



Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

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

Hhealth, Ongoing Projects, Education



(Vol. 4:10-11)

April/May 2010

AAIIL Worldwide Edition

Editor: Akbar Abdullah

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

INTRODUCTION

Editor's Notes:

Due to my asthma and emphysema condition, my pulmonologist has been urging me to move to a warmer climate such as California, Arizona or Florida. I chose California so I could be close to my brothers and sisters and their families.

Last year when Parveen left for Fiji in October for two months, I spent that time in Sacramento, California, and during that time I was successful in purchasing a three-bedroom single family home.

On the morning of Saturday 1 May we left Chicago to travel by road on a 2100-mile journey to our destination in California. My son Rizwan drove the U-Haul truck with our belongings; Parveen and I accompanied him. Our motor vehicle was hitched to the back of the U-Haul truck.

It seems that the prayers of Hazrat Ameer, Dr. Abdul Karim Saeed Pasha Sahib, and *Jama'at* members worldwide worked. In Iowa we were within a mile of running out of fuel when we located a gas station, and again on the first day when we broke our journey at 9 p.m. between Omaha and Jackson City in Nebraska, we pulled into a Super Motel 8 where parking was available for large trucks. To our delight there was only one room available with two beds; Rizwan took one bed and Parveen and I shared the other.

The next morning we left at 8 p.m. with a plan to drive at least 600 miles and retire early. Incredibly good weather made it possible so we were able to check into a Days Inn Hotel in Wyoming at about 6 p.m. There were plenty of rooms available here so we took two rooms.

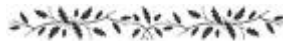
Again the next morning we left at 8 a.m. and, blessed with good, sunny weather, we reached a central town in Nevada where we spent the night in a Motel 6 where there were plenty of rooms available.

As usual, the next morning we left at 8 a.m. and arrived at our destination in Sacramento, California in the early afternoon of Tuesday 4 May.

Allah was so kind to me that despite spending time in altitudes of 7-8000 feet in Wyoming Hills and the Sierra Mountains in Nevada and California I did not get ill. All praise is due to Allah and thanks to all your prayers for our safe journey.

Please note the current changes made in our “Contact Information” at the end of this magazine.

May Allah (*swt*) bless you all and keep you under His protection and care at all times. *Aameen*.



JAMA‘AT NEWS

Communiqué from Amir Aziz, General Secretary AAAIL, Pakistan

Assalamu ALikum.

We would like to inform you that yesterday’s attack on Ahmaddyya mosques were on Qadiani *jammats* mosques in Lahore. All our members are safe with the blessings of Allah.

We condemn these attacks and condemn this cowardly act which has taken the lives of a hundred innocent people.

All members are requested to keep on praying for us.

Election of new Board Members in SIV Jama‘at in Suriname

Reported by Amir Aziz, General Secretary, AAAIL, Pakistan:

Assalamu Alikum

We take pleasure to inform you that AAAIL Suriname (SIV) has elected a new Board of Executives on 25th of April 2010. The new president of the Suriname *Jammat*, Brother Dr. Robbert Bipat, has informed Central Anjuman about the new board and requested to circulate the list of executives to all *jammats*.

Central Anjuman congratulates the new elected Board and extends its confidence to the board for future cooperation.

All *jammats* are informed to correspond official matters only with the new elected board.

May Allah bless the AAIL Suriname (SIV) to work for the progress and solidarity of Islam and Ahmadiyya Movement.

Extract from Dr R. Bipat's letter:

Please find the list below.

R. Bipat, MD, PhD (President)
Hassenmahomed, R.I. (Vice-President)
Lalmahomed, J.K. (General Secretary)
Moenne, Y., BSc (2nd Secretary)
Chitanie, I.H. (Treasurer)
Moennoesing, M.R. (2nd Treasurer)
Asraf, K. (Commissioner)
Badloe, S. (Commissioner)
Boedhoe, N. (Commissioner)
Hassankhan, M. (Commissioner)
Radjbali, M.J. (Commissioner)

The Board looks forward to a constructive cooperation with the Central Anjuman.

Wassalaam,

The Board of Executives of the SIV

President
Robbert Bipat, MD, PhD

Website change coming soon

Reported by Mudassar Aziz, Manager, "VirtualMosque" United Kingdom:

Just to let you know that we will be completely changing the website very soon; it will be moving to version 2.0 in an attempt to make things simpler and easier to use plus also making SEO (search engine optimisation) much better.

This will mean that all existing links will not work anymore (although I will try and add redirects to the most important ones).

Once the new site is up and running with the content loaded I will send the link out here to everyone, and ask you to update if you have any pages saved as a favourite in your web browser.

The BBC recently aired a programme about Islam; we answer the misconception which was brought up by Nicky Campbell: <http://www.virtualmosque.co.uk/women-are-subservient-to-men/>

Message from Shaukat A. Ali, Regional Coordinator, Asia and Pacific, AAII, to the Anjuman's Convention or special *Jalsa* in Suva, Fiji, April 2010

Bismillah-ir Rahman-ir Rahim. (In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful)

“And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, they are with those upon whom Allah has bestowed favours from among the prophets and the truthful and the faithful and the righteous, and a goodly company are they!” (4:69).

Hazrat Ameer, sisters and brothers,
Assalamu Alaikum WA Rahmatullahe wa Barakatuh.

I am very pleased to send this message to be read at the Convention being hosted by Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam (Lahore) Fiji. As a National of Fiji and having served the Anjuman in various capacities in Fiji as well as abroad, it gives me great pleasure to be associated with the programmes and projects being implemented in the region and my prayers for their success are always there.

The verse of the Holy Quran which I quoted at the beginning tells us that there are four categories of people upon whom Allah, our Creator and Maintainer, in His Infinite Wisdom has bestowed favours: **1)** the prophets; **2)** the truthful; **3)** the faithful and **4)** the righteous. We are told that those who obey Allah and His Messenger (the Holy Prophet) are with these four categories of people even though they may not have attained to the perfection of these four classes of people. However, as *Ahmadis* it is expected of us to attain *taqwa* and to maintain it so that we can hold the religion above the world.

Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, is reported to have said that when the *Masih Mauood* (Promised Messiah) appears, all those who obey Allah and His Messenger should pledge their support to him. Even if someone loses his arms and legs and has to crawl on his belly over a snow-capped mountain one should go and convey his (Holy Prophet's) *Salaam* to him. In practical terms it means to join his army of peace-loving followers to take the message of the Holy Quran and Islam (Peace) throughout the globe. As members of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam (Lahore) we have accepted Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as the *Mujaddid* (Reformer) of the Fourteenth Century and *Masih Mauood* in obedience to our beloved Holy Prophet.

Masih Mauood has in turn given instructions to his followers on how they should act and carry the message of the Holy Quran as well as to support the mission established by him. He was a great lover of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet and always acted in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet. The Holy Quran states: “O you who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority from among you; . . .” (4:59).

As the Founder of this great Movement in Islam, Hazrat Mirza sahib had established *Sadr Anjuman* as his successor. It was under his “authority” the *Imam* of the Age himself appointed a President of the Anjuman. Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam Lahore (*Sadr Anjuman*), in compliance with the instructions of the Founder, has appointed *Ameer* and President, who have ably guided the Movement over the last almost a hundred years. I am glad to note that the Worldwide Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam (Lahore) has accepted their authority as stated by Allah *ta'ala* in the above mentioned verse.

I am delighted to note that Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam (Lahore) Fiji has invited Hazrat Ameer, Prof. Dr. Abdul Karim Saeed Pasha sahib, and the General Secretary, Brother Amir Aziz Azhari, to the Convention. I am sure their participation will be very fruitful and will provide enlightenment to the members and invited guests.

I am also very pleased to note that Sister Samina and Brother Noman Malik have also been invited and are present among you. No doubt their presence and participation will add an international flavour to the gathering. Their

tremendous sacrifices and propagation activities which they will expound on will be sources of encouragement to those present.

I hope and pray that all of you will be able to work with greater zeal and enthusiasm in serving the cause of our Movement which was ordained by Almighty Allah. Apart from the verses which I have quoted earlier, there are many other verses which tell us to obey Allah and the Messenger and for your benefit I quote a few:

“And obey Allah and the Messenger, that you may be shown mercy” (3:132).

“So keep your duty to Allah and set aright your differences, and obey Allah and His Messenger, if you are believers” (8:1).

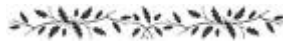
“And obey Allah and His Messenger and dispute not one with another, lest you get weak-hearted and your power depart, and be steadfast. Surely Allah is with the steadfast” (8:46).

“O you who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and make not your deeds vain” (47:33).

“And obey Allah and obey the Messenger; but if you turn away, the duty of Our Messenger is only to deliver (the message) clearly” (64:12).

I pray that Compassionate and Merciful Allah guide us and grant us the wisdom to follow the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet. I wish the Convention every success. May the choicest blessings of Allah be with all of you and your loved ones – *aameen*.

Shaukat A. Ali
Regional Coordinator
Asia and Pacific
Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam (Lahore)
Phuket, Thailand
30 March 2010



PRAYER & HEALTH NEWS

Du‘a for Iraz Sahu Khan

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahe wa Barakatuh.

We are sorry to learn that Br. Iraz Sahukhan is not well.

We pray that Compassionate and Merciful Allah grant him speedy and complete recovery which leaves no ailment behind - *aameen*.

Please convey our Salaams and *Dua* to the members of his family who must be going through a period of anxiety and pray that Allah *swt* accept their prayers and give comfort to all of them.

Allah Hafiz, Shaukat

OBITUARIES

Irshaad Djoemai (27 April 1976 – 2 February 2010)

On February 2nd 2010, Irshaad Djoemai passed away at the young age of 33 years, after having been sick for almost 10 years. *Inna lil-laahi wa inna ilaihi radji-un.*

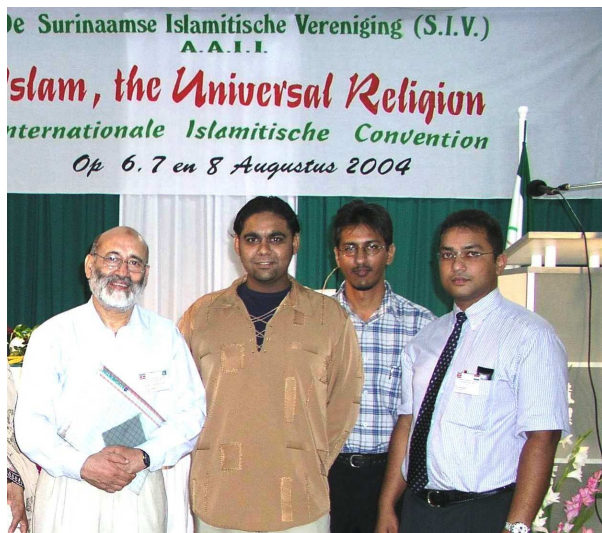
Irshaad was chairman of the Youth commission of the S.I.V. in Suriname during the period 1999-2001. In 2001 he went to Holland for treatment of his illness. As a result of this he also had to end his medical studies prematurely.

In 2003 Irshaad returned to Suriname, because the doctors in Holland were of the opinion that he would not make it long anymore.

Since 2003 he worked for the Institute for Islamic Studies and Publications (IVISEP) for about one year as secretary, Islamic teacher and technical staff. In this period he contributed to the new Dutch translation of the Holy Quran, published by the Stichting Ahmadiyya Isha'at-i-Islam in 2004. The index of this voluminous work was prepared by Irshaad. Also one of the new Dutch editions of *The Religion of Islam* was checked completely by Irshaad (linguistic). Besides this, Irshaad was part of the editorial staff of several magazines, such as *An Nur* (S.I.V.), *The Dawn* (De Dageraad, IVISEP) and *Iqra' United*.

After his IVISEP period, Irshaad joined the Suriname Red Cross as First Aid teacher and technical staff member. There he met Grace, with whom he got married last year.

Although he was given up by the doctors in 2003, he had a very active life for almost seven years before he returned to Allah. May his soul rest in peace. *Ameen!*



Irshaad Djoemai (in brown suit, second from left) with Hazrat Ameer A.K. Saeed (left) Riaz Ahmadali from IVISEP (second from right) and Jerrel Sardar from the Stichting in Holland (right)

Condolence message from Hazrat Ameer, Dr. Abdul Karim Saeed Pasha Sahib

Dear Riaz Ahmadali,

As-salamu alaikum wa-rahmat-Ullah wa-barakato.

I am grieved to hear the news of the death of Irshaad Djoemai; it is all the more painful considering his age. Thanks for attaching his photo with me. It has brought memories of my visit to your country some years back; it has also added to my sadness that a young friend I had made will not be there for me to meet and visit. It reinforces our belief that 'SURELY WE ARE ALLAH'S, AND TO HIM WE SHALL RETURN'.

I pray to Allah to bless his soul and grant it high abode in the LIFE which he has now entered. I pray for his family and dear and near ones he has left behind. Please pass my condolence message to his family members and close ones. I pray that Allah grants them patience in these times when they have been tried by Allah and console their feelings by the Quranic words: 'SURELY WE ARE ALLAH'S, AND TO HIM WE SHALL RETURN'.

Abdul Karim Saeed Pasha

Mother of Mrs. Samina Malik

Reported by Brigadier Mohammad Saeed, Moderator, LahoreAhmadees, Lahore, Pakistan:

Assalaam-o-Alaikum Wa Rakhmatullahi Wa Barakaato Hoo.

We are informing you with deep sorrow that sister Samina Malik's mother expired in Vancouver Canada, today.

Allazeena iza asabat hum museebatun qaloo Inna Lillahi wa inna elaihi raaji oon. Who, when a misfortune befalls them say: "Surely we are Allah's and to Him we shall return" (*Al Baqarah*, 2:156).

She had been ill and hospitalised for some time and sister Samina Malik had to shorten some of her visits abroad to be with her.

We will let you know about the funeral and internment arrangements when we get the information.

I met Mrs. Samina Malik's mother when I visited Vancouver in 1992 and found her to be very noble and hospitable. May Allah Ta'ala have mercy on her soul and grant patience and fortitude to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss.

Hazrat Ameer and all members of the Worldwide Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement share the grief of the bereaved family and condole with them.

Seeker of your prayers,

Lahore Ahmadees Moderator
Mohammaad Saeed

Updated obituary on the mother of Mrs. Samina Malik received from Brigadier Mohammad Saeed, Moderator LahoreAhmadees, Pakistan

Assalaam-o-Alaikum Wa Rakhmatullahi Wa Barakaato Hoo.

Obituary note from Dr. Noman Malik is appended below.

Seeker of your prayers,

Lahore Ahmadees Moderator
Mohammad Saeed

Assalamo Alaikum.

It is with great sadness that I inform you of the passing away of Samina's mother Mrs. Tara Muhammad. *Inna Lillahi wa inna ilahi rajeoon.*

She breathed her last on May 27, 2010 at 2:18 p.m. after a two month stay in Burnaby General Hospital. She was eighty four years of age.

Samina and I were with her for almost six weeks. May Allah *Taala* admit her to His forgiveness and mercy and grant her Paradise.

Mummy was a very nice and kind woman with a deep faith in God. She was very hospitable and generous and always helped the poor and needy. For the past ten years, she used to spend several months in summer with us in Columbus, Ohio where she attended most of the USA annual conventions held in Ohio. She always donated funds for the holy Quran, and attended all the *jummah* prayers when she was in Ohio.

Most of our *jamaat* elders who visited Vancouver, had been her guest at her house for dinner or tea. Among these were the late Ameer, Dr. Saeed Ahmad Sahib, Hazrat Amir Dr. Abdul Kareem Saeed, Hafiz Sher Mohammad Sahib, Mian Umar Farooq and Mrs Ghazala Farooq , Mian Fazal and Mrs Tahira Ahmad, Brig Mohammad Saeed and Mrs Sabiha Saeed, Mr Ijaz Ilahi and Mrs Nasra Malik, Mr. Izaz Ilahi and Mrs. Nageen Malik, and many more members from other parts of the world. Hafiz Sher Muhammad who had been in Fiji for many years was especially fond of her and always praised her for her kindness and hospitality.

She was loved by everyone, and we will all miss her very much.

Wassalaam.

Noman

Condolence message from Shaukat A Ali, Coordinator Asia-Pacific Region

Dear Sister Samina

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahe wa Barakatuh.

We are deeply saddened to learn that your beloved mother has left this world to meet with our Maker.

Inna-lillahe wa inna Ilaihi rajioon.

My family and I had met your mother several times and we know that she was a kind-hearted and noble lady. We pray that *Allah ta'ala* grant her soul eternal peace and abode in the highest pedestal of *Jannat-ul Firdous – aameen.*

We also pray that Compassionate and Merciful Allah give you and your loved ones strength, solace and *sabr* at this time of great anguish to bear this sad and irreparable loss.

Please convey our heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the other members of your family and loved ones.

Allah hafiz, Shaukat

Condolence message from Shabir Buksh, Secretary, AAAIL NZ

Dear Br Akbar,

Inna Lillahe Wa Inna Ilehi Rajeroon.

May Allah (*swt*) with His cherished mercy and graceful blessings grant the dearly departed soul of Sister Samina Malik's mother, a resting abode in high places of *Jannate-Firdouse* and grant the surviving members of her family patience, strength and fortitude to bear the burden of this irreparable personal loss. *Aameen.*

Please convey our deepest sympathy to Sister Samina Malik from all members of the NZ *Jamaat*.

Inshah Allah, we will hold *Salat-e-Janaza Ghaibana* on Friday after *Jummah* Prayers.

Allah Hafiz.

Shabir Buksh
Secretary AAAIL NZ

Sympathy and condolences for Br. Shahied Pierkhan, Suriname, and Sister Sheila Ali, United Kingdom

Abid Raza, President, AAAIL, New Zealand

Dear Br Akbar,
A.A.

Please convey our heartfelt sympathy and condolence to the bereaved family of Shahied Pierkhan Marhoom and Sheila Marhooma and pray that Allah *Subhanatalla* grant them both a high place in *janatal firdoss. Ameen.*

Janaza Ghaibana will be held on Friday before the *Juma'ah* Prayers.

Best regards
Abid Raza

Arshad and Bushra Alvi, Pakistan

Assalam-u-alaikum.

Dear Family Members

We are very deeply saddened and grieved to know of the sad demise of Shahied Pierkhan, brother of late Rashied Pierkhan has passed away. *Inna Lillahi wa inna elaihi raaji oon.*

We pray that Almighty Allah rest his soul in high places in *Jannate Firdouse* which He has promised to all righteous people and that He also grant *sabar* and fortitude to the surviving members of the family to bear the burden of this irreparable personal loss.

Aameen.

Best regards,

Arshad Alvi and Bushra Alvi
Darul Islam
Pakistan

Riaz Ahmed Choudhary, Jammu

Assalam-o-Alaikum wrwb.

We the members of AAAIL Jammu too share grief and sorrow on the sad passing away of Brother Shahied Pierkhan Marhoom, brother of the late Rashied Pierkhan of Suriname, and Sister Sheila Ali Marhooma, beloved mother of Sister Fareida Ibrahim of the United Kingdom.

Inna Lillahe Wa Inna Iلهi Rajeeon.

Allah Hafiz, Riaz Ahmed Choudhary

Acknowledgement

Jameela Khan, President AAAIL, UK

Walaikum Assalam.

... I am really sorry to hear about Rasheid Pierkhan's brother.

THANK YOU SO MUCH for including the tribute to Sheila. It means a lot to U.K. *Jamaat.*

Best Wishes to you both,
Jameela



“O you who believe, seek assistance through patience and prayer; surely Allah is with the patient. ... And We shall certainly try you with something of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits. And give good news to the patient, who, when a misfortune befalls them, say: Surely we are Allah's, and to Him we shall return. Those are they on whom are blessings and mercy from their Lord; and those are the followers of the right course” (Holy Qur'an, 2:153-157).

FEATURE REPORT

[Contributed]

A pilgrim's account of visit to Harmain Sharif From the pen of a humble servant of Islam

Arrangements

For some time my wife and I were looking forward to going for *hajj* or *umrah* but our health problems kept us from fulfilling this lifelong cherished desire. Some of our friends suggested that starting with *umrah* will be a good idea to assess whether we will be able to stand the physical hardships of *hajj*. When, in January 2010, various tour and travel agencies in the USA advertised packages for *umrah*, my wife, my eldest son and I selected one offering a visit to Makkah for *umrah*, to Masjid-i Madinah Munawwarah, and visits to historical places around Makkah and Madinah. One advantage of choosing such packages is that one does not have to worry about personally arranging for hotels and inland transport, etc, as the package covers all of these.

On 28 February we received information about our confirmed seats for air travel from the USA to Jeddah and back, along with our passports with Saudi visa for a 30-day stay, and we were set for our journey.

After fifteen hours of direct flying from the USA, we arrived at Dubai Airport where, during the stopover, we changed into *ihram* after showering in the transit lounge. We then flew from the UAE to Jeddah, arriving in the early morning, and on to Makkah by bus from there. After registering at the Sarwah Royal Orchid Hotel and breakfasting in the dining hall, we were ready to perform *umrah*.

MAKKAH

Kabah

When we arrived at the King Abdul Aziz Gate of Masjid Al-Haram, we recited "*Bismillah was salato wassalmo Ala Rasul Allahe-Allahum Maghfir lee Zanoobi waftah lee Abwaba Rahmataka*" and proceeded towards the Kabah. On seeing the Kabah, and before entering the yard, we recited, "*Allahumma zid Hazal Baite Tashreefan wa Inzanan wa Takreenirn wa Mahabaton aw wa zid man Sharrafa hu wa karramahu Mimam Hajjahu watamarahu tashreefan wa takreemanawwa barra.*" Before starting *tawaf*, we recited "*Allahumma imman bika a tasdeeqan bikitabaka wa wafaan beahdika watebaan le Sunnate Nabika Sali Allah Alaih wa Sallam,*" then proceeded to the point just at the start of the area where the Black Stone (*Hajr-e Aswad*) stands. Here we recited "*Allahu Akbar, La ilaha ill Allah,*" and with the palms of our hands facing the *Hajr-e-Aswad*, we started our *tawaf*.

When we arrived at the Maqam-e Ibrahim, the recitation changed to "*Subhan Allah, wal hamdu lilah la illahaiill Allah wallahu Akbar,*" with which we passed behind the Hateem (the area on the side of the Kabah which was left out when the Quraish-e-Makkah rebuilt it some three to five years before the Holy Prophet's call to prophethood. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) had placed the Hajr-e-Aswad on the wall where it now stands. Since the size of the Kabah was reduced by the Quraish at that time, compared to the size as was built by Hazrat Ibrahim, the area left out is called *Hateem*, and is now indicated by a wall of about five to six feet high around the area).

Tawaf

Thereafter, until reaching the Rukn-eYamani, one may supplicate and ask favours from Allah in one's own language. Since I had a long list of favours to ask Allah for, I divided the requests into seven parts, allowing me to address one in each round of *tawaf*. Firstly, I asked forgiveness for my past sins and

protection from future sins. In the second *tawaf* I sought forgiveness for my elders and near relatives and my fraternal elders and members and their wives. In the third I recited the *Darud Shareef*, and “*Allahuma Ansar man Nazara deena Muhammad au wajaatun min hum, Allahuma Makhzal man khazala deena Muhammadan wa la Tajalna min hum,*” and prayers for the elevation of the *darjat-e-Muhammad* and *darjat-e-Hazrat Imam* of the era of Momineen. During the fourth *tawaf*, I prayed for the good health and long life of my wife and children, cousins and their families, and all my other relatives. In the sixth I beseeched Allah for the health and long life of all my fraternal brothers and sisters and their children, and in the last *tawaf* I prayed for the health and long life of my personal friends and their families, and the friends and families of my children and their families, and ended with a prayer for the predominance of Islam in the world and for the granting of *hidayat* to all Muslims. This was a long list of prayers but then there was no better time and place for seeking favours from Allah than in the *tawaf*, so, like many others around me, I cried to Allah for forgiveness and for favours.

After Rukn-e Yamani, we started chanting “*Allah humma inna asa lokaal afwa wal afinata fidounya wal Akherate, Rabbana fiddunya Hasanatuna wa fil Akherate hasnatuwesa qinar Azabannar,*” until we reached the starting point parallel to the wall on which the Hajr-e-Aswad rests, the raised our hands, palms facing the Hajr-e-Aswad in a kissing gesture, which is called *istaslam*, again reciting *BismAllah Allahu Akbar, Kalma-e-Shadah*, and repeated what we had done in the first round, thus completing the seven rounds of *tawaf*. We then offered two *rakahs Nafl* prayer behind the Maqam-e-Ibrahim, after which we took a cup of Zamzam water and proceeded towards Safa and Marwa for *sa’y*.

Safa and Marwah

Safa and Marwah, two hills between which Hazrat Hajrah ran many times looking for any signs of water or civilisation, have now been made into a building adjoining the Kabah and is an air-conditioned building covering the whole pathway between Safa and Marwah, with marble floors and *aab-e Zamzam* provided at half the distance, which hardly makes one realise the hardships which Hazrat Hajrah had faced in running between these two hills on a stony and thorny path in scorching heat while searching for water for her son. On reaching the starting point of seven courses between Safa and Marwah, we made *niyah* for *sa’y* and then recited verse 158 of *Surah Baqarah*, “*Innas Safa wal Marwah to min Shaier Allah fa man Hajjal Baita an Atamara flajunnah Allahe Anyyatawwaf bihima wa man tatawwaa khairun fa innallaha shakeran aleem*” (The *Safa* and the *Marwah* are truly among the signs of Allah; so whoever makes a pilgrimage to the House or pays a visit (to it), there is no blame on him if he goes round them. And whoever does good spontaneously—surely Allah is Bountiful in rewarding, Knowing). (A small portion of the Safa hill has been retained in the building and is visible through a glass wall.) We then turned towards the Kabah, which is visible through an arch, and raised our hands in supplication and recited “*La llah ill Allah wahdahu la Shareeka lahu, lahul Mulko wa lahul Hamdo. Wa hava ala kulte shayin Qadeer. La llah ill Allah wahahaha Anjaza waadahu wa Nasara Abduhu wa hazani al Ahzab wahdahu.*” We repeated this thrice and then started *sa’y*, walking from Safa towards Marwah. Men run or jog between the two green pillars which are also indicated by green lights blinking at those points. Ladies and those who cannot run for health reasons are allowed to walk. When I had completed three courses, I began having breathing problems and was sweating profusely. My son asked whether I could complete the seven courses and I told him I was completely exhausted and that it was my heart disease which had caused this. He got a wheelchair for me and I completed the remaining four courses in it, while my wife walked alongside me. At the end, at Marwah, we recited prayers and I got my hair trimmed on three sides while my son had his head shaved. Thus by 9.30 our first *umrah* was completed and we returned to our hotel room.

During our five-day stay in Makkah we performed *tawaf* every day, and also offered our five times daily and *Tahajjud* prayers in the Kabah, with the exception of the *Tahajjud* and *Fajr* on the third day due to upset stomachs resulting from eating food my son had bought from an Arab-style fast-food outlet.

Visit with Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah

We also did not perform our *Maghrib* and *Isha* prayers in Masjid al Haram as we had gone to Jeddah after *Asr* to visit and dine with a Malk Mauritanian, Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah, a saintly person, who has a doctorate in Philosophy from Paris University and is considered an authority on Islamic jurisprudence. He has been a professor of jurisprudence in many universities and is held in high esteem for his piety and leaning by those who know him. His two sons, both of whom had their higher education in the USA and are married to Americans (who converted to Islam before they met the Sheikh's sons), are living next to their father's place in Jeddah. This meeting with Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah was very rewarding. I was very impressed by his extreme humility in spite of his high position. We performed *Isha* prayer with him in a *masjid* which is located about two blocks from his home. After *Isha*, one of the Sheikh's sons treated us to Arab hospitality with a sumptuous dinner.

We returned to Makkah just before 1.00 a.m., and that being our last day in Makkah, we decided to perform another *umrah* before leaving for Madinah.

Second umrah

We again put on our *ihram*, at one of the five places decided on for this exercise by the Holy Prophet (pbuh) (called *miqat*, pl. *mawaqit*). On our way from Jeddah to Makkah we had noticed that one *miqat* was situated in a place called Taneem, some ten miles from the Kabah, and Masjid-e-Aisha is built there with provisions for showering, a requisite before changing into *ihram*. Taxi cabs and wagons run between the Kabah and Masjid-e-Aisha to transport pilgrims wishing to change into fresh *ihram*. At about 2.00 a.m. we boarded a wagon near the Kabah where the library is located and went to Masjid-e Aisha. Once again we had to recite the *niyah* for *umrah*, "*Allahhuma inni creedal umrata fayassir ha lee wa taqabbal ha minni.*" (There is also a shorter version of the *niyah* for *umrah*: "*Labbaika Allahumna umratan.*") After changing into our *ihram* we recite the *tasbih*, "*Labbaika Allah huma labbaik. Labbaika la Shareeka laka labbaik. Inna al-Hamdu wal Nimata laka wal Mulka. La Shareeka laka.*" (*Tasbih* must be recited by everyone who puts on *ihram* at least once and preferably thrice. The pilgrim must recite it for himself.) After *tasbih*, we offered two *rakahs* requisite *Nafl* prayers at Masjid-e-Aisha and returned to Masjid Al-Haram by taxi cab before 4.00 a.m., just in time for *Tahajjud* prayer. After offering *Fajr* prayer, we entered the yard of the Kabah after reciting the requisite *du'a* and completed seven rounds of *tawaf*. After *tawaf*, my wife performed two *rakahs* *Nafl* prayer in Hateem and supplicated to Allah for some time, asking Allah to grant her good health, forgiveness and other things. By then my son and I had performed two *rakahs* *Nafl* prayer behind the Maqama-e-Ibrahim, reciting *Surah Al-Kafirun* after *Surah Fatihah* in the first *rakah* and *Surah Ikhlas* after *Surah Fatihah* in the second. After my wife, too, had performed two *rakahs* *Nafl* behind Maqam-e-Ibrahm, we proceeded to Safa for *sa'y*. My son rented a wheelchair again for me for this ritual, and after saying the *niyyah* of *sa'y* and the *tasbih*, we completed the seven courses, with my son pushing the wheelchair. After we had completed the *sa'y*, we made supplication at Marwah and I had my hair trimmed again at three places and my son again had his head shaved.

After completing *umrah*, we returned to the hotel, had breakfast and rested in our room for a couple of hours before returning to Masjid Al-Haram for *Zuhr* prayer. Later we offered *Asr* prayer in Masjid Al-Haram before leaving for Madinah.

During our stay in Makkah we had a desire to see the house where the Holy Prophet (pbuh) lived before the *hijrah* to Madinah. That house is now in the area in which the library is built adjacent to Masjid Al-Haram. We made two attempts to visit it but unfortunately the library was not open.

Ghar-e-Thaur

We went to see Ghar-e-Thaur, which is about 10 to 12 miles from the Kabah and within the Makkah city limits. This *ghar* is the place where the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and Hazrat Abu Bakr had spent about three days and nights at the time of the *Hijrah* while the *kafir* Quraish of Makkah were searching for them. The pursuers had reached up to the entrance of the *ghar* where, miraculously, after the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and Hazrat Abu Bakr had entered, a spider had woven a web and a falcon had built a nest and laid eggs in it. On seeing these, the pursuers had left as they doubted that anyone could have entered the *ghar* and left without disturbing the web and the nest. This *ghar* is located on the top of a hill, 5000 feet high, with only a stony trail leading to it. Our son went to see it with some other young people, while my wife and I waited at the base with many other elderly people from different parts of the world. Some had arrived there in tour buses and included Turks, Malaysians, Indonesians, Syrians, Indians and Pakistanis. While people were trekking up the trail, I was lost in thought, travelling back in time fourteen hundred years, imagining the conditions then when there were only stony trails instead of the mettled roads, and the hardships that the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and Hazrat Abu Bakr would have faced in reaching this *ghar* before dawn, after leaving their homes at midnight, the fear of being chased and found looming large in their minds. My son returned after about two hours and we rode back to Masjid Al-Haram in time for *Zuhr* prayer.

An observation

I feel if there is a small *masjid* with *wudu* facilities at the base of the hill on which Ghar-e-Thaur is located, and then pilgrims who remain there can spend their time in *Nafl* prayer or reading the Qur'an rather than just sitting around in buses etc. while waiting for their group members to return.

Hazrat Maimunah

We also visited the grave of Ummal Momin Hazrat Maimunah (Allah be pleased with her) at Sarif, which is now located alongside a road leading to Makkah. Hazrat Maimunah was the younger sister of Ummal Fadl, the wife of Hazrat Abbas, the Holy Prophet's uncle. Her sister Salamah was the wife of Hazrat Hamza, another uncle of the Holy Prophet (pbuh), who was martyred in the Battle of Uhud. When the Holy Prophet (pbuh) had come to Makkah in 7 AH with two thousand Muslims, as agreed in the Truce of Hudaibiyya in 6 AH, the Makkan Quraish moved away from the city to the hills surrounding the Kabah and the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and his companions remained in the Kabah for three days, performing *umrah* and offering prayers in Masjid Al-Haram. Some Makkans who had embraced Islam but had not declared it openly would come down from the hills to the Kabah to join the Muslims in prayer. Hazrat Abbas, who had declared his Islam at the time of the Battle of Badr, was being tolerated by the Makkan *kafirs* and he and his wife spent these three days with the Holy Prophet (pbuh). They offered Hazrat Maimunah, who was a 36-year-old widow, to the Holy Prophet (pbuh) in marriage. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) accepted and requested of the Makkan *kafirs* a one-day extension to stay in Makkah so that the marriage could be solemnised and that he may host a feast. On their refusal, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and his companions left the city by midnight of the third day as previously agreed but the Holy Prophet (pbuh) left one of his personal attendants behind in Makkah to take Hazrat Maimunah with him the next day while the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and the rest of his companions camped at Sarif some miles outside Makkah. When Hazrat Maimunah arrived there the next day, the marriage was solemnised and consummated. Ummal Momin Hazrat Maimunah lived to be 80 years and was the last of the Holy Prophet's wives to pass away from this world. She had desired that she be buried in Sarif at the same place where her marriage had been consummated, and this wish was fulfilled. Now a wall covering an area of about one acre has been built around grave and a steel gate opens onto the site. When we arrived there the gate was locked so we stood outside and offered *Fatihah* and *du'a* for the elevation of Hazrat Maimunah's *darjaat* in the hereafter. We then returned to Masjid Al-Haram for *Maghrib* prayer.

Other pilgrims

The day we had arrived in Makkah and performed our first *umrah* in the morning, there were about 10 to 15 thousand people in Masjid Al-Haram. By evening the number had swelled to more than a hundred thousand. We saw people emerging from hotels all around the Haram and entering from all the gates. Among them were groups of Turkish, Malaysian, Indonesian, Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Syrian and African origin. We noticed that during *tawaf* members of groups performed the ritual together, holding one another's hands. This resulted in hindering those individuals who preferred to walk swiftly, who were forced to make their way around the groups. No one complained, though. In fact, everyone was so absorbed in supplication that other matters did not appear to come to mind. I myself was walking slowly and on occasion kept company with these groups for a few paces, joining them in their *du'a*.

MADINAH

Masjid-i-Nabwi

We left Makkah after offering *Asr* prayer in Masjid Al-Haram and arrived in Madinah-e-Munnawwarah by midnight, having offered *Maghrib* and *Isha* prayers at roadside *masjids* located in small towns on the way. After registering at the hotel and making *wudu* we went straightaway to Masjid-i-Nabwi from the gate nearest our hotel. The present *masjid* building, including its courtyard, which are paved with marble and black stones, is huge and stands on an area where the whole city of Madinah of the Holy Prophet's time was located. Thus walking in the courtyard one may be walking over the area where the home of one or another of the companions of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) had been located. We entered the *masjid* from Bab Al-Salam and my son, leading the way, took me to that area where the original Masjid-e-Nabwi had once stood. Presently this area is distinguished from the rest of the *masjid* by the colour of the carpets on the floor. It has green carpets while the rest has red. The area adjoining the Rowdah of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) up to the pillar which stands in place of Stoon-e-Hannah is known as Riad-al-Jannat. We offered *Nafl* in the original Masjid-i-Nabwi (that had stood in the Holy Prophet's time), then I offered *Nafl* prayer in Riad-al-Jannat. While I was praying by the pillar that stands in place of Stoon-e-Hannanah I glimpsed some writing on the wall by the side of the *mahrab* (pulpit), which said: "The *massalla* (prayer mat) of Muhammadur Rasul Allah." I waited till the person who was praying at that spot moved and I took his place and offered two *rakahs Nafl* at the *mussalla* of the Holy Prophet (pbuh). A sinner like me could not imagine that one night he would be lucky enough to offer *Nafl* prayer on the prayer mat of the Messenger of Allah. *Subhan Allah wal hamdu lilah wa Allahu Akbar*. Meanwhile, my son had gone out of the eastern door after offering *Fatihah* and *salam* at the Rowdah of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) to meet his mother as ladies and men are not allowed together in Riad-al-Jannat and/or visiting Rowdah at the same time. Ladies are allowed in these areas at two specified times, during which men are not allowed.

After visiting the Rowdah and offering *Fatihah* and reciting *Darud* and *salams* I went to the eastern door. My family was not there. I could not remember the name of the hotel or the number of the gate which led to it. I went out of a gate and went from hotel to hotel enquiring about them and finally decided to return to Masjid-e-Nabwi and wait for them there, in the hope that they will come to offer *Tahajjud* prayer there. I stood by Bab-i-Mawk Saud to wait for them. Finally, at 3.30 a.m. I saw them walking towards the *masjid*. My wife went through Bab-al-Nisa and my son and I entered the *masjid* through Bab-al-Salam. After *Fajr* we returned to our hotel.

As planned, we stayed in Madinah for six days and during this time we offered our five daily prayers, *Tahajjud* and one *Jumu'ah* prayer in Masjid Nabwi, with the exception of the fourth day when we left Madinah after *Fajr* for Madian-e-Salah and returned after midnight. The *masjid* used to be full, with

people even spilling out into the surrounding courtyard. Here, I saw many of the groups of pilgrims I had seen in Makkah. On Friday it was hard to find a space inside the *masjid*, so my son and I offered our *Jumu'ah* prayer on the roof of Masjid-e-Nabwi.

Madinah is full of historical sites of great interest to visitors. With a few exceptions, many of the sites are now located inside the present limits of the city of Madinah and one can plan a visit to one or two of these a day in such a way that one can start after offering prayer in Masjid-e-Nabwi and return in time to offer the next prayer there.

Visit to the site of the Battle of Uhud

After *Asr* prayer on our third day in Madinah we went to see the area where the Battle of Uhud was fought. When we arrived there our guide narrated the events of the battle, pointing out the places where both armies had been encamped before the start of the battle, the hilltop where the Holy Prophet (pbuh) had posted the archers with strict instructions that come what may they were not to leave their positions until he gave the okay, the area where Khalid bin Walid, with his two hundred-strong cavalry, was at the time of the start of the battle, the hill behind which the Holy Prophet (pbuh) was taken after he sustained injuries on his face and teeth, and the route which Khalid bin Walid had taken to reach behind the hill when 40 of the 50 archers posted by the Holy Prophet (pbuh) had left their positions in contravention of the instruction given to them. The narration by the guide given at this particular place revived for us not only the accounts of this battle which we had read about in books of history and biographies of the Holy Prophet (pbuh), but so impacted on us that we felt we were actually witnessing the events. After that we walked to the site where the martyrs of the Battle of Uhud, including Hazrat Hamza, (Allah be pleased with them), are buried, and offered *Fatihah* and *du'a* for the enhancement of their *dajaat* in the hereafter.

We returned to Masjid-e-Nabwi in time for *Maghrib* prayer.

Another important matter relating to the Battle of Uhud is that a night before the battle, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) had seen a *ruya* (vision) which he thought was an indication that the Muslims were likely to suffer some harm in this battle. In view of this, he was of the opinion that the Muslims should not go out in the open for battle and should remain in the town and defend it in street-to-street battle, more or less a guerrilla-type defence. Abdullah ibn-e-Ubai, the Chief of Munafiqeen, was also of the same opinion, but the majority of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), both Muhajrin and Ansar, when consulted, were of the opinion that staying in the city would be interpreted by the Makkan Quraish army as a sign of cowardice on the part of the Muslims, therefore they were in favour of going out and settling the matter in the battlefield. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) accepted the opinion of the majority and, along with 1000 Muslims, *marched* towards the Uhud battlefield to meet the 3000-strong army of the disbelievers of Makkah. Out of these 1000 Abdullah bin Ubai, along with 200-300 of his men, went back to Madinah before the battle on the excuse that his opinion was not followed. Thus in the Battle of Uhud only about 700 Muslims actually faced the army of 3000 *kafirs*. This shows how much importance the opinion of the majority in *Shariah* was given by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). The events of the Battle of Uhud are given in the Holy Qur'an in 3:140-159.

Madian-e-Saleh

The next day after *Fajr* prayer and breakfast we proceeded to Madain-e-Saleh, which is a six-hour drive away from Madinah on the way to Tabreek. We reached there after offering *Zuhr* prayer in a *masjid* in a town which was recently built in that area. Madian-e-Saleh was the place where the people of Thamud, to whom Hazrat Saleh had been sent as a messenger of Allah, lived. The account of Thamud is mentioned in 7:23-29, 27:45-53 and 91:11-15 of the Qur'an. Thamud were the people who, in addition to building houses with stones, also used to carve their houses in the stony mountains. They rejected Allah's

commandments brought to them by Hazrat Saleh and Allah appointed a sign for them in a she-camel with directions that if they harmed the she-camel then Allah's wrath will fall on them. Our guide pointed out the direction from which the she-camel had entered the mountains and had been slaughtered in complete defiance of Allah's commandments resulting in Allah's wrath falling on the people of Thamud for four entire days in the form of an earthquake followed by volcanic eruptions which destroyed everyone except Hazrat Salah and those who had believed in Allah. The remnants of those mountains are spread over an area of 10-15 miles, indicating that this was a large civilisation. Historically speaking, Thamud and Aad were the people who lived after Noah's time, thus placing them between six to seven thousand years before our era.

We went back to the new town for lunch and *Asr* prayer, and then returned to that area where our guide showed us some houses, big and small, carved in the stones of the mountains. My son in fact walked into one of them while my wife and I just peeped in from the doorway. My wife took some photographs, as well. The Holy Prophet (pbuh), while on his way to the Tabuk expedition, had stopped here for a while, drawing the attention of his army of companions to the evidence of the destruction of a people as a result of Allah's wrath on them for rejecting His message and commandments. There is now a *masjid* on the place where the Holy Prophet (pbuh) had prayed during his stay here. It was about *Maghrib* time, the *masjid* was locked, but water for *wudu* was available, so we performed *Maghrib* prayer in the open in front of the *masjid*. We then returned to our hotel.

Madain-e-Saleh

After having some light snacks we offered *Isha* prayer in the hotel prayer room, after which we left for Madinah, arriving there after midnight in time for *Tahajjud* prayer in Masjid-e-Nabwi. Madain-e-Saleh was reopened to tourists only this year for the first time after five years of requests and we were probably among the first batches of visitors to this historic site. An interesting incident occurred. When one of us was picking up some small pieces of stone from the site to take as souvenirs, the guide dissuaded us, saying, "Please do not carry any stone from this area as this is an area on which the curse of Allah had visited. You probably will not be carrying any accursed stone from here with you."

Site of the Battle of Khandaq

On our fifth day in Madinah, we went, after *Zuhr* prayer, to visit the site of the Battle of Khandaq (Ditch). The *khandaq* has since been filled and now seven *masjids* stand in its place, the largest of these being Masjid-e-Umar, which is also commonly called Masjid-e-Khandaq. The other *masjids* are known as Masjid-e-Abu Bakr, Masjid-e-Uthman, Masjid-e-Ali, etc. Our guide narrated the story of the *khandaq* in details and indicated the place where it was dug, seven feet wide and six feet deep, in a semi-circle covering an area of about three miles between two hills which stood on both sides of Madinah as a natural fortification while the stone walls of houses built in a way that the walls of one house touched the other making it impossible to enter the city from that end. Thus the only opening to the city was where the *khandaq* was dug as suggested by Hazrat Salman Farsi as a measure of defence of the city. This battle is mentioned in the Qur'an in *Surah Al-Azhab*. It is also dealt with in details by Maulana Muhammad Ali in *Muhammad the Prophet* (pp. 167-180).

Pointing to Masjid-e-Uthman, which stands on a hilltop, our guide told us that that was the place that was the command post of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) during the battle. We had already offered two *rakahs Nafl* prayer in Masjid-e-Khandaq. Now, my son, my wife and I went up to that *masjid* and offered two *rakahs Nafl* prayer there.

From Khandaq we drove to Quba where, at the time of *Hijrah*, before entering Madinah, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) had stayed as a guest of a tribe known as Banu Umru, and a *masjid* had been built there, which was

known as Masjid-e-Quba. It was the practice of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) to visit this *masjid* after *Jumu'ah* prayer and offer a prayer in it. It was during one such visit that, about one and a half years after the *Hijrah*, that 2:142-145 of the Qur'an, about the change of the *qiblah* from Baital Muqqadas in Jerusalem to Bait Al-Haram (the Kabah) in Makkah was made and a new *mehrab* in the wall of the *masjid* on that end was made while the *mehrab* facing the old *qiblah* on the wall on the previous direction was left intact. Since then, this *masjid* has been called Masjid-e-Qiblatain (*Masjid* of Two *Qiblahs*). According to common belief, offering prayer in this *masjid* carries reward equal to an *umrah*. We offered two *rakahs* Nafl prayer in this *masjid* and also *Asr* prayer before returning to Masjid-e-Nabwi in time for *Maghrib* prayer.

Jannat-al-Baqi

After *Fajr* prayer on the sixth day of our stay in Madinah, we went to see Jannat-al-Baqi, the graveyard that is adjacent to Masjid-e Nabwi. It is located on a slightly higher level than the *masjid* and stairs have been built leading to the entrance. At the entrance we discovered that ladies are not allowed to enter the graveyard, so leaving my wife outside to wait for us, my son and I went to the graveyard where the wives of the Holy Prophet (pbuh), except Hazrat Maimunah, and many of his Companions, including Hazrat Uthman, Hazrat Fatimah and Hazrat Hassan, are buried. Their graves are level with the ground to discourage people from *shirk* by making *du'a* on the graves. There are stone fences about one to two feet high built around some of the graves indicating that they are the graves of some important persons but no signs are placed on them to identify who they are. I think the Saudi government and maybe the Turkish government have some maps to help identify those buried there.

After that, my son and I returned to Masjid-e-Nabwi where we performed *Nafl* prayer in Riad-al-Jama'at before *Zuhr*. After *Zuhr* we offered *Fatihah* and *salam* at the Rowdah of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and his two Companions before returning to the hotel to pack before returning to the USA.

Departure

We left Madinah for Jeddah after performing *Asr* prayer in Masjid-e-Nabwi, arriving at the airport by *Maghrib*, which we offered in the airport *masjid*. Our flight left at 9 pm for the UAE, and after a two-hour stopover there, we took off for the USA.

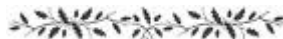
Appreciation

During our visit to Masjid Al-Haram (Kabah) and Masjid-e-Nabwi we found all the workers, in whatever capacity they were employed, to be very courteous and helpful. The cleaning arrangements were excellent. These arrangements are praiseworthy, keeping in view the huge buildings and the hundreds of thousands of people visiting and offering prayers there day and night. It is an enormous task to keep all these places clean all the time and this cost is being magnificently met by the Saudi government, and for this they deserve all the praise and admiration.

Aab-e-Zamzam is supplied plentifully not only in Masjid Al-Haram but also in Masjid-e-Nabwi, twenty-four hours a day. May Allah bless all of those who are rendering these services to pilgrims. *Ameen*.

Observation

One small observation: during our journey to Madain-e Salah I noticed that a lot of land is vacant on both sides of the road for hundreds of miles. With a little attention and investment these lands can be turned into green orchards. Maybe the Saudi agriculture department could pay some attention to this aspect of their country.



RELIGIOUS NEWS

[Courtesy Riaz Ahmadali]

Florida Court Sets Atheist Holy Day

In Florida, an atheist created a case against the upcoming Easter and Passover Holy days. He hired an attorney to bring a discrimination case against Christians and Jews and observances of their holy days. The argument was that it was unfair that atheists had no such recognized days.

The case was brought before a judge. After listening to the passionate presentation by the lawyer, the judge banged his gavel declaring, "Case dismissed!"

The lawyer immediately stood, objecting to the ruling saying, "Your Honor, how can you possibly dismiss this case? The Christians have Christmas, Easter and others. The Jews have Passover, Yom Kippur and Hanukkah, yet my client and all other atheists have no such holidays."

The judge leaned forward in his chair saying, "But you do. Your client, Counsel, is woefully ignorant."

The lawyer said, "Your Honor, we are unaware of any special observance or holiday for atheists."

The judge said, "The calendar says April 1st is April Fools Day. Psalm 14:1 states, 'The fool says in his heart, there is no God.' Thus, it is the opinion of this court, that, if your client says there is no God, then he is a fool. Therefore, April 1st is his day. Court is adjourned."



PUBLICATION

Web link to *The HOPE Bulletin* on Central Anjuman's official website

The aaiil.org Webmaster will place online, at <http://aaiil.org/text/articles/hope/hopebulletin.shtml>, some selected issues of *The HOPE Bulletin* and some articles and special photographic supplements which do not carry any sensitive or confidential matters of our worldwide *Jama'at*.

***The Light* – UK Edition**

To access current and previous issues, kindly click on the following weblink: <http://www.ahmadiyya.org/>

In the April 2010 issue we draw your attention to the article, "The Second Happiest Occasion of My Life," written by Maulana Muhammad Ali Sahib of blessed memory.

***Paigham-E-Haq*, Fiji *Jama'at's* magazine, now online**

We congratulate Br. Mehboob Raza, Editor of *Paigham-e-Haqq*, and his staff for the recent introduction of online publication of this esteemed spiritual magazine. May Allah (swt) make this endeavour successful and reward the staff for this noble task. *Aameen*.

Updates on “Virtual Mosque, UK by Mudassar Aziz

As salam alaikum.

We have some new updates on the virtualmosque site.

Final part of the series on the state of Muslims in the Punjab in the 1800s:

<http://www.virtualmosque.co.uk/state-of-muslims-in-the-punjab-in-the-1800s-final-part/>

Our March edition of the monthly magazine:

<http://www.virtualmosque.co.uk/the-light-magazine-march-2010-edition/>

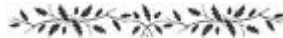
Sunnis use Ahmadi research to defend Islam:

<http://www.virtualmosque.co.uk/sunnis-use-ahmadi-research-to-defend-the-holy-prophet/>

Please see the blog below for a very revealing speech about *wuzu*.

New videos added every week, as well as articles daily.

<http://www.virtualmosque.co.uk/>



WHAT OUR READERS SAY

SIV (AAIIL) election

On April 25th there will be a General Assembly in which a new Board of Executives for the Surinaamse Islamitische Vereniging AAI (SIV AAI) will be elected. In due time we will send you some more news about that, perhaps with some pictures as well as the names of the new Members of the Board.

Salaam, Robbert Bipat



HOPE MEMBER SERVICE

Recipe of the Month

Chicken with sweet corn

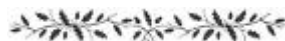
Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons sunflower oil
- 2 medium onions, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons ginger-garlic paste

- 600g skinless chicken breasts, cut into 2.5cm cubes
- 150g sweet corn, fresh or frozen
- teaspoon chilli powder
- 1 teaspoon garam masala
- teaspoon turmeric powder
- 225g ripe tomatoes, roughly chopped
- 1 tablespoon tomato puree
- salt, to taste
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh coriander leaves, to garnish

Method of Preparation

- Heat the oil in a heavy-based, non-stick saucepan and fry the onions over a high heat until soft – about 5 minutes. Add the ginger-garlic paste and fry for 1 minute.
- Add the chicken and stir-fry for 5 minutes to seal the meat.
- Add the rest of the ingredients and continue cooking until the chicken is cooked through – about 15 minutes. You may need to add a little water to prevent the curry from drying up.
- Garnish with fresh coriander.



PHOTOGRAPHIC PRESENTATION

Shaukat A Ali, Coordinator Asia-Pacific Region, visits India *Jama'ats*



Dr M. Sohrab providing information to Shaukat Ali.
Mufti Mumtaz Alam is at right and Maulana M.
Mushtaque is on left facing camera



Shaukat Ali addressing the gathering



Shaukat Ali and his team being welcomed at Virbanna Village, Bihar. Behind him are Advocate Sahab Shabbir, Mufti Mumtaz Alam and Maulvi Abdul Qaiyyum



Shaukat Ali in front of Masjid at Braini Village with (l-r) Mufti Mumtaz Alam, Dr M. Sohrab and Maulvi Abdul Qaiyyum



Shaukat Ali listening to village leaders at Virbanna Village, Bihar



Shaukat Ali talking with community leaders and others at Briani Village. On his left is Maulvi Shamsher



Being welcomed by a community leader in Braini Village, Bihar



Discussing activities with some members in Kolkata. From left: Hifazat Hossain, Enayat Karim Shaikh, Eshfaque Hossain, Maulvi Abdul Mutallib

CONTACT INFORMATION

Akbar Abdullah

Editor, *The HOPE Bulletin*

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 232811
Sacramento, California 95823-0430, U.S.A.

E-mail Address: akbar_786us@yahoo.com

Telephone Number: (773) 539-6892

