



*In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful*

## ..... **The HOPE Bulletin** .....

**Health, Ongoing Projects, Education**



**February 2007**

**AAIIL Worldwide Edition**

**Editor: Akbar Abdullah**

A CALIFORNIA JAMA'AT PROJECT: APPROVED BY THE CENTRAL ANJUMAN, LAHORE

### **Introduction**

#### **Editor's Notes**

##### **Link to the UK *Eid* supplement**

Recently we provided you with a link to the UK *Eid* supplement (~~Outdated link removed~~), obtained from Dr. Mujahid Saeed, Webmaster of the Central Anjuman's official website <http://www.aaiil.org>.

Normally you would open this file by pressing on the "Ctrl" (control) button and clicking on the mouse. At least one member expressed difficulty in opening this file. Dr. Mujahid's response was:

"If the questioner has an Acrobat Reader, he can first proceed by right-clicking on the mouse and saving the document, and then launch the pdf."

When the document opens you come across another link to the UK's Virtual Mosque audio page, <http://www.virtualmosque.co.uk/audio.php>.

I had trouble opening this link while other members of *The HOPE Bulletin* Team could open it with ease, so I enquired from Dr. Zahid Aziz, author of the covering article. His response was:

"When viewing the document in Adobe Reader, if you move the mouse pointer to a point anywhere over a link, the pointer will change its shape to look like a thumb and a finger, where the finger points straight up. On this 'hand' there will also be a tiny square with a 'W' in it. This change of shape may take a second or two. Under the hand a long, thin rectangle will also appear containing the address of the link. Now click and it will take you to the link."

As I said, my Team members had no trouble opening the link but I still did, so I requested Br. Riaz Ahmadali to guide me on this. His reply was:

“You can copy the link and paste it in your web browser. The link will then open in the browser.”

By following this instruction I was able to open the audio file and enjoy listening to the *Eid-ul-Adha khutba* which was delivered at Darus Salam, London by Br. Mushtaq Ahmad. This experience was so exhilarating that I listened to the *khutba* again. This Virtual Mosque is an amazing development of the UK *Jama'at* that must be adopted by our worldwide AAIIIL *Jama'ats*.

I thank Dr. Mujahid Saeed for including our UK *Eid* supplement on the Anjuman's website, and Dr. Zahid Aziz and Br Riaz Ahmadali for their expert advice on how to operate personal computers. May Allah (*swt*) bless them all (*Ameen*).

Note: Before mailing out this *Bulletin* I checked Dr. Zahid Aziz's instruction on opening the audio file, and it worked fine. *Alhamdulillah!* .

### **News from the Centre**

After staging a highly successful *Duaiyya 2006 Jalsa* at Lahore and taking a break for the *Eid-ul-Adha* celebration, Hazrat Ameer Dr. Abdul Kareem Saeed and the staff of the Central Anjuman are all back in office to begin another challenging year. May Allah (*swt*), with His bountiful mercy and with His graceful blessings, grant Hazrat Ameer and the hard working members of the Central Anjuman health and stamina to bear the burden of guiding and inspiring all of our worldwide AAIIIL *Jama'ats* (*Ameen*).

Dr. Abdul Karim Saeed, *Ameer-i-Qaum*, wishes all the members of the global *Jama'at* sound health, prosperity, spirit of sacrifice and spiritual blessings during the year 2007. We request the global members to kindly pray for Hazrat Ameer and the *Jama'at*.

Br Achmed Baksoellah, brother-in-law of H/Dr. Abdul Waheed, and Mrs. Baksoellah, who visited India after attending the annual *Jalsa*, returned to Holland from Lahore on Friday, January 11, 2007.

Mrs Abdul Razak, Vice-President of AAIIIL, India, who attended the annual *Jalsa* and celebrated *Eid-ul-Adha* at Lahore, visited Karachi for a few days. She will now spend some time in Lahore before returning to India. Brother Hamid Rahman of San Diego, California, who attended the *Salanah Jalsa*, is expected to spend some time in Lahore before returning to the USA.

Choudry Riaz Ahmad is delighted to see his daughter, Asma Majid, and his grandchildren, who arrived in early January from the USA to spend some time with the family in Lahore, Pakistan.

### ***Jama'at* News**

#### **Prayer meeting in Oakland, California, USA**

Brother Mohammad Mustafa, President of AAIIIL, Oakland, California, submitted the following report:

“On Saturday Jan 6 2007, I arranged a special *dua* meeting for my daughter Shelly Rehana Khanoum, who passed away at the end of last year. A large number of families, including individual members, attended the prayer meeting. The programme of the evening was conducted as follows:

We all prayed *Salatul Magrib* and *Isha* together, then everyone recited the Holy Qur'an. After that Janab Ahmad Nawaz Sahib gave a small talk on *Sura Al Asr*, followed by *dua* offered by me. Before dispersing, the guests were treated to a delightful dinner.

May Allah grant *Jannatul Firdous* to Shelly Rehana's soul. *Aameen.*”

### **Eid greetings from AAIIIL, Indonesia**

The General Secretary, Br Iwan Yusuf B. Lelana, writes:

“Herewith I send you our message, to all brothers and sisters all over the world. *Insha Allah*, the spirit of *Eid* this year improved our spirit of brotherhood, spirit of forgiving others, spirit of sacrifice, spirit of sincerity and the most important thing is the spirit of *taqwa* towards Allah.

May Allah forgive our sins, and enable us to better use our heart, our eyes, our ears and our mouth according to the Will of Allah.

*Wassalam.* On behalf of the Indonesian *Jama'at*, Iwan Yusuf B. Lelana.”

### **Eid-ul-Adha celebration in New Zealand**

Brother Abid Raza, President of AAIIIL, New Zealand, filed the following report from Auckland:

“We celebrated *Eid-ul-Adha* on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December at Brother Adil Hussein's residence which is central for all of us and where we have our regular *Jumu'ah* prayers as well. This was well attended despite the holiday period and in spite of a few members that were out of town.

The *khutba* and prayer were performed by Brother Shabir Buksh; full text of the *khutba* will be mailed separately for you to publish in the *Eid* and the New Year's supplement of *The Hope Bulletin*.

After *Eid* prayer a sumptuous breakfast was provided by Brother Adil Hussein and his family.”

### **Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs Shaukat A. Ali**

Brother Shaukat A Ali travelled together with his family from Thailand to Brisbane, Australia to participate in the marriage of their daughter which took place at the end of last year. We wish the newly weds a happy, healthy and long life full of spiritual blessings, and the parents the joy of this happy occasion.

## **Feature Article**

[The following is the text of a speech delivered by Habiba Anwar, daughter of Begum Bano Anwar of AAIIIL, UK, at the UK's monthly meeting at Darus Salaam, London, on 7 January 2007.]

### **New Year's Resolutions**

Just under a week ago, we began the year 2007. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy and healthy year ahead for yourselves and your families. I will be staying on the theme of new beginnings and new starts for the duration of my talk today.

I am sure all of you have come across the phrase "New Year's resolutions" before. The tradition of making New Year's resolutions is often one that is associated with the West. By many, it is even considered to be a Christian idea. But, in fact, if you look at the history behind this concept, it goes all the way back to before

Christ. The story goes something like this:

Janus was a mythical king of the early Romans and he was placed at the head of the calendar. Allegedly, Janus had a distinctive characteristic, and that was his two faces. One was on the front of his head and one on the back. With them, Janus could look back on past events and forward to the future. Janus became the ancient symbol for resolutions and for looking and learning from the past in order to look into the future. The Romans even named the first month of the year after Janus, hence, the name January. He was their god of beginnings.

Now, thousands of years later, this tradition is still going strong. The first week of January sees millions of pounds spent on advertising for slimming products, nicotine patches, detoxification kits and other such things. You will find articles galore on the best diets to try. Even more amusing is that the actual resolutions being made, are with full knowledge by the people making them that they won't stick to them for long. It's almost like an annual custom that everyone adheres to superficially, but hardly anyone actually takes it seriously. This is obvious from the resolutions themselves. They tend to involve some sort of material gain. You'll hardly hear of resolutions that delve into the realm of spirituality. It's all about losing weight and feeling great. It's about temporarily giving up alcohol to re-energize your organs, and be capable of handling even more when the next party rolls around. Yes, this indeed is the Western concept of New Year's resolutions.

But where people are wrong is when they assume that Islam doesn't offer us anything similar, or something better in the shape of reforming ourselves in the New Year. Let's take a look at modern religion and its take on the future. When you enrol in an institution, or belong to a particular profession, you will almost certainly have a code of conduct in place that you have to abide by. Universities have one. Lawyers, doctors and other professionals have to adhere to one, and you risk losing your license to practice if you don't comply. Parallel to that, religious systems and philosophical systems, whether they are conceived or revealed, all claim a code of conduct for human beings too. But the interesting thing to note is that apart from the Islamic code of conduct, no other religion actually encourages you to plan ahead, and think about your future. Every religion, including Islam, tells you that the future is in God's hands. But Islam also tells us that we ourselves have a large role to play in planning our future. Divine assistance from Allah only comes through our sincere and true efforts, and only when we take the necessary steps in order to achieve our goals. And that's when our future becomes placed in His hands.

Conversely, take Christianity, for example: The Gospel quotes Jesus Christ as saying, "Let the dead past bury its dead, and tomorrow will take care of itself. You worry for the present." The focus is on the here and now. We are told to exclude ourselves from the past and the future and simply control our present actions. The Qur'an on the other hand tells us to reflect and learn from our past, and plan your future actions. We are told in the Qur'an that "you will be dealt with as you deal with others, you will reap what you sow, and what you send today will meet you tomorrow. So provide for your future and send (some good acts) for your day (of reckoning)."

So resolutions in the new year to carry out some specific goals are in no way a concept unique to the West, and with careful reading into Christianity you can see that contrary to popular belief it's actually not a part of that religion at all. In fact, changing and re-evaluating ourselves is something that's very much a part of Islam, and the best thing is, Islam has never limited this to a particular time of year. We should be making resolutions all the time. On the first of January, people look back on the year that's passed and think of what they would like to do better in the year ahead. An Islamic way of life encourages you to do that every morning: to look over what you did yesterday, and what you're going to change and do better today.

This constant re-evaluation of ourselves and constant desire to become better individuals is what makes

Muslims different from others. Muslims are hopeful people. When you have no goals and no aspirations to do anything with your life, you're a person living in a hopeless state. And what happens to people who live like that? Well we have hundreds and thousands of people suffering the consequences of living hopelessly in the West today. A deep-rooted sense of depression takes over and it's something that is very difficult to recover from. And being hopeful is not just something that separates us from people of other religions. It's also what separates us from animals. Animals act purely on instinct and without any patience. Humans, on the other hand, plan and aim towards their goal and have something fundamental that animals do not – hope.

These days, however, it's difficult to say how much hope is left even in us Muslims. There seems to be a pessimistic attitude surrounding the Muslim world. We've lost hope. We've lost the confidence in ourselves to bring about change, and the most unfortunate thing is that we do have the power to change the world. The world has never been in such a desperate state of instability as it is right now, and this is not something that's negative. In fact, it's an advantage to us, because when we live in an already stable system, that's when it's truly difficult to change things. Ask yourself what effect one person's actions can have on a large, stable society. The answer is no effect, but where there is instability, great change can be bought about from even one individual's small actions. Unstable societies *need* change; they're looking for change, and such instability comes from no one else but Allah. He is the One Who moves and unsettles things, and creates opportunities for us to change things. But like I said, we've lost the confidence in ourselves, and in our faith to grab these opportunities. Instead we're moving alongside the instability and becoming unstable ourselves.

Brothers and sisters, this year, why don't we make real resolutions, not just about our appearances and not just resolutions that will give us a temporary gain for ourselves, but let's think on a wider scale. Let's look at the bigger picture. I am sure you will be familiar with a famous quote that says: "Aim for the stars and maybe you'll reach the sky." Maybe our first New Year's resolution this year should be to instil confidence in ourselves and our faith to aim higher, and to open our eyes and really see that we can do so much to make improvements around us. All we have to do is try.

Our feelings of deflation at the moment are not necessarily because we are bad people, or that our optimism has been completely diminished. Of course the year that has just passed and in the years before that the Muslim world has suffered many blows. Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine and many other Muslim countries witnessed yet another devastating year. Of course, too, it is very easy for me to stand under a warm roof, with warm clothing on, and a table filled with food waiting, and to tell you that we should be more hopeful. Let's ask someone in Iraq right now how they are feeling about the year ahead. I am sure that after what they have experienced in 2006, their answer will be very different to mine. But what we need to remember, and to remind others around us, is that Islam teaches us to look for the blessings behind calamities, because there are blessings hidden there, and history itself shows us that some of the worst events in our lives, some of the most difficult situations give us the most insight and understanding. One of the greatest lessons ever learnt from the past is that "good comes from evil." An evil act at the time it takes place causes so much pain. Take for example the most evil of all crimes – the unjust killing of another human being. It is nothing to us but painful when it takes place, but, once time passes, you see that in retrospect you have learnt and grown from that pain in ways that you could never have done if it was never there.

Take the events of September 11th, and let's just strip it of the controversies for now and just look at the pain and devastation that rippled in its aftermath. Fast forward five years to today, and think about how much we have learnt about ourselves as Muslims as a result, and how much the world has learnt about Muslims, and think about your thoughts on terrorism now and your thoughts before that day. Don't get me wrong, for I am in no way implying that what happened then, or what happened in any other calamity is a good thing, but what Islam teaches us is that evil will always be there. The point is not to dwell over its existence. The point is to learn from it, and use the opportunity to change: change our attitudes, change our thoughts, and change our world around us. It is crucial for us to do this, and not simply become used to hearing about evil. We

should not become complacent and accepting.

When we talk about the problems in the world, there is a de-sensitive attitude towards them. Death has, unfortunately, become very normal for us. We switch on the news and almost expect to hear about some sort of unjust death somewhere in the world, like the Iraqi death toll, which is always thrown in at the end of the main news bulletins. Four more people died today outside an Iraqi shopping district. Ten more people died today because of a car bomb, and so on. It's nothing but mere statistics. We need to ignite our emotions, and realize that the world as we know it is in chaos. Muslims are dying everywhere, and we need to wake up and change our attitudes, and attitudes in the world around us. We need to be open and honest with ourselves and with our children, and teach them about the world they are growing up in. Teach them to pray for their brothers and sisters who, on the other side of the earth, are suffering as we speak. Your New Year's resolution should be for *this* year to be the year you show your children, the next generation of Muslims, that every single soul that suffers and dies everyday is somebody's father, somebody's mother, somebody's brother, their last family member left, their only shoulder to lean on, their flesh and blood, and it is wrong, their death is wrong, and we should be praying for them all the time, and thinking and working and planning towards changing the world. Only then will those deaths have not been in vain. Only then will their deaths have been given meaning.

Let's take a short moment to consider some of the problems that many Muslims all over the world are entering 2007 with:

Did you know that 80% of the world's refugees are Muslim? Did you know that of the 30 worst conflicts that are raging the world at the moment, 28 of them involve Muslim people and Muslim countries? In the past three decades, 2.5 million Muslims have been killed in war. I am talking about Bosnia. I am talking about Chechnya, Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan, Palestine, and so many more, and let's not forget to think about and to pray for the many others in the world, not just Muslims, but everyone who desperately needs our prayers, our help and our actions. Did you know that the average life expectancy in the African country, Sierra-Leone, is less than 26 years? And do you know what it is in the UK? Seventy-one. Did you know that there are approximately two billion people in Africa who do not have access to something as basic as clean water? Did you know that every 15 seconds a child in Africa is orphaned by AIDS? We are indeed facing bleak times, and sometimes what I find upsetting the most is the silence of those suffering. Can you imagine if any of these things were happening in the West? Can you imagine what would happen if there was a severe water shortage in London tomorrow? We'd start killing one another, that's what would happen.

So that's just an idea for you of what's happening in the world right now. But, realistically speaking, everyone in this room today has a busy lifestyle. You're professionals, you're parents and grandparents. You have important things to think about within your own little worlds. The point was not to imply that you shouldn't make resolutions unless they involve momentous changes to the whole world as we know it. The things I have spoken to you about today belong in a much bigger picture, but long journeys do start with small steps, and I wanted to show you that the concept of making New Years resolutions is a good one, if embraced in the correct way, and that planning for the future doesn't spawn from some ancient Roman god, but from Islam itself, and from the teaching of our Prophet, and the small changes that we make everyday will eventually lead us to that bigger picture, and enable us to make bigger changes.

Well what are the resolutions that you and I can think about for now, which realistically we can carry out?

How about this year we start becoming regular in attending our *Jumu'ah* prayers? This is quite manageable for all of us with a bit of effort on our side, and sometimes we forget the importance of *Jumu'ah* prayers when we're faced with a decision about doing something else with that time instead. We are told in the Qur'an that "O you who believe! When the call is given for prayer on Friday, hasten to the remembrance of

Allah and leave off business." There is also a *hadith* in which the Prophet (*saw*) was reported as saying "whoever omits three Friday services making light of it, Allah sets a seal on his heart." It's a small action on our part, but in the long run, it can provide us with so much strength in order to make those bigger changes we have talked about. If you attend *Jumu'ah* prayers, you are in contact with fellow *Jama'at* members on a regular basis. Your ties with the *Jama'at* and your relationships with one another are strengthened. Your love for these fellow Muslims grows and they become like your family, and once you have that family, you're no longer one voice trying to bring about change to the world. You're a community, and all this just from becoming more consistent in your *Jumu'ah* attendance, something which is not even supererogatory on your part. It's your obligation in the first place.

Another resolution we could make this year and easily keep is regarding charity. Now, the *hadith* regarding our charitable obligations are well known to all of us. I won't go through them again. I'd just like to tell you a little bit about an experience I had last year. In true student fashion, I worked in a call centre for a few months, and the work involved charity fundraising for the biggest charities in the UK. I would get through 100-150 calls in a day, and after my first few shifts, I began to wonder why none of the numbers I was calling led to a Muslim household. Every name on the screen in front of me was a Christian name so I asked my manager where the charities collect their data from, and I found out that we were either calling people that already supported the charity and we were asking them to increase their subscriptions, or we were calling people that had at some point in their lives expressed an interest in the charity and we were following them up on it. I couldn't help but wonder if the reason I had never encountered Muslim data the entire time I worked there was because we Muslims are not expressing any interest in charities. This is in no way a judgment call on us Muslims. A lot of us prefer to give to our own charities, or we donate to individuals or send the money back to our own countries, and a lot of people donate anonymously so you can never truly judge who is more charitable than others. So my experience is certainly not a general reflection on Muslims altogether. We are charitable people. When our people are in need we do come through for them, but perhaps this year, instead of waiting for them to ask for our help, instead of waiting to hear about appeals, we could try to become regular givers ourselves, and use our own intuition to judge for ourselves when and who needs our help. Take the people of Pakistan that suffered in the aftermath of the 2005 earthquake. During the weeks afterwards, Muslims were donating money for them like crazy all over the world. Now, thousands of people are still homeless there, but when was the last time we even mentioned them?

I hope that the things I have mentioned today have not offended anybody, and that this year we think carefully about our New Year's resolutions, and try and think what we can change in our lives to help not just ourselves, but our families, our *Jama'at*, and all our Muslim brothers and sisters worldwide, and let's be different to everyone else that makes new year's resolutions; let's actually stick to them. *Ameen*.

## Book Review

[The following is the Foreword, written by Mualana Jalaluddin Shams, to *Faslul Khitab* by Hakeem Nur-ud-Din, which is being translated by Captain Abdus Salam Khan of California, USA, and is to be published by the Noor Foundation, USA.]

**Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din, commenting on the genesis of the book *Faslul Khitab*, says in *Mirqaatul Yaqeen Fil Hayaat-e-noorud Din*:**

When I presented myself before the august presence of Hadrat Mirza Sahib (Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani, the Promised Messiah [*as*]), I asked him: "What *wazeefa* (spiritual exercise) must I engage in as a disciple of yours that will increase my love for God?"

“The exercise I am going to prescribe for you is this: You should write a book as a rejoinder and a reply to the Christian criticism of Islam,” he instructed me.

At the time of receiving this command I was not conversant with the details of the Christian religion, nor had I any knowledge of the objections raised by the Christians against Islam. Moreover, I had no time available due to my service in Jammu.

When I returned to my home town, Bhera, after receiving this command, an old schoolmate of mine, a *hafiz* of the Qur'an and *imam* of a mosque, set about discussing the issue of predestination (*taqdeer*) with me, and he showed such impertinence during the conversation that I had to take him aside and tell him: “It seems you have become a Christian.”

“What if I have!” he retorted.

“Take me to your mentor,” I requested him.

So he took me to the bungalow of a British Christian missionary in Pind Dadan Khan. But, despite my insistence and pressure from Hafiz Sahib, the missionary avoided entering into a debate with me and said: “I shall not enter into a verbal discussion. I would rather send you my allegations in writing later on.”

I told Hafiz Sahib: “Please refrain from accepting baptism till we have received the allegations and submitted a reply thereto.”

Thereafter, on my asking Hafiz Sahib to take me to anyone else who had been impressed by the missionary, he took me to the Railway Station Master, who very boldly declared: “No religion can be compared with the Christian religion.”

“This gentleman has already been entangled (in the Christian net),” I told Hafiz Sahib.

The Station Master was amazed that the missionary had kept silent and had declined to discuss the issues.

Eventually, the missionary sent me a bundle of papers containing Christian allegations against Islam. I asked Hafiz Sahib: “Replying to these allegations, is it a day's work?”

“Certainly not!” replied the *hafiz*.

“So then you should set a time limit yourself,” I told him.

“A printed reply in the form of a book should reach me within a year,” he said.

When I returned to Jammu I found that a number of earthquakes had hit those areas and the son of Rajah of Poonch had lost his mental balance as a result. The *Rajah* wrote to the *Rajah* of Jammu asking for the services of a high class physician, so I was sent to Poonch, where I was given an isolated house outside the town for treating my patient. All I had to do now was to look after my charge. I enjoyed complete solitude, so I started studying the Bible and the Holy Qur'an, writing margin notes on the Bible, keeping in view the objections raised by the missionary. I would then study the Holy Qur'an and mark all the relevant references. Thereafter, I started writing the book and succeeded in writing a four-volume book called *Faslul Khitab*.

No sooner was the book finished than the *Rajah's* son became well. Now I was faced with the problem of financing the printing of the book. The *Rajah* of Poonch gave me several thousand rupees. When I returned

to Jammu the *Rajah* there asked me the fee I had been paid. I put down all the money in front of him. He expressed annoyance, saying that it was too little, so he forthwith issued orders that I should be given a year's pay and a bonus from his treasury.

I sent that money and two of the volumes to Delhi for the publisher. When the books came after printing I sent these two volumes to Hafiz Sahib and to others like him. They wrote back, saying: "We have now wholeheartedly reverted to Islam, so there is no need to send the other volumes." (*Mirqaatul Yaqeen Fi Hayaat-e-Nooruddin*, pp. 147-150.)

### **Maulana Jalaludin Din Shams goes on write in the Foreword to *Faslul Khitab*:**

To highlight the excellences of this book it would suffice to reproduce here what the Promised Messiah himself had to say about the book and about the author's other work, *Tasdeeq-e-Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya*.

The following is a translation of the relevant Arabic text occurring in *Awe-eena-ai-kamlaat-e-Islam* greatly lauding the qualities of the two books. The Promised Messiah says:

"He has written books that cover many useful topics and contain many important points, the likes of which are not to be found in the works of those before him. Despite their brevity, his writings are full of eloquence. The words that he uses are all very attractive, beautiful and fine. To read them is to drink a very delicious drink. The likeness of his books is like a silk cloth that is steeped in musk. Moreover, pearls and rubies and fragrance have been added to it. After mixing it with ambergris, an amalgam has been made out of them.

The works of this author have excelled other people's works in respect of their attractiveness as well as the power of their arguments and clarity of their proofs. Blessed is he who gets hold of them, and informs others of their content, and also peruses them intently."

"The reader would find nothing as helpful as the contents of these books. Anyone desirous of solving all the obtuse places in the Holy Qur'an and getting acquainted with the mysteries of the Holy Book should peruse these books with full attention and be steadfast in this study because these books provide all the information that is needed by an intelligent student. The fragrance of their bloom enamours the hearts. The boughs are fully laden with fruit and no there is doubt that these are like the garden whose fruit-laden branches are hanging low. No vain discourse is heard in these, and for the purified souls it is a place of solace and hospitality. One of these books is named *Faslul Khitab Fee Muqqadamah-e-Ahle Kitab* and the other *Tasdeeq-e-Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya*. In these books chastened words and subtleness of discourse are combined with insights into the issues in such a beautiful manner as to become an excellent example for other authors. The scholars who excel in dialectics wish they could write books like these, and very eminent scholars have nothing but praise for these books. The learned author has striven hard to explain and elucidate the obtuse points of the Holy Qur'an and has paid full attention to combining and reconciling both the traditional and rational point of view.

So all praise is due to him for his high resolve and his enlightened thoughts."

"He is a source of pride for the Muslims. In the matter of resolving difficult points of the Holy Qur'an and in expressing and expounding the treasures of the verities contained in the Holy Book he is endowed with a wonderful mastery over it. No doubt he is blessed and illuminated by the light coming from the Prophet's lamp. He is a unique and wonderful man of high resolve. Every moment of his life radiates spiritual light. Each flourish of his pen brings forth fresh thought- provoking drinks.

No doubt this is God's grace and He bestows it upon anyone He chooses and He is the Best of Bestowers.” (*Awe-ee-na-ai-kamalaat-ai-Islam*, pp. 584-585.)

## All About Us

Br Choudry Masud Akhtar is on vacation in California visiting his children, so we will not be able to receive the next instalment of *Yaade Raftagaan* until the next issue. We are pleased to reproduce below, as an affirmation of our New Year’s resolution, what Ahmadis are all about.

### Meaning of the letters in A-H-M-A-D-I-S

**AFFECTION** ----- and love for one another.

**HUMANITARIAN** ----- Pray for sick, condole death and contribute to disaster such as earthquakes, tsunami, etc.

**MEMORABLE** ----- Memorable narratives of Hazrat Mirza Sahib are often read to bolster their Faith

**ADMIRABLE** ----- Admired by others for their works.

**DEDICATED** ----- fully

**IN** ----- the

**SERVICE** ----- of Islam.

Thus, in summation:

“**AHMADIS** are that class of people who have **Affection** and love for one another, are **Humanitarian** in nature, often read **Memorable** narratives of Hazrat Mirza Sahib to bolster their Faith, are **Admired** by others for their literary works, and are fully **Dedicated In the Service** of Islam.”

## What Our Readers Say

### Correspondence from Lahore

Mian Fazl-i-Ahmad, Chairman of the Foreign Missions, wrote:

“My dear brother Akbar Abdullah,  
*Assalam-u-alaikum.*

Many thanks for your “HOPE Bulletin” dated Jan 2007 which is full of information & inspiration. May Allah bless your efforts so you can continue to do your best. My best prayers are with you.

Yours truly, Fazl-i-Ahmad.”

### Greetings from Captain Abdus Salam Khan, California, USA

“Thanks for the greeting. This is to wish you all at the "HOPE" a very happy New Year and a very enjoyable *Eid*.

*Wassalaam*, Capt.Abdus Salam Khan.”

## Health & Prayer News

### Updated list of members for whom prayers are offered

Hazrat Ameer Dr. Abdul Karim Saeed has provided us with an updated list of global members for whom prayers are offered at the Darus Salaam Central Mosque. It is as follows:

**Pakistan:** Malik Saeed Ahmad, Abdul Ghafoor (Darus Salaam), Razi ud Din (Wazirabad), Mrs. Nazeer ul Islam, Suleiman Lala, Begum Choudry Abdul Karim (Okarha), Abdul Qayyum (Karachi), Shaikh Sharif Ahmad (Karachi), Zahoor ur Rahman's father, and his uncle and aunt, Usman Ahmad (Lahore).

**Australia:** Dr. Abdul Habib Sahu Khan.

**Holland:** Maulana Jaggoe, Begum Khuda Baksh Nasrullah, Nur Sardar.

**Suriname:** Mary Ghafoerkhan's mother.

**Fiji Islands:** Rhamatullah Abdullah, Mehboob and Abid Raza's mother, Jalal UD Dean's mother.

**United Kingdom:** Dr Zahid and Shahid Aziz's mother, and their sister, Samina; Fauqia Aziz, Akela Haroun, Dr. Hami.

**Norway:** Muhammad Ali's parents and his *bhabi*.

**United States of America:** Khalid Abdullah, Akbar Abdullah.

**Canada:** Begum Usman Ghani Baksh (Vancouver), Javed Sadiq's grandson (Toronto).

Global members of our Prayer Circle are kindly asked to update their lists. Moreover, the members of the worldwide *Jama'ats* are requested to pray for the health and welfare of Hazrat Ameer as he prays for the health and welfare of all our brethren around the world. May Allah (*swt*) with His infinite mercy grant Hazrat Ameer and his assistants health, strength and stamina to guide and inspire this *Jama'at* to complete success (*Ameen*).

### Ongoing Project

To infuse a greater interest amongst members towards the recently created Education Fund pioneered by Choudry Masud Akhtar, Secretary, AAAIL, Hayward, California, USA and adopted by the Central Anjuman, we are pleased to reproduce below an article on *Zakah* by Br Riaz Ahmadali, which previously appeared in the December 15, 2006 issue of *A Spiritual Note*.

#### *Zakah*

Every religion of the world has preached charity, but it is in Islam only that it has been made obligatory and binding upon all those who accept the Muslim faith. Here we have a brotherhood into which the rich man cannot enter unless and until he is willing to give a part of his possessions for the poorer members of the brotherhood. There is no doubt that the rich man is not here confronted with the insuperable difficulty of the ideal test of the camel passing through the eye of the needle, but he is subjected to a practical test which not

only makes him stand on the same footing with his poorest brother, but also requires him to pay a tax, known as *Zakah*, a tax which is levied on the rich for the benefit of the needy.

Everyone who possesses property above a certain limit is required to set apart a stated portion thereof. The portion so set apart should be collected by the Muslim state, or the Muslim community when there is no Muslim state, and the objects to which it must be devoted are enumerated in the following verse of the Qur'an:

“*Zakah* is only for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer it, and those whose hearts are made to incline to truth, and to free the captives, and (to help) those in debt, and in the way of God, and for the wayfarer” (9:60).

The words “way of God” include every charitable purpose. *Zakah* stands unique both as charity and as tax. As charity it is obligatory, but the obligation is moral. As tax, the sanction behind it is moral, not the physical force of a state. *Zakah*, therefore, acts not only as a levelling influence but also as a means of developing the higher sentiments of man — the sentiments of love and sympathy towards his fellowman. It should be noted that, according to the Holy Qur'an, a charitable deed must be done as a duty which man owes to man, so that it conveys no idea of superiority of the giver or inferiority of the receiver.

“Those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah, then follow not up what they have spent with reproach or injury, their reward is with their Lord, and they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve. A kind word with forgiveness is better than charity followed by injury. And Allah is Self-sufficient, Forbearing. O you who believe, make not your charity worthless by reproach and injury, like him who spends his wealth to be seen of men and believes not in Allah and the Last Day. So his parable is as the parable of a smooth rock with earth upon it, then heavy rain falls upon it, so it leaves it bare! They are not able to gain anything of that which they earn. And Allah guides not the disbelieving people” (2:262-264).

[Source: *Islam, the Religion of Humanity*]

## Education News

### Acknowledgement of Allah's blessings

Br Ahmad Nawaz of Hayward, California, USA, submitted the following article for our readers' knowledge:

“I dreamt that I went to Heaven and an angel was showing me around. We walked side by side inside a large workroom filled with angels. My angel-guide stopped in front of the first section and said, ‘This is the **Receiving Section**. Here, all petitions to God said in prayer are received.’

I looked around in this area, and it was terribly busy with so many angels sorting out petitions written on voluminous paper sheets and scraps from people all over the world.

Then we moved on down a long corridor until we reached the second section. The angel then said to me, ‘This is the **Packaging and Delivery Section**. Here, the graces and blessings the people asked for are processed and delivered to the living persons who asked for them.’

I noticed again how busy it was there. There were many angels working hard at that station, since so many blessings had been requested and were being packaged for delivery to Earth.

Finally at the farthest end of the long corridor we stopped at the door of a very small station. To my great surprise, only one angel was seated there, idly doing nothing. ‘This is the **Acknowledgment Section**,” my angel-friend quietly admitted to me. He seemed embarrassed.

‘How is it that? There's no work going on here?’ I asked.

‘So sad,’ the angel sighed. ‘After people receive the blessings that they asked for, very few send back acknowledgments.’

‘How does one acknowledge God's blessings?’ I asked.

‘Simple,’ the angel answered. ‘Just say, "Thank you, God."’

‘What blessings should they acknowledge?’ I asked.

‘If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75% of this world. If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish, you are among the top 8% of the worlds wealthy. And if you get this on your own computer, you are part of the 1% in the world who has that opportunity.

Also, if you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than the many who will not even survive this day. If you have never experienced the fear in battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation, you are ahead of 700 million people in the world.

If you can attend a prayer meeting without the fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death, you are envied by, and more blessed than, three billion people in the world.

If your parents are still alive, you are very rare.

If you can hold your head up and smile, you are not the norm; you're unique to all those in doubt and despair.’

Ok, what now? How can I start?

If you can read this message, you just received a double blessing; in that someone was thinking of you as very special and you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world who cannot read at all. Have a good day, count your blessings, and if you want, pass this along to remind everyone else how blessed we all are.

Attn: Acknowledgment Dept:

Thank You God! Thank you God, for giving me the ability to share this message and for giving me so many wonderful people to share it with.”

## HOPE Members Service

### Recipe of the Month

#### *Kufta* (spicy Arabic meatballs)

#### Ingredients

Serves 4

- 1 pound ground meat (beef, lamb or a mixture of both)
- 5 medium-sized potatoes, skinned and sliced thin
- 2-3 medium tomatoes, thinly sliced
- 1 small potato, shredded finely through a cheese grater
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- Handful of parsley, minced
- Salt, black pepper and other spices (e.g. curry powder or all spice mix)
- 4-5 tablespoons olive oil

#### Method of preparation

- Combine ground meat, shredded potato, onion, garlic, parsley, olive oil, salt and pepper and spices.
- Make meat balls from this mixture, each smaller than a golf ball.
- Place them side by side in an oven-safe baking dish along with sliced potatoes.
- Sprinkle the meat and potatoes with salt and pepper.
- Cover everything with thin slices of tomatoes and sprinkle these with salt and pepper too.
- Place the dish in a preheated oven set to 350°F.
- Cook for about an hour, turning meat and potatoes around 45 minutes.

#### Note

Cooking time could vary. Ensure the meat does not overcook and dry out. The baking dish can also be covered with foil to keep the juices in the dish while cooking.

#### Laughter is the best medicine, especially when it carries a lesson

#### Two Wolves

One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people. He said:

"My son, the battle is between two 'wolves' inside us all. One is Evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.

The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith."

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather:

"Which wolf wins?"

The old Cherokee simply replied:

"The one you feed."

## Eight Wonder of the World?

# Bubble City: Amazing new Dubai project launched

Following the creation of some of the world's most remarkable landmarks, Dubai is all set for yet another path breaking project. This time not on earth or on water but in the skies. The Bubble City will be a suspended architectural marvel, stationed 200 metres above the ground, powered by two mammoth helium balloons and an anti-gravity reaction motor. Designed to look like an air-bubble, the Bubble City will be a transparent enclosure made of reinforced glass and specialised fibre. The concept will house restaurants, theme parks and museums along with a few exclusive conference venues. Randomly placed hydraulic oxygen vents will make atmospheric

oxygen available for use inside, through pressure balancing that doesn't jeopardise the existence of the bubble.

Another ground breaking feature of the city is that the entire city will be powered by solar energy. Heavy duty solar cells for this purpose are already in the process of development. The Bubble city is deemed to be one of its kind; a new chapter in modern architecture and town planning. The estimated cost for this mammoth venture is US\$ 30 billion. The bubble city is the costliest proposition till date. A panel of award winning international architects and structural engineers has prepared the blue print for this amazing new city.



*An Artist's impression of the proposed Dubai Bubble City*

The above news report is courtesy Dr Khaliel Ghafoerkhan of Suriname. After reading Sis Habiba Anwar's inspirational article, what a waste of thirty billion dollars, which instead could have brought relief to destitute Muslims elsewhere in the world.

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