

INSIGHT



THE
WORLD
FEDERATION
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A PUBLICATION OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF KHOJA SHIA ITHNA ASHERI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

The Conference 2006



‘One Community, One Vision’

**Autistic Centre
opens in
Dar-es-Salam**

**YND's India
Documentary
Initiative**

**IEB participates
in Interfaith
Activities**

The Conference 2006 - One Community One Vision

Conference 2006, a conference with a difference. One community, one vision. To create a vision of Excellence by sharing Global KSI experiences. These one-liners are all well and good, but what makes the tenth ordinary conference of the World Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-asheri Muslim Communities so special? In one word, participation.

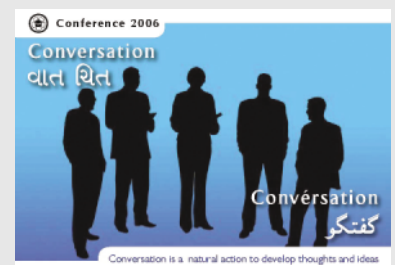
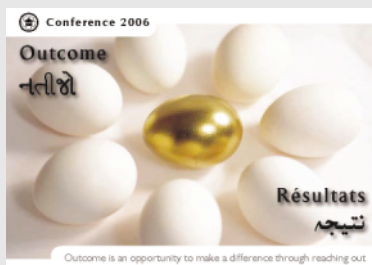
This conference is all about the participants; you, the core of the World Federation. Every member of an organisation in the Federation is a participant – some more silent than others. Conference 2006 will, for the first time, allow each and every member the opportunity to influence proceedings, whether physically in the conference hall or outside.

The Constitution of the World Federation dictates “*The Ordinary Conference shall meet at least once every three years*”. Within this document, provision is made to limit the number of delegates attending on behalf of member organisations. The constitution also makes provisions for invitees from the President; these individuals are able to take part in the deliberations without the right to vote. In Conference 2006, for the first time in the history of the World Federation, all members are invited to the conference, be it physically, or virtually. The development of communication technology enables each and every one of you reading this article to actively partake in discussions at the conference. Whether by e-mail or text message, your voice will be heard. Daily feedback from the live discussions will Inshallah reach your inboxes in the mornings, along with summaries of the day’s proceedings.

You will be able to download videos of the speeches given, and via e-mail or SMS, add your contribution to the discussions that will shape the future of this community.

Conference 2006 is framed by the nine words that are scattered around all conference literature and the conference room itself. The Conference is about **enlightenment** and **outcome**, only achieved if all members **participate** through **conversation** and **sharing** their **diversity of thought**. The Conference aims to promote **bridging** and **networking** to move towards true **unity** within the organisation and the community at large.

These nine words will Inshallah form the framework around which the conference will proceed. The opportunity to converse, share and network with community members around the world is unparalleled and serves the organisation in countless ways, not least by bringing together the immense wealth of experiences that we share. It is only through the sharing of these experiences can we grow, only through bridging this diversity of thought that we can develop, only through networking and conversation can we become enlightened, thus leading to a unified outcome. The key ingredient in this mix however is your participation in the conference, your giving to this community to shape the next three years. Your participation is a sacrifice, sacrifice is service, service is unity, unity is strength. It is with this strength that we ask Allah (SWT) to guide us forward for the next three years to serve this community, taking it towards excellence Inshallah. After all as an organisation: **We exist to serve.**



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Message from the President

Salamun alaikum

First and foremost I am thankful to Allah (SWT) to have given me another opportunity to serve in His cause. I would also like to thank the regional federations and the jamaats who placed their trust and confidence in me by nominating me for a second term to serve as the President of the World Federation.

Since the announcement by the Electoral Commissioner of my election for the term 2006-2009, I have received numerous messages of best wishes and support from regional federations, jamaats and individuals. I am grateful for this support and look forward to working with all in an inclusive manner to try and address the needs of our communities worldwide.

As I embark on the second term as President, I confirm my ongoing commitment to remain true to the ethos and values of the organisation, as was envisaged by the founders of the World Federation.

Over the last two and half years I have visited many Jamaats and met members of the community around the world, which has provided me with an opportunity to observe many common serious issues faced by our communities. These include a lack of effective leadership, despite the best of intentions to serve, leading to divisions within communities; tensions between managing committees and members; largely inappropriate programmes at our centres to meet the current needs of our communities especially the youths; and a widening gap

between those who are, Alhamdulillah, well off and those who struggle to provide for their daily needs.

There also exist tensions between the jamaats, regional federations and the World Federation caused by the fact that sometimes there is no clear demarcation of responsibilities, which leads to duplication of work and lack of centralisation.

It is therefore imperative that we address all these issues and other issues faced by our communities in the coming term to enable us to meet the needs and aspirations of our communities worldwide. It will of course mean that we all together need to take some hard decisions and take an objective and honest look at our challenges.

I therefore ask for the support of the elders of our community, leadership and each and every individual to guide us, work with us and support us during the next term so that we can achieve the objective of enhancement of spirituality, economic upliftment and unity in our communities worldwide.

Salaams and Duas,

Ahmed Hassam

WE EXIST TO SERVE



WF delegation visits Aden Jamaat Yemen

On 30th April - 1st May 2006, Dr. Ahmed Hassam, accompanied by Councillor Br. Hussein Alibhai, Br. Abidbhai Hemani, Br. Gulambhai Virjee and Executive Councillor Br. Mohsin Kanji visited Aden Jamaat in Yemen. This was the first visit by a President of the World Federation to a Jamaat that has been a home for the Khoja community for over 100 years.

The purpose of the visit was to see the progress made by the community towards the building of a new Community Centre, to which the World Federation has already contributed funds. The project completion date will be around October 2006; three floors of the structure are already completed and the Ladies Hall on the first floor is already in use.



This work is being co-ordinated Br. Mohsin Kanji who said, "It was gratifying to meet with the Community brethren as well as see first hand the progress on the Community Centre."

Delegates in the newly completed ladies hall of the centre. In his interactions with the Executive Committee of the Jamaat, Dr. Hassam stressed that the unity of the community is of paramount importance so as to deliver this project where once again, from that corner of the world, another house of Allah (SWT) emerges where His work is done for His pleasure.

Community Donates TzShs 50M to President of Tanzania for Food Relief

The President of the World Federation Dr. Ahmed Hassam led a delegation of community members, who paid a visit to the Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete at State House and donated 50million Tanzanian Shillings (£22,000) as a contribution towards relief food for the drought affected regions.

President Kikwete thanked the community for their contribution and warmly appreciated the concern of the overseas Tanzanians for their fellow Tanzanians back home. This contribution was a joint effort between The World Federation, Africa Federation, Dar es salaam Jamaat and the JIBA chapters of Dubai and Dar es Salaam.

Presidential visit to East Africa, Madagascar, Mauritius and Reunion Islands

The President of the World Federation, Dr. Ahmed Hassam visited our community centres in East Africa, Madagascar, Mauritius and Reunion Islands to observe first hand the work undertaken by front line workers in delivering the Tableegh Agenda. A brief report outlines the highlights of his visit:



Dr. Hassam lecturing the students in one of the centres

During his tour to Mombasa, Kenya, he visited eight Bilal centres in the rural areas of Coast province. The trip included visits to madaris, nursery, primary schools and mosque projects.

The President met with the community elders, parents and children. He saw the structures, some dilapidated and some requiring major renovations. In certain areas he expressed the need to build new ones to supplement efforts to propagate Madhhabe Haq. In his address to the community he underscored the importance of education and advised the parents to take keen interest in the madrasah and school education of their children. In addition he emphasised on looking into ways and means of empowering our deprived Shia Community in the rural areas.



Dr. Hassam holding hands in unity

At the end of the trip a tree planting ceremony was held at Jaffery Centre in Mackinnon road village. This was the first Centre in the rural area set up in 1972. Dr. Hassam commended the Bilal Muslim Mission of Kenya for its tableegh activities and assured continued support of the World Federation at all times.



Dr. Hassam with Dar es Salaam leadership

In Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, he visited the new Tableegh library hall. He also visited the Bilal Centres in Antananarivo, Tanga, Moshi, Arusha, Zanzibar and Dodoma. He also had the opportunity to visit the Dar-ul-Muslimeen centre in Dodoma and the WIPAS centre in Dar es Salaam.



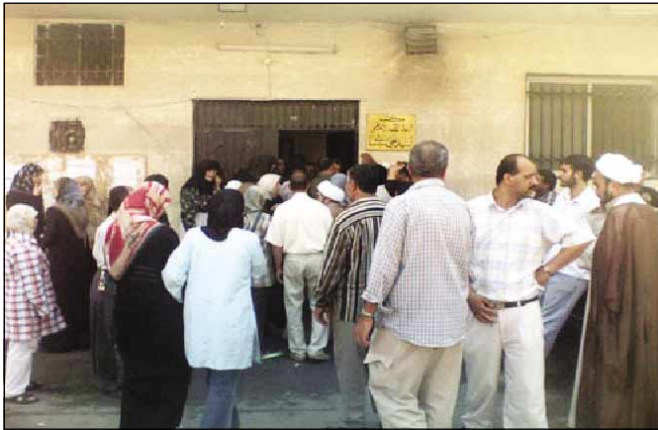
Relief to the war-torn Lebanon

An extract of the report by Br. Hussain Ravji of WF humanitarian relief efforts made through the offices of Ayatullah Sistani in Syria, during the war in Lebanon. A full update can be found on the WF website.

"As the war continues, as war crimes continue to be committed, as innocent lives continue to be lost, as thousands of homes continue to become a mere plot of land with piles of broken bricks, we continue to aid the humanitarian requirements of the Lebanese citizens who have become displaced.

News always comes before my ears, new faces always come before my eyes, and new needs always come to my attention. Reality only gives one a limit to what he can do.

We visited many families in all kinds of conditions. Some would be living on ground floor and some on the 5th floor of different buildings. On the way to these temporary homes, refugees roaming the streets seeking help stopped us no less than 30 times.



Front door of the office of Ayatullah Sistani where support is being provided

The above has been made possible by your generous donations to the World Federation for this cause. Many families are being helped by your donations, giving them hope that there are believers who care for their safe being.



A woman walking through the streets with all that is left of her belongings

The office of Ayatullah Sistani has now started to send aid beyond Zainabiya. They are reaching as far as Homms, Latakiya and Aleppo. This is due to the contact made via the World Federation, which has made this project successful."

Shia organisations converge at Dar al Tableegh to discuss UK Government proposals

The Islamic Education Board of the World Federation organised a meeting of Shia organisations at Dar al Tableegh on 27th May 2006, in order to discuss and provide a united response to the UK Government's proposal of creating a working group entitled 'Mosques and Imams National Advisory Body' (MINAB).

The meeting was attended by over 20 individual UK-based Shia organisations. The delegates were briefed on the current state of affairs and were presented with a proposal for the formation of a Shia Advisory Council to advise on the issue of MINAB and beyond.



The delegates at the meeting

The meeting culminated in a joint declaration, signed by all the organisations present, on the formation of the Shia Advisory Council. It was agreed that further meetings will be held to discuss and finalise the Terms of Reference and the dynamics of operation of the Council.

The President of the World Federation, Dr. Ahmed Hassam, commented, "The issue of MINAB has provided the impetus for the UK based Shia organisations to move towards establishing a representative body of UK Shias. I thank the organisations for their wholehearted involvement and support in this initiative and pray to Allah (SWT) to grant the Council all the success and to remove any obstacles in the path of furthering the services to the Shia community."

Free Islamic Literature distributed in Africa

IEB, in its continuous efforts to promote Islam and carry out external tebleegh, regularly distributes free literature across East Africa. To date, it has distributed over 6000 books to various institutions in Arusha, Bukoba, Dar es Salaam, Dodoma, Kampala, Kibaha, Kigoma, Lamu, Lushoto, Matuga, Mombasa, Moshi, Mwanza, Nairobi, Nakuru, Tanga and Zanzibar.



Facilitation Skills Course 2006, London, UK

On 24th – 26th March 2006, the World Federation launched its first Facilitation Skills course. The event was led by Neselyn Watson Druee MBE, Br. Abdul Chaudhry and Br. Yasin Rahim at a venue near London, UK.



The participants smiling for the camera

The aim of the course was to instill greater understanding of leadership and facilitate effective group communication and discussions. The participants learnt about different facilitation techniques, how to focus attention and energy, and how to create an open-thinking environment.

The participants used role playing techniques to express themselves more incisively. This is extremely important in community and professional work including chairing meetings, dealing with fellow volunteers, organizing and running events.



Participants listening attentively to the facilitators

Br. Murtaza Bharwani, the Secretary General of CoEJ added: 'This has indeed been a great experience. I have become more aware of the various obstacles and miscommunications that can occur within the community and how to deal with it in a more effective manner.'

For further information about the Facilitation Skills Programme and other Personal Development or Leadership Programmes, please email

secretariat@world-federation.org

IEB participates in the '2nd World Congress of Imams and Rabbis for Peace' in Spain

On 19th- 22nd March 2006, the 'Second World Congress of Imams and Rabbis for Peace' was held in Seville, Spain. The World Federation was represented by Sheikh Abbas Ismail and Br. Hasnain Walji, head of IEB publications department. There was a strong Shia representation consisting of Syed Mustafa Qazwini attending from US and Syed Hadi Qazwini from Iran.

The programme was organised by Hommes de Parole - a Paris based organisation that works towards fostering ties of peace and cooperation throughout the world. The Congress was a brilliant opportunity to network and discuss common experiences, themes and challenges, with a view to bridging the gap of hostility and misunderstanding. This Congress saw the interaction and participation of Rabbis and Ulema from all over the world and from many different sects.



Sheikh Abbas with Syed Qazwini and Abu Sami at the Congress

Family Ethics, the Role of Women, Modernity, and Methods of Interaction were some of the many topics that were discussed. Political issues were not tabled for discussion but did inevitably surface, especially with the Palestinian brothers voicing their concerns.

One of the highlights of the Congress was the constructive youth sessions with discussions on sensitive topics, chaired mainly by Syed Hadi Qazwini and Sheikh Abbas Ismail. These sessions left the participants challenged but refreshed.

Sheikh Abbas commented, "The Congress was a wonderful opportunity and Hommes de Parole should be commended for the initiative. The Congress brought to a single platform Rabbis, Ulema, academics and thinkers from all over the world. The spirit of participation was exceptional. We found the youths especially to be very open and inviting and we learned immensely from each other. Inshallah this can be a small step towards a lasting peace between Muslims and Jews all over the world, working for a common good."

The History of the WF updated on the website

The WF Communications Team has updated the history of the World Federation, on how it was formed and how it has progressed. This can be accessed in the 'About Us' section of the WF website.



IEB Attends Muslim Jewish Interfaith Workshop

On 30th March 2006, the Islamic Education Board attended a Muslim - Jewish interfaith workshop organised by the Maimonides Foundation and the UK Home Office. IEB was represented by Sheikh Abbas Ismail and Mulla Mohammed Kassamali, IEB's Edexcel team member and resident Alim of Peterborough Jamaat.

The enlightening workshop began with an address by Mr. Paul Goggins MP, Minister for the Faiths and Cohesion Unit at the Home Office, who spoke on the dire need and importance for interfaith dialogue and discussions in this day and age. There were four themed sessions during the day. Each of the sessions, on 'Radical texts', 'Participation by women', 'Steps to improving relations' and the 'Role of Religious Education', produced excellent interaction and discussion, showing the remarkably similar perspectives from both the Muslim Ulema and the Jewish Rabbis.

Sheikh Abbas Ismail said, "This meeting was extremely useful in discussing focussed issues with our Jewish colleagues. Many of the areas were relevant to both religions and the respective scholars. There were many suggestions and actions presented at the end of the seminar and it would be interesting to see them developed further."

Syed Murtaza Kashmiri visits Dar al Tableegh

Syed Murtaza Kashmiri, the representative of Ayatullah Sistani in Europe visited the Islamic Education Board at Dar al Tableegh, London, UK. Syed Kashmiri requested to meet with the Muballigheen of the community. Dr. Akber Mohammed Ali represented the Office Bearers of the World Federation. Approximately 15 Muballigheen attended the dinner program, hosted by IEB.

Syed Kashmiri with other Ulema



After a welcome address from the former IEB Chairman, Sheikh Safder Jaffer, Syed Kashmiri gave a short talk on the importance of Tableegh and pursuit of knowledge. He emphasised the importance of keeping in the forefront of the mind the lofty aim and goal of Tableegh, and the way this can help a Muballigh to overcome the many obstacles and difficulties associated with the revered mission of Tableegh. Syed Kashmiri went on to express a keen desire to work with IEB in the future in the field of Tableegh. He also asked Mumineen to keep Agha in their prayers.

Bilal Muslim Mission of Kenya organise Health Action Camps

Bilal Muslim Mission of Kenya in conjunction with the Kenyan Ministry of Health organized 'Mother and Child' Health Action camps in five areas on 18th December 2005. The Mission and the Ministry of Health identified the centres as areas, which needed special attention due to the highest infant mortality rate in the country.

Health Action Days are a very effective way of improving a community's health status especially in an area where more than 70% of people live below the poverty line. Such events target the vulnerable groups; women and children under five, and provide specific interventions, which have a long-term impact. 30 Mother and Child Medical Camps have been organised since 2000.



A patient being attended to during the event

The long term impact of this project will be tremendous since the most basic preventive aspects in health care are addressed. Some of the treatments that were offered were deworming, vitamins supplies and immunization. Through the help of well-wishers, the poor could benefit from provision of basic medical care, which is often sadly lacking in people's lives.

Radio Fatima goes global

Radio Fatima, which began broadcasting in UK in July 2005 has gone global on www.radiofatima.com.

Radio Fatima combines the very best of Muslim broadcasting with the increasing need for more informative programming based on the beliefs and values of Islam, pertaining to life today. The programme carries duas, nasheeds, recitations and enlightening talks on various topics of spirituality and other human values and interests.

Radio Fatima is a groundbreaking initiative to share pristine Islamic values from the teachings of The Quran and the Ahlul Bayt. The Islamic Education Board (IEB) of the World Federation has been producing and airing Islamic radio programmes in South East England for the last five years.

The programme is aired seven days a week from 6–7am (UK time) on Spectrum Radio 558 AM, and is also accessible through Sky Channel 0185. You can also listen live on www.radiofatima.com or www.spectrumradio.net



Autistic Centre opened in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

On 19th February 2006, the President of the World Federation Dr. Ahmed Hassam officially opened an Autistic Centre in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in the presence of the Chairman of Africa Federation Br. Ramzan Nanji, Chairman of Dar es Salaam Jamaat Br. Anwer Dharamsi and other prominent leaders of our community.

This project, a vision of Marhum Mulla Asghar, will be unique in the whole of Central and East Africa. The centre will provide diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation for children with autism and other disabling and chronic conditions.

Autism is a disorder marked by severe difficulties in communicating and forming relationships with other people, in developing language, and in using abstract concepts, creating repetitive and limited patterns of behaviour, and obsessive resistance to tiny changes in familiar surroundings.



Above - Autistic Centre in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Side - Delegates at the Opening ceremony

UK Metropolitan Police Seek MAB Disease Information

In April 2006, the WF Medical Advisory Board received a request from the London Metropolitan Police Service to use its information on Meningitis and Septicemia in their Guidance Manual. The Guidance Manual is aimed at officers at the London Coroners providing basic training and standard of service for coroners in addressing the bereaved. This request is testimony of the quality of information MAB prepares for the community.

World Federation opens 4th Aeinullah Eye Clinic

On 13th January 2006, MAB officially opened its 4th Aeinullah Eye Clinic in Mianwali, Pakistan. The programme was attended by several dignitaries and people from Mianwali.

Incidence of eye disease, particularly blindness, is very high in the area, with adults in their 30's being blind with cataract.

The World Federation therefore has launched this clinic, adding to its success in other 3 eye clinics, with its key objective, **"It Is Better To Light A Candle Than Curse The Darkness"**

Statistics show that about 90% of the world's blind live in developing countries like Pakistan. However if significant efforts are made in this direction then about 70% of the blind people will regain their eyesight. About 60% of all blindness worldwide is caused by cataract, childhood eye disease, trachoma and onchocerciasis.

MAB is grateful to donors who made this project possible. The clinic will provide necessary eye treatment for operations to the needy of Mianwali and surrounding areas.

Bilal Muslim Mission of Moshi carry out Eye Camp in a village in Tanzania

Bilal Muslim Mission-Moshi Branch carried out an extensive eye camp in a remote village in Kilimanjaro Region called TPC/Njia panda. A lady optometrist from KCMC hospital accompanied the group, along with the Chairman of Bilal Moshi as well as a first year student, Br. Muhammad Shaban.



The optometrist checking a patient

Approximately 100 patients were screened for various diseases like cataract, night blindness and short-sightedness. Some patients were provided with medicine and many more will be provided with spectacles. From the 100 patients, about 40% were Muslims and 60% Christians. Bilal Moshi is grateful to all donors who sponsored the camp and donated spectacles.



Women's Desk drives forward "Effective Parenting"

Dr. Abdul Bari, an educationalist with a PhD and PGCE from King's College London and author of the book 'The Greatest Gift – A Guide to Parenting from an Islamic Perspective' led a one-day effective parenting seminar at the Zainabiyya Centre in Birmingham, UK on 17th December 2005.

Welcoming the guest, Sister Shamim Abidi elaborated on the challenges facing our youth today in Western Society and the dire need for parents to be able to tackle these challenges effectively, enabling our youngsters to develop strong Islamic characteristics. She reminded the audience of the great personality of Imam Ali (AS) who counselled parents to raise their children in a different manner to the one in which they were raised, as they were born in a different age.

Dr. Bari led four insightful sessions during the day. The first session compared 'Community Parenting' in the past to 'Parenting Today', stressing that parenting is a proactive deliberation of doing things with children. There is a great need to understand not only the developmental but also the psychological and sociological aspects of a child's life. Skills to raise children in Islam, he emphasised, will involve consideration to time changes as 'yesterday is different to today'. Dr. Bari introduced the participants to the five Course Components in his Parenting Programme - Growth and Development, Parent/Child Relationship, Discipline and Control, Family and Community Perspective and Faith/Culture and Spirituality.

During the second session, Dr. Bari discussed behaviour and its causes and took the participants through the different stages of the life of a child, giving age related views of life and examples of what to teach them at each stage.

He stressed the importance of understanding 'innocent childhood' and their need to play, giving examples of stories from Prophet Muhammad's life with his grandchildren Imam Hassan (AS) and Imam Hussein (AS).



The different Parenting Styles were discussed in the next session, highlighting examples with emphasis on the importance of consistency and the common dos and don'ts. The day ended with discussions on Discipline and the Discipline Process. Participants were able to draw from their experiences and share their views on this important aspect of parenting.

The seminar was jointly organised by the Women's Desk of the World Federation and the Khawateen Committee of the Council of European Jamaats.

Should your Jamaat be interested in running it at a local level, please get in touch with the Women's Desk, by e-mail womensdesk@world-federation.org

"The best thing a father can provide to his child is good manners and ethical training"

Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

WF and CoEJ hosts 2nd Seminar to encourage Marital Bliss

Encouraged by the success of its first seminar, the WF Womens Desk and CoEJ Welfare Committee once again hosted the 2nd Pre - Marriage Guidance Seminar on 8th July 2006 in London, UK. The seminar was aimed at providing guidance and advice to engaged couples on how to sustain a successful marriage.

Community members addressed these issues through interactive seminars on communication, empathy, commitment, intimacy and spirituality within a marriage context. They also discussed some of the possible reasons behind marriage failures including insufficient preparation to address marital challenges, unrealistic expectations and a lack of commitment founded on faith.

The Seminar was born out of the determination of the organisers to address the pressing problem of increasing marriage breakdown and divorce within Khoja communities. A full report can be found on the WF website.

www.khojamatch.com The matchmaking website

Following the launch of khojamatch.com on the 1400th birth anniversary of Hazrat Abbas (AS), the website has proven its remarkable success.

It now has over 750 registered members and a vast network of over 100 volunteers worldwide working purely for the pleasure of Allah (SWT), whilst maintaining its secure and confidential status.

To register as a matchmaker or to look for a spouse, visit www.khojamatch.com/register.php



Youth Network Desk's documentary initiative

The Youth Network Desk of the World Federation is looking to embark on a radically different project, which aims to revive the spirit of charity within the heart of every human being.

Humanity is progressing in huge strides. It is searching for knowledge from the depths of the ocean to the furthest reaches of the universe. Yet one thing that is still rife within our society is poverty. In India, 39% of adults are still illiterate and 47% of children under the age of five are malnourished. However, statistics are one thing and realities another.

The Youth Network Desk (YND) of the World Federation is planning to take a group of youth to film a documentary to highlight the plight of people in India and allow us for a few moments to live their life. YND aims to take approximately 15 youth from all around the world, aged

between 18 - 30 years old, to India in order to film a documentary highlighting the suffering that still exists within parts of the country. Not only does the documentary aim to instill charitable values but we also hope to open the minds of the youth who take part by giving them a life-changing experience exploring the depths of poverty.

The youth who take part will have the opportunity to be ambassadors within their communities and share their experience with others upon their return. This documentary will also give donors a chance to appreciate what their contributions have achieved.



Through the eyes of a ZCSS Sponsored Child

Br. Mohamed Abbas Burmawala, born and brought up in a small city of Gujarat, India (called Mahuva) is today a software engineer with Dubai Immigration Department and talks about how the Scheme has give him a new life. Read a first hand account of his story.

My name is Mohamed Abbas Burmawala. Born and brought up in a small city of Gujarat, India (called Mahuva) I was the youngest child of my parents after 7 daughters. My father, a simple accountant (muneem) by profession at a local private company, had to struggle to make both the ends meet. Feeding eight children and getting seven daughters married was indeed a daunting task for him.

Given these circumstances, it would never have been possible for me to go for good education – or even going further than the primary schooling. But Alhamdulillah, Greatest is the Allah who is the cause of the means. I got an unprecedented opportunity to excel as ZCSS of World Federation came to my rescue, through Council of Gujarat.

Having realized that without outstanding academics, my fate would most probably be similar to my father's, I put all my efforts in studies. And with Allah's help, I continued performing and World Federation continued supporting.

That was it. Alhamdulillah, today I am a software engineer with Dubai Immigration Dept. Prior to this, I was with Oracle Corp. at its India Development Center. And financial life has changed – completely – for me, my family and my relatives' families. Looking back, I am afraid to imagine what would have been my life without education, due to the lack of finance. I would have been like my other friends /young relatives doing a mere clerical job fetching around US\$100 per month. And perhaps would have continued to do such work for lifetime.

Can you imagine what change that small amount from my sponsor (till date I don't know his/her name) has made in my life? It has literally shaped my life – completely.

The journey from small town of Mahuva – to Oracle – to Dubai – has been made possible only because Allah (SWT) rescued me through my sponsor. What else can be a better example of thawab-e-jariya (the continuing reward)?

I am grateful to my sponsor for my lifetime. And every time whenever I raise my hands for dua – whether it is Eid or whether it's Ashura – whether it's after Subh or after Esha – I first pray for the wellbeing and bounties for my sponsor and then I pray for my family, for it is s/he who, for the sake of Allah, committed to do something good, selflessly helped me to stand wherever I am today. Perhaps, even s/he would not know for sure, what difference the 10,000 US\$ or less that s/he has spent behind my whole career (I have already started repaying the loan to WF, Alhamdulillah) has made. May Allah (SWT) grant him/her and all in the chain, the best in this world and the hereafter. Aameen.

There are many such and more potential students in the country; most of them in financial troubles. Together we can save at least a few lives and a few families to gift better careers to these youth. Let us do our BEST for this, impartially and selflessly joining hands to work for these people, forgetting all our differences and leaving aside all our personal interests, with true spirit of brotherhood and sincerity, seeking the pleasure of Almighty (SWT).

Great job done by WF & ZCSS. "Thanks" is a very small word to my sponsor.

With tears and salaams,
Md. Abbas Burmawala



Education in Malaysia - A Case Study

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Look at your map again and turn your eyes eastwards at the peninsular country of Malaysia. A country renowned for its enormous Palm Oil Estate, Rubber, Petroleum, Breath-taking vacation spots, and proudly boasting the Petronas Twin Towers, the once Tallest Building in the world, among other attractive spots in the country. As a multi racial society, Malaysia has promoted living together in peace and harmony. With a population of 23 million the Malay race is the majority, approximately 60% and all are Muslims, with the next two major races being the Chinese and Indians, 23% and 10% respectively. Kuala Lumpur poses as the country's Capital City cum Financial Centre while Putrajaya has been made the Administrative Capital. The currency is the Malaysia Ringgit (MYR) that is un-pegged yet on a managed float. Against the US Dollar it stands at approximately MYR 3.67 (August 2006).

Why do students choose to study in Malaysia?

Evidently, the main reason why students choose Malaysia to study is the cost factor. The cost of living is reasonably affordable and thus allows for much savings that could be used for occasional entertainment. With soaring prices for education in the west, Malaysia becomes an affordable alternative. Secondly, the tertiary education system offered is convenient and attractive. Malaysia is proud to have over 500 private and public universities and colleges that offer tertiary education in a variety of fields of study.

What would it cost me to study?

For a typical Bachelor Degree in Business Administration, tuitions fees only are approximately US\$10,000 for the three year academic course.

Tuition Fees:

This list is by no means exhaustive. All values are in MYR (US\$ 1 = MYR 3.67 ~ Aug 06)

- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Accounting / Business Administration / Finance / Marketing MYR 36,000
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in: Computer Science / Network Computing / Software Engineering – MYR 38,000
- Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Electrical & Electronic / Computer and Digital Art MYR 45,000.
- Master of Pharmacy Year 1 & 2 (Malaysia Campus) MYR 66,000. Year 3 & 4 (UK Campus) - GBP 24,300.

What would it cost me to live?

On an annual basis the cost of accommodation, meals, transportation and entertainment, would total under US\$ 5,000, depending on lifestyle.

Accommodation & Meals

Generally, there are two types of accommodation – on-campus and off-campus. Newly enrolled international students can stay on-campus for the first semester or year. For the following years, students can opt for off-campus accommodation.

One will never sleep hungry in Malaysia. With varieties of choices of food, one can find absolutely anything to fill their stomach. An average meal costs approximately US\$1.50 - 2.00. A meal at fast food restaurants such as McDonalds and KFC costs just US\$3.00-4.00. The Malaysian law requires all meat to be Halal and therefore, this gives peace of mind.

How is the Student Visa Application Procedure?

All institution recruiting international students follow a standard procedure highlighted in the Malaysia Immigration Act. The procedure is as follows:

- 1) A potential student must submit an application for enrolment to the institution he/she has chosen.
- 2) Upon approval of the application, the institution makes submission for Immigration Approval to Malaysia Immigration Authority.
- 3) Upon receipt of the Immigration Approval, the institution sends an offer letter and the Immigration Approval to the student who is required to present these at the Immigration Counter upon arrival to the country.
- 4) After entering Malaysia, the institution undertakes the responsibility of sending the student's Passport to the Malaysian Immigration Authority to obtain the student Visa.
- 5) Renewal of Student Visa is undertaken by the institution.

Can I work part-time?

Several courses have work placement as part of their course. However, for courses that do not have work placement as part of their curriculum, the Malaysia Immigration has recently allowed international students to work part-time ONLY on semester breaks and for a maximum of 20 hours per week.

Where are celebrations of Wiladat and commemorations of Wafaat held?

There are presently no Khoja Shia Ithna-Asheri communities in Malaysia. The only Khoja family residing in Malaysia happens to be my family - the family of Hussein Esmail Kassam (well known as Wassama), originally from Mombasa, Kenya. There are many KSI's students pursuing their tertiary education.

Wafat/Kushali's commemorations are hosted at our residence around the year where Khoja students from East Africa, Oman, Yemen, India, Pakistan, etc are invited to honour the gathering. Recitations of duas, Nauhas, Ziyarats, Amaals, etc are all conducted by the students.

Full article can be found at www.world-federation.org under the **CETAB** tab followed by **Articles**.



'Towards building an Islamic Society' Dodoma, Tanzania

Over 120 Muslim students converged at the Dodoma Secondary School on Saturday 22nd July 2006 to discuss the theme 'Towards Building an Islamic Society.'

The first speech at the seminar was on the 'Importance of Islamic unity towards building an Islamic society' by Sheikh Muslim Bhanji, who emphasised that to achieve true unity every Muslim must concentrate on similarities between various sects, respect and tolerate the differences, and learn the arguments of the others to appreciate and understand their beliefs. "It is not enough to follow the beliefs of the forefathers blindly, but every Muslim should study the roots and fundamentals of his religion and that of others scientifically", Sheikh Muslim insisted.

Br. Abdushakur Fumu, a teacher from Al-Qaem Seminary was the next speaker who talked about 'Importance of Learning, Research work, and Teaching towards Building an Islamic Society'. The focus of his speech highlighted the pseudo separation between so-called secular education and religious education, which are all part of Islamic knowledge since their source is one - Allah (SWT).

The speeches were greatly appreciated by the students, who raised many questions from the differences between the Islamic sects to the current political situation in Lebanon.



Important resolutions towards building an 'Islamic Society' were passed by the students at the end of the program. For further information, visit www.darulmuslimeen.org

We value your feedback

The World Federation would like to hear your thoughts on **Insight**. We are seeking our readers' feedback in all areas, ranging from the article content to layout and design, future topics for the magazine to explore, and any further relevant comments.

Your suggestions are essential for us to continue growth and improvement of this publication, and to ensure it targets the topics of greatest importance to our community today.

If you would like to share your comments, please contact the communications team at

secretariat@world-federation.org

Tsunami Victims Benefit From WF Relief Effort

The World Federation has increased the livelihood of a lady widowed by the Tsunami in Sri Lanka by buying her a stock of chickens to make her more self sufficient.

The World Federation works with appointed agents in the region who identify the most deserving cases and ways and means of assisting them. One of the agents identified a widow who was already offered assistance by an NGO to build a small house for her. The widow however also needed assistance in order to earn her own livelihood. She appealed for help to purchase chicken to enable her to earn a living. 100 chicken were therefore bought for her, making her self sufficient.



One of the homes built for the widows

World Federation's relief efforts focus on assisting victims return their life back to normal. Assistance is normally given by re-building permanent and temporary structures for them and providing means to earn their own livelihood, therefore making them self-sufficient.

World Federation wishes to thank all who donated generously towards this noble cause.

School raises money for ZCSS

The headteacher Sister Sajida Rashid and graduates of the Islamic Montessori School, present a cheque to the administrator of Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme (ZCSS), Sister Zainab Kassam.

The money was raised during the Mini Olympics Day in conjunction with the British Heart Foundation.



A New Era in Care - The CoEJ Health Improvement Board (HIB) Disabilities Project

Sunday 21st April 2006, saw the beginning of the first ever nationwide disabilities project, the launch of a consultation event held in London, UK. The event was attended by 67 keen and enthusiastic participants wanting to make a positive difference to the current system of facilitation. The ethos behind the CoEJ HIB disabilities project is simple; to bring the needs and rights of people with special needs or disabilities to the forefront of our social agenda.

The aim of this first meeting was to assess the requirements of those with a special need or disability within our community, to evaluate the existing facilities provided (or lack thereof) and to engage proactively in discussion as to how we can ensure that as a community no person is deprived from benefiting from the services provided. Participants were given a platform to express their own thoughts and ideas by recognizing current challenges and discussing approaches that can be used to tackle them.

*Quran recitation by
Br. Maisam Reza Khaku and
Br. Bilal Khaku*



*Parents and individuals in
talks and discussions*

From the various issues discussed, it was obvious that certain factors were prevalent across the board. One such issue was the lack of awareness and understanding of special needs/disability issues. While all participants acknowledged that efforts were, in some areas, being made to facilitate the needs of those with a disability or impairment, many expressed that prejudice and stigma was still rife. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness within the community has left many children, youth, adults, parents and elders isolated and excluded from our community and more needs to be done to address this.

The organizers are optimistic that the launch of this project and all subsequent activities and campaigns will be fully supported by all community members. Inshallah a strong awareness can be created regarding our moral and Islamic duty to support this much needed project.

Islamic Finance Seminar held by youth in London, UK

On Saturday 22nd January 2006, London's Stanmore Jaffery's held a landmark seminar on Islamic Finance at Hujjat Imambara, London, UK. The purpose of the seminar was to examine the verses of the Quran, in which Allah (SWT) says: "O you who believe! Be careful of our duty to Allah and relinquish what remains (due to you) of riba. And if you do not, then be warned of a war against you from Allah and His Messenger..." (Surah 2, 278-9). The seminar sought to investigate what the position of our Maraje is on this issue of riba, how the Muslim community has tried to find alternatives to the interest-based system of conventional finance, and what the future may hold in an area which affects all of us.

The seminar was blessed with a very distinguished panel, including:

- Br. Iqbal Asaria CBE - a member of the Bank of England working committee set up to look into Islamic finance.
- Br. Hasnain Syed - a practitioner in the field of Islamic Finance with HSBC Amanah.
- Sheikh Safder Jaffer - Masters in Economics from Tehran University.

The wealth of knowledge on the panel allowed participants to approach the topic from three distinct angles: the history and background of the industry, the products available to Muslims in the UK, and the Sharia view.

The seminar attracted a large and very diverse audience consisting of youth and elders, with professionals from various industries. This facilitated an extremely vibrant Q&A session. Overall, the feedback from the seminar was that it was very interesting and thought provoking. It raised some very important and fundamental questions to all in our community. Can we continue to partake in interest-bearing transactions? Should we support the growth of the Islamic finance industry? Why have the Shias stagnated in the development of Islamic Finance, even though Shaheed as Sadr was at the forefront of the industry at its origin? How can we change this?

SAB Launches Internet Education Program for Senior Citizens

Roots of modern science, philosophy, and art can be traced back to our 5th and 6th Imams, Baqirayn (the two who split open knowledge) who taught us that seeking nearness to Allah can be attained through knowledge.

The WF Senior Advisory Board, SAB, is pleased to offer SAB Baqirayn ILM (Internet Learning Module) Program which teaches how to operate the computer in an easy manner using a booklet with step by step instructions.

The booklet is available free to download in both English and Gujarati, at the WF website in the SAB tab. For further information email sab@world-federation.org



A Visionary IEB Retreat

A delegation of 52 Ulema and Muballigheen from around the world embarked upon an unprecedented consultation exercise to discuss the future vision of Tableegh and to offer proposals for the Islamic Education Board to conceptualize and implement, on 30th September 2005, in the outskirts of London, UK.

The retreat, which stretched over three days and two nights, was organized by the IEB in order to accomplish a variety of objectives, including engaging grassroot Muballigheen, creating a spirit of teamwork and coordination in order to achieve common goals, and providing a unique platform for these religious representatives to offer their insight and advice regarding the future of tableegh efforts under IEB.

In order to meet these objectives, three distinct themes were devised in order to provide structure and focus to the discussions:

1. Practical realities facing Muballigheen dealing with issues externally and internally
2. Muballigheen Training Programme
3. Burning issues facing our community

The sessions were organized according to these three themes and a total of 10 papers were presented by specific Muballigheen. Upon conclusion of each theme, focused discussion workshops were conducted in order to extract concrete and realistic solutions from the attendees to some of the complex issues they themselves had identified through the papers.

Under the first theme, the papers addressed the challenges of tableeghi efforts in both Africa and North America and the need for a structured approach to the challenging role of a Resident Alim.

IEB decided to implement the following action plan, based upon the recommendations that were developed in the workshops under this theme,;

- Formation of a Tableegh Task Force for North America;
- Formation of a Tableegh Task Force for Africa, to work in conjunction with the Central Bilal Board; Sheikh Shanawaz Mahdavi to form a small team to explore and define the role and responsibilities of a Resident Alim;
- Development of a modular course for training and continuous advancement of existing Muballigheen to be developed by Dr. Mahmood Datoo.

Furthermore, on the theme of the Muballigheen Training Programme, the delegates decided on a two-model approach: one model serving potential Resident Alims and the other for longer-term academics. The delegates also decided to appoint a Muballigheen Training Coordinator, who would then form a team of scholars and experts to define the required syllabus.



Considerable discussion was then devoted to the third theme, under which the Muballigheen focused mainly on the topic of Marjaiyyat and the enhancement of its role in the community. The conclusion of this discussion hinged on the need for a Religious Advisory Council. The Muballigheen also discussed issues surrounding moonsighting and guidelines on mixed gatherings.

After a full weekend of deliberation, discussion and decision-making in an environment graced with a spirit of cooperation and energy, the 52 Muballigheen who had come prepared to offer their full perspective on a variety of issues, left after making landmark decisions on difficult issues facing the community having successfully drawn up an Action Plan ready for implementation.

The detailed action plans, focused on implementation schedules, continue to be achieved.

"The Retreat was a landmark in the history of the World Federation. Three powerful action points have arisen that will determine the future destiny of the tableegh agenda for generations to come. The manner in which the Muballigheen participated and deliberated on the topics was a great source of inspiration and guidance for all of us."

Sheikh Safdar Jaffer, Past Chairman of IEB



YES, I want to donate

The Lebanese Relief Fund

The Israeli onslaught indiscriminately destroyed lives, property and infrastructure in Lebanon, leaving hundreds of thousands of Lebanese displaced. Many people, including innocent women and children, have fled to Syria for protection with no belongings except the clothes they wear.

The offices of Ayatullah al Udhamah Sayyid Ali al Husaini al Sistani in Damascus have set up relief programmes to help the refugees. The World Federation will also provide assistance to the Lebanese people, via the Maraje's office.

The World Federation requests all mumineen to send in their generous donations, to help the Lebanese people rebuild their lives after the Israeli invasion. Please pray for the souls of those who have passed away, for the health of the injured and for the safety of all Lebanese public.



Much of Lebanon lay in ruins

Islamic Education Board (IEB)

IEB provides support to Alims, Hawza students and madrasah, while producing publications and audio-video materials for the benefit of spiritual enlightenment to the community. It also heavily subsidises annual Youth Summer Courses in Qum.

Zainabiya Child Sponsorship Scheme (ZCSS)

ZCSS provides school, higher education and yatim & asir sponsorship schemes for as little as £10 a month, £13 a month & £500 a year respectively. Make a difference to the life of a student or an orphan afflicted by war.

Medical Advisory Board (MAB)

MAB continues to provide financial assistance to deserving patients, whilst carrying out health screening initiatives and establishing of Zainabiya Health Centres and Aeinullah Eye clinics. It provides medical relief to countries like Iraq, and assistance to sister organisations in Africa and Asia.

Career Training Advisory and Education Board (CETAB)

CETAB are dedicated to providing the educational development support in order to ensure that all University students are able to enhance their education careers and build successful futures.

Senior Advisory Board (SAB)

SAB provides support to the elderly and senior members of the community. It is currently running the Hope and Save Appeal – a worldwide campaign to raise US\$100,000 to reduce old-age poverty among our Shia elders.

The Womens Desk (WD)

Dedicated to provide support and assistance to the women within the worldwide communities.

The Youth Network Desk (YND)

Dedicated to the upliftment of the youth with several projects & activities to engage the youths of our community worldwide.

Other Relief Projects

Several other relief and welfare funds such as Zulfikar Ali Khimji Memorial Education Fund, as well as contributions like Sadaqa, Qurbani, Radde Mazalim, Zakaat and Khums can also be made at the World Federation website.

**The success of these vital activities can only be achieved by your contributions.
Please donate generously.**

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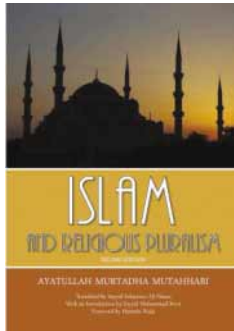
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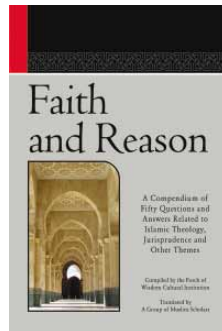


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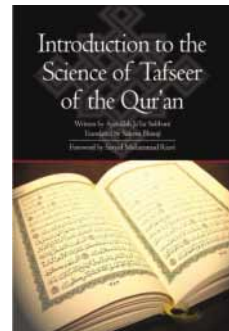
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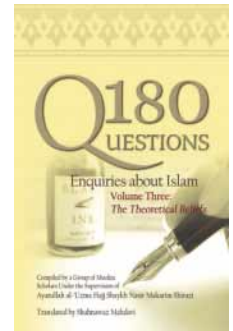
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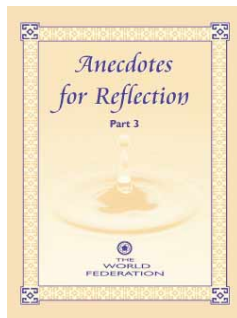
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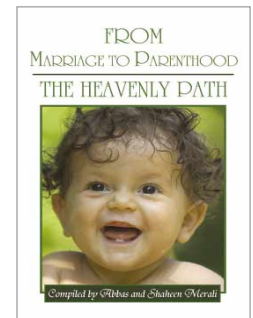


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