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OF KHOJA SHIA ITHNA ASHERI MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

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Message from the President

As I pen this message to share with the Community, I reflect on the progress we have made in the last year and thank the Almighty for guiding us and helping us.

The World Federation embarked on an unprecedented strategic planning exercise through which it engaged the Community grassroots around the world. The results of the strategic planning gave us a clear direction and focus whilst at the same time setting many new challenges ranging from key priorities that the Community felt needed greater attention to areas such as the style, content and frequency of our communications.

Additionally, the advent of the Strategic Plan also brought about tremendous interest among the young professionals of our community who are increasingly eager to play their part in serving the community and humanity at large. We have endeavoured to create an optimum environment at the secretariat for them to come forward to serve.

Clearly all this has meant a significant change to the way we function. We have started to challenge our thinking, our approach, our methodologies, our systems and processes; and every facet of this organisation has risen to the challenge of meeting the ever-growing expectations of the Community. The organisation is re-orienting its practices so it can work in an increasingly efficient way and in the process, we are building competencies and sustainability within the organisation through this new way of working.

The Strategic Plan required the secretariat to engage the regional federations, jamaats and other institutions to address and deliver on the key issues highlighted by the grassroots around the world. We asked each region to provide us with a three-year implementation plan and we now have these for Africa, Gujarat, Pakistan and North America.

The Boards and Desks of the World Federation are therefore focussed on delivering these implementation plans by working together with our members and other organisations to meet the individual and collective needs of our community.

I will leave you with some final thoughts in an area that I am most concerned about. The burning issue is one of erosion of tableegh in our own communities. The issue is no longer of language because our muallimhean can communicate with us in various languages, including English. The key to addressing the issue is to ensure that Islam is considered as relevant to people lives and that the techniques of imparting Islamic knowledge are aligned to the recipients' experiences in their different societies and geographical areas.

Our experiences are and will be different - our values are and should always be Islamic. So the challenge for us all is how our institutions start to recognise this and change their approaches.

To that end, the initiatives that the World Federation Islamic Education Board has undertaken to address this challenge include:

- introduction of a GCSE syllabus in our Madaris & community schools;
- short term courses in Qum for our youths;
- engagement with the Hawza-e-Ilmiyah in Qum to influence relevant syllabus to meet our needs;
- collaboration with Islamic teaching institutions such as Islamic College for Advanced Studies, Al Mahdi Institute and others.

I must emphasise that success relies on our combined efforts, a global partnership to face this challenge. The next stage of development will involve identifying partners with whom we share a common purpose and start working with them to deliver the agenda ahead.

With the Brampton Accord, we as a community have achieved unity to work under one common Ijaza for collection and disbursement of Khums, so let us now centralise our resources both human and financial.

Please pray that we are successful in bringing about the change that will help us to do His work better. Ameen.

Ahmed Hassam

In memory of Marhum Zulfikar Khimji



As we reflect on Marhum Zulfikar Khimji's death, we find our solace in the fact that men of virtue like him, remain alive by their spirit despite the departure of their bodies. Our community in Africa is not in ordinary times. The winds of change are strong reminders that we need to

change. In Marhum Zulfikar, came an ordinary man providing extraordinary leadership in difficult times. During that extraordinary leadership of the Africa Federation, he instilled a sense of duty and a deep feeling that rendering useful service was the common duty of everyone in our community. He became an icon of love and admiration among our people.

He brought his energy, enthusiasm and vigour to a purpose that changed the map of our community in Africa. We felt his presence only after he left the stage. He is one of those whose real worth is only known after their departure from the scene.

Imam Ali (AS) has said: "The worth of every man is in his attainments." So what were Marhum Khimji's attainments? The first is his focus on education. He was convinced that education was the key to the realisation of the full potential of our community. This sense of purpose filled him with greater energy and vigour. He believed that the collective good of the community was to serve Allah (SWT) and that the needs of our community in Africa had to be met through collective responsibility. There were no easy solutions to the complex problems we encountered on a daily basis. Thus, he urged the youth to get involved. Today, there are many who were nurtured by him and are capable of leading Africa Federation. He served with sincerity of heart, thus his actions were borne out of sincerity. This will remain one of his strong attributes.

But the legacy with which history will remember him most for was his vision of ensuring that only through common purpose will common goals be achieved. His vision was the centralisation of huqooq in our institutions and working under a common jaza (religious permission). He was firm in his views, and this enabled him to take the leadership role he deserved.

Our thoughts are with his family and our community in Africa. We mourn with them, united in grief at our common loss and giving thanks to Allah (SWT) for the time he gave this servant of His to uplift our community's aspiration. We thank Allah (SWT) for the life of this man who had rendered extraordinary services to our community.

The President visits East Africa

On Saturday 4th September 2004, at Iwanjee Gardens in Nairobi, the President of the World Federation, Dr. Ahmed Hassam, joined leaders and members of our community, representatives of other Asian communities, Religious Leaders and all peace-loving Kenyans to pay their respects and register their silent protest on the unwarranted attack on Marhum Zulfikar Khimji.

The President later attended the Chalisimo ceremony of Marhum Zulfikar Khimji, the former Chairman of Africa Federation. He paid tribute to the visionary works of the marhum,

who was the life and soul of the community in his address to the community, he said:

"For his lively spirit and enthusiasm, all those who had the privilege of meeting and working with him will always fondly remember Zulfikar Khimji. He utilised his energy, his vision and his vigour to bring about changes in our community and in particular subscribed to the principle that education is fundamental to the development of our community.

The best tribute we all, as members of the Community, can pay to the memory of Marhum is to work together in harmony and in a spirit of co-operation for the welfare of our society in Africa, and worldwide"

The President also had several discussions with the community leaders of Africa. Later, he was accompanied by the Office Bearers of the Africa Federation on the visit to Kampala and Bukoba Jamaats, where he had meetings with the management committees to discuss various issues, and addressed members of the Jamaats.

WF DELEGATION VISITS PAKISTAN AND IRAN

A Visit to Pakistan

The President of the World Federation, Dr Ahmed Hassam, visited Pakistan from 27th August to 1st September 2004. He was involved in several activities there and was also accompanied by the Treasurer, Br. Azad Kanani, and the Chairman of IEB, Sheikh Safder Jaffer, on some of his visits.

- Convocation ceremony of two schools, Al Muntazar School and Fatimiyyah schools. Both these schools have obtained exceptional academic achievements. In Al Muntazar School, there are 132 students graduating with a 100% pass rate, of which a phenomenal 94% acquired A and A+.

- In the boys Fatimiyyah School, it was 100% in either an A+ or an A, whilst the Fatimiyyah Girls School bagged positions thrice all over Karachi.
- Donating to the Ida Rieu Poor Welfare Association: On Friday 20th August, the World Federation donated £10,000 to the Ida Rieu Association in Karachi that runs schools and colleges for the Deaf and the Blind. This ceremony was also attended by the Treasurer of the World Federation, Azad Kanani, IEB Chairman, Sheikh Safder Jaffer, Executive Councillor Anver Rajpar, President of Mehfil-e-Murtaza, Husein Alibhai, Vice President of Mehfil-e-Murtaza, Hassan Abullo and Mohamed Rajpar.

- Meeting with Khoja Ulama and Zakireen from our community at Fatimiyyah School in Karachi: An extensive discussion was carried out to highlight the need of Tabligh and the coordination of the tabligh activity in Pakistan.

- Attending the Foundation Laying Ceremony at Tando Bagho and presented a cheque for the construction of the Mosque / Imambargah as a gift from the World Federation.

- Visiting a Cancer Hospital run and managed by Community Ladies and also visited Hussein Blood Bank.

- Visiting Karachi University.

- Launching of the Health Screening sponsored by World Federation for the Khoja Community of Karachi and Hyderabad and presented a cheque as contribution from World Federation for this programme.

- Featuring in an open talk show, which was an interview arranged by the Masoomeen Cable Network (MCN), discussing about the World Federation and its activities.

- Meeting with the Managing Committee of Khoja (P) Jamaat, Mehfil-e-Murtaza and other Trusts.



Sheikh Safder Jaffer presenting a cheque to the Chairman of Ida Rieu Association.

The IEB Chairman, Sheikh Safder Jaffer attended separate meetings with the tabligh workers of Pakistani Jamaats, to discuss issues regarding tabligh and the implementation of the Pakistan Action Plan. He had a fruitful meeting with Al Muntazar youth body. Sheikh Safder also visited the Sindh distributors of the published book "Payghame Najaat", which is the translation of "Know your Islam" by Syed Akhter Rizvi. This 276 page book also contains important Fiqh Masaals and Nawhas related to the Tragedy of Kerbala, and has over 26,000 copies in distribution in Sindh. On his visit and subsequent meeting at the PDC, he was accompanied by



Dr. Hassam receiving a copy of Pearls of Wisdom in Braille.

IRE coordinator Br Nisar Sheralli, and discussed items of mutual interest.

World Federation Delegation's Visit to Iran

The President of the World Federation, Dr. Ahmad Hassam, Executive Councillor Al-Haj Mohsin Kanji and the Chairman of IEB, Sheikh Safer Jaffer visited Iran from 21st to 25th August 2004. IEB representative in Qum, Sheikh Mohammed Ali Ismail accompanied the delegation in all their meetings, while Syed Ridha Shustartari, the WF representative in Iran was present in some of the meetings. The delegation takes this opportunity to sincerely thank Syed Ridha Shustartari and Sheikh Mohammed Ali for their hospitality during their visit to Iran.

The delegation was involved in the following activities during their visit:

Visit to Majma-e-Jahani-e-Ahlul Bayt (World Ahlul Bayt Assembly)



Meeting with Secretary General of Majma Ahlul Bayt

Throughout the trip, the delegation was the official guest of Majma-e-Jahani (World Ahlul Bayt Assembly). They had a day's meeting with the officials of Majma including their Secretary General Hajj Muhammad Hassan Akhtari, who appealed to the World Federation to join Majma for collective efforts in education, eradication of poverty and the spread of the message of Ahlul Bayt (AS). He also appealed to the World Federation to look into establishment of an International University. A brief insight into the three phases of the evolution of the World Federation was then given, namely:

- Establishment of our centres world-wide
- Assisting in alleviation of poverty and illiteracy, building schools etc.
- Extending activities beyond the Khoja world.

Following the meeting, an agreement was reached with the Majma to cooperate on the following common areas with immediate effect, and to continue to expand in different areas in the coming months.

- Publications
- Short Summer Courses
- Contacts with the Iranian Red Crescent Society
- Fast tracking the admission process for our students by the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Visit to the International Centre for Islamic Studies (Markaz)

Dr. Hassam emphasised on the need for unity and helping our youth with the difficulties they are facing in society. He also took the opportunity to thank both the ICIS and Madrasah Imam Khomeini for their support and warm welcome they gave to the students in the recent short course.

An agreement was made with ICIS, whereby ICIS will accept thirty-five students who have been recommended by IEB and who have the entry requirements for the Introductory and BA Degree Course. In addition, ICIS will hold a six-month course every year for a maximum of twenty-five students who would be recommended by the IEB. In return, IEB shall organise a three-month course in England for fifteen officials and specialists of the ICIS for the purpose of completing their spoken English training.



Meeting with top team of Markaz including Agha Araf

Meeting with Sayyid Hashim Bushehri (Head of Hawza in Iran)

This meeting was held to finalise the plans for the Hawza project in Bam. The meeting was held at Madrasah Faiziya, Qum at the office of Sayyid Hashim Bushehri. Sheikh Asgar Asgari, the Friday Prayer Leader of Bam, welcomed the delegation and thanked the World Federation for the Muharram and Safar tent project, saying that this was an honour for Shias and adding that it was given global exposure.

Visit to the Centres run by the office of Syed Jawad Shahrestani in Qum

The delegation was given a tour of the various centres of Ayatullah Seestani by Abu Astmar, the Chief Accountant of the Representative of Ayatullah Seestani in Iran and Sayyid Jawad Shahrestani. Some of the centres visited included the Eye Hospital, the History Library, Ahlulbayt Global Information Centre, the Old Manuscript Centre, and the Astronomy Centre.

Meeting with students from our community

The delegation met most of our community students in Qum at Dar al-Zahra (AS). In his address to the students, Sheikh Safer Jaffer announced the plans for an IEB Office to be established in Qum with Sheikh Mohammed Ali Ismail running it. Dr. Hassam then gave a short talk, stressing that the IEB Qum Office is for all of them. This was followed by an open forum in which issues relating to ICIS meeting as well as other matters concerning studying and living in Qum were discussed.

Visit to Imam Sadig (AS) International School, Qum

The delegation visited this school, which currently has about three hundred students from sixteen different countries and teaches up to the fourth class of Montessori, implementing the Oxford Education System with some additional classes on Islamiyat, Persian, Urdu and Quran. The School is in need of a qualified, experienced Principal, a bigger place, books and school uniforms for the children.

Meeting at Jamiat-az-Zahra - Girls College in Qum
Sheikh Mohammad Ali Shomali, Director and Head of International Students, briefed the delegation that the short courses have proven to be very successful and that there is a great demand for them. He presented the delegation with a set of CDs covering some of the lectures taught in this year's short course, which some of our girls attended.

Meeting with the President of Iranian Red Crescent

A meeting was held with the President of Iranian Red Crescent Dr. Ahmad Ali Noorbala. He congratulated Dr. Hassam on his appointment as a Muslim and Asian Trustee at The British Red Cross. Dr. Hassam briefed Dr. Noorbala on the initiatives of World Federation in providing for the needs of those affected by the earthquake in Bam.

The delegation also had meetings with:

Ayatullah Uzma Wahid Khorasan and Ayatullah Mahdi Hadavi Tehrani, (English speaking Ayatullah in Qum), **Ayatullah Baqir Shirazi** (in Mashad), and visited the **Madrasah Imam Ali (AS) and Alawi Darul Quran**.

Report on President's visit to Bam



The delegation at the ground breaking ceremony for the Hawza in Bam

The President of the World Federation Dr. Ahmad Hassam visited Bam on 22nd August 2004, accompanied by Executive Councillor & Bam Project Head Al Haj Mohsin Kanji, IEB Chairman Sheikh Safer Jaffer and WF Representative in Qum Syed Muhammad Ridha Shustartari. The delegation also undertook a ground breaking ceremony for the community funded project in the earthquake stricken city.

World Federation has taken on the project to build a much needed Hawza that will use a contemporary syllabus aimed at creating Religious leaders (Aalims) for the various towns and villages surrounding Bam. There is a particular need to strengthen the Cultural & Religious base of Bam due to its location at the cultural front line protecting the country against infiltration by the missionary works of other schools of thought from nearby Baluchistan and Sistan.

At a ceremony to sign the Memorandum of Understanding defining the project and its parameters, the Head of Hawza Ilimiya for Iran, Sayyid Huseini Bushehri commented that it was indeed unique to see people who had travelled a great distance from their homes to come to a far off place to assist their brothers in faith. He commended the World Federation's efforts and congratulated the entire community in this regard.

The Imam Juma, who is a direct appointee and representative of Ayatullah Khomeini in Bam, said the prompt action of the World Federation by providing 14 centres, ensured the commemoration of the events of Kerbala took place with fervour as well as provided centres for congregational prayers and other communal activities. He added that although many NGOs and international organisations had extended support to the people of Bam, the World Federation had played a pivotal role by addressing much needed support in this particular area of cultural rehabilitation that could only be understood by an organisation like the World Federation.

Dr. Hassam thanked the officials for their kind words, saying that Tableegh is at the very heart of the institution and a fundamental reason for its existence. He added that these kinds of projects combined the opportunity for tableegh whilst also providing humanitarian assistance to this earthquake stricken town.

At a recent meeting in London during the visit of Ayatullah Seestani, Dr. Hassam and Sheikh Safer Jaffer took the opportunity to appraise Agha Jawad Shahrestani, the wakil of our Marja, who resides in Qum, of various World Federation projects including our work in Bam.



President signing the MoU for the construction of the Hawza in Bam with Syed Huseini Bushehri, Head of Hawza Ilimiya in Iran

A Review of a century old relationship, between the Marjae and the Khoja Community.

By Br. Hasnain Wajli

"The Marjae have nurtured and supported the leaders elected by our Community demonstrating that they understand that a leadership emerging from within a Community is best placed to understand and address challenges.

The relationship of the KSI Community with the marjae goes back as far as the period of early conversion of the Community to the faith. To understand the context in which the very first time our Community had interaction with the Marja, it is, first, necessary to have a brief historical review.

Soon after the arrival of the Aga Khan in India, and owing to the greater control exercised by the Aga Khan in the affairs of the community, certain groups dissented. This resulted in a number of prominent Khoja families being ousted from the Jamaat Khanaa. In the early 1800s some of these 'outcast Khojas' went for Ziyarat and while in Najaf they met the Mujtahid of the time, Sheikh Zainul Aabdeen Mazandarani. During the discussions Ayatullah Mazandarani recognized that there was a need for a mujtahid to teach them the aqaid of the Shia Ithna-asheri faith. Soon after and at the behest of Ayatullah Mazandarani a Soudani Imam muballigh, studying in the hawza, (called Mulla Kader Hussein) returned to India. His efforts resulted in more and more Khoja families leaving the Ismaili sect and accepting the Shia Ithna-asheri faith. From these few dissenting families some of whom had to undergo considerable hardship (and two of them gave their lives), the community has now grown to well over 120,000 Khoja Shia Ithna-asheries. The overall number is still very small when considering that there are an estimated 300 million Shia Ithna-asheries in the world today.

It must be acknowledged that since those days, the KSI Community has been blessed with the support and patronage of the Marjae, by way of religious guidance as well as the various mujtahedin allowing the use of hukook funds for establishing imambaras and tabligh projects. At the same time, the KSI leaders endeavored to educate the Community not only to pay its hukook funds but also in centralizing its activities and projects. The leadership has always been proactive in communicating the Community's challenges to the Marjae and seeking guidance - which it always conveys to the mumineen, through its network of Jamaats around the world.

In these days of the Imam's (AS) concealment, it is the prerogative of the Marja to grant an ijtazat, or a wakalat, for the use of hukook. (When a payer is allowed to use a certain percentage of Sehme Imam for his own liability towards Khums and the prescribed purposes it means that he has an ijtazat. However, when a person is appointed to collect Khums from the believers and then disburse with it, partly or fully in the manner prescribed by the Marja, it means that he has a wakalat.)

In the the Khoja Shia Ithna-asheri Community, individuals holding ijtazat are 'known to have existed since the times of Marhum Ayatullah Syed Abul Hasan Isfahani (d. 1945) and Marhum Ayatullah Syed Husain Burujardi (d. 1960). In fact, the latter had sent his Wakils from Iraq to East Africa and had also appointed certain reliable, and pious, local Mominen to perform the work.' [1]

At an organizational level and for the very first time in the history of the Community, the then President of Africa Federation, Marhum Haji Ibrahim H. Sheriff (d. 1960), was granted a wakalat by Marhum Ayatullah Syed Muhsin El Hakim, (d. 1970).

"This was a turning point in terms of centralization as well as a structured relationship with the Marja. Thus, a new era in our Community had dawned. Individuals, families and traders who were hitherto averse to paying Khums, became conscious and inclined." [2] Subsequently, Marhum Hassanabhai M. Ladak (d. 1967) followed by Marhum Haji Mohammed Al-Meghi (d. 1973) served as Wakils of Ayatullah Hakim and since then all the Chairmen of the Africa Federation have served as wakils of the Marja of the time.

At the inception of the WF in 1976, Marhum Ayatullah Syed Qasim El-Khui granted the wakalat to Marhum Mulla Asghar as its first President and then to his successor, Haji Haider Haji. With the passing away of Ayatullah Khui, on 8th August 1992, most of the Community made raju towards the person of Ayatullah Syed Muhammad Redha Gulpayghani (d. 1992).

When Ayatullah Gulpayghani, and then Ayatullah Araki, passed away, the consensus of Ahlul Khuba descended upon the person of Ayatullah Syed Ali Al-Seestani as the Marja. He granted Marhum Mulla Asghar a wakalat [3]. Subsequently, when Mulla Asghar returned away in March 21, 2000, the wakalat was reassigned to the author of this article (and upon the election of the current President, Dr Ahmed Hassan), the wakalat was duly issued to him on a similar basis.)

The foregoing account of the relationship of the Khoja Community serves as a backdrop to a model relationship between a Marja and the mumineen, a century old relationship and a connection with Najaf or Qum, wherever the marja resided. This has been reciprocated by an acknowledgement, by the Marjae, of the religiosity and compliance of the Khoja Community and this aspect has been one of the key factors resulting in institutions, like that of the Khoja Community, as some of the best organized and well run in the entire Shia World.

The founders of the WF began with a clear vision that the WF was formed to cater to religious, and consequently to the social, needs of the community, in order to fulfill our 'collective obligations' (wajib-e kifai). In 1980, defining this vision the Founding President of the WF, Marhum Mulla Asghar stated: "A united community where every act of goodwill is propelled and driven by sincere intention to please Allah and none else. We need a society where the youths are saved from the rising tide of Kufir and its influence, where our men and women follow Shariah with pride and without apology, and rise above the mean and the mediocre to that which is high and sublime"

Thus the underlying ethos of our Community has been consistent right from the outset. All our organizations are in the service of Imame Zamana (A.S. May Allah hasten his reappearance). And it is in the service of our Imam, and we seek the patronage and guidance of his nabis - our Marjae.

From the preceding historical review, it is explicit that the KSI Community has benefited immensely by way of its contacts with and support of the Marjae. From the time of Ayatullah Zainul Abedin Mazandarani in the 1800s, to the

present Marja, Ayatullah Seestani (may Allah keep him), the progress of the KSI Community today and the very existence of the WF is a living testimony of the impact of Marja'iat upon the stability and unity of the community. The Marjae have nurtured and supported the leaders elected by our Community demonstrating that they understand that a leadership emerging from within a Community is best placed to understand and address the internal challenges. With the help and guidance of these Marjae, the World Federation has been a major player in the affairs of the Ummah at large. The legacy of serving the Community, and Humanity, has been acknowledged and praised by all the marjae.

It is in this context, that the recent meeting of the President of the WF, and other leaders, with Ayatullah Seestani, while he was in London, needs to be understood.

He asked Dr Hassam, the President of the WF, to convey his salaams and du'as to mumineen, and to thank them for their concern for his health. He also asked mumineen to continue praying for him and advised us to always remain steadfast on the path of the Ahlulbayt (AS).

When the President asked for guidance on the recent events in Najaf, Agha responded by asking the mumineen to pray for a quick and peaceful resolution of the conflict. Once peace returns to Iraq, mumineen should be assured that the rebuilding of the country and any other infrastructure that have been destroyed over the years. He also advised that "mumineen should not be involved in any political activities."

When a young man of the Khoja community, Altaf Daya was blessed to have an audience with the Ayatullah, he advised him, and those with him, to follow in the footsteps of their forefathers and continue the work. They should continue to maintain the future of the organization in the same principles that it is currently run. Specifically he said 'I pray to Allah (SWT) that he may continue to guide you and the youth of the Khoja community to serve in His way.' He then advised them 'not to get side tracked from our goals and objectives by politics and other non-essential distractions that may usurp our time and energy and not result in any fruitful results.'

To a delegation from Paris, comprising of Br Iyasar Asrarani and friends, he advised them to 'speak language and culture unity and bring people together in their own family. This provides the religious attachment and its principles to be transmitted from generation to generation. The absence of sense of partnership and unity will certainly lead to a dispersion of the people in their own community after two or three generations. Consequently, the religious interest and its spread will diminish. This will lose the community to deviate and (in the end) become lost.'

Such profound words require neither elaboration nor interpretation. The clarity is illuminating. The advice regarding culture and language, a vindication of the way the Khoja's function organizationally. To those, who continue to ventilate, in cyberspace, maligning the Khojas and more distressingly questioning the word of the Marja, let me say this: Perhaps they need to reappraise themselves on the concept of Marja'iyah and the role of the Marja as taught to us by the school of Ahlul bait (AS). Through the institution of Ijtihad, our marjae are there to guide on issues mumineen face in their eras. However, the onus is on us to convey our challenges and to seek their guidance. Then, having sought their guidance, to then follow it whole-heartedly.

Therefore, as he has advised, let us pray for the safety of all, stay steadfast on the path of Ahlul Bait (AS) and not be distracted by fruitless activities like cyberspace debates, cyberbully and cyberstalking. Much needs to be done in real space by serving humanity and the community starting with our own families and neighbours and, to promote the positive teaching of Ahlul Bait (AS).

As Imam Kadhim, (AS) advised his companion: "O Hishami! If there is a walnut in your hand and people say that it is a pearl, their saying will not benefit you in any way when you know that it is actually a walnut. And if there is a pearl in your hand and people say that it is a walnut, their saying will not harm you in any way when you know that it is actually a pearl." (Tuhaf al-Uqool)

Let us remind ourselves of the promise of Almighty Allah in Surah Al-Ankabut (69):
Wallazina Jaahadu Fiina Lanahadiyannhum Subulana ;
And as for those who strive hard for Us, We will certainly guide them in Our ways.

We are indeed thankful to Allah, for His Guidance through the school of Ahlul Bait (AS). Striving for excellence, serving with sincerity and simplicity, enabling and facilitating all community endeavors, are very much part of the ethos of World Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna-asheri Muslim Communities.

References:

- [1, 2, 3] Mulla Asghar M.M. Jaffer, *Award of Wakalat and Ijtazat - a tradition or a prerogative?* *Shia World - September 1994/Rabi ul Awwal 1415* (a publication of The World Federation of Khoja Shia Ithna Asheri Muslim Communities, London (UK).

IEB Office in Qum

The Islamic Education Board of the World Federation has an office in the centre of Shia learning, the Holy city of Qum. Situated at Dar al-Zahra (AS), the IEB Qum Office will seek to achieve the following objectives:

- Organise and manage various projects and activities such as designing and implementing short courses, translating academic material into English and getting questions answered by the Ulama
- Co-ordinate activities with our community students in Qum, and the committees they have formed
- To play a major role in recruiting suitable students to take up continuous Islamic education
- To assist students with gaining admission to the Hawza as well as with their progress during the course of their studies
- To establish strong relations with various organisations based in Qum and coordinate activities with them

Sheikh Mohammed Ali Ismail from Peterborough, England has been appointed as Head of the IEB Qum Office. Sheikh Mohammed Ali studied Law in Leicester and having gained his degree, pursued Islamic studies in the Hawza of Qum. He has been studying there for eight years and is currently undertaking specialised studies and research having completed a BA in Islamic Studies.

For information about studying in the Hawza of Qum, or about the activities of the IEB Qum Office, email ieb-qum@world-federation.org

The MoU With Africa Federation, from a Common Pool towards a Common Purpose

On Thursday 24th June 2004, the World Federation and Africa Federation signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the centralization and pooling of resources and working under one common jizaa.

A delegation of the Office Bearers of the Africa Federation, the former Chairman Marhum Zulfikar Khimji, the then Vice Chairman (current Chairman) Ramzanali Nanji, Hon Treasurer Murtaza Kanani and Hon Asst Secretary Mukhtar Assaria travelled to London to attend the WF-COEJ Leadership Development Programme. There they met with a delegation of Office Bearers of the World Federation and had several discussions on matters of mutual support and common purpose, concluding with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the two Federations.

Marhum Zulfikar Khimji, former Chairman of Africa Federation had said: "This historic moment brings a unique opportunity for our community. We cannot go back to the days of disharmony and disunity. We now have to go a step forward and work together for a common purpose which is the upliftment of our community world-wide."

Dr Hassam, the President of the World Federation said: "This is the beginning of our journey towards the common purpose. We are now firmly embarked on this path of walking towards a common purpose, hand-in-hand with Africa Federation."

This will bear fruit for generations to come. With the realization of a vision of Marhum Mulla Asger M M Jaffer, we now need to build on the legacy and transform our communities for the better."



Office Bearers of World Federation and Africa Federations

IEB appoints Sheikh Saleem Bhimji to translate the commentary of the Noble Quran into English

The IEB of the World Federation has commissioned the translation of the commentary of the Noble Quran into English, called The Message of the Quran. This is a ten-volume encyclopaedia, which presents Usul-e-Din in detail, drawn from the Noble Quran. It was written by one of the leading Marjae Taqidi living in Qum, Ayatullah Nasir Makarim Shirazi.

The translator, Sheikh Saleem Bhimji, was born in Fort Rae, NWT, Canada in 1972. After completing his secular studies in Edmonton, Alberta, he migrated to Qum, Iran with his wife, Arifa Hudda to study in the Hawza. After four years of study, they returned home and settled in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. Sheikh Saleem has translated over 20 books into English, one of them being a compendium of Juristic rulings on family planning in Islam, which was commissioned by the Ministry of Health and Education of the Islamic Republic of Iran with support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). He currently directs the Islamic Publishing House (www.iph.ca) and also translates articles for Al-Fath Al-Mubin Publications (www.al-mubin.org).

IEB publishes the Book "Islam and Religious Pluralism"

IEB in partnership with Islamic Publishing House have published a book entitled "Islam and Religious Pluralism"

The concept of religious pluralism is not new; past philosophers and theologians of various schools have discussed it in one form or another. However, with the increased interaction between followers of different religions and inter-faith dialogues, religious pluralism has taken a new life in the stream of current thought. The book is based on the last chapter of 'Adi-e Ilahi by Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari.

The book has been translated by Sayyid Sulayman Ali Hasan, edited by Saleem Bhimji, with a forward by Hasanain Walji, and also contains a preamble by Sayyid Mohamed Rizvi who provides a comprehensive view on Pluralism in modern context.

The cost is £5 UK, \$10 Canada and \$8 USA plus postage.

To obtain a copy of this book, please email ieb@world-federation.org

IEB publishes commentary on Surah al Hujarat and Suratul Jinn

The IEB of the World Federation in conjunction with the Islamic Humanitarian Service has published Ayatullah Jafar Subhani's work in English, which was translated by Sheikh Saleem Bhimji. This will insallah help English speaking students of the Quran to study the moral and ethical concepts of Islam from its original source.

Surah al Hujarat, the forty-ninth chapter of the Quran lays out many of the social-ethical concepts in Islam. It covers various themes from submission and obedience to Almighty Allah, and His Messenger, Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him), to the status and honour of the Prophet in the eyes of Allah. It talks about the brotherhood of the Muslims and the ethical duties that they have towards one another. In addition, it emphasises on the concerns that Muslims should have for solving internal disputes and for supporting justice against injustice. It presents the equality among the believers, irrespective of their ethnic and racial differences. It also highlights the importance of spiritual conviction (Iman) over physical submission (Islam).

The IEB has also published Surah Jinn, based on Ayatullah Nasir Makarim Shirazi's work extracted from Tafsir-e-Namuna. The work, which was translated by Shaykh Saleem Bhimji, will help English speaking students to undertake an in-depth investigation into "Ilmul Ghaib", or Knowledge of the Unseen. Knowledge of the Unseen is only with Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) and those individuals whom He decides to inform about these matters. This commentary is presented in a way, which seeks to clear out any misconceptions and misunderstandings that surround this important topic.

To obtain a copy of these books, please email ieb@world-federation.org or ih@primus.ca

World Federation delegation visits Aden Jamaat

A delegation from the World Federation and Dubai Jamaat led by Executive Councillor Al Haj Mohsin Kanji, Dubai Jamaat President Al Haj Aziz Jawad and a prominent philanthropist, Al Haj Gulambhai Virjee visited Aden between 9th and 15th June 2004. The primary objective of the visit was to meet our Community members and its executive committee in order to conduct a Needs Assessment, from which a 3-year action plan can be prepared.



The Shia Islamic Jamaat of Aden's Centre at dusk

Aden is amongst our oldest Jamaats in the world with its first Khoja immigrants landing there in 1888. There are over 900 people in the four areas of Mukhalla, Hudaia, Taiz and Aden, which is by far the largest with 700 Khojas. It is a prominent Shia centre in the Republic of Yemen providing a much-needed platform of Tableegh especially during the months of Muharram and Ramadhan. Br. Mohsin Kanji's comments after the visit were, "It was an eye opener. Thirty odd years of communism has brought this once thriving community to its knees and I am confident that the Worldwide Community will pull together so as not to let the 'sun set' on one of the oldest Communities in our rich history".

World Federation and COEJ witness opening of Babul Ilm Centre in Leeds

The Babul Ilm Centre in Leeds was formally opened on Sunday 4th July 2004, in the presence of the President of the World Federation, Dr. Ahmed Hassam, President of the Council of European Jamaats, Dr. Anwer Dhanji and other prominent members of the community. The ceremony was held to inaugurate the near-completion of the new multipurpose Centre, which will not only accommodate the religious and educational needs of the Leeds Jamaat, but would be tailored to facilitate the community's social requirements.

As the project still requires some funding to finalize the completion of this Centre, the Leeds Jamaat requests all donors to assist them in this great project. Every individual's support towards this project, no matter how big or small, will send out a tiny ripple of hope; the hope that our community in Leeds will successfully complete its journey to the very last mile. For more information and contact details, please visit the <http://www.baab-ul-ilm.org>.



The first Leadership Development Programme jointly hosted by the World Federation & CoEJ

The World Federation and the Council of European Jamaats jointly hosted the first Leadership Development Programme held on the 26th - 27th of June 2004. Over 20 participants from all over Europe, North America, Africa and Qum attended this programme. The participants included the Office Bearers of World

Federation, President Ahmed Hassam, Vice President Sultan Davdani, Secretary General Yasin Rahim, Hon Treasurer Azad Kanani; the Office bearers of Africa Federation including the former Chairman Marhum Zulfikar Khimji, Hon Treasurer Murtaza Kanani, and Assistant Secretary Mukhtar Assaria; the CoEJ President Dr Anwer Dhanji and its Hon Treasurer Jamil Bandali; NASIMCO representative Mujtaba Datto; and the Director of Imam Ali Madrasah, Sayyid Salman Naqvi.



The aim of the programme was to:

- Develop and enhance participants' leadership capacity.
- Develop leadership skills to enable the community to participate in mainstream society.
- Provide an environment for participants' to explore their assumptions and ideas.
- Increase participants' self-awareness, reflective practice and self development.
- Develop participants' understanding of the diversity and dynamics of the KSI European community.
- Identify different leadership styles, reflect on one's own style and develop new ways of working.
- Understand the main developments in leadership theories and appreciate different perspectives and approaches to leadership.

The programme was organized and coordinated by Navshir Jaffer and Dr Akber Mohamedali, and was facilitated by Ms Naaz Coker. Other participants included Tabassum Bachoo, Jamil Bandali, Fatima Bandali, Shafik Haji, Abbas Ismail, Mohammed Ali Ismail, Mehboob Ali Khaki, Sabira Lakha, Shabbir Lakha, Rizwan Walji.

A UNIQUE PERSONALITY Profile - Mullah Abdulrasul Mullah Hassanali Khaki

For most community members settled in the West, the observance of middle aged individuals originating from Mombasa and actively participating in religious activities, brings to mind an invariably common bond amongst them. Each one of them will fondly recall their days at the Huseini Night School, or the Huseini Madrasah in Mombasa where they were taught by Al Haj Mullah Abdulrasul Mullah Hassanali Khaki.



A self taught individual, and a businessman by profession, Mullah Abdulrasul was born in Mombasa in 1926. A voracious reader with a special interest in Islamic History and Fiqh from his early years, he always sought the company of Ulama to further expand his knowledge which attests to his remarkable breath of learning within the world of Islamic education.

Indeed he has exercised profound influence in both the traditional and modern circles throughout his life within the community and has always occupied himself with serving the community. He has also undoubtedly created intellectual elite among his modern educated students. He stands as a symbol of what is most permanent in the long tradition of Islamic knowledge and his presence carries a fragrance which can only come from one who has had the opportunity to taste the fruits of his knowledge. He exemplifies in his person the nobility, humility and quest for truth which have characterized the finest of his students around the world. His knowledge and

its exposition are a testimony to what real Islamic knowledge is.

Fluent in Arabic, English, Farsi, Kiswahili, Urdu, Kutchee and Gujarati, he continues to make visitors from all corners of the globe feel at ease in his presence. He has been acclaimed by many great ulama for his deep insight into the subject of fiqh and usulfiqh, Islamic history and theology. As an educator par excellence, his ability to inform and educate his students on various Islamic concepts from a contemporary perspective has been truly enlightening.

What is remarkable is that all his education, from one who was self taught, has not been confined to the hawza. As a brilliant communicator, he has eloquently presented the teachings of the Ahlul Bai (A.S.) to the masses at large. Wherever he has visited people have craved to hear him and be touched by his impeccable oratory. Countless minds have been set thinking, many lives have been changed by his nasihat (advice) and admonitions. His impact on the community at large is nothing short of phenomenal and one that has shifted paradigms.

A charismatic man, Mullah Abdulrasul has the special ability of being relevant to people at all times. He has always been charismatic to the rich and the poor, the literate and the illiterate, the young and the old. They are always attracted to his informal ways and his warm personality. And while scholars always claimed him as one of them, he has always had the time in the world for any member of his congregation who approached him regardless of his status. His portrayal of himself as an ordinary and humble teacher, has enabled him to preach the message of the Ahlul Bai with relative ease which will be acknowledged by most who have met him.

Mulla saheb has worked harmoniously to achieve excellence in Islamic education in the community. Most of his students have consequently been able to develop their spiritual, intellectual, physical, and social potential.

Imparting religious education and conducting classes in Fiqh and Islamic history has been his life long mission.

To this day, Mullah Abdulrasul is ever ready to conduct classes, even if it be for one student. Some of his students recall Mulla saheb's teaching style. He actively engaged and involved his students in their own learning, drawing out of the students their own life experiences and knowledge, and guiding them in new ways of learning.

In addition to his role as a Madrasah teacher, since 1956, Mullah Abdulrasul has been an active member of the Ghusul Kafan Committee and has, over the years, taught scores of individuals on the related practices and masale. Another sphere of his active involvement has been in match making and as a member of the Marriage Reconciliation Committee. In addition, he is also an effective Zakir delivering majalis in Gujarati.

While engaged in business, his doors were always open to visitors to walk in without an appointment to seek clarifications on masale of Fiqh, on matters related to matrimonial disputes and on interpretations related to the Islamic laws of inheritance. The ladies of the community also used to frequently seek his opinion on clarifications and guidance on a variety of religious issues.

In appreciation of his services, Mombasa Jamaat awarded him with a citation and the Africa Federation presented him with the 'Huseini Medal'. A relentless social worker whose qualities, abilities, and above all, his piety and sincerity has been recognized by all the community members throughout the world. We pray to Allah to keep alive his mission, to continue the path he has set. His devotion and zeal to the community have no parallels.

We pray for the longevity and good health of Mullah Abdulrasul and may Allah (SWT) continue to shower his blessings on him and to give him the tawfiq to continue the mission of Imam -e- Zaman(A.S.).

The Brampton Accord signed with NASIMCO at their annual Conference held in Edmonton

The Annual NASIMCO conference was held in Edmonton, Alberta on the 22nd - 23rd of May 2004. The conference theme was "Responding to the Challenges", where Jamaat representatives from across North America were involved in charting the future - reaching a consensus on the vision, mission, role, values, and operating principles for a new and rejuvenated NASIMCO.

During the Conference, the Vice President of the World Federation, Al-Haj Sultan Dawdani, formally signed the Brampton Accord with the President of NASIMCO, Al-Haj Huseinbhai Walji. He assured the conference that the World Federation supports NASIMCO and the Accord, which emphasizes cooperation and provides funding attests to the new relationship.

The Obituary and Condolence Service

The World Federation has an 'obituary and condolence' service, whereby people can write about the loss of their relatives or friends, and send condolence messages. This service has been set up in order to recognise the hopes and achievements of our community members. The obituary service shall therefore outline the person's life, achievements and contributions to the community. The condolence service will be open to all, and will facilitate a mechanism for community members to send a personal message to the family of the departed soul, and acknowledge the person's contributions. These messages will inshallah play a part in comforting the relatives of the deceased.

To submit a message, go to the 'news of death' section, in the World Federation's home page on its website. Thereafter, click on the name of the person you are referring to, and make your submission.

Dr. Mahdi expresses appreciation to the World Federation

The World Federation has supported many of our students in the past who are now successful in their careers. A good example is Dr. Mahdi Ramzan Gangji, who was born in Merca, Somalia. The World Federation sponsored Dr. Mahdi in 1992 to study a PhD in public health in the University of Pavia, Italy. The World Federation supported him at a time when war broke out in Somalia and our community there were forced to evacuate.

Dr. Mahdi, who is also a medical doctor currently works in Zanzibar in the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO), an Italian NGO and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine amongst other international health organisations. He had the following to say: 'The World Federation supported me in the past to complete my studies, which I greatly appreciate. It is a pride to be a member of such a community that supports you in your time of need'.

Dr. Mahdi met with the President of the World Federation, Dr. Ahmed Hassan and has volunteered to work with MAB of the World Federation to facilitate various medical facilities in the East African region. Such professionals are now a great asset to the community and would be very useful in serving at different levels. The World Federation requests all individuals wishing to serve the community to please email secretariat@world-federation.org stating how they could offer services to the community worldwide.

The World Federation provides support to students through CETAB and ZCSSL. To donate towards these noble causes or for further information, please email CETAB on CETAB@world-federation.org or ZCSSL on ZCSSL@world-federation.org

World Federation President meets with Chief Minister in Zanzibar

In April of this year, the President of the World Federation, Dr. Ahmed Hassan visited East Africa where he attended the AFED conference in Nairobi. Prior to this conference, he visited various Jamaats in East Africa like Mtwaru, Lindi, Arusha, Mwanza, Dar-es-Salaam, Mombasa, and Nairobi. The highlight of his visit was his trip to Zanzibar, accompanied by WF councillor Br. Anver Dharamsi, AFED councillors Br. Salehmohamed Jacksi and Muallim Saleh. During his trip, Dr. Hassan met the members of the Zanzibar Jamaat, and he also visited the Chief Minister of Zanzibar, Shamsi Vual Nahodha at his offices. The President pledged the support of the World Federation to the Zanzibar Government's drive to provide clean water in the rural areas and will provide funds for the provision of wells. Following a request from the Chief Minister to provide assistance for improvement of education standards in the schools of Zanzibar, Dr. Hassan pledged to send an Educationist to inspect the schools with a view of preparing a report that will provide realistic recommendations on possible improvements.

This has been a good start to a relationship between the World Federation and the Government of Zanzibar, and would Insha Allah result in mutual benefit. Dr. Hassan thanked the Chief Minister for receiving him and his delegation and pledged that our community will work with his government for the betterment of the people of Zanzibar.

ZAINABIYA CHILD SPONSORSHIP SCHEME

Please sponsor a child and give another one an opportunity to go to school. It only costs 33 pence a day, (or only £10 a month). They are keen to study. Why don't you help to get them out of the poverty cycle?

For more information, email
ZCSSL@world-federation.org

The IEB and the Bosnian Desk

At the end of the conflict in Bosnia, the Islamic Education Board (IEB) of the World Federation began its extensive work on the propagation of Islam within the Bosnian community. Since then, it has translated, published and distributed different books free of charge. Some of the famous titles include: The Holy Quran, Du'a e Kumayl, Nahjul Balagha, Sahifa e Sajjadiyya, Then I Was Guided, Pearls of Wisdom, Islamic Laws, and Imamate.

A quarterly magazine entitled "Muslimanski zivot" (Muslim life) is also published and was initiated with the blessings of Marhum Mulla Asghar, the former President of the World Federation. The magazine has regular articles on Islamic history, Fiqh, Akhlaq, Tafsir and current

issues. The published material and the magazines have been received extremely well by the Bosnian community and many positive responses have been expressed.

The desk also operates a website which is the only Shia Bosnian website, www.muslimanskizivot.org

Some of the Bosnian readers had the following to say:

"I'm a Sunni but I learnt more about Islamic history from your magazine than from all the Sunni books that I have read. It's pity that we call ourselves Muslims but we are ignorant about basic things from Islamic history. I'm here (Norway) for the last ten years, and believe me or not, every new issue of your magazine is awaited the way a letter is awaited from a good friend."

Naim Abdurrahmani

'I would like to thank for having contact with you. Since its beginning I have learnt about Islam a lot. You have somehow lit in me a new hope' Esad Omerbasic

'Dua-Kumayl has become something very special for me. I have never felt so close to my Creator, as much as I am when reading this Dua. Reading every new line causes tears in my eyes. It really gives strength to my faith. I pray to Allah that every believer feels like myself when reading this wonderful dua.' Dijana.

'Do not feel ashamed if the amount of charity is small because to refuse the need is an act of greater shame'.

Imam Ali (A.S.)

Opening of an Educational Centre in Meta



The President of the World Federation, Dr. Ahmad Hassam was the Chief Guest during the opening ceremony of the Jaffery Education Centre in Meta, India, which took place on May 8th, 2004. This new centre was built under the patronage of ZCSS of the World Federation. The centre will provide the residents of the Meta community with a highly essential centre for learning and education. It should enhance the education standard in the area by producing skilled professionals and local graduates. The Stanmore Jafferys of Stanmore Jamat in London and HSBC Bank raised the funds for this project. These youths performed various activities during the month of Ramadan in 2002, including sleeping outside and doing Ibaadat on a bitterly cold winter night. For further information on the activities of ZCSS, please email ZCSS@world-federation.org

Shia Interns have first historic network meeting in Washington DC

There are currently several young, dynamic, and committed Shia youth working in influential policy positions in Washington DC such as Council of American Islamic Relations (CAIR), Capitol Hill, and prestigious think tanks like the Centre for Strategic and International Studies. These interns, who are an integral part of contributing a much needed Shia voice to the American and the Muslim-American political landscape met at a networking event for the first time in history on 29th June 2004 in Washington DC. The networking event focused on how Shia youth can collectively work together to exert a positive influence on the larger American policy arena. Topics discussed included the assault on civil liberties of Muslims, Arabs and South Asians; the upcoming US presidential elections; and the rising violence against Shias in Pakistan. For further information email Zahir Jannohamed at zahirj@world-federation.org

Women's Desk take charge of 'Marriage Advisory Council'

The Women's Desk (WD) of the World Federation has been given the heavy task of reviving the long dormant 'Marriage Advisory Council'. After a successful 'Marriage Forum' and Workshops held in Dubai at the WF Triennial Conference, during which over 150 women from Jamaats all over the world shared their views on various marital issues, the Women's Desk has now embarked on researching possibilities to find answers and solutions to the many questions raised.

Feedback from the conference showed that our community urgently needed to help our youngsters all over the world in making the right, informed choices on selecting their life partner. Many avenues were discussed and all present agreed that an Internet Matchmaking site was necessary to help those who needed it, albeit with some caution. It was also agreed that more needed to be done to educate our community overall on marital issues.

The idea of 'Pre-Marriage Counselling' and 'Training for Marriage Educators' was also discussed and it was highly recommended that these courses be attended by both male and female members of our community.

In view of all this, WD has undertaken to deliver the following tasks during the course of this year and will be working closely with the YND and IEB:

- Develop an Internet Matchmaking portal to help with spouse selection.
- Setting up of a Template for Marriage Committee Structures with guidelines and person specifications with roles and responsibilities.
- Working on 'Training the Trainers' - a Training Programme for 'Marriage Educators'.
- Working on a Module for 'Couples Embarking on Marriage' for use in Training sessions by Marriage Educators.

Working on Extension Modules for Madrasahs on Spouse Selection and Marriage for use in Madrasahs, WD has already started putting together a team of workers to develop this programme and is looking to recruit more members. Anyone interested in helping out, male or female, should contact the Women's Desk. Any input, however small, is most welcome and will be valuable to the group. For suggestions or further information, email womensdesk@world-federation.org

Women's Desk organise Marriage Training Programme

The Women's Desk organised a three day Training Programme for 'Marriage Educators'. Islamic lecturers and trainers from the 'Marriage Care' organisation ran this course jointly. The training covered a wide range of topics and aimed to provide participants with the necessary skills for Pre-Marriage Counselling. Research in several countries has shown that couples who prepare properly for marriage are more likely to stay together when problems arise in their marriage. The task of the 'Marriage Educators' will be to carry out such preparation courses with couples in their respective Jamaats.

More than 25 participants from different Jamaats in the UK as well as from Dubai had enrolled for the programme, which took place on May 28th to 30th in Milton Keynes. Participants learned to help couples sustain their relationship using different methods and approaches and to be able to guide them through the initial stages of their married life. Topics that were covered included Commitment, Conflict Management, Communication, Islamic perspective on Sex and Spirituality. With the evaluation and feedback from this course, the Women's Desk hopes to run similar courses for Jamaats in other parts of the world. For further information, email the Women's Desk on womensdesk@world-federation.org



Update on Namaz time software

Namaaz Timer software 6.00 has just been released. It now covers 29 cities including several from England and Scotland. This software has been developed by Brother Zulfikar Kassam of Toronto, Canada. The software, if running, will prompt the accurate time of Adhan in the city where you live, therefore enabling you to hear a Shia Adhan at the exact time from your computer.

The software can be downloaded from <http://www.muslims-business.com>

IEB host GCSE Shia Islamic Studies Seminar

The Islamic Education Board of WF hosted a seminar on GCSE Shia Islamic Studies on Sunday May 31st at Dar Tabligh in London. All the principals and senior teachers of the Madaris in UK participated. The director of Spring Education, Sheikh Zakaria who is also the first Shia examiner at Edexcel, conducted the seminar.

The President of WF, Dr Ahmed Hassam, inaugurated the programme. He expressed delight that the Madrasah agenda was getting prominence and felt that a key finding of the strategic plan has been implemented. The President noted that strengthening the institutions, especially the Madaris was key to upholding Islamic values particularly in the West.

It was a daylong seminar that dealt in-depth with the syllabus content, lesson plan, examination questions, and tools required to teach the subject. In addition specific samples of work carried out by students of Hyderi Madrasah and Milton Keynes Madrasah were shared with the participants.

The following subjects were dealt with at length:

- 1 The needs of the Madrasah student aged 13-15 in light of the state school education system.
- 2 The GCSE Religion and Life based on a study of Islam syllabus Units K and D.
- 3 A sample of students work.
- 4 Reviewing past examination papers.
- 5 The marking scheme.
- 6 Which resources to use.
- 7 The sociological implications of the syllabus content and its adaptation by the Madrasah teacher.
- 8 The A' level / Diploma programme in Islamic studies- the next step.

It was agreed that the Madaris' would consult with their teams and a three-phase approach was planned to effectively role out the programme to all interested Madaris.



Sheikh Zakaria will inshallah be visiting Africa later in the year where he will share the seminar contents with our schools in Mombasa, Nairobi, Arusha and Dar-Es-Salaam. A Needs Analysis will also be carried out to assess the technical and structural support required to implement this programme successfully at these schools.

Any individuals or institutions interested in obtaining more information or a video of the proceedings may contact IEB by e-mail at IEB@world-federation.org or by phone at 01923-823 606.

Zainabiya High School produce exceptional results

The Zainabiya High School in Alipur, 40 miles from Bangalore, India, obtained exceptional results making it the number one school in the Kolar District. Of the 18 students who took the SSC examination (equivalent to the British GCSE Examination); 2 students obtained a distinction, 13 students obtained a 1st class grade, 3 students obtained a higher 2nd class grade. This school is following the Indian system of education. In this system, after completing the 10th grade at the age of 15/16 years, the students need to pass the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations to proceed further into higher education. They are examined on the seven subjects which include a Primary and Secondary Language, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, Typewriting, and Computer Studies.

The school, which was built by the ZCSS of the World Federation, has 575 children and runs classes from Lower Kindergarten through to the 10th standard. The Imamia Education & Welfare Trust of Bangalore currently manages it. The attainment of such high standards is a tribute to the school's Principal, Br. S. A. Nayeem, its secretary, Br. Muzamil Hussain, and the governing body. For further information on ZCSS activities, please contact ZCSS@world-federation.org.

Higher Education in South Africa

The Careers, Education and Training Advisory Board are producing a case study on learning opportunities in South Africa.

South Africa has a high quality of tertiary education, with several very good universities to choose from situated in a number of uniquely different cities. The education system, itself, is based on the British system of research-based teaching. Students from the South African Development Countries have the advantage of a lower fees structure while international students will have an increased tuition fee. The acceptable entrance qualifications for University are Matric, HIGCSE, AS or A-levels.

More information on education in South Africa can be obtained by contacting CETAB by email: cetab@world-federation.org

President visits Kutch and Gujarat

The President of the World Federation, Dr. Ahmed Hassam visited Kutch and Gujarat from the 2nd to 11th May 2004. The highlights of his visit were the foundation laying ceremony of the rebuilt Mosque at Bhuj, the opening ceremony of the rebuilt mosque in Marive, and the foundation laying ceremony at Unna for six residential flats to provide accommodation for our ommeineen. All these places were completely destroyed in the earthquake, which occurred on January 26th



Foundation laying ceremony at Bhuj

2001, claiming thousands of lives and causing major destruction in the areas. Many of these places were rebuilt with support from the World Federation.

Update on IEB's Al Quran website www.quran.org.uk

The World Federation's Islamic Education Board has a website dedicated to the Holy Quran, entitled 'Holy Qur'an Resources on the Internet'. This website was designed for two primary reasons; using the Web as the prime medium for making knowledge available, and the fact that knowledge of the Holy Quran is an obligation on every Muslim.

The website fills a niche by functioning as a portal to the wealth of information on the web. By categorising and linking to high quality Quranic material in a simple, user-friendly manner, the site has rapidly acquired a formidable reputation of its own. In fact the site was recently displayed on CSPAN, a public TV news channel in the US, recommending it as a good site to visit for information on Islam.

Some highlights of the website are:-

- Approaching 500,000 hits

- Articles by Shaheeds Muthahhari & Al-Sadr
- 12 English & 25 foreign Qur'an translations
- Endorsed by over 500 academic institutions

• Recent additions include a biography of Marmaduke Pickthall & An Introduction to the Quran by AJ. Arberry.

Visit the site at <http://www.quran.org.uk>. You are requested to encourage everyone in your family, madrasah, and jamaat to visit this website regularly and together understand the uniqueness of the Holy Qur'an. For further information, email ieb@world-federation.org

IEB establish Quran Library at Dar al Taleegh

The Islamic Education Board of the World Federation is pleased to announce the launch of a Quran Library at its office in Dar al Taleegh, London. The aim of this library is to collect translations of the Holy Quran in different languages, along with books related to the Quran. Currently the library has books in Arabic, Farsi and English. 300 books are available in English, which were obtained from different parts of the World, with eighteen different translations of the Quran in English. IEB has subscribed to the British Library Service to obtain thesis on Quranic subjects presented at Universities in United Kingdom. So far sixteen volumes (in English language) have been received. To move forward, IEB is also trying to obtain thesis of the Quran presented to North American Universities.

The library is still in need of many more books, mainly in the English Language. IEB request all to please donate books and thesis to the library.

For further information, email ieb@world-federation.org

SAB's "Spread the Warmth" Campaign

On the auspicious occasion of Eid-e-Mubahila, The Seniors Advisory Board launched the Hadith e Kisa Blanket Drive "Spread the Warmth" Campaign. This initiative was aimed at raising funds for our senior citizens around the world, so that they can purchase warm blankets to keep them protected from the cold winter nights.

The Seniors Advisory Board will be holding a number of blanket drives that are region specific. The first region was Bihar, which is a state in the eastern region of India. It is a flood prone region and one of the most underdeveloped regions in the country. Of the 86 million people who live in Bihar, Muslims account for about 15% of the total population. Patna, the capital city, has 10,000 Shia Muslims of whom 95% live in abject poverty and gross deprivation. They lack basic facilities like housing, sanitation, and clean water. Health care is non-existent. Most people are unemployed and getting enough to eat is a daily struggle. Most of these individuals do not have any heating systems in their homes. Those that do have blankets have ones which are torn and no longer provide any warmth. Bihar experiences extreme climates, as shown in the reference below.

"In January 2003, a cold wave hit the state of Bihar. For the first time in 40 years, temperatures dropped to almost zero degrees centigrade. As a result, Bihar was reported to have the second highest number of casualties - 100 in one month alone."

The "Spread the Warmth" Campaign still needs your help! Your donation can mean the difference between life and death for some of our seniors around the world. Whenever you put on a warm coat or a sweater, or even cover yourself with a snug blanket when you go to sleep, think of those elderly individuals who are without blankets and are freezing in the cold wintry nights.

For more information or donations, please contact sab@world-federation.org

MAB's donation for the People of Iraq

With the number of casualties in Iraq rising everyday, the health services in Iraq do not have the facilities required to cater for all the casualties.

The Medical Advisory Board of the World Federation has sent a container load of disposable syringes to Iraq.

It also donated medical supplies worth over £30,000 to the Office of the Grand Ayatollah Seestani in Najaf, Iraq. The medical supplies include drugs like antibiotics, cancer drugs, pain killers, asthma drugs and much more. Currently there is a great shortage of these supplies, which are highly necessary for the wellbeing of the people of Iraq.



On 15th July 2004, MAB also presented medical equipment to Mr. Mahir Kubba who will organise its dispatch to the Al-Awiyah Maternity Teaching Hospital in Baghdad, Iraq. The equipment, worth over £25,000, included the much-needed supplies like incubators for premature babies, ultrasound machines and its gel packs, glucometers, gynaecologist equipment, blood transfusion sets and other essential medications. This donation was administered by the Chairman of the Medical Advisory Board, Dr. Mohammed Taki Wajli and Mr. Aliasgar Rajbhai. Most of these items were bought by the World Federation and several generous donors.

For further enquiries, please email mab@world-federation.org

Report on MAB Haj Medical Mission

As done every year, the MAB of the World Federation sends a medical team to Hajj with the aim of serving the Hajj if they fall ill. This year the team consisted of Dr. Gulamabbas Rajpar of Trollhattan, Sweden, Mr. Aliasgar Rajbhai of Birmingham, UK, Dr. Asad Lakhani of Mumbai, India and Dr. Aqeel Moosa of Karachi, Pakistan. The groups were given medications, some provided with regular clinics and some were helped with regular visits by doctors. Those large groups without accompanying doctors e.g. groups from Madagascar were found to be particularly needy and were helped appropriately. In Arafat, Muzdalifah and Mina, help was made available when necessary without duplicating services. Very serious patients with life threatening conditions were attended to in Madina and Makkah. Patients were given prompt attention and a full course of medicines was provided free of charge - a gift from The World Federation. Hajj appreciated the services provided by the World Federation.

Like last year, the team co-operated with doctors from Imamia Medical International and a full and comprehensive service was provided to the Hajj. A meeting of all the doctors was held at the end and mutual views were expressed. All the doctors expressed a wish to work in full co-operation and partnership. Feedback from the team and groups indicates that Alhamdulillah, our communities worldwide are realising the importance of having a doctor in their groups. MAB expresses sincere appreciation to the team of volunteers for their generosity and willingness to help the sick and needy at all times.

Seniors Citizens retreat to Toronto, Canada.

The SAB organised a senior's retreat which was held on the weekend of 30th July to 2nd August 2004 in Collingwood, Toronto, Canada. There were about 90 participants from all over the world. The speakers during the camp were Syed Mohamed Naqvi, Dr. Shabbir Aibhai, and Sister Siddika Mithani. In addition to the lectures, there were also evening Shari' programs, barbeque dinners, sightseeing tours, as well as one of the highlights of the trip, an evening Boat Cruise.

The SAB hope to make this first-ever venture an ongoing tradition, and look forward to continuing to improve the lives of our elders throughout the Muslim community.

For further information, email sab@world-federation.org

MAB's report on Primary Health Care Projects

The Medical Advisory Board of the World Federation have been undertaking Primary Health Care Projects in India for over 15 years, during which they have conducted several medical activities.

Some of the major projects that have been successful are:

- 1) A nursery school is running in Govandi, Mumbai.
- 2) In Bangalore, the Zainabiya Health Centre is catering for the health needs of the poor and deprived and with the World Federation's first hospital called Aeinullah Eye Hospital. This hospital has been functioning well since January 2003 in treating patients with diseases like cataract, glaucoma and refractive errors. The hospital has been reported to be the best in the region with excellent facilities and medical equipment.
- 3) In Patna, Zainabiya Health Centre and Aeinullah Eye Clinic provide essential medical services.
- 4) In Lucknow, Aeinullah Eye Clinic has just been opened to cater for the eye treatment and operation for the needy.

Following these successes, MAB is planning to start similar clinics in Basra and Baghdad. You are requested to please donate generously towards this noble cause. For further information, please email mab@world-federation.org.

MAB treats Sister Shahad Jaafar

The Medical Advisory Board of the World Federation is pleased to announce that Miss Shahad Jaafar, a 13 year old girl from Kadhamain, Iraq had a successful operation in the United Kingdom on 3rd July 2004 and is making excellent progress to her treatment.

Miss Jaafar is suffering from a spinal disorder, which made it difficult for her to walk and control her bladder and bowels. The World Federation fully funded her costs and expenses through the generosity of its donors.

The World Federation is short of funds to complete this treatment, and requests moinen to please donate generously.

For further information, email mab@world-federation.org