faltering due to Tardy Implementation**

Hundreds of teachers employed under the scheme have received only six months wages during the last three years.
A Task “Well” Done!

An abandoned well in Kondhwa became a garbage dump yard. Saleem Mulla rejuvenated it with fresh water, and now it is benefiting thousands of people today.

What would your first reaction be if you walk past a heap of garbage? To cover your nose and mouth, right? But people with the usual reactions seldom make a change for the better: and this is what separates Saleem Mulla, a 53-year-old social worker from Pune, from the rest of us. While we would be happy to walk through the filth and hurl abuses at the municipal corporation, Mulla decided to act and solve the issue. Mulla took lead in not only removing garbage in survey no 42, Jawaharganj Kondhwa Khurd area of Mihanagar locality in Kondhwa, he also rejuvenated it into a well with fresh water, which has benefited thousands of people. “It was originally a well which was lying unused since many years due which there was a deep built up of silt in it to the ground level, making it impossible to use. I dreamt of rejuvenating it and could do it with the help of people”, Mulla says. In 1999, Kondhwa area was included in the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) limits and since then, the well was abandoned and was used for dumping garbage, he explains. The well acquired the shape of a garbage depot after that.

The cleaning process began with 75 tractors full of silt unearthed from the well, with drilling hitting a depth of 45 feet. Commenting on the month-long work, Mulla says that the rejuvenation success is a testimony of people’s power through community participation. “People from all communities, comprising Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and other faiths, have backed fought against all odds to ensure that the well was revived. His spirit for the cause of humanity barring religion and caste is a shining example of brotherhood and concrete work for the cause of national development,” he says. Pradeep Barar, another Kondhwa resident, said that the utility water is being supplied to the citizens free of cost and was a noble gesture. Mulla who works as an event-manager in the city, has a passion for social work, for over 15 years now. He is now working to set up a maternity hospital in Kondhwa.

(Extracted from twocities.net)

Bahrain PM Donates Funds to Manjhi

The Kingdom of Bahrain offered a red carpet welcome, and donated Rs 8.87 lakh to an Odisha tribal who was forced to carry his wife’s body for nearly 12 km, en route to his village, after she died at a hospital last month. A video of Dana Manjhi walking with a wailing daughter and his wife’s body over his shoulder, after help eluded him, went viral, sparking national outrage. The video caught the attention of the international media too. Moved by the plight, Bahrain prime minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa offered help to Manjhi, who received the cheque at the country’s embassy here. An illiterate marginal farmer from Kalahandi district, Manjhi has so far been struggling to earn Rs 2,000 a month and has never even visited Bhubaneswar. Dressed in a wrinkled shirt and a dhoti, Manjhi told reporters: “I don’t know how many zeros are there in nine lakh. I will educate my daughters. They should have a better life. If I had the money, I would not have suffered this much.”

Bouquets & Blood Donation

For Abbas, it has been a struggle to find blood with compatible blood groups, but he never gives up. How does he provide blood? “I know people in different districts, I have saved their numbers with their blood groups, so I ask them to go and give their blood to those patients,” he replies. Abbas has been providing blood to child with Thalassemia has been receiving AB positive blood for the last seven years, thanks to Abbas. Abbas began providing blood in 2000. He had gone to meet his uncle in the hospital when he saw a seven-year-old-child, bleeding from an injury in his stomach. “The boy’s family pleaded to me to give my blood and I did. That day I realized there are so many people who are in need of blood, so why not help them out?” he says. Asked about the expenses involved in pursuing this noble cause, Abbas says that the only cost is the amount spent in making calls to people. He has been awarded many times for his work. In 2014, he was given the Governor’s Award.

Abbas donates his blood every three months and has done it 25 times now. He had to stop recently because of his sinus problem.
EVENTS

ISLAMIC VOICE, October 2016

5

Sunnis and Shiites Offer Eid Prayers Together

The members of Shoulder to Shoulder were convinced that this namaz would be a defining moment in the history of Shiite-Sunni unity starting from Lucknow.

By Akhtar Ali

Lucknow: At Eid al-Adha prayers recently, several hundred Shiite and Sunni Muslims offered joint prayers as a show of peace. The prayer took place in a Shiite shrine, but was led by a Sunni imam as part of an initiative by a volunteer group called Shoulder to Shoulder. “In Uttar Pradesh, sectarian tensions surfaced occasionally between the two sects,” said Arif Durrani, a member of Shoulder to Shoulder. “We came up with this idea of joint Shia-Sunni congregational prayer.” In India, where Shiites constitute less than a third of its 170 million Muslim population, the two sects have lived in peace for centuries. Indeed, a similar joint prayer was held in a Shiite mosque in New Delhi, organized by a branch of Shoulder to Shoulder. Since the group’s start in Lucknow last year, its volunteers have been trying to bring the two Muslim sects closer together. “The members of Shoulder to Shoulder were convinced that this namaz would be a defining moment in the history of Shiite-Sunni unity starting from Lucknow, where the Shia-Sunni divide is very distinct,” said Sibtain Baqri, a Shiite volunteer. “We were able to more than double the number of attendees at the namaz this year and the following on social media for our cause, highlight the point, that acceptability and appeal of the idea is growing,” he added.

This year’s prayer at the Shahnajaf Imambara Lawns took place in the presence of several non-Muslim community members. As soon as the Muslims finished the prayer, they embraced and hugged the Sikh, Hindu and Christian community members, Sikh volunteers offered refreshments. Last Ramadan, Shoulder to Shoulder organized an all-community iftar meal ending the daily fast, co-sponsored by a Sikh gurdwara. At Christmas the group’s members offered free food at a local Catholic shelter run by the Missionaries of Charity. “We all were created by one God,” said Sikh community leader Gurmeet Singh who attended the prayer. “In a pluralistic society such initiative deserves to be backed by all.” The Rev. Donald De Souza, chancellor and spokesperson of Catholic Diocese of Lucknow greeted and hugged the Muslims following the prayer. “This is the need of the hour in the country where in the name of religion people are fighting with each other,” De Souza said. “We need to foster brotherhood and harmony for the sake of peace.”

(HIJ House Inaugurated in Ghaziabad

Ghaziabad: The newly constructed Ala Hazrat Haj House for pilgrims from western Uttar Pradesh was inaugurated by UP Chief Minister, Akhilesh Yadav on September 5. The impressive Haj House has come up on the Hindon river on a 4.5 acre plot. It has 36 dormitory halls and five convention halls in six floors and was constructed at a cost of Rs. 57.6 crore. The foundation stone for the edifice was laid on March 30, 2006, but the progress was hindered due to litigation. Following dismissal of the cases, the construction began in right earnest in 2012. The Haj House can accommodate 2,500 pilgrims at a time. The complex has 10 rooms reserved for office space away from the main building. The parking area can take 100 vehicles. Though official inauguration took place on September 5, the pilgrims used the facility between August 4 and 20 when nearly 8,649 pilgrims left by 37 chartered aircrafts flying from Delhi International Airport. The Ala Hazrat Haj House caters to the pilgrims from districts of Agra, Aligarh, Baghpat, Ghaziabad, Hathras, Jyotiba Phule Nagar, Mathura, Meerut, Moradabad, Muzaffarnagar, Rampur, Saharanpur, Shamli, Hapur, Sambhal, Bijnore, Buland Shahar, Firozabad and Gautambudhnagar.

ZINDA TILISMATH

Trusted by Millions Since 1920

Unani Herbal Formula which gives Fast Relief from :

- COLD
- COUGH
- SORE THROAT
- HEADACHE
- STOMACH DISORDERS
- VOMITINGS & CURE FOR MANY OTHER COMMON AILMENTS.

Available at All Medical & General Stores
Customer Care : 040-27406382
website : www.karkhanazindatilismath.com
E-mail : zindatilismath1920@yahoo.com

J.S. TOURS & TRAVELS®

Registered by
the Ministry of External Affairs, Hajj Cell (New Delhi)
Ministry of Hajj (Saudi Arabia)

9/1 Cunningham Road, Commerce House Building, Flat G-1A, Bangalore - 560 052.
Ph: 080 - 2237 0773 / 4260 1000 / Fax: 2237 0774, Email: jshajumrah@gmail.com

Booking Open for Umrah and Umrah with Ziarath,
In sha Allah, Starting from the month of November 2016.
Book Your Seats at the earliest.

J. SALIM SHARIFF
98450 41337

ABDUR RAHMAN
98452 74640

WAJID SHARIFF AKHIL
98801 49740

Avail Services for Air Ticketing Packages Worldwide, for Hotel accommodation globally and Visas contact :
Fatwa on Environment

Jakarta: The Indonesian Ulema Council issued a fatwa against intentionally starting forest fires in a bid to cheaply clear land for palm oil and pulpwood plantations. It said it was against Islamic law for Muslims to start fire on purpose in forests or on plantation land. It may be noted that fires started by farmers in Sumatra and Indonesian part of the Borneo islands cloud large parts of skies in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore and create choking smog for weeks.

Conference on Economics and Finance

Kuala Lumpur: The 11th International Conference on Islamic Economics and Finance (ICIEF) will be held on October 11-13 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to discuss the role of Islamic economics and finance in the contemporary global development agenda. The conference is organized jointly by the Islamic Research and Training Institute (IRTI) of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Group, Kulliyyah of Economics and Management Sciences (KENMS), International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM); and the International Association for Islamic Economics (IAIE), with the support of the Malaysian Ministry of Finance. Under the theme of “Rethinking Islamic Economics and Finance: Paving the Way Forward for Inclusive and Sustainable Development”, this year’s edition of the conference will bring together academicians, researchers and policymakers from around the world to discuss 100 research and policy papers from authors representing 35 countries.

London Muslim Women Answer Questions about Their Faith

London: Members of London’s Muslim community joined together outside Victoria Park recently for the first “Meet a Muslim event”. “I decided to hold this event to help educate the community, reaching out to the community by spreading awareness to stop Islamophobia,” said organizer Tamara Elsayed, aged 28. Sparked by the recent incidents of Islamophobia in London and Donald Trump’s comments about banning Muslims from entering the United States, Elsayed encouraged Londoners to ask any questions they had about Islam. More than 100 people came by, said Elsayed, with more than 50 taking the time to chat with the Muslim women, who offered brownies, cookies and free bottled water. “We saw this and decided to stop by, had some treats, learned a little bit. It was good, win-win,” said Marlon Brown, who stopped by after brunch downtown with his friends. “Groups and groups of people were coming to speak with us to thank us,” said Elsayed, “I even had a police officer pull up and come to thank us because he thought it was fantastic.”

Fatwa on Environment

Jakarta: The Indonesian Ulema Council issued a fatwa against intentionally starting forest fires in a bid to cheaply clear land for palm oil and pulpwood plantations. It said it was against Islamic law for Muslims to start fire on purpose in forests or on plantation land. It may be noted that fires started by farmers in Sumatra and Indonesian part of the Borneo islands cloud large parts of skies in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore and create choking smog for weeks.
Oxford Centre Hosts Forum for British Muslim Youth

Rabat: The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (OCIS) hosted the 11th Forum of the British Muslim Youth Leadership, in Oxford, Britain, last fortnight. The forum, which was attended by Director General of Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, aimed at encouraging British Muslim youth to develop their abilities and to express their opinion on the issues affecting them as well as giving them the opportunity to employ their talents and potential in the development of society. In a speech to the forum, the ISESCO director general stressed the growing role of young people in addressing the issues in the community and promoting intercultural dialogue and coexistence among peoples. Dr. Altwaijri also noted that the ISESCO has given a great deal of attention, in its Three-Year Work Plan (2016-2018), to the issues of young people, particularly in the fields of education, science, culture and communications. The week-long forum was attended by ministers, politicians, parliamentarians, specialists in law and business, experts, academics, and representatives of non-governmental organizations and British media.

Colorado Church Hosts Sessions on Islam

Minneapolis: A restaurant owner in the United States, who posted ‘Muslims get out’ sign outside his eatery, has been invited to a mosque to learn more about Islam and the Muslim community. Executive Director of the Council of American-Islamic Relations in Minnesota (CAIR-MN) Jaylani Hussein plans to invite Ruedinger to a mosque in Faribault. Dan Ruedinger, the owner of the Treats Family Restaurant, had put up the controversial sign because he was upset over the stabbings at a St. Cloud mall in Minnesota. “We are not targeting the Muslims in general, just the extremists,” Dan Ruedinger has said. “CAIR-MN hopes a meeting with local Muslims will change the business owner’s view of the state’s Islamic community, it said. “Our experience has shown that interaction with ordinary American Muslims and enhanced knowledge of Islam are key factors in the reduction of Islamophobic attitudes,” Hussein said.

Restaurant Owner Invited to Mosque

New York: Scores of Muslims waved American flags recently as they marched in the annual Muslim Day Parade in New York City. The 31st Annual United American Muslim Day Parade began at 38th Street in Manhattan. The revelers, many clutching flowers, marched down Madison Avenue to 24th Street in Manhattan. Members of the New York Police Department (NYPD) and Muslim Officers Society also marched. According to a flyer, this year's theme was “For God and Country.” The parade's grand marshal was Khizr Khan, whose son was killed while protecting other soldiers in Iraq.

Mosque Invites Church to Use Its Space for Worship

Michigan: When Unitarian Universalist Christian congregation in Michigan (USA) found itself homeless as their church underwent construction, a local mosque came to the rescue, offering them a space free of charge. “This has been the Muslim tradition for over 1,400 years — to be hospitable, to take care of your guest,” Imam Sohail Chaudhry of The Islamic Center of East Lansing said. The church had been gathering in a Jewish fraternity before deciding to buy its own building, but the space needed construction and wouldn’t be available for several months. The Islamic center, which hosts its main prayers on Fridays, invited the Unitarian congregation to use its worship space for Sunday services. The congregation met at the mosque for about a month before settling into its new space.

Mosque Invites Church to Use Its Space for Worship

Many of the Christian congregants had never been inside a mosque before, said Rev. Kathryn Bert, senior minister of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Greater Lansing. “People were so excited the very first day,” said Bert. Before the church’s first service at the mosque, Bert fielded questions from her congregation about etiquette, including whether women should cover their heads, as is traditional in Muslim places of worship. When Bert posed the question to Chaudhry, the imam said it would be polite, but not necessary. Bert said she estimated that 30 to 40 percent of the women in her congregation chose to wear scarves during services out of respect to the Islamic center. “Getting comfortable with difference involves building relationships with people,” she pointed out.

U.S. Muslims hold their "31st Annual United American Muslim Day" Parade

New York: Scores of Muslims waved American flags recently as they marched in the annual Muslim Day Parade in New York City. The 31st Annual United American Muslim Day Parade began at 38th Street in Manhattan. The revelers, many clutching flowers, marched down Madison Avenue to 24th Street in Manhattan. Members of the New York Police Department (NYPD) and Muslim Officers Society also marched. According to a flyer, this year's theme was “For God and Country.” The parade's grand marshal was Khizr Khan, whose son was killed while protecting other soldiers in Iraq.

Mosque Invites Church to Use Its Space for Worship

Michigan: When Unitarian Universalist Christian congregation in Michigan (USA) found itself homeless as their church underwent construction, a local mosque came to the rescue, offering them a space free of charge. “This has been the Muslim tradition for over 1,400 years — to be hospitable, to take care of your guest,” Imam Sohail Chaudhry of The Islamic Center of East Lansing said. The church had been gathering in a Jewish fraternity before deciding to buy its own building, but the space needed construction and wouldn’t be available for several months. The Islamic center, which hosts its main prayers on Fridays, invited the Unitarian congregation to use its worship space for Sunday services. The congregation met at the mosque for about a month before settling into its new space.

Mosque Invites Church to Use Its Space for Worship

Many of the Christian congregants had never been inside a mosque before, said Rev. Kathryn Bert, senior minister of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Greater Lansing. “People were so excited the very first day,” said Bert. Before the church’s first service at the mosque, Bert fielded questions from her congregation about etiquette, including whether women should cover their heads, as is traditional in Muslim places of worship. When Bert posed the question to Chaudhry, the imam said it would be polite, but not necessary. Bert said she estimated that 30 to 40 percent of the women in her congregation chose to wear scarves during services out of respect to the Islamic center. “Getting comfortable with difference involves building relationships with people,” she pointed out.
Why Can’t I Be Just another Woman… But With A Headscarf?

By Zeynab Ladak

Whilst living with a diverse group of people in my college years, a new housemate of mine posed a question about me, based on the fact that I used to wear a headscarf. He asked if I was allowed to go out of the house alone or not, and I was very confused about his question. I mean, I understood that he was making an assumption because he saw me wearing a headscarf, presenting myself very obviously as a Muslim woman, so he made a presumption that because I was covering my head, I am probably like one of the stereotypes he saw on TV, which is of an “oppressed” Muslim woman.

The Popular Culture Norm

Now, at the same time, I was living with other Muslim girls who didn’t wear a headscarf and he did not pose the same questions to them even though they were of the same faith as I was. I, however, was subjected to the assumption that I must somehow be “oppressed” and I am not “allowed” to leave the house because I chose to cover myself. The presumption was made due to me wearing a certain type of clothing that did not fit the popular cultural norm and has been stigmatized for years by the mainstream media, so I can’t blame the guy for what he thought.

What frustrated me, and I still remember this very clearly, is why couldn’t I be just another girl, just another girl but with a headscarf on? Why does what I wear, automatically determine who I am supposed to be? I was wondering if I was alone in feeling this, but after asking other Muslim women who covered themselves I realized it was an issue we all were facing. No one looked at them as individuals, people with normal lives, unique personalities, diverse cultures, different career paths, because the Muslim women were reduced to just their headscarves and nothing more.

The problem with this is that to reduce a person to what they wear limits understanding the other person, limits open-minded discussions, and unfortunately for Muslim women, even limits opportunities for them—a recent study published by UK’s The Independent found that Muslim women had lesser chances of getting jobs even though they may be as qualified as non-Muslim women, just because they were Muslim.

As a Unique Individual

For me, it is sad that I am not allowed to identify myself as a unique individual, as a woman with a degree or a career, a woman with a certain personality. I am identified by those who see me as a stereotype of what a Muslim woman is supposed to be like. But there is no one definition of who a Muslim woman is as all of us are diverse individuals with different beliefs and interests; and to categorize us in a tiny box of what we should be just because of what we wear, rather than ask us who we are and what we think, is not only harmful to us, but to everyone else also, because this means we are losing out on knowing who people are and stereotyping them for how they choose to dress.

One day, I wish that if I meet a new housemate, they would think of me being more than just my headscarf, that they would think of me as just another human being, with hopes, aspirations and dreams similar to themselves and I hope that they would see me as much, much more than a piece of cloth.

I hope that day comes soon.

((Zeynab is currently a final year Bachelors in Media, Communication and Culture student at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa)

---

My Hijab Liberates Me from Your Oppressive Standards for Women

My existence is not validated by compliments, by 200+ likes on my profile photo or random people commenting that I am beautiful. My purpose in life is relieved of the baggage of my appearance.

By Mahvash Afzal

I click on the newspaper tab on my browser to read the top stories. Some of the words that catch my eye... Burqini, radical Islam, oppression of women, regressive culture. In the wake of the Burkini ban by the French, the discussion on the Muslim women's Hijab has been unearthed for the nth time (oh, did I forget that it had never been buried?). I guess it is a lot of fun telling other people what to do, and how they are doing is actually the result of some kind of indoctrination. All this condescension is based upon the following assumptions:

Her family must have forced her into this:
She has been brain-washed by reading a certain type of literature or hanging out with certain type of people. Totally indoctrinated!
She is probably too dumb to figure out what she is doing and why she is doing it.

Thank you very much for your penetrating analysis. However, there are certain things that I want you to know. Your premise that the Hijab or Abaya or Burqa, whatever you like to call it, is a form of enslavement is based upon your assumption of the supremacy of your ideology. I, on the other hand, see semi-clad women as representing a form of enslavement to a social structure that requires them to dress a certain way, be a certain size, and have a certain type of hair, and what not. I think that your likes and dislikes are not governed by you. They are governed by your peers, the media and the society in general. I see that as enslavement and I see you as enslaved to the idea of transient beauty and pleasure. However, I do not go on harping about how I think you are oppressed or your women are oppressed.

The Standards of Beauty

I want you to think for a moment about what the Hijab has done for me. It has liberated me from living by the standards that you have set for me—the standards of beauty, of acceptability. My existence is not validated by compliments, by 200+ likes on my profile photo or random people commenting that I am beautiful. My purpose in life is relieved of the baggage of my appearance. I would love to introduce you to my lifestyle, but the choice has to be yours. Similarly, I would appreciate it if you talk to me about how wearing an Abaya is oppressing me and stopping me from enjoying my life... but I'll not let you announce to the world that I have been indoctrinated into wearing what I choose to wear or that I am powerless to make the choice for myself.

Now let me discuss some facets of your ‘egalitarian’ ideology. One of the most important forms of emancipation is somehow the clothes that women get to wear, automatically determine that catch my eye. The Popular Culture Norm

Similarly, I would appreciate it if you introduce you to my lifestyle, with hopes, aspirations and dreams similar to themselves and to have such a long history of female imams.

Women’s Mosques Opens in Denmark

Born in Denmark to a Syrian father and a Finnish mother, Sherin Khankan, well-known author and political commentator, has started an new mosque in Copenhagen. The Mariam Mosque is led entirely by women imams. Khankan says: “I have never felt at home in the existing mosques. The new grand mosques are unbelievably beautiful, but I have the feeling of being a stranger when I am there. We women stand up in the balcony and look down on what is happening. Many women and young people don’t even go into the mosques as you enter into a male-dominated and patriarchal space in which a man has the floor, a man leads prayers, men are in focus and dominate. “Many imams in this country belong to the traditional school which does not account for the culture we live in. Instead, they help to construct contradictions between being a practising Muslim and a young person in Denmark”, Khankan says. Women’s Mosques in China

China is the only country to have a long history of female imams.

China has an estimated 21 million Muslims, who have developed their own set of Islamic practices with Chinese characteristics. The biggest difference is the development of independent women's mosques with female imams, something scholars who have researched the issue say is unique to China. Young Muslims have become an imam for four years, after being laid off from her job as a factory worker. First she studied under a female imam, then with a male imam alongside male students. Her main role is as a teacher, she says. “When people come to pray, they don’t know how to chant the Quran, so my job is teaching people about Islam, helping them to study one line at a time and leading the prayers,” she says. The modest courtyard of Wangjia Hutong Women's Mosque contains within it the entire history of China's mosques for females. It's the oldest surviving women's mosque in China, with one gray plaque high up on a wall dating back to 1820. Like other women's mosques, it began as a Quranic school for girls. These sprang up in the late 17th century in central China, including Shanxi and Shandong provinces, remembering her own childhood, 83-year-old Tang Guiying says even then the women's mosque was the only place a girl could receive education. China is the only country to have such a long history of female imams.
State of the World Children

80% Child Deaths happened in Africa, South Asia, Child Marriages Declining

Providing every child a fair chance to live is the essence of equitable development. Every child should have the same right to a healthy start in life, education and safe, secure childhood. But these are denied to the children because of their place of birth or the origin of their family; because of their race, ethnicity or gender; or because they live in poverty or with disability. If the world fails to deal with the children equitably, the scenario down the line is bleak. The Unicef 2016 Report titled State of the World Children paints a grim picture of the future. Sample these facts:

By 2030
- 167 million Children will live in extreme poverty.
- 69 million children under age 5 will die between 2016 and 2030.
- 60 million children of primary school age will be out of school.
- 38% children leave school without learning how to read, write and do simple arithmetic.
- 950 million women will be married as children, if child marriages are not curbed.

MDGs to SDGs

We can avert this fate as has been demonstrated during the 2000-2015 while the world nations pursued the Million Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs have now been given a new name, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which will be pursued between 2015 and 2030. But there are challenges ahead. For example, by 2015, at least 60 million people had fled their homes because of conflict and violence.

Half of them are children. Globally, more than half a billion children live in zones where the occurrence of flooding is extremely high, and nearly 160 million live in zones where the severity of drought is high or extremely high. The World Health Organization (WHO) has projected that approximately 250,000 additional deaths will occur annually through 2030 from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress attributable to climate change.

What is Equity?

It means the same opportunity for all children to survive and develop their full potential. An ‘equity approach’ to development begins with learning more about who is being left behind and why, identifying the children at greatest risk and analysing the structural determinants of inequity – poverty, geography and discrimination, for example – and the complex interplay among them.

Infant Mortality

For approximately one million children in 2015, their first day of life was also their last. Compared to the richest children, the poorest children are: 1.9 times more likely to die before age 5. 80% Child Deaths in South Asia Globally, child deaths are highly concentrated. In 2015, about 80% of these deaths occurred in South Asia, (India, Pakistan, Nepal, B.Desh, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan) and sub-Saharan Africa, and almost half occurred in just five countries: the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria and Pakistan.

34% Muslim Children Out of School

The Report says 34% Muslim children in India are not enrolled in the school. This proportion among other communities in India is: Hindus 25.9%, Christians 25.6%, Jains 12.4%, Buddhists 18.2%.

The Right To Education Act (RTE) has improved the retention of children in schools. In 2009, the dropout rate among 6-13 year age group was 8 million which declined to 6 million in 2015. 36% children drop out before they finish their elementary level education. Nearly half of these children are from underprivileged sections while 47% belong to Scheduled Tribes. However there is no worthwhile improvement in the learning outcome. It has quoted National Achievement Survey which says half of the 5th std children cannot answer questions from Maths.

Child Marriages

While child marriage rates are decreasing, each year about 15 million girls are married before the age of 18. These girls represent a highly vulnerable group: They are denied their childhood, face limited opportunities for education and often begin childbearing too early.

Girls in the poorest 20% of the population, as well as those living in rural areas, face the greatest risks. In Africa, the level of child marriage among the poorest has remained unchanged since 1990. And babies born to mothers under age 20 are 1.5 times more likely to die during the first 28 days than babies born to mothers in their twenties or thirties.

Unintended Pregnancies

Globally, an estimated 216 million married women need, but lack, access to modern contraceptive methods. If women who want to avoid pregnancy had access to these methods, unintended pregnancies would drop by 70%. Reducing the number of unintended pregnancies, in turn, could avert 60% of maternal deaths and 57% of under-five child deaths.

If no progress is made in curbing child marriages, almost 950 million women will be married as children by 2030, up from more than 700 million today. And by 2050, almost half of the world’s child brides will be African.

Education is a critical part of the solution. Girls who have little or no education are up to six times more likely to be married as children than girls who have secondary schooling.

Deficient Health Workforce

By 2035, the world will need an additional 12.9 million health workers.

In recent years, Bangladesh has made solid progress in reducing mortality rates among children under age 5. Part of its success can be traced to the expansion of community-level health interventions. Accelerated progress will depend on expanded and more equitable provision of antenatal care and skilled birth attendance.

Stunting and Overweight

In 2014, 159 million children under age 5 were stunted. Another 41 million children under age 5 were overweight – and their number is rising. Stunting and other forms of undernutrition reflect societal inequities; stunting can serve as a marker for poverty. In Africa and Asia, 11% of GNP is lost due to poor nutrition.

Eliminating malnutrition in young children has several benefits. It could improve school attainment by at least one year, reduce poverty, empower women and, in turn, break the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

(Note: These are only selective highlights of the Unicef Report. For a full version, long onto: http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/UNICEF_SOWC_2016.pdf)

"When I approach a child, he inspires in me two sentiments — tenderness for what he is and respect for what he may become.” — Louis Pasteur, French chemist and microbiologist
Rejecting Vigilantism

The so-called Cow Protection campaign has become the leitmotif of right wing extremists’ dream of realizing their violent designs against minorities. In its second year now, it is beginning to hurt the BJP itself. The campaign has indeed come to touch its nadir. It is clear that the campaign is basically divisive in its nature, intent and purpose. It was basically aimed at identifying minorities, particularly Muslims, as ‘cow killers’ and thus targeting them with violence. But what is now apparent is that it is recoiling upon the perpetrators. People from several other sections are getting drawn into the vortex of violence, especially, Dalits who are traditionally assigned the task of disposing off the carcasses of dead cattle and many industries such as leather and leather goods for whom skins are the basic raw material.

From Dadri in Uttar Pradesh to Una in Gujarat, the trail of blood marks the freedom with which the vigilantes are running amok, usurping authority and browbeating the minorities into submission of their dictates. It is no healthy sign for a country as diverse as India where food choices are diverse and difficult to be straitjacketed. Cow slaughter is banned in several states of the country and is implemented strictly. But the law leaves enough scope for even those who survive on oxen and buffaloes to be victimized, especially when the powers that be are known to dividing the society in the name of religion, caste and community. All such laws have the effect of creating categories of citizens, privileging a few and rendering others as vulnerable at best and suspects at worst.

Economics of meat, exports and leather apart, it is evident from a report being carried elsewhere in this issue that implementation of such laws becomes a priority of unwarranted seriousness for those in Police who seek proximity to the power wielders. No wonder then why pleas to restrain those taking the law into their hands are falling on deaf ears. If India were to be really free for people to practice their faith, speak their language, follow their food, dressing choices and culture, then it will be imperative to carry out a scrutiny of all such laws that render a few sections of people less patriotic than others and provide a handle for some to implicate them.

The free run enjoyed by the vigilantes is undermining the authority of law and those who should legitimately exercise it. Moral policing is fraught with risks and is all likely to curtail freedoms and liberties of citizens enshrined in the Constitution. The BJP runs the risks of losing law and those who should legitimately exercise it. Moral policing is some to implicate them.

The hardened attitude was reflected in one instance where there was a rape, child slavery and human trafficking were involved children; stories of child prostitution and given up caring any more, even if the suffering on a global scale in which several things were exposed as lacking in legitimacy to represent their people and their culture. Europe and the Muslim world, two civilisations thus meet darkly and not understanding each other grapple with the best means to maintain balance in their own cultural context. As the relationship is an asymmetrical one, between a reluctant benefactor and a disgruntled recipient of favours, it is ripe with the potential for misunderstandings and disasters. Europeans are finding the balance between their most cherished values of order and the rule of law with that of their humanitarian character repeatedly compromised. Every negative action of the Muslims tilts the balance away from the humanitarian to the security aspect of European identity. Every reaction of Europe in terms of increasingly harsh security measures causes anger, grief and humiliation in the Muslim community. Both blame each other for the plight of the refugees. For Europeans, and an opinion no longer restricted to the right-wing groups, the refugees are an unwelcome, ill-disciplined and ungrateful lot. Omran and Aylan were metaphors for the conscience of the world: one was half dead when he was found and the other fully dead. (Akbar Ahmed is Ibn Khalid Chair of Islamic Studies at the American University, Washington, DC. His latest film, Journey Into Europe, has just been released and he is completing the parallel book for Brookings Press)
An Inclusive Model of Education

Noorul Uloom Education Society runs 11 schools today, with 35% Hindu students.

By Eram Agha

Aligarh: In restive, communally-divided western Uttar Pradesh, wracked by repeated riots and violence, education is what unites Hindus and Muslims. Noorul Uloom Education Society was started in 1989 for the educational and cultural advancement of Muslims with the full support of local Hindus. Today, some Muslims sponsor education of those Hindus who cannot afford it. Their apex school has 52% Hindu and 48% Muslim students. The first school was set up under a tree on the land of a poor Hindu farmer, Mann Singh, with the help of another local, Ramzan Khan. This led to a two-room arrangement in the house of another Hindu, Lal Singh, of Kumrai village. Lal gave the rooms for the cause, free of rent for two years. Another local Hindu, Bhola Singh, donated Rs 10,000 when the organization was in its infancy. Over the years, a Muslim named Jaspal Singh (in parts of Uttar Pradesh, it is common to find Muslims with Hindu names) has been actively involved in buying land at reasonable rates from Hindus and Muslims to build schools. "Introducing the benefits of education to our children will only help us in many ways. How can we not do it for a cause like this?" said Jaspal.

The first school was set up under a tree on the land of a poor Hindu farmer, Mann Singh, with the help of another local, Ramzan Khan.

An Inclusive Model of Education

The best way to get rid of societal ills, feels the society's secretary Nafees Ahmad, is to have an inclusive model of education. "When we started the movement, we got heart-warming help from Hindus who not only contributed in whatever way they could, but also sent their children to study," he added.

Noorul Uloom runs 11 schools today, with 35% Hindu students.

In the main school at Parsara village, 52% of the students are Hindu. The fee starts from as low as Rs 230 per month for the junior classes to Rs 700 for class XI-XII (Arts) and Rs 800 (Science).

Low Fees

In the rest of the schools run by the organization, which are overseen by the basic Shiksha Adhikari, the fee is as low as Rs 100 per month. The fee structure has been kept nominal, in view of the general poverty of locals. "There was once an attempt to hike fees, but this increased the dropout rate. We tried to address that by introducing sponsorship for those who can't afford fees. So Muslims also fund education of Hindus," said Arif Rizvi, a member of Noorul Uloom.

The Pradhan of Parsara village, Shishupal Singh, and social activists have also been consistently supportive. "In effect, because of the organization, all of us are working for the cause of education," Shishupal said.

Social activist, Dara Singh said both communities have united to target the high dropout rate of girls, as well as boys engaged as child labourers. "The majority of the local population are marginal farmers or landless agricultural labourers. Their children drop out frequently to work on farms. That is an issue we are trying to address," he added.

The change is apparent. In interior villages, where till a few years ago parents were not willing to send their daughters to school, girls now number more than 39% of students. There are other encouraging indicators. In one of the schools, out of the total 623 students, OBCs number 180, while SCs and STs number 48. (Source:timesofindia.indiatimes.com)

North Maharashtra University gets Minority Cell

By Imran Inamdar

Jalgaon: Maharashtra: Jalgaon-based North Maharashtra University has formed a Minority cell in an attempt to help minority students and institutes associated with the University. Sudhir Meshram, Vice-Chairman of the University, recently issued a notification forming the 11-member cell and allocated the responsibility to President Abdul Karim Salar. Salar, who is based in Jalgaon, stated that during the last five years, the Central government has started number of scholarships and schemes for the betterment of minority students and institutions. "Unfortunately most of the students were unaware about the same and facing difficulties in filling forms and updating data. Three districts—Jalgaon, Nandurbar and Dhulia fall under the North Maharashtra University wherein thousand of minority students (including Muslims, Jains, Sikhs, Christians and Parsis) are studying," he said. He further added that with the advent of the minority cell, helping students will become hassle free as it will provide all kinds of assistance to students. (twocircles.net)

Nobel Laureate: Don’t ‘Muddle Up’ Terrorism with Islam

Nobel Peace prize winner Wided Bouchamaoui has urged people everywhere not to “muddle up” terrorism with Islam.

The Tunisian businesswoman, who co-founded the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet which won the 2015 peace prize, said Muslims who practice their faith calmly and respectfully are “victims of a semantic problem” when “terrorists” are described as “Islamic terrorists.” “I think we should call a spade a spade,” Bouchamaoui told the UN General Assembly’s high-level forum on The Culture of Peace. “A terrorist is a killer, a murderer, a criminal and I would even say an imposer who is manipulating Islam.” The Nobel laureate said she and others intend to use the importance of international action, she said, “I would like to urge each and every one of you not to muddle up terrorism with Islam.”

Bouchamaoui said. Stressing the importance of international action, she said, “I would like to urge each and every one of you not to muddle up terrorism (with) Islam.”

COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

Bihar Floods

US-based IMRC Provides 1,600 Families with Food Packets

By Raqib Hameed Naik

Jamsheed Ahmed, 40, from Amdaar village of Bhagalpur district leaves early morning in search of food for his family, but every night he comes back with little he could collect from relief camps. Before floods in village, he used to work as a labourer in a nearby Beedi factory. As floods have brought life to a standstill in Bihar, he is also among lakhs of laborers struggling to earn and sustain their lives. Last month, he along with 52 other families was provided with ration by the US-based IMRC Indian Muslim Relief & Charities (IMRC), from a team of volunteers working in Bhagalpur district of Bihar. IMRC volunteers distributed food packets among 520 families at two centres in Amdaar and Agarpurtola village in Bhagalpur district and 1,080 families were provided with food packets in Manihari, Azampur Gola villages of Khairahar district. Every food packet includes, 5 kgs rice, 3 kgs rice flakes, 1 kg Jaggery, 1 kg pulses, biscuits and 500 ml mustard oil.

160 Govt. Minority Residential Schools in Telengana

Hyderabad: Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) has ordered that all 160 Minority Residential Schools should become functional from the next academic session. He said 71 such schools have already started functioning this year and 89 more would be set up in the next academic session. He said these schools would provide education to all 55,000 students from minority communities. He said districts such Khammam, Karimnagar, Nizamabad, Warangal, Hanamkonda, Adilabad, Mahbubnagar, Nalgonda etc should have at least six such schools. KCR said Telengana was the heartland of Ganga-Jamuna tehzeeb (read composite culture) and minorities would be provided with facilities for development.

He lauded the participation of Muslims in the Ganesh Festival processions recently. The State Government has set up a committee to look into the proposal to make 12% reservation for Muslims in the State, which was once part of the Nizam’s State of Hyderabad. The new state of Telengana was carved out of former state of Andhra Pradesh.

(By A Staff Writer)
UP Assembly Elections

A Manifesto for Muslims

Uttar Pradesh has the largest chunk of Muslim population in India. The community should press parties to include plans for their betterment in their manifesto for the 2017 elections.

By Syed Zafar Mahmood

It is ten years since Sachar committee presented its report on the socio-economic and educational status of Muslims in India. It was appointed by the Prime Minister’s Office in 2005 and presented its Report in November 2006. Its terms of reference mandated it to assess the socio-economic and educational status of Muslims and find out as to where they lagged behind other social components of population. It had pointed out that 38% Muslims in urban areas and 27% in rural areas were below the poverty line. Statewise findings had pointed out that Muslims comprised 23.6% of those below poverty line in Uttar Pradesh where their share in the population was 18.5%. It was stated that the community’s representation in Police, Transport and Health Services was 3.7% and among those who were recruited by the State Public Service Commission their share stood at mere 3.1% (p. 174). What it implies is that Muslims represented even less than one-fifth of what they legitimately deserved by dint of their share in population. Even more significantly, the Muslim representation among those called for interview for ‘A’ and ‘D’ grade services was 13.4% and 17.8% respectively.

Lagging Behind

It was plain that Muslims in Uttar Pradesh lagged far behind other religious communities in all sectors of development and Government welfare as well as development schemes were not benefitting them in due measure. Given the statistics available on the UP Government website, tremendous institutionalized effort would be necessary to raise the level of the community in proportion to its numbers.

West Bengal Situation

A similar exercise was undertaken in West Bengal in 2014 when 200 scholars fanned out in the State and carried out a detailed survey covering 97,017 Muslim families election manifesto. And that it should present its report within a year of the Government assuming power in Lucknow. It should also recommend measures to elevate the status of those falling behind in matters of development indices. It should be given the same mandate as that of the Sachar Committee and should be headed by a retired judge of a High Court or the Supreme Court.

The members should be drawn from among professionals in the field of Statistics, Sociology, Economics, and Administration. The new Government should start implementation of the recommendations within 15 months of its installation. Similarly, the action on recommendations of the Sachar Committee should also be relayed through the official website. Currently, copies of the State Chief Secretary’s letters advising action by various departments in 2009 are present on the official website. The Department heads had been advised to see that 20% of the benefits under all development schemes should reach the minorities. But there are no details with regard to implementation of these measures by the Departments between the intervening years of 2009 and 2016.

Blocks as Unit under MsDP

In the backdrop of the progress so far, it would be incumbent upon the party taking over the reins of power in 2017 to ensure that special attention is given to uplift the Muslims in the State. For example, the Blocks should be made the unit to implement the civic improvement schemes rather than the district or division under the Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP). A Minority Welfare officer should be posted in all blocks of the State. BPL cards should be issued to all widows and poor families. Bank loan facilities should be extended to all the landless families. Free education facilities should be extended to their children till matriculation. High Schools and Industrial Training Institutes should be set up in all the blocks with a heavy concentration of Muslim minority.

Development Work

The development work should include setting up hospitals, school, banks, public toilets in Muslim concentration areas at ward levels. Water, power and sewage lines should be extended to these areas with road being laid to them. Housing units should be allotted to Muslims in proportion to their population in every block.

No Place for Fatalism

Only such measures would enable the Muslims in Uttar Pradesh to get back their lost position. Defeatism and fatalism must be shunned. Only struggle for their right can bring a turnaround in their fortunes.

For example, the Blocks should be set up on district level and plans be drawn for promotion of skills. SHGs should be encouraged in all such centres. Waqf properties under Government ownership should be evacuated and entrusted to the Waqf Board or the Government should pay their rents at the market rate. Bank loans should be arranged for small businessmen.

Muslim Couple Performs Funeral Rites of Hindu Woman

Warangal: Bakrid was celebrated in a way of brotherhood in Hanakonda, when a Muslim performed the funeral rites of an octogenarian Hindu woman, whose relatives refused to cremate her. The deceased woman, Iloni Bondamma (85) had been staying at Sahadavasa Old-age Home at Prashanth Nagar in KaziPet in Warangal district. She was left alone after the demise of her husband Lakshminarayana Somu years ago, as the couple had no children. “As we learnt that Bondamma has some relatives residing in the town, we contacted them and informed them about the demise of the woman. But they expressed their inability to conduct her funeral rites in view of Ganesh Navaratri celebrations and other reasons,” Mohammad Chotu, who runs the home said. “So I decided to do the role of a son for Bondamma to perform her funeral,” he said. After offering the Bakrid prayers, he along with his wife Bakub Bi and others, took the body to Sivamuktidham ground near Padmakshi temple. The funeral was conducted as per Hindu customs.

(Extracted from siasat.com)
What the Media is not Telling Us about AIMPLB’s Stand

The fact that the Board has accepted the principles laid down in the Shamim Ara ruling, is the most positive aspect of the affidavit, and this should be hailed.

By Flavia Agnes

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) has given to the Supreme Court its opinion on triple talaq and polygamy. As expected, media reports have reacted to the absurd and indefensible statements made by the Board, but the positive aspects in the affidavit seem to have gotten buried beneath the flurry. The affidavit starts on a positive note by stating that the Supreme Court in the 2002 Shamim Ara ruling has already dealt with the issue of instant, arbitrary triple talaq, and has laid down the test of “reasonable cause” and “prior reconciliation”, and goes even further to state that the principle laid down in the Shamim Ara ruling is the law of the land and a binding precedent.

Even while stating that the Shamim Ara ruling does not accurately reflect the Shariah law, the affidavit accepts the judgment by stating that the Board does not wish to reopen the discussion on it in these proceedings, but ends with a rider that it reserves its right to “interpret” the Shamim Ara ruling in future. This appears to be a feeble objection to the historic ruling, especially since the board accepts that the proper course open to Shayara Bano — petitioner in the current case — was to challenge the triple talaq and claim her rights in a local court by invoking the 2002 ruling.

The Shamim Ara Ruling

Fourteen years have gone by since the ruling, and the volume of case law accumulated through the decisions of various high courts which have relied on the Shamim Ara ruling makes it difficult for the Board to feign ignorance about it as the principle of stare decisis will apply when the Board wakes up to challenging this ruling.

What does this imply for Muslim women who are sent arbitrary talaqnama by post? While trial courts have been relying on this ruling when Muslim women approach them to claim their rights, the community has been hesitant to challenge the fatwas that triple talaq are valid, discouraging women from approaching the courts. The Board’s affidavit, in paragraph six, sends out a clear signal that a Muslim woman has every right to challenge the triple talaq sent to her by her husband relying upon the Shamim Ara ruling.

The fact that the Board has accepted the principles laid down in the Shamim Ara ruling is the most positive aspect of the affidavit, and this should be hailed. After pleading that Shayara Bano had the right to challenge the triple talaq in a local court in a duly affirmed affidavit by a person no less than its secretary, it will be difficult for the Board to retract from this position in future. Now Muslim women can defend their rights against instant talaq pronounced on them, as the Board has given its approval.

The second positive aspect is the acceptance that a Muslim woman who has been subjected to domestic violence has the right to claim relief under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWWDA), 2005. This helps break yet another prevailing myth that Muslim women are not entitled to relief under PWWDA. There is a clear signal from the Board that it reserves its rights in this area.

Protection, injunction, residence, compensation and child custody can be claimed under summary proceedings in a magistrate’s court.

Further, remedies under this Act can be claimed not only during the marriage but at any time thereafter. The Board does not seem to restrain Muslim women from claiming relief under this statute even after their marriage has been dissolved. Acknowledging the rights of Muslim women for remedies under this civil statute is sufficient to clear any misconception which the media may harbour.

Ending Violent Marriage

The third positive point: In the event that Shayara Bano wished to end her violent marriage by accepting the talaqnama sent by her husband, she has the option of exercising her rights under the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights upon Divorce) Act, 1986. The agency of the Muslim woman and her multiple choices under various legal provisions, which are seldom highlighted, are captured in a nutshell.

The affidavit chides Shayara Bano for rushing to the Supreme Court by way of a PIL without first benefiting from the remedies available to her against her husband in a local court. In fact, it is on these grounds that the affidavit claims that the PIL should be dismissed ad-limine (at the initial stage). The affidavit further states that these alternate remedies are more apt as the appropriate judicial authorities can give effective and adequate remedy. These statements help to clear the misconception that a divorced Muslim woman has no rights under the existing laws.

The affidavit further states that provisions of maintenance after divorce have been codified in the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986, and the constitutional validity of this Act was upheld in the Danial Latifi ruling of 2001.

Misconception Surrounding Important Rights

The Board was a party to these proceedings and had opposed the wider interpretation provided by the Supreme Court. But today it seems to accept this judgment and urges Muslim women to reap its benefits.

Unfortunately, due to the negative projection of these important milestones, Muslim women were not able to sufficiently reap the benefits of these rulings. The affidavit seems to clear the misconception surrounding these important rights.

It would have been better for the Board to confine itself to these legal positions rather than contradict what is stated in the opening paragraphs, by invoking obscurantist authorities to uphold arbitrary, instant triple talaq. Unfortunately, by making sensational and outlandish comments about the necessity of validating this practice, the Board has played into the hands of Hindu communal elements, especially before the UP elections, and provided fodder to mount its vitriolic campaign against the Muslim community.

After affirming that the principle laid down in the Shamim Ara ruling is the law of the land and is binding, these contradictory and atrocius comments were totally unwarranted.

Since the main objective of the media is to secure the rights of Muslim women, it would do well to publicise the fact that the Board has encouraged Muslim women to safeguard their rights by using the existing laws available to them.

(Source: asianage.com)

By Flavia Agnes

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) has given to the Supreme Court its opinion on triple talaq and polygamy. As expected, media reports have reacted to the absurd and indefensible statements made by the Board, but the positive aspects in the affidavit seem to have gotten buried beneath the flurry. The affidavit starts on a positive note by stating that the Supreme Court in the 2002 Shamim Ara ruling has already dealt with the issue of instant, arbitrary triple talaq, and has laid down the test of “reasonable cause” and “prior reconciliation”, and goes even further to state that the principle laid down in the Shamim Ara ruling is the law of the land and a binding precedent.

Even while stating that the Shamim Ara ruling does not accurately reflect the Shariah law, the affidavit accepts the judgment by stating that the Board does not wish to reopen the discussion on it in these proceedings, but ends with a rider that it reserves its right to “interpret” the Shamim Ara ruling in future. This appears to be a feeble objection to the historic ruling, especially since the board accepts that the proper course open to Shayara Bano — petitioner in the current case — was to challenge the triple talaq and claim her rights in a local court by invoking the 2002 ruling.

The Shamim Ara Ruling

Fourteen years have gone by since the ruling, and the volume of case law accumulated through the decisions of various high courts which have relied on the Shamim Ara ruling makes it difficult for the Board to feign ignorance about it as the principle of stare decisis will apply when the Board wakes up to challenging this ruling.

What does this imply for Muslim women who are sent arbitrary talaqnama by post? While trial courts have been relying on this ruling when Muslim women approach them to claim their rights, the community has been hesitant to challenge the fatwas that triple talaq are valid, discouraging women from approaching the courts. The Board’s affidavit, in paragraph six, sends out a clear signal that a Muslim woman has every right to challenge the triple talaq sent to her by her husband relying upon the Shamim Ara ruling.

The fact that the Board has accepted the principles laid down in the Shamim Ara ruling is the most positive aspect of the affidavit, and this should be hailed. After pleading that Shayara Bano had the right to challenge the triple talaq in a local court in a duly affirmed affidavit by a person no less than its secretary, it will be difficult for the Board to retract from this position in future. Now Muslim women can defend their rights against instant talaq pronounced on them, as the Board has given its approval.

The second positive aspect is the acceptance that a Muslim woman who has been subjected to domestic violence has the right to claim relief under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWWDA), 2005. This helps break yet another prevailing myth that Muslim women are not entitled to relief under PWWDA. There is a clear signal from the Board that it reserves its rights in this area.

Protection, injunction, residence, compensation and child custody can be claimed under summary proceedings in a magistrate’s court.

Further, remedies under this Act can be claimed not only during the marriage but at any time thereafter. The Board does not seem to restrain Muslim women from claiming relief under this statute even after their marriage has been dissolved. Acknowledging the rights of Muslim women for remedies under this civil statute is sufficient to clear any misconception which the media may harbour.

Ending Violent Marriage

The third positive point: In the event that Shayara Bano wished to end her violent marriage by accepting the talaqnama sent by her husband, she has the option of exercising her rights under the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights upon Divorce) Act, 1986. The agency of the Muslim woman and her multiple choices under various legal provisions, which are seldom highlighted, are captured in a nutshell.

The affidavit chides Shayara Bano for rushing to the Supreme Court by way of a PIL without first benefiting from the remedies available to her against her husband in a local court. In fact, it is on these grounds that the affidavit claims that the PIL should be dismissed ad-limine (at the initial stage). The affidavit further states that these alternate remedies are more apt as the appropriate judicial authorities can give effective and adequate remedy. These statements help to clear the misconception that a divorced Muslim woman has no rights under the existing laws.

The affidavit further states that provisions of maintenance after divorce have been codified in the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986, and the constitutional validity of this Act was upheld in the Danial Latifi ruling of 2001.

Misconception Surrounding Important Rights

The Board was a party to these proceedings and had opposed the wider interpretation provided by the Supreme Court. But today it seems to accept this judgment and urges Muslim women to reap its benefits.

Unfortunately, due to the negative projection of these important milestones, Muslim women were not able to sufficiently reap the benefits of these rulings. The affidavit seems to clear the misconception surrounding these important rights.

It would have been better for the Board to confine itself to these legal positions rather than contradict what is stated in the opening paragraphs, by invoking obscurantist authorities to uphold arbitrary, instant triple talaq. Unfortunately, by making sensational and outlandish comments about the necessity of validating this practice, the Board has played into the hands of Hindu communal elements, especially before the UP elections, and provided fodder to mount its vitriolic campaign against the Muslim community.

After affirming that the principle laid down in the Shamim Ara ruling is the law of the land and is binding, these contradictory and atrocius comments were totally unwarranted.

Since the main objective of the media is to secure the rights of Muslim women, it would do well to publicise the fact that the Board has encouraged Muslim women to safeguard their rights by using the existing laws available to them.

(Source: asianage.com)
The Muslim World Is Going Backwards - And the West Isn’t To Blame

You have proper societies when you have a group of people who will work hard to live in peace and harmony with each other. There are virtually no societies left in much of the Muslim world and Muslims have only themselves to blame for that.

By Dr. Azeem Ibrahim

Turkey and Malaysia have long been regarded as the most developed countries in the Muslim world. Through a historic commitment in the 20th century to modernisation and development, they have achieved standards of infrastructure, education, healthcare, but also industrialization and economic output that compare favorably to that of many of the newer members of the European Union. They were not, of course, the only countries in the Muslim world to have attempted such development. But they have been by far the most successful. They were also quite fortunate to not end up as collateral damage in the Cold War struggle between the USSR and the West – as some other Muslim countries have been.

Determination to Build Integrated Nations

But ultimately, one feels that much of their success is down to their respective determination to build integrated, inclusive nations. Unlike in Syria, or Iraq, in Turkey one is not, first and foremost, a Sunni, or a Shiite, or a Christian. One is, before anything else, a Turk. In Malaysia, the ethnic group of every citizen is something that is acknowledged and celebrated. But unlike in Afghanistan, the competition and the conflicts between groups is not settled through tribal warfare: it is settled through the political process. And when specific ethnic groups have been historically disadvantaged, like for example the indigenous Malays, this is acknowledged and there are quotas in place for access to higher education or to the institutions of political administration to redress historical imbalances in the representation of their interests.

Blame Game

But right now, unfortunately, both of these countries are sliding backwards. And this time, I am afraid to say, the West is not to blame. Turkey has been steadily becoming more and more illiberal in the last 14 years in which President’s Erdogan AK Party have been the dominant political force in the country. Any independent-minded journalists can expect to be sacked if they choose to not toe the party line. And now people are going to prison for the crime of “offending the President”. Meanwhile, Malaysia is being ruled by a prime minister who has distinguished himself through incompetence in public administration. Though it does seem that Najib Razak is quite able to line his own pockets.

Very many Muslim countries also have fractured populations who put parochial or tribal interests well above collective national concerns. And if that was not enough, you have militant Islamists, very often foreign, barging in left, right and centre and blowing things up.

Westernised countries in the Islamic world now tolerate. But it was not to be. Libya and Syria are examples of how badly wrong things can go if you get rid of some of these corrupt leaders, and how badly things can go wrong if you do not. Tunisia stands alone as the only success story of the Arab Spring; at least for now. But ISIS already has it in its sights.

Corruption and Economic Mismanagement

Note, however, what proportion of these woes affecting the Muslim world is in fact to do with the West and how much more it has to do with local or transnational Muslim factors. The most frequent problem is corruption and economic mismanagement. Very often, there is a huge problem with large, young populations with poor education and virtually no economic opportunities. Very many Muslim countries also have fractured populations who put parochial or tribal interests well above collective national concerns. And if that was not enough, you have militant Islamists, very often foreign, barging in left, right and centre and blowing things up. Is it any wonder that states in the region are so fragile? Is it surprising that so many have failed or are failing? Everyone likes blaming the West for all this, of course. But if the West just suddenly stopped existing tomorrow, would any of this get any better? The West is responsible for plenty of decades and foreign policy blunders in the region. But it cannot be held responsible for the fact that so many Muslims there cannot abide to live in peace and justice just because they are a different tribe, or sect, or have a different political ideology.

You have proper societies when you have a group of people who will work hard to live in peace and harmony with each other. There are virtually no societies left in much of the Muslim world and Muslims have only themselves to blame for that.

(Azeem Ibrahim is an RAI Fellow at Mansfield College, University of Oxford and Research Professor at the Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College. Over the years he has met and advised numerous world leaders on policy development and was ranked as a Top 100 Global Thinker by the European Social Think Tank in 2010 and a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum.)

(Extracted from english.alarabiya.net)
Obama Nominates First Muslim as Federal Judge

US President Barack Obama made history recently by nominating the first Muslim to the federal judiciary, Abid Qureshi. The nomination carries a symbolic value: It lands in the midst of a chaotic presidential campaign in which GOP presidential nominees, Donald Trump has said that a Muslim federal judge wouldn’t treat him fairly because of his calls for banning Muslims from entering the country. Trump made similarly bigoted charges that a Latino federal judge would be biased against him because he has advocated for building a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. Muslim advocates hailed Qureshi’s nomination. “I commend President Obama for taking this important step in continuing to pick the best and brightest from every community to serve as part of our nation’s judiciary,” said Farhana Khera, executive director of Muslim Advocates, a legal advocacy organization. “A judiciary that reflects the rich diversity of our nation helps ensure the fair and just administration of the law, and it is vital for American Muslims to be included. Mr. Qureshi’s profound commitment to the rule of law and justice for people of all backgrounds makes him an exceptional nominee.”

Jamia Hamdard VC: Dr. Syed Ehtesham Hasnain has been appointed the Vice Chancellor of Jamia Hamdard, Delhi on September 3. He was earlier the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities which has its headquarters at Allahabad.

KMDC Chairman Minister Assumes Charge

Bengaluru: Minister for Primary and Secondary Education and Minority Welfare, Tanveer Sait took charge as the Chairman of the Karnataka Minorities Development Corporation on Sept. 19. Sait has called for the meeting of Board of Directors on 6th October. He said the Corporation is preparing a Vision Document for Minorities in the State.

(By A Staff Writer)

Mohd Miraj Maniyar
First from the Community to enter MBBS Course

Sikar: Mohammed Miraj Maniyar will be the first MBBS doctor in the Maniyar Muslim community. He secured 989th rank in the recently held NEET admission test held for MBBS. He will be taking admission in the JLN Medical College of Ajmer. He is son of Ismauddin and Mumtaz Begum, both bangle-makers. They barely earn Rs 100 a day. They had studied only up to 5th standard. Nearly 30,000 Muslims of Sikar belong to the OBC category. Not even a single child in the family had so far reached 10th standard. According to Miraj, he used to study five to six hours for getting through NEET, the newly introduced all-India entrance test for admission into MBBS course. Rest of the time, he would assist parents in carrying out their business. Miraj had scored 94.6 percent marks in the 12th standard CBSE examination. He said he was offered a seat in Chennai in the first round of counseling for selection after the results were out, but he waived for the second round and opted for the college in Ajmer. (Translated from Dainik Bhaskar)

Niyaz Ahmed Conferred the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize in Medical Sciences

Professor Dr. Niyaz Ahmed has been conferred the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize in Medical Sciences. Niyaz Ahmed is a medical microbiologist working in the University of Hyderabad. A Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry (UK), Royal Society of Biology (UK) and the National Academy of Sciences India, Niyaz Ahmed is the founder Editor-in-Chief of Gut Pathogens journal. The Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize for Science and Technology (SSB) is a science award given annually by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) for notable and outstanding research, applied or fundamental, in biology, chemistry, environmental science, engineering, mathematics, medicine and Physics. The award is named after the founder Director of the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research, Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar. It was first awarded in 1958. (Reported by Sameen Ahmed Khan)

TIDBITS

CSSS Call for Applications for Fellowships
Mumbai: The Centre for Study of Society and Secularism (CSSS), an organization founded by late Dr. Asghar Ali Engineer has announced scholarship in Islamic Studies for young researchers. The Centre set up by reformist writer Asghar Ali Engineer in 1993 has announced fellowships for work on the research areas like 1- Liberation Theology in Islam, 2- Islam and Gender Justice, 3- Feminist readings of islam, 4- Sufi Islam, 5- Reforms within the Islamic world, 6- Secularism and Islam, 7- Islam and Democracy, 8- Emerging challenges within Islam, 9- Islam and Interfaith engagement, 10- Islam and concept of compassion and mercy, 11- Environment, climate change and Islam, 12- Gender diversity and Islam, 13- Islam and two lakhs and helped the staff and personnel attached to the mosque management in the town. The group formed two years ago has now a membership of 1,200 people. According to Matheen Hafeez, one among the founders, the members were pained to see the muezzins and imams of the mosque running from pillar to post to muster up resources for medical bill for themselves or their family members. The group now funds purchase of medicines for the ailing persons.

Mohd Miraj Maniyar First from the Community to enter MBBS Course

Sikar: Mohammed Miraj Maniyar will be the first MBBS doctor in the Maniyar Muslim community. He secured 989th rank in the recently held NEET admission test held for MBBS. He will be taking admission in the JLN Medical College of Ajmer. He is son of Ismauddin and Mumtaz Begum, both bangle-makers. They barely earn Rs 100 a day. They had studied only up to 5th standard. Nearly 30,000 Muslims of Sikar belong to the OBC category. Not even a single child in the family had so far reached 10th standard. According to Miraj, he used to study five to six hours for getting through NEET, the newly introduced all-India entrance test for admission into MBBS course. Rest of the time, he would assist parents in carrying out their business. Miraj had scored 94.6 percent marks in the 12th standard CBSE examination. He said he was offered a seat in Chennai in the first round of counseling for selection after the results were out, but he waived for the second round and opted for the college in Ajmer. (Translated from Dainik Bhaskar)

Niyaz Ahmed Conferred the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize in Medical Sciences

Professor Dr. Niyaz Ahmed has been conferred the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize in Medical Sciences. Niyaz Ahmed is a medical microbiologist working in the University of Hyderabad. A Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry (UK), Royal Society of Biology (UK) and the National Academy of Sciences India, Niyaz Ahmed is the founder Editor-in-Chief of Gut Pathogens journal. The Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize for Science and Technology (SSB) is a science award given annually by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) for notable and outstanding research, applied or fundamental, in biology, chemistry, environmental science, engineering, mathematics, medicine and Physics. The award is named after the founder Director of the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research, Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar. It was first awarded in 1958. (Reported by Sameen Ahmed Khan)
BJP’s Myth-making Machine Unveiled

By A Staff Writer

Social activist Dhruv Rathee has unveiled the myth-making industry working behind the screen of the BJP’s IT Cell. He says, the social media cell of any party organization is for the marketing and advertising of that Party’s ideology and philosophy, highlighting of its policies and criticism of rival party’s policies.

Doctored Facts
But half of the BJP IT cell’s content is based on fabricated news, doctored facts and their achievements are produced at the photoshop. Much of their news is ‘Paid news’. They pay to the people for even a single tweet. At the first glance, it would appear that this is being done by the BJP volunteers and supporters. But it is not so.

Paid News
The BJP IT Cell hires big PR companies for the purpose. These companies are emailed the messages together with Twitter hashtag of different accounts and indicate the time during which it has to be tweeted. However this strategy is old and also employed by some corporate organizations as well as Bollywood stars. According to Rathee Bhondo-Bhongu, Dare2Zak, robithfly, Cool8769, Mehekmantan, Snehlataji, Coolkashish, KhalidSRKFan, Adarshbalak, ChiragG14, etc. They are certified as incapable of the buffaloes can be slaughtered if the banned categories. However, calf and oxen were also added under the banned categories. It may be recalled that there is a channel reporter Srinivasan Jain out in Maharashtra. It was led by a bunch of vigilantes. The objective of the BJP rally but the Facebook and Twitter accounts owing allegiance to BJP IT Cell portrayed him as a BJP activist beaten up by an AAP activist. The flow of myths, lies, half-truths and falsehood from these accounts reached such heights that BJP IT cell chief Mr. Pradhyut Bora, who had founded it in 2004, resigned in protest. He wrote in his resignation letter; It was not the party with a difference. Madness has gripped the party. The desire to win at any cost has destroyed the very ethos of the party.

Non-existent Quotes
Sometimes, these paid news, paid Twitter and paid Facebook accounts produce such quotes of important personalities which they had never said. The strategy is to pick up audios from one source and the videoclip from another and mix them together to serve their propaganda purpose. For example, an Aam Aadmi Party activist was beaten up in a police station.

BJP IT Cell employs myths, falsehoods, untruths and Photoshop modified images to carry on the malicious propaganda

Well-Oiled Machine
Now Amit Malviya is in-charge of the BJP IT Cell. It is a well-oiled machine which sends What’sapp messages that spread myths. They hire big PR companies. They have Facebook accounts such as ‘Frustrated Indian’, ‘Satya Vijai’, ‘Jagrut’, ‘India Against Prestitutes’ etc. Sometimes they are successful in making people believe myths and lies spread by them. For instance these social media highlighted a news item saying that the Prime Minister called an IAS officer (Sandip Mahatme) at 10 pm on July 21 asking him to repair the National Highway-208-A to Tripura on an urgent basis. It was reported by one Pushpak Chakrvorty on Quora Post. TV channels like Zee News and India Vision, which are pro-BJP, immediately aired it. But later the IAS officer denied having received any such call from the Prime Minister and the falsity of this image-making exercise came unstuck.

Rathee warns against being misled by such newpapers and advises the newsreader and TV watchers to confirm such news from portals of reputed newspapers such as The Hindu, Hindustan Times, The Indian Express and the The Times of India. He says even Indian Express which carried the news item about the Tripura officer, had clearly mentioned that the news was not verified. Rathee says the mythmaking industry is working in full swing and follows no scruples. It does not reveal the sources of funding which runs into hundreds of crores and does not want the party funding to come under the RTI.

Partisan Play by Police Unveiled

An NDTV team launched an investigation into the campaign going on across the country in the name of ‘Cow Protection’ by a bunch of vigilantes. The objective was to investigate as to how the whole campaign is being carried out in Maharashtra. It was led by channel reporter Srinivasan Jain who took his colleague Sanjay Mandal to pose as the helper of the BJP. They loaded a buffalo on the truck. The truck was fitted with secret cameras. It may be recalled that there is a ban on killing of cow in the State for the last three years. When BJP-Shiv Sena government took over the reins of power in the state, even calf and oxen were also added under the banned categories. However, the buffaloes can be slaughtered if they are certified as incapable of yielding milk or are infertile. The team procured all the necessary documents such as papers required under Motor Vehicles Act and certificates by Veterinary doctors verifying the age of buffaloes stating that they were neither yielding milk nor capable of bearing calves.

The gau rakshaks asked the driver to get down and took the truck to a police station. Even before the investigation, the Police began to believe the account given by the vigilantes who identified themselves as members of Hindu Aghadi. They intercepted a car. The NDTV reporter at a distance. When asked by the NDTV reporter whether it was all right for vigilantes to take the law into their hands and stop the vehicles and take away the cattle, the policeman on duty said the vigilantes only provided the information. But when asked pointedly as to why a case cannot be filed against persons who were unauthorisedly stopping the vehicle, beating up the persons in the truck, snatching the cell phone and evicting the driver, the cop asked him to wait for the officer. The constable on duty was stumped by the query and asked the team to wait for the officer.

The TV report made it apparent that the police was acting in a partisan way in order to please the political bosses allowing a free rein to the vigilantes even while claiming themselves to be non-partisan.

(Transcribed from NDTV News Channel footage)
Learning From the Other

The book, My Faith and Others, underscores the fact that religious pluralism can be a positive value.

By A Staff Reviewer

One of the great things of living in a country that is home to many different religions, such as India, are the wonderful opportunities to learn and grow, that religious pluralism provides. The book, My Faith and Others, underscores the fact that religious pluralism can be a positive value. It is a collection of personal reflections on the subject by 15 men and women from different walks of life, from different faith backgrounds, and from different parts of India. Most of the contributors are ‘lay’ people, only a few being theologians or academically-trained scholars in religious studies. This sets the book apart from many other writings on interfaith relations, which are mainly the work of religious ‘specialists’.

Ethics of Harmonious Co-Existence

Celebrating the goodness in cultures and faith traditions other than the one they identify with, the contributors to this volume discuss the ethics of harmonious coexistence in a multi-religious society, something that is of global importance today, particularly in the context of endemic violence in the name of religion in many parts of the world.

In her essay, Tulsi Badrinath reflects on the Advaitic way of relating to the world—seeing everything as part of One Reality. “There is no ‘other’, each of us is part of the all-pervading Consciousness that is the universe”, she writes. “Within this vastness, each of us is free to find the path that will allow us to go beyond the limitations of the body and the senses, imputed by name and form, to be one with the One.” This understanding can easily accommodate religious diversity and enhance all faiths within an overall unity.

Stressing the need to counter extremism in the name of religion, Beatrix D’Souza underscores the need for interfaith dialogue beyond intellectual exchange and relating it with the real world of “the marketplace of social interaction”. One fruitful way to promote interfaith understanding, she suggests, is forming small groups of people from different religious backgrounds, who begin by getting to know each other personally, meeting in each other’s homes. They can celebrate festivals together and understand their significance, come together to read from different scriptures, make documentaries on places where people from different communities worship together, and engage in activities to promote public awareness of the need for inter-communal harmony.

Help People Grow in Faith

In his article, Anwar Syed reminisces about growing up in a Muslim family in Tamil Nadu, where he was exposed to Hindu and Christian influences. He speaks of how a Christian brother helped him grow in his faith in Islam after his disenchantment with Muslim clerics. As Syed’s case shows, interaction with people of other faiths can often help people grow in the faith they identify with. From such interaction, one can begin to view one’s own faith in a different, more evolved, perspective.

Sheeba Sayeed was born in a Muslim family and went on to study yoga and teach it in Qatar. Reflecting her exposure to different faith traditions, she points out that most religions teach the same ethical principles.

Amaladass raises a very pertinent point: “Perhaps”, he muses, “it would be helpful for all of us to ask what one could learn from the other, instead of asking what one could teach the other.”

It is these, she opines, that we should focus on, rather than obsessing and quarrelling about dogmas, rules and regulations that appear to distinguish and divide religions from each other. “To be in dialogue with others is the best way to live in harmony on earth”, writes Jesuit scholar Anand Amaladass in his essay. To address the manifold problems of humankind, including issues related to peace, economic welfare and ecological sustainability, he says, it is imperative for people from different faith communities to work together. Such dialogue is also essential for one’s spiritual growth. “It is also the realization of many that no one culture and no one religion has the monopoly over truth”, he says. All religions are unique, and so while there is need to appreciate and promote the commonalities between the religions, one needs to be aware that none can be reduced to one, Amaladass opines. He speaks of a “perennial true religion” which, he says, underlies all religions—what he calls “a true religious force which is alive in the hearts of all religions in various forms.” All “authentic religions”, he believes, “are on the way to the only true religion”, realizing in various degrees its essence. This inclusivist approach leads Amaladass to stress the need for what he calls “mutual fecundation”, for people of different faiths to learn and benefit from the spiritual insights of others. Such interaction, he indicates, can help people develop self-awareness. It also offers them, he says, “the challenge to look at one’s own position or faith claims in a critical way.” Hence, he points out, “knowing another religion or another culture is a normal way of growing further”.

Learn from the Other

This, what Amaladass terms ‘intercultural’, is, he says, inevitable and indispensable in our closely interlinked world, and is also mutually enriching (since, he says, “none of us is self-sufficient”), and this awareness has “a corrective, complementing and even purifying role”). In this regard, Amaladass raises a very pertinent point: “Perhaps”, he muses, “it would be helpful for all of us to ask what one could learn from the other, instead of asking what one could teach the other.”

These, and several other contributions included in the volume, point out both to the possibility and the urgent necessity of interfaith understanding and peaceful coexistence. As can be expected for a book of this sort, the essays are of varying quality in terms of content, language and style, and could have done with more careful editing. Yet, this book is definitely a valuable contribution to our awareness of a subject of immense practical significance.

Good News For Arabic Students

Al-Ehsan Academy offers Arabic language course for all levels, Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced. Short and Long term courses For Muslims and non-Muslims. Male and Females Foreign Students. Trained Teachers. Flexible timings from 8am to 8pm. Special arrangements for female students.

Venue: Institute for Higher Learning
Next to Hasanath College, No. 43, Darus Suoor Building Dickenson Road, Bangalore Registration open Contact: 941378603 Apply before 30th October 2016
In the name of God, the Merciful, the Beneficent

Facing the Day of Decision

The surah speaks of the people of Arabia at the start of the Islamic message. They used to deny the resurrection and life after death. The surah reminds them of the fate of the people of Tubba, who lived in southern Arabia. The surah makes only a very brief reference to them, giving no details of what they did or how they transgressed. What is of interest is only their fate, and it must have been well known to the Arabs who were the first to be addressed by the Qur’an. It was enough only to mention them in order to revive feelings of dread among the Arabs. As this reminder makes them shudder, they are called upon to reflect on the perfect design of the heavens and earth, and how the universe is finely balanced and well planned, indicating that it is deliberately made in this way for a particular purpose: “We have not created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in mere idle play. We created them all for nothing other than a true purpose, but most of them do not understand.” There is a fine and delicate relation between the creation of the heavens, the earth and all that is in between them on one hand and the question of resurrection and accountability on the other. Human nature can easily understand this when attention is drawn to it in the way described here.

Perfect Balance and Harmony
Such reflection should take into account the creation of the universe, allowed in any aspect, major or trivial, of the design of the huge celestial bodies or the small, fine creatures living on them. Thus, we realize that the universe is created for a purpose, which means that nothing of it is the result of idle play; and that it is based on the truth, which means that no falsehood is allowed to infiltrate it. We further realize that it must have an end, which does not occur at the point of death after a short journey on earth.

Reward or Punishment
Logically speaking, a second life, when reward and punishment are administered, is inevitable, tendencies, and that God’s action cannot be mere idle play, means that man will have a specific fate which he meets after his journey on earth is over. This is the essence of the hereafter. Hence, it is mentioned after attention has been drawn to the wise purpose that lies beyond the creation of the universe: “The Day of Decision is the time appointed for all of them. It is a day when no friend shall be of the least avail to his friend, and when none shall receive support except those upon whom God will have bestowed His grace and mercy. He alone is the Almighty, the Ever-Merciful.”

(24: 38-42)

REFLECTIONS

Sa’eed’s Hajj

Sa’eed was sitting at the waiting area at the Jeddah airport after having just completed the rites of Hajj. The man next to him said: “I work as a contractor and Allah has blessed me with performing my tenth Hajj.”

Sa’eed told him: “Hajj mabroor, blessed me with performing my rites of Hajj.

The same day I went to get my money to go for Hajj.

As a physiotherapist in a private hospital, I was able to save enough money to go for Hajj. The same day I went to get my savings, I came across one of the mother’s who’s paralyzed son I could see her face was worried and anxious.” She kept: “I leave him to Allah’s keeping, Brother Sa’eed this is our last visit to this hospital.

I was surprised with her words and I thought she wasn’t happy with my treatment and our service and that she therefore considered moving her son to another hospital. She told me: “No brother Sa’eed, Allah bears witness that you were to my son like a father, and you helped him in his treatment when we had lost hope.” Then she left very saddened. The man next to him interrupted and said: “That’s strange, if she was pleased with your treatment and her son was improving then why did she leave?

Sa’eed answered: “That’s what I thought too so, so I went to the administration to find out what happened. They told me the boy’s father had lost his job and was unable to continue paying for his son’s treatment.”

The man next to him said: “There is no Might nor Power except with Allah, poor them, how did you deal with it?”

Sa’eed said: “I went to the manager and pleaded with him to continue treating the boy on the hospital’s expense, but he sharply rejected and said, ‘this is a private institution not a charity’. I left his office sad and broken for this family. Then suddenly, I placed my hands in my pockets which had my money all prepared for Hajj. I stood in my place for a while, and then I raised my head above and spoke to my Rabb Allah: O Allah, You know how I feel and You know there is nothing more beloved to me than to go to Your mercy. He alone is the Almighty, the Ever-Merciful.”

This statement comes naturally at this point, closely related as it is to what went before it. It is absolute wisdom that requires that creatures should have a day when judgment is made between those who follow true guidance and those who go astray; when
Fasting on the Day of Ashura

Fasting on Muharram 10, known as the Day of ‘Ashura’, expiates for the sins of the past year. When the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) arrived in Madinah in 622 CE, he found that the Jews there fasted on Muharram 10 and asked them the reason for their fasting on this day. They said, “This is a blessed day. On this day giving thanks to Allah.”

The Prophet described it as a day of great merit. He said, “If a Muslim fasts on the day of ‘Ashura’, he expiates for his sins in the previous year.” (Muslim)

Maintaining Truthfulness

The Prophet (Pbuh) described truthfulness as a sense way leading to heaven and telling lies and being false as a sure way leading to hell. The Prophet often spoke to his companions of a person who maintained either quality as being entered in Allah’s book under the classification of truthful or liar. This was a very effective way of bringing home to Muslims the importance of maintaining truthfulness in all situations. All aspects of lying whether in earnest or in jest are forbidden. The Prophet is quoted by his cousin, Abdullah Ibn Abbas (RA), as saying: “Do not be too argumentative with your brother, and do not joke with him, and do not promise him something without fulfilling your promises.” (Related by Al-Bukhari in Al-Adab Al-Mufrad and Al-Tirmithi).

Being Too Argumentative

This is a Hadith which gives a general instruction to believers to refrain from certain practices which are bound to have adverse effects on relationships within the community. On different occasions, the Prophet has spoken against being too argumentative. Indeed, such an attitude does not bring about any proper understanding of the opposite view. What the Prophet is warning against is argument for argument’s sake. He does not tell us not to have different views on matters which admit such differences, but he does tell us not to try to defend our views as if proving ourselves to be right, as an end in itself. The goal should always be to try to arrive at the proper view through enlightened discussion. This is what Muslim scholars have understood and practised. As for the instruction against joking with one’s brother, it does not apply to ordinary jokes which bring about a relaxed atmosphere and a good relationship. What the Prophet was against is what people may sometimes do, that is carrying matters to excess, trying to play jokes on others in order to make those who are present have a good laugh. This may be at the expense of another person among the group who may take it hard that he is being treated as a source of laughter. Indeed, any type of joking which generates ill-feelings is shunned by the Prophet. To establish good and close relationships within the community is a paramount aspect of falsehood as particularly repugnant. The Prophet is quoted as saying: “It is a grave treachery indeed that you should say something to your brother and he believes you while you are lying to him.” (Related by Al-Bukhari in Al-Adab Al Mufrad and Abu Dawood). This Hadith applies to a situation which is quite frequent. Some people do not hesitate to make use of the trust of others who tell them something which they know to be false. They realise that their interlocutors believe them and take what they say on trust. Nevertheless, they show no indication whatsoever to suggest that the truth is different from what they say. They may have reason for that, but generally speaking, their reason is a very selfish one. They may stand to gain by the result of this talk or they may lead the person who believes them to do certain actions which will serve a particular interest of their own. But this is extremely selfish. The Prophet describes it as a grave treason. That is an apt description indeed. Perhaps, nothing in social relations is worse than to exploit the trust of others in order to tell them a falsehood. Whatever another in what he says to him discovers after sometime that his trust was misplaced and that the person was telling him lies, he feels very much aggrieved.

FOLLOW-Up

When Prophet Muhammad sought to emphasise the importance of a particular value, he mentioned it in a variety of ways, making use of every chance that might have presented itself to remind his companions, and his followers in every generation, of its importance. Furthermore, he utilised all methods of emphasis in order to make its importance clear to all people. Sometimes, he would issue a straightforward and specific order. At other times, he would include it among similar qualities or values which he would either encourage his followers to adopt or forbid them to practice. He may also describe its effect in society either by using a parable or stating a rule.

Maintaining Truthfulness

The Prophet (Pbuh) described truthfulness as a sure way leading to heaven and telling lies and being false as a sure way leading to hell. The Prophet often spoke to his companions of a person who maintains either quality as being entered in Allah’s book under the classification of truthful or liar. This was a very effective way of bringing home to Muslims the importance of maintaining truthfulness in all situations. All aspects of lying whether in earnest or in jest are forbidden. The Prophet is quoted by his cousin, Abdullah Ibn Abbas (RA), as saying: “Do not be too argumentative with your brother, and do not joke with him, and do not promise him something without fulfilling your promises.” (Related by Al-Bukhari in Al-Adab Al-Mufrad and Al-Tirmithi).

Being Too Argumentative

This is a Hadith which gives a general instruction to believers to refrain from certain practices which are bound to have adverse effects on relationships within the community. On different occasions, the Prophet has spoken against being too argumentative. Indeed, such an attitude does not bring about any proper understanding of the opposite view. What the Prophet is warning against is argument for argument’s sake. He does not tell us not to have different views on matters which admit such differences, but he does tell us not to try to defend our views as if proving ourselves to be right, as an end in itself. The goal should always be to try to arrive at the proper view through enlightened discussion. This is what Muslim scholars have understood and practised. As for the instruction against joking with one’s brother, it does not apply to ordinary jokes which bring about a relaxed atmosphere and a good relationship. What the Prophet was against is what people may sometimes do, that is carrying matters to excess, trying to play jokes on others in order to make those who are present have a good laugh. This may be at the expense of another person among the group who may take it hard that he is being treated as a source of laughter. Indeed, any type of joking which generates ill-feelings is shunned by the Prophet. To establish good and close relationships within the community is a paramount aspect of falsehood as particularly repugnant. The Prophet is quoted as saying: “It is a grave treachery indeed that you should say something to your brother and he believes you while you are lying to him.” (Related by Al-Bukhari in Al-Adab Al Mufrad and Abu Dawood). This Hadith applies to a situation which is quite frequent. Some people do not hesitate to make use of the trust of others who tell them something which they know to be false. They realise that their interlocutors believe them and take what they say on trust. Nevertheless, they show no indication whatsoever to suggest that the truth is different from what they say. They may have reason for that, but generally speaking, their reason is a very selfish one. They may stand to gain by the result of this talk or they may lead the person who believes them to do certain actions which will serve a particular interest of their own. But this is extremely selfish. The Prophet describes it as a grave treason. That is an apt description indeed. Perhaps, nothing in social relations is worse than to exploit the trust of others in order to tell them a falsehood. Whatever another in what he says to him discovers after sometime that his trust was misplaced and that the person was telling him lies, he feels very much aggrieved.

It is well known that most lies are discovered after sometime. When a person who believes another in what he says to him discovers after sometime that his trust was misplaced and that the person was telling him lies, he feels very much aggrieved.

Karim Shop

Umrah & Haj requirements
like Itham, Itham Belt, Ladies Itham Sets, Janimaz & other related Haj requirements are available.

No. 61, Jummma Masjid Road, (O.PH. Road) BANGALORE- 560 051. Phone Off.; 25592274

Furniture Designers - Interior Decorators

A bench mark in furniture SINCE 1980

4/2, St. Marks Road, Bangalore - 560 001
Tel. 22210781 / 22270113. Fax: 22245383
The Purpose of Life from an Islamic Perspective

The Quran teaches that the purpose of life is to worship our Creator by believing in Him and by doing good deeds.

By Sheima Salam Sumer

What is the purpose of life? The holy Quran, believed by Muslims to be the direct word of God to humanity, encourages us to ask this question: “Did you then think that We created you in vain, and that you would not be returned to Us?” (Holy Quran 23:115).

God associates the value of justice with the belief in a purpose to life: “And We have not created the jinn and man to mislead one another; but We created them (only) for (the purpose) of worshipping Me ( Alone).” (Holy Quran 55:16)

“...Who has created life and death so that He may try you which of you are best in deeds...” (Holy Quran 67:2)

Seeking the pleasure of God is the aim of every sincere believer: “And among the people there is he who sells himself for the pleasure of God. The Quran teaches that the truly successful people are those who purify their souls: “By the soul, and the proportion of his substance: for We had been recording all that you have done” (Holy Quran 45:26-29). The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) echoes this message of accountability: “A man shall be asked concerning five things on the Day of Resurrection: concerning his life: how he spent it, concerning his youth and how he grew old, concerning his wealth: where he acquired it and in what way he spent it, and what was it that he did with the knowledge that he had.” (recorded in Tirmidhi).

Our looks and wealth are not the criteria for success in the sight of God. The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated: “The Almighty Allah judges you neither by your countenance nor your wealth, but by the purity of your hearts and your deeds.” (recorded in Muslim)

Even our Difficulties Have a Purpose

Our hardships in life have a purpose too: they are a test of our faith, and they also purify our souls: “Do the people think that they will be left to say, “We believe,” and they will not be tested?” (Holy Quran 29:2)

Seeking the pleasure of God is the Next World Belief in a life purpose for the Muslim is closely tied to belief in the afterlife. Our worldly possessions will not last, but our good deeds done for God’s sake will: “Whatever you have will end, but whatever is with Allah is everlasting. And We will surely give those who were patient their reward according to the best of what they used to do.” (Holy Quran 16:96)

The Next World Belief in a life purpose for the Muslim is closely tied to belief in the afterlife. Our worldly possessions will not last, but our good deeds done for God’s sake will: “The Almighty Allah judges you neither by your countenance nor your wealth, but by the purity of your hearts and your deeds.” (recorded in Muslim)

INTERFAITH HARMONY

Dalai Lama Advocates Interfaith Harmony

“Any person who wants to indulge in violence is no longer a genuine Buddhist or genuine Muslim.” For the Dalai Lama, using religion to justify violence isn’t religious at all. During a visit to Myanmar’s leaders to ease tensions between these two groups, saying that the Buddha would be for protecting the country’s Muslims. He repeated that message of interfaith cooperation and harmony recently. “All major religious traditions carry the same message: a message of love, compassion, forgiveness, tolerance, contentment, self-discipline - all religious traditions,” he said. “These are the common grounds, and common practice. “On that level, we can build a genuine harmony, on the basis of mutual respect, mutual learning, mutual admiration.”

The Nobel Peace Prize winner has made interfaith reconciliation and harmony one of his main commitments in life. This isn’t the first time the Dalai Lama has spoken out as an ally for Muslims. When Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump reiterated his call to ban Muslims from entering the U.S., the Dalai Lama said that although the candidate is entitled to his own opinion, scapegoating all Muslims for the actions of a few is “wrong.” “You cannot generalize,” he said.

(Extracted from huffingtonpost.in)
By Waris Mazhari

Among the gravest threats facing humankind today is extremism resulting from erroneous interpretations of religious teachings. Almost every religion has such teachings or the other, that if not understood and practised in the right manner can have disastrous effects, at both the individual as well as collective level. For instance, many religions underscore the need to protect society from anti-social elements, call for eradicating injustice, advocate establishing justice, and sanction self-defence in exceptional circumstances. All of these things are part of our basic human duties. But if ignorance and immorality leads some people to develop distorted and deviant perspectives about these issues, it can easily lead to violent conflict in society. If this happens, religious teachings that were meant for promoting goodness and human welfare come to be used as a means to foment violence and destruction.

**Distorted Understanding**

In this regard, Islam is faced with a particular predicament—of being viewed through a distorted lens by both those who claim to follow it as well as others. That it is misunderstood by others is not as surprising as the fact that it is misunderstood by many of those who claim to be its adherents, who are themselves destroying the religious and cultural bases of the tradition that they say they follow. These people are projecting their own religious teachings as a grave threat to the world.

The source of this distorted understanding of Islam is the intellectual crisis of Muslims. The inability of Muslim leaders to understand the social political challenges that have emerged as a result of various socio-cultural processes. This, and a desperate clinging to the past, meant that Muslims were unable to relate intellectually with the present.

The greatest need of the ‘Muslim world’ today is the reconstruction of Islamic thought so that Muslims can appropriately relate to contemporary socio-political demands. The poet-philosopher Muhammad Iqbal (d. 1938) attempted to do precisely this through his monumental work, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (1930), but the book failed to have any noticeable impact on the traditional ulama class, even though they counted themselves among Iqbal’s greatest admirers. While they were all praise for his poetry, they rebuffed this serious academic work of his, that raised many questions about traditional Muslim religious thought.

**Irrelevant Muslim Political Theory**

With regard to the renewal and reconstruction of Islamic thought, one dimension that I need particular attention is Muslim political theory. This urgently needs to be re-looked at. Aspects of this political theory that have now become irrelevant, and, more than this, have turned into a threat to the world of today, must be completely renounced so that the younger generation of Muslims can be protected from falling prey to deviant thinking and thus going astray. Controversial and completely un-Islamic notions such as mixing up political hegemony of Islam, offensive, considering other people’s lack of faith in Islam as a sufficient cause to wage war against them, and regarding war, not peace, a Huge Vacuum

While much has been written on various other aspects of Muslim jurisprudence, very little work has been done on issues of immense contemporary import—Islamic political jurisprudence. Because this issue has not received the attention that it deserves, there is a huge vacuum in Islamic political theology, which is being taken advantage of by radical Islamists, who falsely claim to speak for Islam. In this regard, it is truly lamentable that the mindset of traditional ulama is such that they do not see taking up the task of addressing this vacuum, although this work of rethinking Islamic political theory is something that they would be more effective in doing because of the great influence that they have on general Muslim thinking. On the other hand, there are relatively few modernist Islamic scholars who can combine both traditional wisdom and modern perspectives and fill this enormous gap. One hopes that this issue will receive the attention that it so sorely deserves.

Today’s world is a closely interlinked ‘global village’. A saying of the Prophet Muhammad: “All God’s creatures are His family” reflects this reality, and we all, Muslims and everyone else, have to learn to live together in harmony, like members of one large, well-knit family. It is for each one of us to try to unite this family, through love, not to divide it, through hate. There is a very urgent need today for interfaith dialogue on a vast scale in order to promote mutual understanding, which is simply indispensable for peaceful coexistence at every level. This way, the external nearness between religious communities across the world that has come about through new communications technologies can evolve into an authentic, inner nearness. Today, this is the most urgent task for those who have true love for Islam to undertake and another major responsibility for Islamic scholars, besides other Muslims.

The writer is a graduate of the Dar ul-Uloom Deoband. He a Phd. From the Dept of Islamic Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, where he is presently teaching. He can be reached on w.mazhari@gmail.com.

---

**Page 18**

**Sa’eed’s Hajj**

House and do Hajj, and to visit Your Messenger’s (peace be upon him) Masjid. You know I have been working all my life for this moment, but I prefer this poor lady and her son over myself, so don’t deprive me of Your favors.

I went to the accounts desk and paid all I had for his treatment which covered the next six months. I begged the accountant to tell the lady that it’s from the hospital expense for special cases. He was affected by this and there were tears in his eyes.

The man next to him then said: “If you donated all of your money, then how did you come for Hajj?”

Sa’eed said: “I went back to my home sad that day for having lost the opportunity of a lifetime for Hajj. But my heart was filled with happiness that I restored a distress taken from the lady and her son. I slept that night with a tear on my cheek. I had a dream and I was making tawaaf (circumambulating) around the Ka’aba and people were saying salam to me and they told me: ‘Hajj mabroor O Sa’eed, for you have performed Hajj in the heavens before you performed Hajj on earth. I immediately woke up and felt an indescribable happiness. I praised Allah for everything and was pleased with His decree. When I got up from my sleep, my phone rang and it was the hospital’s manager. He told me the owner of the hospital wants to go to Hajj this year and he won’t go without his personal therapist. But his therapist’s wife is expecting and has reached her final days of pregnancy so he can’t leave her.

‘Would you do me favor, he asked politely. ‘Would you accompany him for Hajj?’

I made sujood shukr (prostrated in gratitude to Allah). As you see, Allah granted me this gift to go to His House. All praise to Allah, the owner of the hospital insisted on giving me something for his accompaniment. I told him the story of the lady and her son, and he demanded the boy be treated at the hospital from his
Discovering One’s Helplessness

If you allow the problems that you face to turn you into someone who is constantly grumbling and complaining, they will only destroy you. But if your problems lead you to develop the habit of introspection, they will become a source of mercy for you.

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

A hadith appears in the Sahih al-Bukhari, the Sunan Abu Dawud and the Musnad Imam Ahmad. In the Sahih al-Bukhari, this report reads: “God is amazed at those people who will enter Paradise in chains.” (hadith no. 3010). In another hadith, the words “driven in chains” appear.

The experience of some believers that this hadith refers to is not something that will happen in the Hereafter. Rather, it is something that will happen in this world, before the Hereafter. Here, the word ‘chains’ actually refers to a compulsive situation. It means that some people will face such a compulsive situation that they will have no way out, but to adopt a God-centred and Hereafter-oriented life, and in this way arriving in Paradise ‘in chains’, as it were.

Sincerity and Noble Intentions

This good fortune lies in store for those people whose hearts are aflame with sincerity and noble intentions. On seeing this sort of readiness in someone, God will bless him by arranging for such conditions that would, willingly or unwillingly, lead him to act in a manner that is pleasing to God. Problems become heavenly chains for a person who has the capacity to turn to God whenever he or she is faced with problems, whose heart has been so softened as a result of problems that he or she turns into a person who often remembers God. If you allow the problems that you face to turn you into someone God willing, it will be a means of purification.

Now, this does not mean that when someone falls sick, his sins are washed away through some mysterious process and that he is automatically purified. Rather, it is something known that happens with a believer. If you are not sick and your body is in good health, you develop, consciously or otherwise, a feeling of pride and a sense of self-sufficiency. In such a situation, feelings of helplessness are absent from you and you become insensitive.

Discovers his Helplessness

In contrast to this, when a believer falls sick, he discovers his helplessness. It cultivates the virtues of kindness and compassion in him, and he experiences what it means to be a servant of God. In this way, illness serves to distance the believer from other things and takes him close to God. He turns his attention to God. He begins to remember God. He prays to God and beseeches Him. Sickness becomes a means for him to come near to God. On the face of it, illness is an undesirable thing. But if you have a proper way of looking at things, your bodily illness will become a means for your spiritual health.

In this world, what is of real significance is intellectual awakening. An awakened mind alone is capable of drawing lessons from every event. And the biggest trigger for awakening the mind is just one—and that is, difficult conditions.

Abdullah ibn Umar reports that the Prophet once said, “A believer who engages with people and is patient when he faces annoyance from them shall have greater reward than he who neither interacts with others nor remains patient at the troubles caused by them.” (Musnad Ahmad, hadith no. 5022)

A person who lives all by himself, without any social interaction will not face any unpleasantness at the hands of others. But someone who lives amidst others and interacts with them and is socially engaged will very naturally face various troubles, big and small, from others.

As you pursue your own particular spiritual path, you do so in a world of great religious diversity. It is important to ensure that your religious commitment does not prevent you from feeling closely connected to others, who do not share your particular path. Even though we all share a single world, when we hold tightly to religious labels, these labels can keep us apart. For all that religions can potentially offer us, they can also become a major cause of animosity and social strife, rather than a way to end them.

We are all united by the simple fact that we are human beings. Religious teachings seek to address us on a universal human level. Yet clinging to a specific religious identity might move you further from the spirit of that religion’s teachings. When religions end dividing us, it is a sure sign that something has gone terribly wrong. To guard against that, keeping a wide focus on our shared humanity is extremely important.

Walls come up between people when we attach more importance to the form of our religious identities, than to the substance of what they teach us. When spiritual beliefs are used to build up walls between people, this is a total misunderstanding of the purpose of spirituality. Spirituality should mean coming closer to yourself. When this happens, you become closer to others, too.

Spirituality and religion should dismantle discrimination and labels, not shore them up. It should break, not create, barriers between people.

Embracing Diversity

The differences between religious beliefs are relatively superficial. Although the lineages and texts differ, all world religions share many similarities. Living in a society with a diversity of religious beliefs is a fine opportunity to put our own tolerance, respect and love into practice. Tolerance, respect and love are values shared by all the major world religions. Surely, most people who are strictly secular also hold to the view that respect for others is an important ethical value. We can use a simple analogy to think about religious difference. The fact that we like a certain food does not mean everyone else has to like it. We do not get upset with our friends if they do not share our taste in food. When we eat in a restaurant together, we do not insist that they order the same dishes as we do, do we? We want them to eat food that suits them and that they will enjoy.

We are human beings. We are neighbours. We all share the same planet and breathe the same atmosphere. We are warmed by the same sun, and enjoy the soft light of the same moon. Because of this, we will always have things in common. Spirituality ought to heighten our awareness of all that we hold in common. It should enhance our recognition of the basic worth of all human beings.

The differences between religious beliefs are relatively superficial. Although the lineages and texts differ, in essence, Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam and the other world religions share many similarities. This is easy to see when we consider their ethical values and their emphasis on the awakening of human beings’ highest potential. Whether or not we think that the tenets of other religions are true, is not the point. The point is that if we care about others’ happiness, we can be pleased that their religion is serving to bring them some happiness. If their religion or spiritual path is contributing to their well being, that is what really matters.

I keep copies of the scriptures of each of the major religions of the world in my room. I have a personal practice of my own that I do with them. I take each scripture from the shelf and hold it in my hands as I make the aspiration: “Many millions of people have placed their faith and hope in the teachings contained in this scripture. May these teachings become a true vehicle for those who make their own aspirations through them. May these teachings be a vehicle that brings them all happiness.”

(Extracted from The Heart is Noble. Changing the World from the Inside Out, by the Buddhist spiritual leader, the Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje)
Good Parenting

By Roshan Shah

To be a parent is to take on one of the most challenging responsibilities possible—of being the vehicle for providing for the various needs of the child that one has been gifted with by the Creator.

Every individual has a number of needs that must be met in an optimum way for his or her all-round health: bodily or physical needs (such as for food, clothing and shelter); emotional and mental needs; and spiritual needs (the needs of the soul—vertically, in relation to the Creator, and horizontally, in relation to the rest of the creation).

Needs of their Children

Good parenting is about meeting all these different needs of a child in a balanced and adequate manner. From this it follows that a good way for people to understand how they are performing as parents is to reflect on how they are providing (or not providing) for each of these different sets of needs of their children.

Now, parents are, after all, human beings, and human beings do make mistakes occasionally. All parents err, though some less often or in a less damaging way than others. Taking time off every now and then to think about where one might be going as one goes about parenting a child, in terms of meeting the child’s various needs, is a good way to help play one’s role as a parent in a better manner.

Because many of us tend to identify with our physical bodies, many parents mistakenly think that meeting the physical needs of their children in what they think is the best possible manner is what they need to do in order to be good parents. While these needs are vital and have to be met for the sheer survival of their children, this tendency can—as it very often does—go completely overboard, turning into sheer over-indulgence.

In many cases, such obsessive concern with providing material things to children serves as a substitute for providing them love and genuine emotional bonding, even though parents may think that in plying their children with these ‘ goodies’ they are expressing their care for them. Material over-indulgence can sometimes simply be a sign of emotional under-provision.

This, for instance, is the case with many parents who don’t give sufficient time and attention to their children and who think (often impelled by a deep, though unrecognised, sense of guilt) that loading them with material things can make up for this.

Children Have Emotional Needs

Like physical needs, children have emotional needs, and if these are not met in the right manner, they are likely to grow up crippled for life. It is absolutely imperative for parents to seek to dispassionately observe how their children are doing in terms of their emotional or psychological development.

Parents can become more aware of the emotional needs of children and of the ways of meeting them and also learn to identify signs of possible emotional distress in their children by reading up on the subject—there are many magazines and books and much material on the Internet on these issues—or by enrolling for a course on child psychology or counselling, which are now easily available in many places and also online.

Parents need to constantly and deeply reflect on how, if at all, they are seeking to fulfil their children’s spiritual needs, including through their own life. Have they made provision for the spiritual nurturing of their children—for instance, by telling them about God, by teaching them to pray?

Bayazid, the Sufi’s Story

Change the World by Changing Me

The Sufi Bayazid says this about himself:

“I was a revolutionary when I was young and all my prayer to God was: ‘Lord, give me the energy to change the world.’

“As I approached middle-age and realized that half my life was gone without my changing a single soul, I changed my prayer to: ‘Lord, give me the grace to change all those who come in contact with me. Just my family and friends, and I shall be content.’

“Now that I am an old man and my days are numbered, my one prayer is: ‘Lord, give me the grace to change myself.’

“If I had prayed for this right from the start, I would not have wasted my life.”

IF YOUR CHILD HAD POOR SELF-ESTEEM, IT IS BECAUSE YOU ADVICE THEM MORE THAN YOU ENCOURAGE THEM.

If I had prayed for this right from the start, I would not have wasted my life. As I approached middle-age and realized that half my life was gone without my changing a single soul, I changed my prayer to: ‘Lord, give me the grace to change all those who come in contact with me. Just my family and friends, and I shall be content.’

“Now that I am an old man and my days are numbered, my one prayer is: ‘Lord, give me the grace to change myself.’

“If I had prayed for this right from the start, I would not have wasted my life.”
Sunni Muslim parents invite alliance for their daughter, 22 yrs, 5', 5", BSc, from a respectable, religious family. Family is from Bangalore & duniya. Interested in finding well settled, educated, professional boy from bangalore or abroad. Contact: nazim.advi@gmail.com

Sunni Muslim parents seek alliance for their daughter B.E., 30 yrs 5', 7", good looking belonging to a respectable and educated family, living in Hyderabad, originally from Kurnool/Anantapur districts. Alliances invited from divorced or unmarried, fair bride of educated and religious minded family. Please Email biodata to groomsbo@gmail.com or Call 91-7890539876.

Gazetted SYED Sunni Muslim Parents seek Alliance for their Son, (Divorced) 37 Years, 5',11", B.Com, MBA, Having Settled Business from Bangalore. Bride should be Divorced, Annulled, Widowed, and Graduate in a Reputed Background. Contact - +919845565562. Email: - gfratdelnis07@gmail.com

Mysoe: Ahle-Hadees, Educated family seeks alliance for their son, who is fair, religious from respectable family. Email photo & bio-data to akhtershaf2423@gmail.com or Contact : 9964377372.

SM Parents seek suitable alliance for their daughter, 25 yrs, 5.6" MBA. Fair, religious. Looking for Educated, well settled family from Bangalore or Abroad. Early Marriage Wanted. Interested in finding a well settled, educated boy from bangalore or abroad. Contact: 9986592415 or Contact : 9964377372.

SM Parents seek alliance for their daughter, 26 years, 5'3" MBA, Fair, religious. Family invite alliance for their Daughter 30 years, BE, working for MNC, height 5.6', fair, good looking seeking belonging to a respectable and educated family. Bride should be from qualified & religious family of Mysore: Ahle-Hadees, Educated Mysore: Belgaum. Contact: - +91 9845655627. Email: - skhaleelahmed@gmail.com

SM Parents seek alliance for their daughter, 25 yrs, 5',6" looking for a well settled, qualified, business, engineering, Doctor from Bangalore only. Contact: 8095343242, Email: skhaleelahmed@gmail.com or Contact : 9985924215.

SM Parents seek alliance for their daughter, 25 yrs, 5',6" looking for a well settled, qualified, business, engineering, Doctor from Bangalore only. Contact: 8095343242, Email: skhaleelahmed@gmail.com or Contact : 9985924215.

WANTED BRIDE

Sunni family seeks alliance for son, 46 yrs old, Canadian citizen, fair, Ph.D. Engineering, managing research personnel belonging to educated family living in Hyderabad, originally from Kurnool/Anantapur districts. Alliances invited from divorced or unmarried, fair bride of educated and religious minded family. Please Email biodata to groomsbo@gmail.com or Call 91-7890539876.

Gazetted SYED Sunni Muslim Parents seek Alliance for their Son, (Divorced) 37 Years, 5',11", B.Com, MBA, Having Settled Business from Bangalore. Bride should be Divorced, Annulled, Widowed, and Graduate in a Reputed Background. Contact - +919845565562. Email: - gfratdelnis07@gmail.com

Mysoe: Ahle-Hadees, Educated family seeks alliance for their son, who is fair, religious from respectable family. Email photo & bio-data to akhtershaf2423@gmail.com or Contact : 9964377372.
**Supper for the Soul**

Swabhimaan’s initiative of food and groceries distribution in the poorest of the poor slums in Bengaluru, gives food for thought, for individuals and corporates to emulate this noble work.

By Yoginder Sikand

Drop by just before evening on any evening from Monday to Saturday at LR Nagar, a sprawling slum on the fringes of Koramangala, in Bangalore, and you will find a line of people, holding pots and plates in their hands, patiently waiting. Many of them are elderly. Most look emaciated and sickly. They are among the poorest of the poor in what is among Bangalore’s economically poorest localities.

A van trundles along the crater-filled path, a poor apology for a road, that cuts through the slum. The doors of the van swing open and a team of volunteers rushes to draw out enormous steel containers that are filled to the brim with food. The volunteers—mostly middle-aged men, but sometimes school-going children—get busy distributing the food, stopping to exchange a friendly word or joke with the people who line up to take their dinner—for many of them, their main meal for the day.

**Distributing Free Groceries**

This initiative is the brainchild of 60-year-old Venkatraman Iyer (or Venkat), who, along with his wife Vijaya, manage Swabhimaan, a registered charitable trust. “In 2009, with help of Mpower Foundation, we started distributing free groceries in and around the Foundation, we started distributing free groceries in and around the Foundation, we started distributing free groceries in and around the Foundation,” Venkat adds. “I’ve never met her myself, but she heard about our work from a

Khader’s reply really struck me. He said, ‘If my parents were alive, wouldn’t I feed them? I’m feeding these two women thinking that my parents are alive and that

I’m fulfilling my responsibility of caring for them.’ Isn’t that amazing—the way he looked upon those two women like his own parents?

I asked him if there were more people like these two women in the area. He said there were many. That is how we came up with the idea of providing a nutritious meal to such people on a regular basis.

To begin with, Venkat contacted friends and relatives to contribute money, on an occasion like a birthday or wedding anniversary, to cook and distribute food to people in the area on the weekends. Beneficiaries were carefully selected by Swabhimaan’s team of dedicated volunteers from among the most economically-needy families.

**Access to Proper Nutrition**

As the work expanded, Venkat realised that the problem of access to proper nutrition in the area was acute, especially among children and the elderly. That led him to contact a software company for help. In many such companies, after lunch is served in served, he says, a significant amount of good quality, nutritious food is left over on any given day, which is thrown away. “I met the company’s Corporate Social Responsibility team and offered to arrange to have the food picked up regularly and given to the poor in the area where we work, and they readily agreed,” says Venkat.

The company didn’t want to take the risk of food getting spoilt and

people falling sick from eating it. “Distributing food was a big risk. I consulted my wife about the matter, and she said we should take the risk since our intention was good,” Venkat says. “We signed an agreement with the company to the effect that the company would not be held responsible in case anyone fell ill on eating the food.”

It is a year since Swabhimaan launched its food distribution programme, and the number of companies involved in the programme has gone up to three. The programme now benefits some 150 families, or around 500 people. Food collected from the companies is delivered every day, from Monday to Friday. With money given by individual well-wishers, food is cooked in the area itself on Saturdays (a contribution of Rs. 3000 is enough to cook food for 300 people, Venkat says), while on Sundays, food is arranged by ‘Robinhoods’ and ‘Let’s Feed Bangalore’, two groups of professionals who reach food to the hungry.

**Sharing in their Common Poverty**

“Our beneficiaries are among the poorest people in the area, living with the idea of providing a nutritious meal to such people on a regular basis. To begin with, Venkat contacted friends and relatives to contribute money, on an occasion like a birthday or wedding anniversary, to cook and distribute food to people in the area on the weekends. Beneficiaries were carefully selected by Swabhimaan’s team of dedicated volunteers from among the most economically-needy families.

Access to Proper Nutrition

As the work expanded, Venkat realised that the problem of access to proper nutrition in the area was acute, especially among children and the elderly. That led him to contact a software company for help. In many such companies, after lunch is served in served, he says, a significant amount of good quality, nutritious food is left over on any given day, which is thrown away. “I met the company’s Corporate Social Responsibility team and offered to arrange to have the food picked up regularly and given to the poor in the area where we work, and they readily agreed,” says Venkat.

The company didn’t want to take the risk of food getting spoilt and people falling sick from eating it. “Distributing food was a big risk. I consulted my wife about the matter, and she said we should take the risk since our intention was good,” Venkat says. “We signed an agreement with the company to the effect that the company would not be held responsible in case anyone fell ill on eating the food.”

It is a year since Swabhimaan launched its food distribution programme, and the number of companies involved in the programme has gone up to three. The programme now benefits some 150 families, or around 500 people. Food collected from the companies is delivered every day, from Monday to Friday. With money given by individual well-wishers, food is cooked in the area itself on Saturdays (a contribution of Rs. 3000 is enough to cook food for 300 people, Venkat says), while on Sundays, food is arranged by ‘Robinhoods’ and ‘Let’s Feed Bangalore’, two groups of professionals who reach food to the hungry.

**Sharing in their Common Poverty**

“Our beneficiaries are among the poorest people in the area, living on an average of Rs. 3000 is enough to cook food for 300 people, Venkat says), while on Sundays, food is arranged by ‘Robinhoods’ and ‘Let’s Feed Bangalore’, two groups of professionals who reach food to the hungry.

**Swabhimann’s initiative of food and groceries distribution in the poorest of the poor slums in Bengaluru, gives food for thought, for individuals and corporates to emulate this noble work.**

**Supper for the Soul**

Swabhimaan’s initiative of food and groceries distribution in the poorest of the poor slums in Bengaluru, gives food for thought, for individuals and corporates to emulate this noble work.
Catholic and Muslim leaders unite to condemn WMDs, terrorism

Rome: Muslim religious leaders from Iran and U.S. Catholic bishops say they have a common fight against weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, and violent religious extremism. “Christianity and Islam share a commitment to love and respect for the life, dignity, and welfare of all members of the human community,” they said in an Aug. 18 joint declaration. “Peaceful coexistence is built on equity and justice. We call upon all to work towards developing a culture of tolerance, dialogue, and peace that respects the religious traditions of others.” The two delegations agreed that belief in one God unifies Jews, Christians, and Muslims. “Religious leaders must provide moral guidance and speak out against injustice and anything that is harmful to humankind,” said the declaration, titled “Gathered in the name of God.” The joint declaration rejected the development and use of weapons of mass destruction as well as “all acts of terrorism.” “Together we are working for a world without weapons of mass destruction. We call on all nations to reject acquiring such weapons and call on those who possess them to rid themselves of these indiscriminate weapons, including chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons,” the declaration said. They characterized violent extremism and terrorism as “perversions of authentic religious belief.” “The guilt of terrorist acts should not be assigned to members of an entire religion, nationality, culture, race, or ethnic group,” they added.

EU nations must not refuse Muslim refugees, says German Chancellor

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has said it is “unacceptable” for European Union member states to refuse to accept Muslim refugees. “What I continue to think is wrong is that some say, ‘we generally don’t want Muslims in our country, regardless of whether there’s a humanitarian need or not,’” she said. Some eastern EU members, such as Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia, have refused to take in any refugees under an EU-wide quota system amid opposition from right-wing nationalists. Slovak President Robert Fico said he would “never bring even a single Muslim into his country.” Czech Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka said he does not want a “large Muslim community, given the problems we are seeing.” In 2015, the scale of the refugee crisis prompted Ms Merkel to waive Germany’s right to send thousands of refugees back to the southern European countries where they were first documented. Germany took in around a million asylum seekers, mostly from Syria, Iraq, or Afghanistan. This year it expects up to 300,000 more people to arrive.

America has Welcomed 30,000 Muslim Refugees in 2016

Nearly half of the more than 63,000 refugees welcomed into the United States in the fiscal year 2016 so far were Muslim, with a majority of new Muslim arrivals coming from war-torn Syria and Somalia. According to a Pew Research Center analysis of State Department data, America has received 28,957 Muslim refugees since Oct. 1, 2015, the beginning of the fiscal year. That’s 46 percent of the total number of refugees entering the country. It’s already the highest number of Muslim refugees the United States has received since 2002, the first year for which data on self-reported religious affiliations among refugees is available. (Muslim refugees have been admitted to the U.S. much earlier than 2002). Most of these new arrivals came from Syria (8,511) and Somalia (7,234). Others came from Iraq (6,071), Burma (Myanmar) (2,554), Afghanistan (1,948) and other countries (2,639).

Mosques and Churches in Kenya Join to Promote Joy

Several mosques and churches across Kenya are getting a fresh coat of paint as part of an interfaith initiative to sow peace in the region. The “Colour in Faith” initiative, spearheaded by Yazzmany Arboleda, is helping Muslim and Christian congregations paint their houses of worship, yellow—a color symbolizing joy. “It’s a simple act they hope will send a profound message of love and cooperation,” Kenya has experienced years of religious tension between its majority Christian and minority Muslim populations. This tension has become increasingly violent due to the rise of Islamist militant group al-Shabab. So far, two churches and one mosque have joined in on the “The Colour in Faith” project, with three other houses of worship in the works. “Often times, people have walked away from our workshops and painting sessions with dismantled preconceptions and a new awareness of how and why other communities outside of their own believe in what they do,” Arboleda says. The artist and his team have named their color of choice “optimistic yellow” to represent “joy, happiness, intellect, and energy,” he said. “Yellow produces a warming effect, arouses cheerfulness, and stimulates mental activity.” “Colour in Faith” is part of an ongoing collaboration between Arboleda and civic engagement expert Nabilah Aliabhi. Their work together began in Kabul, Afghanistan in 2013, where they worked with local artists and activists to give pink balloons to 10,000 people in the city. Arboleda and Aliabhi went on to set up a community arts and civic engagement organization, under which the “Colour in Faith” project is now being sponsored.

EU nations must not refuse Muslim refugees, says German Chancellor

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has said it is “unacceptable” for European Union member states to refuse to accept Muslim refugees. “What I continue to think is wrong is that some say, ‘we generally don’t want Muslims in our country, regardless of whether there’s a humanitarian need or not,’” she said. Some eastern EU members, such as Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia, have refused to take in any refugees under an EU-wide quota system amid opposition from right-wing nationalists. Slovak President Robert Fico said he would “never bring even a single Muslim into his country.” Czech Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka said he does not want a “large Muslim community, given the problems we are seeing.” In 2015, the scale of the refugee crisis prompted Ms Merkel to waive Germany’s right to send thousands of refugees back to the southern European countries where they were first documented. Germany took in around a million asylum seekers, mostly from Syria, Iraq, or Afghanistan. This year it expects up to 300,000 more people to arrive.

America has Welcomed 30,000 Muslim Refugees in 2016

Nearly half of the more than 63,000 refugees welcomed into the United States in the fiscal year 2016 so far were Muslim, with a majority of new Muslim arrivals coming from war-torn Syria and Somalia. According to a Pew Research Center analysis of State Department data, America has received 28,957 Muslim refugees since Oct. 1, 2015, the beginning of the fiscal year. That’s 46 percent of the total number of refugees entering the country. It’s already the highest number of Muslim refugees the United States has received since 2002, the first year for which data on self-reported religious affiliations among refugees is available. (Muslim refugees have been admitted to the U.S. much earlier than 2002). Most of these new arrivals came from Syria (8,511) and Somalia (7,234). Others came from Iraq (6,071), Burma (Myanmar) (2,554), Afghanistan (1,948) and other countries (2,639).

Mosques and Churches in Kenya Join to Promote Joy

Several mosques and churches across Kenya are getting a fresh coat of paint as part of an interfaith initiative to sow peace in the region. The “Colour in Faith” initiative, spearheaded by Yazzmany Arboleda, is helping Muslim and Christian congregations paint their houses of worship, yellow—a color symbolizing joy. “It’s a simple act they hope will send a profound message of love and cooperation,” Kenya has experienced years of religious tension between its majority Christian and minority Muslim populations. This tension has become increasingly violent due to the rise of Islamist militant group al-Shabab. So far, two churches and one mosque have joined in on the “The Colour in Faith” project, with three other houses of worship in the works. “Often times, people have walked away from our workshops and painting sessions with dismantled preconceptions and a new awareness of how and why other communities outside of their own believe in what they do,” Arboleda says. The artist and his team have named their color of choice “optimistic yellow” to represent “joy, happiness, intellect, and energy,” he said. “Yellow produces a warming effect, arouses cheerfulness, and stimulates mental activity.” “Colour in Faith” is part of an ongoing collaboration between Arboleda and civic engagement expert Nabilah Aliabhi. Their work together began in Kabul, Afghanistan in 2013, where they worked with local artists and activists to give pink balloons to 10,000 people in the city. Arboleda and Aliabhi went on to set up a community arts and civic engagement organization, under which the “Colour in Faith” project is now being sponsored.
A Doctor with a Golden Heart

Dr. Farida Ghoghawala, a 74-year-old obstetrician-gynecologist, now a US citizen, has travelled in India, the Philippines and Jordan to treat women who cannot afford quality health care. She takes no fees for her services!

After retiring from her practice in 2000, Dr. Farida started volunteering for health programmes. In 2012, she came to India to help in a health initiative organised by Indian Muslims Relief and Charities (IMRC) and has been visiting every year since then. Since 2015, she has been spending six months in India treating patients and providing quality medical care to women from economically poor families free of cost. Her dedication comes partly from the dire financial constraints she faced during her childhood. Dr. Farida was born in a low-income family in Ahmedabad (Gujarat) in 1944 to Mohammad Usman, who worked in a book-binding centre and Zeenat-un-Nisa, a homemaker. She did her primary education in a neighbourhood Government-run Urdu elementary school. However, her parents asked her to drop out, as they weren’t much educated and wanted her to instead focus on domestic chores. Fortunately, her maternal uncle came to her rescue. He took her with him and got her admitted into an English school. Having earlier studied in an Urdu-medium school, English was quite difficult to comprehend for the little girl, but she was full of enthusiasm to learn. After years of struggle and then getting admission to B. J. Medical College Ahmedabad, she graduated in 1967. Later, she was selected for a four-year residency programme in St John’s Hospital, Cleveland (Ohio, USA). With 15 dollars in hand, she landed in the United States. After finishing her residency, she began private practice in Fort Myers Florida and settled there. “Despite all such work, something was amiss in my life. I always wanted to go back to India, because my childhood memories and our poverty and that of other people living in the neighborhood used to haunt me and I wanted to do something for them, especially the women who used to suffer silently,” says Dr. Farida. “Finally in 2012, I first came to India as a volunteer doctor for IMRC, organizing free medical camps across various parts of India. They are really doing a great job in India,” she says. The India Health Initiative (IHI) was started by IMRC in 2010. Every year, doctors from the US volunteer for this health initiative by rendering their services free of cost. Since its inception, the organization has successfully conducted seven India Health Initiatives, comprising medical camps across different rural areas, poor localities and slums in India. Through her efforts, Dr. Farida has treated thousands of women patients in Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Assam and Haryana in the last four years. “Really, the experience has been so fulfilling that after my first visit in 2012, I started coming to India every year and now I spend six months in India,” she says.

(Extracted from twocircles.net)

World Religious Leaders Speak Out Against Terrorism and War

Assisi (Italy): Pope Francis, head of the Catholic Church, and leaders of other world religions said “No to War!” recently, vowing to oppose terrorism in God’s name and defuse the causes of war: the lust for power and money, the greed of arms’ dealers, personal interests for religion which seeks to justify every form of violence and abuse of religion which seeks to justify vendettas for past wrongs,” the appeal said. Let us urge leaders of nations to see the appeal said. “No to war! May the anguished cry of so many innocents not go unheeded. Let us urge leaders of nations to listen to ‘the anguished cry of so many innocents’.

The get-together of religious leaders took place recently at Assisi, the central Italian city that was home to St. Francis, the 13th century Christian saint revered by many as a patron of peace and nature and a defender of the poor. The Pope closed a three-day meeting where about 500 Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, Shinto, Sikh, Zoroastrian and other community leaders discussed how members of their communities could better promote peace and reconciliation. Near the end of the gathering, members of these religious communities joined each other in a square outside the basilica where St. Francis is buried. Prayers were said for the victims of war, including in Syria and Afghanistan, and for the refugees fleeing the conflicts. “Only peace is holy, and not war,” the Argentine-born Pope said. In a final appeal that the leaders signed, they said: “No to war! May the anguished cry of the many innocents not go unheeded. Let us urge leaders of nations to defuse the causes of war: the lust for power and money, the greed of arms’ dealers, personal interests and vendettas for past wrongs,” the appeal said.

Mitkanhall Road, Near Reva College, Belhalli Circle, Yelahanka, Bangalore
Contact: Mr. Razvi, 9844017708

Nature is our Future
Celebrate in it!

Spread on 5½ acres, a Unique experience for events and Theme Parties
Accommodation can Cater from 100 to 10,000 Pax

A Unit of AKS Convention Centre

Facilities Available:
- Function Hall for 1,000 persons.
- Hall Illuminated using Imported Crystal Chandeliers.
- Dinning Hall for 800 persons.
- Hall Illuminated using Imported Crystal Chandeliers.
- Exclusive Vegetarian Hall.
- Separate Prayer Hall.
- For Ladies & Gents.
- Four Furnished Rooms. Two Passenger Lift.
- One Service Lift.
- Hi-Tech Kitchen.
- Toilet Facility in all the Halls.
- Water Facility.
- Backup Generator for power.
- Imported Chairs for Reception Hall and Dining Halls.
- Dining Tables with Frills. Bridal Chairs.
- Stage Platform with Persian Carpets.
- Power, Diesel, Water Charges & Taxes Included.
- Built in Sound System.
- Spacious parking Facility in Ground Floor & Basement.

# 67, Haines Road, BANGALORE - 560 051
Ph.: 2551 7700 / 2555 7700 / 2557 7700
Mobile: 98802 78700 / 98802 73700

SHAMS CONVENTION CENTRE

For:
- Corporate Events
- Marriages
- Parties

Lawns @ Banquet Hall @ Rooms

GHOUSE TOURS & TRAVELS
Hajj, Umrah & Ziarath
Recognized by Government of India, Recognized by Government of Saudi Arabia

Al Hamdullah, We are providing
Umrah Visa Services

Air Tickets and also other related Services

Booking Open for Hajj 2016 Programmes.
Limited Seats. Contact Immediately

HO: 3/F, 1st Floor, Opp. Gundu Rao House (Ex CM)
Rahmath Nagar, R.T. Nagar Post, Bangalore, India
E-mail: hmgdhousebly@gmail.com

BO: VI Ward, Bandimote, Bangalore Road,
Opp. Masjid, Bellary - 583 101, Karnataka, India.
Ph: India Code: 0991 STD: 08392 Off: 250526, 250531, (R) 244606
Al-Haj Mohammed Ghouse, Prop. Cell: 98440-50531 (0) 080-23530531

Adams Golden Heritage

Wedding & Banquets

# 13, Bore Bank Road,
Benson Town,Bangalore-46,
Ph : 6596 4052 Mob : 9243425515

Three Elevators

Each and One Service Elevator
**Madurai Memories!**

When You Are Peaceful, You Can Spread Peace!

The Discover Yourself Workshop was hosted by the Islamic Peace Centre Trust in Madurai on the 2,3 & 4th September 2016 at Tamil Nadu Chamber of Commerce & Industry Auditorium. Around 100 men and women participated in the workshop. Some of the participants share their experiences after the workshop:

- I had a lot of denying character in my life, after the workshop, I learnt how to get rid of my denial and love my daughter.
- This workshop is a basic necessity for a person who needs to have peace in his or her life.
- The workshop helped me to realize what Allah is conveying to us through the holy Quran.
- I thought the Satan is out somewhere there, but realized he is within me and the fall of the Muslim community, I know now is because we have lost our values.
- This is the need of the hour for the Muslim community.
- Very much essential for the whole of humanity for a better life.
- Very interesting and found solutions for the present stressed life.
- I deeply understood what submission is.
- My anger melted after attending this workshop and I was able to evaluate the reality. It was wonderful. It is the need of the hour.

NILOFER: Though I was living my life with Islamic values, but was not able to distinguish the internal and external life. Now I am clear how to follow the path of submission and seek the blessings of Allah. I am now able to solve and rectify the problems of my family members with better focus.

SHEERIN: Before the workshop, I was quite short tempered, I was living with the opinion that I am always right and I tend to speak out what I feel. But the result was that many hated me and thought I am stone hearted and stubborn, even my parents thought so. But now, I can understand and acknowledge that I am corrupted internally. I am taking steps towards being a responsible girl. A great change I experience internally.

NOORJAHAN: I learnt how to lead life in a peaceful manner. I learnt how to bring up my children and how to win the war. I will be a good mother in my present and in the future. Thanks for giving valuable ideas and thoughts.

THASNEEM: First day I thought what is going to be so interesting about the workshop, but it was very good and a new experience. Trulys I learnt many things which were unknown to me.

MUZAMMIL: I was short tempered and wanted my family members to do always what I wanted! I changed myself, an eye opener.

ZAREENA: It changed my entire perspective of life! I could discover myself. It was good I attended this workshop, otherwise, I might have hurt my son and family members. I find change in my son's behavior.

NOUSHAT: You have given me mental strength and peace of mind. I was feeling so bad and was in a disturbed state of mind for the past three years. Now I have left it behind and I will not carry it to the future.

RAJAH: To attend the workshop was the best thing I have ever done in my life! These words are from the bottom of my heart! I am so much grateful to Sadath sir, a great scholar and I really mean it, the organizers of the workshop, the members of Islamic Peace Centre and My beloved Dad for the wonderful opportunity they have given me to participate! I never expected to acquire so much wisdom. Thank you, thank you all!
LET YOUR FAMILY'S
LOVE & LAUGHTER
BE THERE
FOREVER

Choose Sunpure
& watch your family
love you more & laugh louder.

Sunpure
- Zero Harmful Chemicals
- Zero Cholesterol
- Zero Preservatives

Sunpure. Simply Pure.
Terms Related with Disease and Medicine

Panacea: A medicine that can cure any illness. (اکسیرِ اعظم)

Prescription: A medicine told by doctor to be taken by patient. (نسخۂ علاج)

Placebo: A substance that is not medicine but believed by a patient to be medicine and gets better. (پر دیا جاتا ہے ایک بے ضرر مادّہ جو دوائی کے طور پر جانے پایا جاتا ہے)

Biopsy: The process of removing a mass of cells from patient's body to find out a disease. (تشخیص مرض کا ایک مخصوص امندان، جس سے خلیات کی ایک مجموعہ کو مرض کے جسم پہچان کے لئے "آئی ہوئی" جانے پا ہوئے، ایک پوسے)

Caesarian: Delivery of a child by cutting through the wall of the abdomen. (پیٹ چیر کر بچے کی پیدائش)

Geriatric: Pertaining to old age. (بڑھاپے سے متعلق)

Gangrene: Death or decomposition of a part of tissues of the body due to obstructed blood circulation. (کسی حصے کو مردہ کر جانا دورانِ خون کے رکنے سے جسم)

Forensic Medicine: Branch of medical science where medical facts are applied for legal purposes. (طبّ قانونی)

Jaundice: A disease due to malfunction of liver, characterized by yellowing of eyes. (یرقان)

Laxative: Medicine aimed at facilitating the passing of faecal matter. (قبض کشا)

Lesion: A wound or injury. (زخم)

Palliative care: Care aimed at minimizing pain or suffering when cure is not possible. (لاعلاج مرض کی شدّت کو کم کرنے وا لائے)

Paroxysm: A sharp convulsion or fit. (نااچانک دورے پڑتے)

Hiruitism: Presence of excessive body or facial hair in women. (ہوئے سے متعلق)

Infirmary: Clinic or small hospital. (آسپتال)

Quarantine: Isolation imposed on a person who arrived from elsewhere in order not to allow spreading infectious disease. (ی قید طبّ)

Ulcer: An open sore with formation of pus. (پیپ دار زخم)

Vaccine: A formulation to stimulate production of antibodies to provide immunity. (بیماریوں سے دفاع کا ٹیکہ)

Wheezing: To breath with difficulty, often with a sound. (خر خراہٹ دار سانس لینے کا عمل)

Palliative care: Care aimed at minimizing pain or suffering when cure is not possible. (لاعلاج مرض کی شدّت کو کم کرنے وا لائے)

Paroxysm: A sharp convulsion or fit. (نااچانک دورے پڑتے)

Hiruitism: Presence of excessive body or facial hair in women. (ہوئے سے متعلق)

Infirmary: Clinic or small hospital. (آسپتال)

Quarantine: Isolation imposed on a person who arrived from elsewhere in order not to allow spreading infectious disease. (ی قید طبّ)

Ulcer: An open sore with formation of pus. (پیپ دار زخم)

Vaccine: A formulation to stimulate production of antibodies to provide immunity. (بیماریوں سے دفاع کا ٹیکہ)

Wheezing: To breath with difficulty, often with a sound. (خر خراہٹ دار سانس لینے کا عمل)
By Maqbool Ahmed Siraj

Fisherman Shankar had lost his wife when his son Dipu was born. He lived with his mother and Dipu in a pretty coastal village. Shankar would go out to sea early in the morning to catch fish for a living, leaving Dipu under the care of his grandmother, who Dipu called Dadi. Dipu did not even know that he had ever had a mother. He thought a grandmother and a father were all that a family should have. Dipu would leave for school at 8-30 am and be back by 3-30 pm everyday. Dadi prepared his breakfast, packed his lunch box and would see him off at the door as he left for school every morning. She reminded him to come straight back home at the end of the school day. Dadi was always worried that Dipu was not long before Kamli became familiar with her name. Whenever Dipu called out to her, she would rest for the night. When Kamli alone outside. He was comfortable leaving Dipu and follow him around. Dipu back home and would look for the two friends to share. But Dipu was sad. He missed his grandmother, who Dipu called ‘Dadi’. Dipu did not even know how to react. He did not want to embarrass his friend. Nor was he comfortable leaving Kamli alone outside. He was worried. He peered out of the window and told Kamli to get back home and wait for his return in the evening. Kamli knew it was time to get home safe and happy. Dadi must have given her ganji (gruel) for the lunch. She must be missing me a whole lot”. Deep in thought, he didn't even realize that he was walking faster than usual. Suddenly, he heard some noise- the crackling of autumn leaves, snapping of twigs and the ringing of a familiar bell. He turned around to see Kamli emerging from a hedge. Dipu sprang for her, lifting her with both hands and hugging her. “Kamli! Where have you been all this while? I was expecting to see you at home! Didn’t you return home?” tears rolled down his eyes. Kamli was silent. Her eyes were saying: “Shibu! I waited for you all through the day behind the hedge. How could I return home without you?” (Translated from Shama Sharma’s Hindi story. Some names and situations changed.)

Girl Students Design App for Organic Farmers

Bengaluru: Five girl students of Excellent School have prepared an App that provides the organic farmers a platform to connect with the customers directly. Named “GoOrganeco”, it helps the customers looking for healthy and nutritious vegetables and other farm products to directly reach the producers of these items and thereby eliminating the middlemen.