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Al Ihsan Relief (AIR) aid reaches Syrian refugees in Lebanon



Lebanon : With the tremendous support, contribution and duas of the Ummah, Al Ihsan Relief (AIR) continues with its relief operations in Lebanon. AIR has delivered much needed aid in freezing temperatures to desperate refugees in the Beka Valley of Jeb Jenin. Notwithstanding the challenges which included the blocking of entry into Lebanon of a team of SA volunteers and a journalist, operations in December 2013 and February 2014 have thus far been conducted. Whilst the aid has brought some relief to the suffering, there are literally thousands who are in dire need of basic food and necessities.

Detailed report on page 2

MUSLIM MASSACRE

Central African Republic (CAR)

The Muslim community in the Central African Republic (CAR) is under siege amid the failure by the French and allied troops to disarm violent Christian mobs in the country, a report said.

"The Muslim population in the Central African Republic is under siege. People who have even attempted to leave have been prevented from leaving," said Abayomi Azikiwe, the editor of Pan-African News Wire.

"There are mobs that are there (and) that are not being disarmed by the French troops or the EU troops or the African troops that

are allied with France and the European Union," he added.

Christian mobs have been attacking and killing Muslims on an almost daily basis in the Central African Republic in recent months. "The destabilization and the precarious security situation inside the country have worsened since the escalation of the military intervention by Paris," Azikiwe said.

The analyst warned that the crisis in the CAR will deteriorate unless a political solution is found.



The violence in the African country reportedly claimed over 2,000 lives and forced about one million people to flee their homes.

Some 2,000 French troops, supported by a 6,000-strong African Union force known as MISCA, are currently stationed in the CAR, but they have so far failed to curb the violence.

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From page 1

A First Hand Account of the Al Ihsan Relief Team Visit to Jeb Jenin in Lebanon

The drive to Jeb Jenin was a rather quiet two hours from the Lebanese capital of Beirut. It seemed like each of the volunteers on this mission were lost in quiet contemplation of what lay ahead at the Syrian refugee camp in the Bekka Valley. The air was icy from the heavy snows that fell less than a week ago.

After a winding journey, first up the Lebanese mountain range and then down into the snow-laden valley, the group was warmly welcomed by the local organising committee, headed by a modest optometrist. Steaming copper kettles filled with sweet black tea, served with a mountain of local bread filled with either cheese or zaathar (a local spice similar to oregano), drizzled with fresh olive oil were enough to thaw out the frozen group.

The local Shaikh made a heartfelt welcoming speech, highlighting how much they appreciated the help they were receiving from Al Ihsan Relief. The Shaikh said, "Many countries in the Middle East are in crises, most especially Syria. Neighbouring countries depend on their local communities to help those in need. Not only is Lebanon close to Syria geographically, but we have always shared a close relationship with the country. The Lebanese government is doing all it can to help the refugees, but its resources are limited."

There are over two thousand Syrian families in the town, many of whom have taken refuge in the valley since 2011. Each family has between five and ten members. The number of refugees increases steadily each month.

On this particularly wintry day, Al Ihsan Relief assisted in handing out

grocery hampers to refugees in the area. A truck filled with boxes of groceries was parked in a local school yard, which served as the distribution point.

Nothing prepared the group for the situation unfolding in front of their very eyes. The scenario was enough to bring tears to even a grown man's eyes. Local volunteers manned the school gate, a flimsy barrier separating the hundreds of desperately hungry refugees from some sort of salvation. Hordes of people jostled each other in a frantic attempt to be amongst the first to receive a box which may save them from hunger for at least a month. Each box contained one 5 litre cooking oil, 5kg rice, 1kg lentils, 1kg chick peas, 1kg tea, 2kg sugar, 1kg salt and a packet of pasta and coffee. Groups of ten were allowed inside the school yard to avoid a



potentially chaotic scenario. The aged and physically challenged were given preference to save them from being trampled. Both local and South African volunteers worked as a team to offload the truck, hand out the hampers, and assist the elderly and disabled in carrying their hampers. Outside the green school gate, noise levels rise as the crowd grow impatient. Local police are called in to calm



the situation and create order. A young man on crutches patiently waits inside the school yard, for someone to carry his box. Nearby, a threadbare 9-year old boy clutches the hand of his partially blind grandmother, waiting for their ration.

A few hundred metres away from the school, Syrians have occupied incomplete housing shells. White and blue sheets of plastic serve as window coverings, a feeble shield against gusty snow storms.

Each room in the construction site is occupied by one family. It serves as a kitchen and a bedroom. Even

breeding ground for insects inside the "house". There is no electricity or running water.

A walk inside one of the makeshift abodes is enough to make one's heart shatter. A thin white plastic sheet serves as the walls and roof, over a metal frame. On this day, the floors inside were muddy as some of the snow is melting. Little children sit upon the mattress in the mud. Again, a single shelter serves as a kitchen and a room, with a wooden table with a single-plate gas stove in one corner, and a makeshift shelf spilling over with clothing, as a wardrobe in another corner. Even though their living conditions are appalling, the children smile and wave as the strangers leave their home.

The drive out of the Bekka Valley back to Beirut was a rather quiet 2 hours from the Syrian refugee camp in Jeb Jenin. It seemed like each of the Al Ihsan Relief team were lost in quiet contemplation over what they had just experienced. A world away from the comforts that we have in South Africa. Warm clothes, running water, electricity...a place to call home, unlike those Syrians who were forced into a situation of fight or flight.

As one team member remarked, "The Syrian situation is not a crisis. It is an atrocity. A typical 'crisis' in a South African household is whether to order Nandos or Mochachos on a Saturday night. We need to realise how the Syrians are suffering while we magnify petty issues in our homes."

Visit www.alihsan.co.za for further updates and video footage of refugee camps

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CAR! The Ummah Must Act!

- The Central African Republic (CAR) is a landlocked country in Central Africa. It is bordered by Chad and Sudan in the north, South Sudan in the east, Congo in the south and Cameroon in the west. The CAR has an estimated population of about 4.4 million of which 15 % is Muslim. The capital is Bangui.
- The crisis in the Central African Republic (CAR) has in recent weeks become 'a humanitarian crisis of unspeakable proportions' and 'a massive ethno-cleansing of shocking barbarity, brutality and inhumanity' on Muslims in the country.
- Thousands of Muslims have been executed. There is a mass exodus of hundreds of thousands to neighbouring countries. The government of the CAR, although vociferous about maintaining protection and security for the people caught up in this sectarian violence, seems to have neither the will nor the resources to quell the violence.
- Tens of thousands of people, who are being pursued by Christian militias had to flee the country for their safety, but many are trapped inside with nowhere to go. In Bangui alone, thousands of people are in ghettos in inhumane conditions.
- Human Rights Watch, has warned that the country's minority Muslim population is "being targeted in a relentless wave of coordinated violence that is

forcing entire communities to leave the country."

In yet another crisis facing the Muslim Ummah, Muslims are urged to:

- Engage in abundant Istighfar (seeking forgiveness) and collective repentance
- Become regular in performing five daily Salah
- Become committed to practicing Islam in day-to-day life
- Seek protection from the fitan and trials that are unfolding
- Increase Sadaqah and charity
- Intensify in seeking Allah Ta'ala's Mercy and assistance for the oppressed (Dua)
- Practice and revive the Sunnah of Nabi ﷺ
- Assist the plight of the affected in whichever way possible
- Take a stand against this crisis in the CAR by writing to or calling the Embassy of the Central African Republic in South Africa: Cell: 073 7721 430/073 9333 909 Email: hassannouhou@yahoo.fr
- Write to the Dept. of Foreign Affairs calling upon them to intervene in this crisis Email: consular@dirco.gov.za
- Write to the Secretary General of the UN to take adequate steps to bring an immediate STOP to this crisis Email: kgomotso.maditse@undp.org

From page 1

Muslims besieged in Central African Republic

France deployed its troops in December 2013 after the UN Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution giving Paris and the African Union the go-ahead to send troops to the strife-torn country

On Monday, 03 March 2014 the United Nations proposed a nearly 12,000-strong peacekeeping force for conflict-ravaged Central African Republic that would have a "robust mandate" and initially focus on protecting civilians.

There is a grave concern the violence could spiral into genocide and that a "de facto partition" of the country could set in. At least 2,000 people have been killed and more than 700,000 displaced since December.

"It is envisaged that the strength of the peacekeeping operation would comprise up to 10,000 troops and 1,820 police personnel," the report said.

Visit www.darulihisan.com for latest news and updates on CAR



- Half the country's 4.6m people need aid, including 1.3m who need emergency food aid
- 700 00 people are displaced within CAR and 68 000 have fled to neighbouring countries
- Half of all schools are closed
- 70% of primary school pupils have not returned to school out of fear of violence
- 5000-6000 children have been recruited into armed groups



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Build a Bridge not a Fence!

Once upon a time, two brothers who lived on adjoining farms fell into conflict. It was the first serious rift in 40 years of farming side-by-side, sharing machinery and trading labour and goods as needed without a hitch.

Then the long collaboration fell apart. It began with a small misunderstanding and it grew into a major difference and finally, it exploded into an exchange of bitter words followed by weeks of silence.

One morning there was a knock on the elder brother's door. He opened it to find a man with a carpenter's toolbox. "I'm looking for a few days' work," he said. "Perhaps you would have a few small jobs here and there I could help with? Could I help you?"

"Yes," said the elder brother. "I do have a job for you. Look across the creek at that farm. That's my neighbour. In fact, it's my younger brother! Last week there was a meadow between us. He recently took his bulldozer to the river levee and now there is a creek between us. Well, he may have done this to spite me, but I'll do him one better. See that pile of lumber by the barn? I want you to build me an 8-foot fence - so I won't need to see his place or his face anymore."

The carpenter said, "I think I understand the situation. Show me the nails and the post-hole digger and I'll be able to do a job that pleases you."

The elder brother had to go to town. He helped the carpenter get the materials ready and was off for the day. The carpenter worked hard all that day, measuring, sawing and nailing. About sunset when the farmer returned, the carpenter had just finished his job.

The farmer's eyes opened wide, his jaw dropped. There was no fence there at all. It was a bridge ... a bridge that stretched from one side of the creek to the other! A fine piece of work, handrails and all! And the neighbour, his younger brother, was coming towards them, his hand outstretched.


"You are quite a fellow to build this bridge after all I've said and done."

The two brothers stood at each end of the bridge, and then they met in the middle, taking each other's hand. They turned to see the carpenter hoist his toolbox onto his shoulder.

"No, wait! Stay a few days. I've a lot of other projects for you," said the older brother. "I'd love to stay on," the carpenter said, "but I have many more bridges to build."

(Author Unknown)

Moral: It is easy to divide and disunite, as this appeases the nafs and ego, however, the truly admirable person is one who builds a bridge and restores relationships despite the challenges that accompany such an act.



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'Secret' Nikahs not so secret!

Rasulullah ﷺ said: "Announce the Nikah and perform it in the Masjid." (Mishkat)

It is not unusual for a young Muslim female and male to meet at a tertiary institution and develop a relationship with each other - even though this sort of fraternising is unacceptable in Islam. (This meeting can happen anywhere; between colleagues in a work environment, when people travel in group tours, etc.)

Often their need for making Nikah with each other - when declared to their respective parents - can be met with a firm response from parents who, with their experience and acquired wisdom on matters of marriage, will not allow a marriage immediately or anytime soon based on -among other things - the importance of completing their studies, being responsible enough in terms of starting a life together, having the necessary financial means, etc.

Of course, these couples will employ the logic that - regardless of the circumstances - it is better to perform Nikah rather than be in an 'illicit' relationship.

Further, these couples take the position that since they are 'consenting adults' they can do as they please and proceed to perform a 'secret' Nikah at 'back street' venues.

Whilst the purpose behind this may be to legalise an unlawful relationship, the consequences of entering Nikah secretly are serious.

Nikah is a crucial step in the life of a Muslim and cannot be trivialised by conducting it in a clandestine manner. The negative consequences of a secret Nikah have been experienced by many who have ventured down this route.

Quite simply, it is extremely difficult to maintain a 'secret' Nikah.

Their close friends will either be privy to the marriage or sooner, rather than later, friends will discover the truth and news of this will spread to other friends and eventually to the respective families.

Once this happens, there is untold heartbreak and pain as the parents and families feel betrayed. It is natural for parents to feel aggrieved about their child marrying without their knowledge or consent.

Shariah has prescribed public announcement of the Nikah to avoid any suspicion, allegations and rejection from the family. The Hadith also emphasises that a woman must make Nikah with the permission of her Wali - Islamic Guardian.

However, if a Nikah is performed for the purpose of legalising intimacy and avoiding sin, it may technically be valid if done properly, though this could also lead to certain complexities later.

If a person is unable to contain the desires and fears falling into zina then one should honestly consult family members and explain the circumstances to them.

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International Ulama Conference South Africa

The shores of South Africa was graced with the presence of world renowned Ulama who gathered on a platform for a groundbreaking conference in Azaadville.

The conference was convened by Shaikh Muhi'uddeen Awwamah, son of the world renowned Hadith scholar Shaikh Muhammad ibn Muhammad Awwamah (DB) from Syria who currently resides in Madinah Munawwara. The conference was officially opened by the rector and principal of Darul Uloom Azaadville, Hazrat Moulana Abdul Hameed Ishaq (DB) on Friday, 17 January 2014 after Maghrib Salaah and ended on Monday evening with closing comments by Hazrat Moulana Saalim Saheb (DB) and Shaikh Muhammad Awwamah (DB).

The primary objectives of the conference were to recognize the achievements of Darul Uloom Deoband, acknowledge the ongoing contributions towards promoting Islam in its true form and to establish a framework for unity. The conference is named after the eminent founder of Darul Uloom Deoband, Hazrat Moulana Qasim Nanotwi Rahimahullah and was first convened three years ago

in Istanbul, Turkey. Renowned and respected members of the Ulama fraternity gathered from 43 countries to meet in Istanbul. There, Shaikh Mahmud Ustaosmanoglu, also known as Shaikh Mahmud Effendi of Turkey was presented with the "Nanotwi Award for Outstanding Service to Humanity". This year, the conference attracted the strongest academic minds from approximately 80 countries around the globe.

Darul Uloom Azaadville was a hub of activity, as most of the Ulama, dignitaries and invitees were hosted with great hospitality. The agenda included a host of intensive programs, academic discussions and presentations which were conducted over two daily sessions at the Azaadville School Conference Centre. General discussions centered on the many religious, social, ethical and other challenges that Muslim societies faced in non-Muslim countries as minorities and ways of meeting the ever growing challenges faced by Muslims.

Academic lectures included topics such as, Preservation of the Sunnah



Conference Stage

and Sciences of Hadith, Importance of adhering to a Math-hab, Understanding Bid'ah, Combating deviant sects, Matters of Aqeedah, and many other topics. This year's "Nanotwi Award for Outstanding Service to Humanity" was presented to Hazrat Moulana Saalim Saheb (DB) who is the principal of Darul Uloom Deoband (Waqf), a leading Scholar and great-grandson of Imam Nanotwi (R).

Darul Ihsan Centre amongst other South African organisations - Jamiatul Ulama, SANHA, Madrassa An-Noor for the Blind, etc - was invited to conduct a presentation

at the conference on the different services and activities of the Centre. Mufti Ebrahim Backus conducted an Arabic presentation that was well appreciated and generated much interest among the foreign guests. Many expressed their eagerness to establish similar activities in their countries of residence, as the work of the Centre provided a number of essential services for the Muslim community.

A special area was allocated to Darul Ihsan at the Darul Uloom for guests to view projects undertaken by the Centre and to interact with the Ulama of Darul Ihsan.



Darul Ihsan Stall at Conference



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Media Desk

Bias and negative reporting against Islam has become a very real phenomenon in the media, especially in the international press.

The Darul Ihsan Media Desk primarily monitors the media for Islamophobic (anti-Islamic) comments and anti-Islamic sentiments made in the mainstream media and interacts positively with media portals conveying the Islamic perspective.

The Media Desk contributes local, national and international news articles for the website and also focuses on news content of the Muslim world.

Also, letters commenting on broad issues are regularly sent to the editors of newspapers. Below are a few letters which were sent by the Media Desk and published in newspapers.

Daily News

2014 a year for reflection

ESSENTIALLY, two prominent themes will feature in 2014 for all South Africans.

This year, we will have our general/national elections and it will also mark the first 20 years of democracy in South Africa.

Both provide an ideal opportunity for South Africans to engage in a process of self-reflection regarding the road they have travelled, the successes and failures of the past two decades and what still needs to be done to realise the hopes that the 1994 transition to democracy brought with it.

The recent passing of Madiba, our first democratically elected president, lends a heightened sadness and importance to these two themes in 2014.

Thanks to his unique leadership, we are a free and united nation.

The legacy left behind by Nelson Mandela is one of compassion and perseverance.

All eligible voters must exercise their democratic right to register, to vote and strengthen a democracy which has become a beacon to the world of how hate, racism and bigotry

can be overtaken by compassion, reconciliation, equality, justice and freedom.

South Africans have come a long way as a young democracy.

Our vote must maintain a tempo of "ubuntu" of our rainbow nation for now and our future generations.

Most importantly, we must vote in the spirit of Madiba – with compassion, wisdom and patience – without any kind of intimidation or violence at the polls.

**DARUL IHSAN CENTRE
Durban**

The Independent

From: DARUL IHSAN CENTRE

THE CENTRE joins all South Africans in expressing condolences on the passing of Nelson Mandela, an icon in South Africa and across the world.

Mandela was indeed an inspiration to humanity.

We offer our deepest condolences to all members of his family, to the ANC and to all who shared his ideals, dreams and lessons to which he devoted his life.

Madiba left a legacy second to none in the annals of South African history. He fought injustice with a passion and remained steadfast in championing the cause of the poor, powerless and downtrodden.

To him justice and equality were indivisible and had to be relentlessly pursued irrespective of race, colour or creed and without fear or favour. He never deviated from the consistent, principled response to injustice and inhumanity.

Sweetness of an Earthquake

Allah Ta'ala has promised to re-construct the heart that is struck by the pain of an earthquake when abstaining from sin. By turning one's gaze away from the unlawful, difficulty is experienced. Allah Ta'ala will replace this pain of the heart with the material of the sweetness of Iman.

The reconstruction of a heart broken by protecting the gaze, not displeasing Allah, sacrificing a forbidden pleasure, is His responsibility. With what will Allah Ta'ala re-build it? What substance will He use?

In real life, when an earthquake occurs, the government announces that the area is

affected. It sometimes overlooks utility and other payments of the affected people. Allah Ta'ala says that He will forgive your sins. The municipality announces that they will rebuild the houses of the people with cement and gravel provided by the government. Allah Ta'ala says that He does not build the hearts with cement and gravel but He will rebuild the hearts with the sweetness of Iman. By sacrificing the sweetness of the outer sight, He will grant the person sweetness of insight which is the sweetness of Iman.

*Discourses of Hazrat Hakim
Muhammad Akhtar
(Rahimahullah)*

Let your Anger Cool First

A major cause of strife in relationships is the reaction of people to each other when they are angry. Often anger precipitates impulsive behaviour which constitutes abusive language or even physical abuse. This kind of reaction is indeed very dangerous and detrimental.

Many have regretted their actions and words that were explosively uttered in a fit of rage. Some have had to live with the consequences of this for the rest of their lives.

When angry, a person should move away from the discussion, drink some water, calm oneself down and think deeply before commenting or responding, especially in the matter of divorce.

This is especially essential between spouses because often times many a husband will give 'Talaq' or a wife will demand the same with both spouses

consequently expressing regret at the gravity of their impulsive/irrational statements once the anger subsides and reality sets in.

Parents and children, teachers and pupils, employers and employees should never express themselves when angry. Verbally denigrating and reprimanding a subordinate generally leads to transgression of the bounds and violation of rights. Approach the matter with wisdom and maturity. Many have reacted impulsively and have regretted their actions and the damage that resulted from reacting foolishly.

To verbally 'slice' the heart of a believer is unacceptable. Further, to physically smite and hurt someone is the worst form of behaviour.

A Muslim is one form whose hands and tongue other Muslims are safe.

Visit our website

for the latest news

and letters to the editor

www.darulihسان.com

Condolence

Darul Ihsan Centre expresses it's deep sadness at the loss of Hajee Mubeenul Haq Khan of Newlands West. Hajee Mubeenul Haq was an assistance to Darul Ihsan Welfare Dept. at Sea Cow Lake Office. May Allah grant his family Sabr, illuminate his grave and accept his services of Deen.

The Reward of Cancelling a Sale

Hazrat Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه reports that Rasulullah ﷺ said: "The one who cancels the sale of a Muslim upon his request, Allah Ta'ala will remove his difficulties on the day of Qiyamah."

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'YOU' - Youth of the Ummah

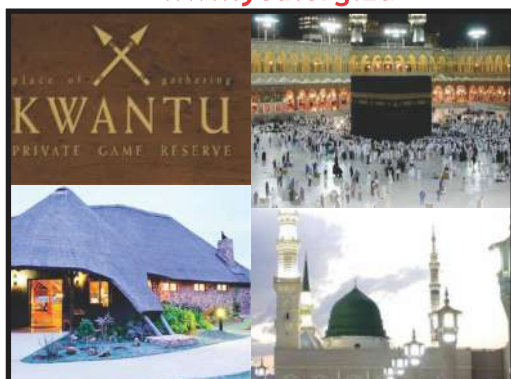
Youth of the Ummah (YOU) is the youth wing of Darul Ihsan. It is an initiative focused on developing the Muslim youth as future leaders of the Ummah. Youth adventure camps and outdoor activities are convened with an Islamic ethos to encourage the youth to realise their potential and achieve their goals.

Several exciting programmes were held for the youth including a 5 Day youth camp at Kwantu Game Reserve in Port Elizabeth which 45 youth attended, a youth Umrah trip attended by a group of 18, an exam readiness programme attended by 250 learners, and several Q&A programmes exclusively for youth.



YOU Motto: "The Youth can change the world...but that change begins with YOU!"

www.you.org.za



"Learn The Deen" Classes

As part of Darul Ihsan's Educational & Da'wah activities, a number of programmes have been initiated.

Under the banner of "Learn the Deen", these programmes are designed to educate especially new Muslims who wish to learn the basics of Islam.

The following are some of the programmes currently running:

"Learn the Deen" Sea Cow Lake (Females)

Classes are held every Monday & Wednesday through the medium of English and Zulu. Approximately eighty (80) female "reverts" are enrolled in this programme, learning the basics of Islam. A team of fourteen (14) female volunteer-teachers conduct the programme at Sea Cow Lake.

"Learn the Deen" Overport (Females)

The target group is mainly professional/academic reverts. The classes are conducted on

Saturday mornings at the Cannon Rd. Musallah in Overport.

"Learn the Deen" Sea Cow Lake (Males)

Classes are conducted by an Ālim every Tuesday morning at Masjid Taqwa in Sea Cow Lake. The students are from a cross-section of the community and a diverse background.

"Learn the Deen" Starwood (Males)

Darul Ihsan's welfare and social office in Phoenix conducts similar classes on a weekly basis.

"Learn the Deen" Overport (Males)

The target group is mainly professional/academic reverts. The classes are conducted on Saturday mornings at the Taqwa Boys School.

Anyone interested in accessing these classes should call 031 5777868.



اللجنة القضائية للزواج الشرعي Muslim Marriages Tribunal

Muslim women are increasingly finding themselves victims of abusive marriages where their basic rights are violated. Due to vulnerability, a woman endures and tolerates the abuse but eventually - when the matter becomes unbearable - she has no option but to seek assistance. Whilst such adversities should never exist in a Muslim marriage, the truth is that women are being grossly abused.

In an Islamic dispensation where an Islamic Judicial system exists, a Muslim woman who finds herself in an abusive relationships may approach an Islamic court to seek an annulment of her marriage. In the absence of such a system, as is the current situation in South Africa, women are not left without a solution as they could approach a Judicial Tribunal for the above purpose.

A Judicial Tribunal should comprise of competent religious scholars and for individuals of integrity. A verdict issued by such a tribunal, following the due Shar'i procedures and requirements, shall be valid and binding upon the couple, resulting in the wife being released from the marriage.

The Muslim Marriages Tribunal, an initiative of Darul Ihsan Centre, has been established to serve the Muslim community in realising the above objectives in the event of need. The Department is managed and guided by a number of Ulama and Muftis from the Fatwa and Social Departments of Darul Ihsan.

For more information
please visit
www.muslimmarriagestribunal.co.za

'Feed a Pupil' Project - Volunteers Required



The 'Muslim Empowerment Fund' - the welfare wing of the Darul Ihsan Centre - requires volunteers to make sandwiches for indigent children who go to school without food or lunch.

The "Feed-a-Pupil" project of the 'Muslim Empowerment Fund' has been running for five years. Alhamdulillah, currently over 47 000 sandwiches are prepared per month and delivered to 57 schools - mainly in the north of Durban. The sandwiches are prepared by housewives

volunteering to serve humanity for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

We have now commenced providing sandwiches in the south of Durban also, i.e. Clairwood, Merebank, Isipingo, etc. To increase this, we need your support.

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Taking a positive approach to Voting

Muslim communities around the world find themselves living as minorities in certain countries that are democratic and allow citizens freedom of religion to practice and promote their faith without hindrance.

Muslims living as minorities are expected to display true Islamic values of peace, brotherhood, kindness to fellow humans and to be law-abiding citizens of the country. There is no doubt that Muslims in these countries are equal citizens of the land and will be affected by the law of the land enacted by the lawmakers who are elected by the public who they serve.

The question arises whether Muslims should contribute to civil governance and participate in the politics of the country by voting and making representation etc. Generally, a candidate soliciting votes undertakes to better service

delivery, take ethical positions on local, national and international issues, make allocation of religious, educational and burial sites, allowing citizens to express their religious identity without intimidation, permitting the free expression of one's religious and political views, etc. as well as taking a clear, just and ethical stand on international issues affecting oppressed communities such as Palestine, Syria, etc.

Voting for a political party does not mean that one agrees with all the ideologies and views of the respective party or its candidate, rather the intention is that there is hope that the candidate or his party will influence favourable decisions for the welfare of citizens and the country.

Therefore Muslims should be proactive and vote for a party or candidate who :

1. Acts with justice
2. Acts in the interest of the public and the country
3. Occupies the public office with integrity

Muslims should voice their disagreement with policies and laws that do not conform to Islamic values and present alternatives and better options.

Darul Ihsan Fatwa Dept.



The Abomination and Prohibition of Music



Allah Ta'ala says in the Quran, "There are some people who purchase futile discourse to deviate from Allah's path without knowledge, making a mockery of it (Allah's path). There shall be a humiliating punishment for these people." (Surah Luqman)

Hazrat Abu Sahyaa (Rahimahullah) reports that he once asked Hazrat Abdullah ibn Masood ؓ about this verse. Hazrat Abdullah ibn Masood ؓ took an oath in Allah's name that the verse condemns music. (Ma'aalimut Tanzeel)

Hazrat Abu Amir Al Asha'ri ؓ and Abu Malik Al Asha'ri ؓ reports that Rasulullah ﷺ said, "There will certainly be people in my Ummah who will make fornication, wearing of silk (for men), liquor and musical instruments permissible. There will also be people living by a mountain, whose flock of animals will reach them by the evening. When someone will reach them for a necessity, they will bid him to return the following day, but they will all be destroyed before the following day, when the mountain will crush them. Some of these people will be transformed into pigs and monkeys until the Day of Qiyamah." (Bukhari)

Hazrat Jabir ؓ narrates that Nabi ﷺ said, "Music causes hypocrisy to grow in the heart just as rain causes crops to flourish." (Shuabul Imaan of Bayhaqi, Mishkat)

Hazrat Nafi (Rahimahullah) reports that he was once travelling with Hazrat Abdullah ibn Umar ؓ when they heard the sound of a flute.

Hazrat Abdullah ibn Umar ؓ immediately covered his ears and walked away from the path.

It was only after proceeding some distance away, that he asked Hazrat Nafi (Rahimahullah) whether the sound was still audible. When the sound was no longer audible, he removed his fingers from his ears saying, "I was once travelling with Rasulullah ﷺ, when we heard the sound of a flute. Rasulullah ﷺ did exactly as I had done." Nafi (Rahimahullah) says that he was a young boy at the time. (Shu'abul Imaan of Baihaqi, Mishkat)

Rasulullah ﷺ was commanded to destroy musical instruments. Hazrat Abu Umamah ؓ reports that Rasulullah ﷺ said, "Allah has sent me as a mercy and a guide for both worlds and He has commanded me to destroy musical instruments, idols, the cross and all practices of ignorance ..." (Musnad Ahmad, Mishkat)

Music is the practice of Shaytan. It is for this reason that one will find music rife in places where satanic practices and behaviour is practiced, like in clubs, discos, and other forms of haram entertainment.

Unfortunately, today music has become a way of life for people, both young and old. It seems as if people cannot really live without listening to music. It is even shocking to note that some Muslim homes consider teaching their children to sing, dance and play musical instruments as a form of advancement.

Unfortunately, one of the reasons for the decline of the Muslim Ummah can be attributed to our involvement with music. Further, this can lead to other vices like adultery, gambling, consumption of intoxicants and drugs, etc. May Allah Ta'ala safeguard and protect us all.

For a more in-depth discussion and understanding on the subject of music we recommend the book "Slippery Stone", authored by Brother Khalid Baig available from Al Ihsan Bookshop. www.darulihسان.com/shop

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Q & A

Q: What is the Islamic ruling with regard to going on a sea cruise?

A: A Muslim is discouraged from sea travel except if it is for genuine valid reasons like Hajj, business etc. (Sunan Abi Dawood, As Sunanul Kubraa lil Baihaqi)

It is well known that sea cruise trips promoted today have casinos, discos, bars, dance halls and a host of other immoral and Haram activities on board. The idea of a cruise is to enjoy and indulge in the entertainment provided. In such an environment the activities and conduct of most people would be un-Islamic and immoral. Being in an environment of immorality and sin is spiritually detrimental for a Muslim and opens the door to wrongdoing.

The Noble Qur'an advises us that we should not incline to the ways of the transgressors and immoral people lest the fire afflicts us. (Surah Hud)

Hence, it is not appropriate for Muslims to undertake such leisure trips particularly when there is no necessity to do so.

Q: Can a lady accept Islam whilst she is experiencing her menses?

A: Yes. She may take a bath in this state and recite the Shahadah. There is no harm in this.

Q: A woman's menstrual cycle is irregular. She probably gets her menses every third month or so. How will her Iddat be calculated in the instance of divorce?

A: The iddah of a divorced woman who experiences menses is 3 complete menstrual cycles. The woman should calculate her iddah accordingly.

Q: Is horse-riding permissible for females?

A: Horse riding for females, as practiced nowadays, is discouraged to the extent that some Jurists have prohibited it. In the past, riding upon an animal was for purposes of transport. Women would use the conveyance concealed in a carriage (called a haudaj) which was mounted on the animal.

Present day horse riding is discouraged for the following reasons;

- a) The occupation has taken the form of sport and entertainment,
- b) Un-Islamic dressing is required and the laws of Hijab are compromised
- c) Causes a woman to reveal herself and allow the gazes of strange men to fall upon her.

Q: What's the ruling with regards to eating crab?

A: According to the Hanafi Mazhab only fish is permissible to consume. Crabs are not classified as fish and

are therefore not permissible to consume.

Q: I would like to know if tripe or the stomach of the sheep is permissible to eat or is it disliked?

A: It is permissible to eat the intestines of a sheep or any other Halal animal slaughtered according to Shariah. It is not Makrooh or disliked.

Q: Can I read Qaza Salah between Asr and Maghrib and Fajr and sunrise?

A: Qaza Salah cannot be performed at three times, at the time of sunrise, at the time of Zawal (middle of the day) and from the time the sun turns pale till the time it sets (i.e. generally from about 20-25 minutes before sunset in South Africa - (this could fluctuate according to place and season). N.B. This is according to the Hanafi Mazhab.

However, Qaza Salah after Fajr and Asr can be performed provided it is not performed at the above-mentioned times. One should perform the Qaza in a manner that is not disclosed to others.

Q: Can you please explain the process of making Sajdah? Which parts of the body should touch the ground first and when waking up from Sajdah which parts of the body should leave the ground first?

A: When going into Sajdah the order is that the knees should touch the ground first, then the palms, then the nose and last the forehead. When getting up from Sajdah, the forehead will be lifted up first, then the nose, then the palms and lastly the knees. This applies to men according to the Hanafi Mazhab

Q: Can one recite Qur'an while the Azan is being called out and simultaneously reply to the call of the Azan?

A: It is better to pause the recitation for the duration of the Azan, reply to the Azan, recite the dua after Azan and then continue with the recitation.

Q: If a person is already in the state of Wuzu when the time for the next Salah comes is it more rewarding to make a new Wuzu or perform Salah with the old Wuzu?

A: It is more rewarding to make a fresh Wuzu for the new Salah on condition that some form of Ibadat was performed with the previous Wuzu.

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The wonderful help I received!

I recently had a stroke. Being a family man with a seven year old autistic son was daunting on me.

Alhamdulillah, my wife - who herself underwent surgery to have a cancerous tumour removed from her lower abdomen - takes care of both of us.

My family and I suffered great difficulty. Being destitute and having nothing and no one leaves one helpless.

Even though my family and I are afflicted with such conditions and consequent difficulties we are grateful to Allah Ta'ala for whatever sustenance He provides us within our daily lives.

However, even while going through such testing times we made much dua for some kind of relief of our difficulties and whatever assistance we could find.

Seeking assistance from other family members, the community or organisations is not a noble thing though we had no choice in the matter.

During our trials and tribulations, Darul Ihsan Centre came to our assistance and offered us tremendous support in ways that are too many to mention in this letter.

When I consider the difficulties my family and I experienced, I often wonder that if within our Muslim community these structures did not exist, how would we as Muslims have survived such trying times?

Darul Ihsan Centre, its Ulama members and entire staff, their donors, the Social and Welfare departments - who execute the duties of Allah Ta'ala - came to my family's assistance when we were in dire need.

The assistance we received from the Centre felt as though we were being rescued from almost drowning in a deep ocean of difficulties.

My family and I would like to express our deepest and most heartfelt appreciation to Darul Ihsan Centre for their assistance.

We make dua that your and many other institutions continue to grow and come to the assistance of our people, Ameen.

Shukran
A Brother in Islam

Home Improvement Project



Alhamdulillah, over the years many homes that needed some basic yet essential repair/construct work were attended to by the 'Muslim Empowerment Fund' (MEF) of Darul Ihsan Centre.

Generally, necessary repairs to self-owned low-cost homes are undertaken to make the dwellings more liveable and an improvement of the long-term quality of life of the residents.

In extreme cases, where a tenant may require some urgent relief of living conditions which may be both unhealthy and/or 'appalling' - especially if he cannot find suitable and affordable alternative accommodation and his landlord is not in a financial position to improve his current residence - the MEF provides immediate assistance.

The MEF - strives to assist people in need.

Be Good towards the Widow & the Poor

Hazrat Safwan bin Saleem ؓ reports that Rasulullah ﷺ said:

"The person who assists the widows and the poor, is ...

- equal to the person fighting in the path of Allah;
- like the person performing Salah continuously at night; and
- like the person who fasts continuously". (Bukhari)

Generally, there is less focus on people who are less fortunate and deserving of assistance. As a result of their position and standing in society, hardly any attention or importance is given to them. However, Islam has elevated and honoured such people.

In the Noble Quran there is repeated reference made to the kind-heartedness and respect shown to the poor and the needy. Similarly, Nabi ﷺ has mentioned that sincere kindness and affection

shown towards such people, will earn them great rewards.

Apart from their financial woes, which are very challenging in today's economic climate, perhaps the most taunting and hurtful experience is to be looked down upon and ostracised by the community at large. To add salt to the wound, family and friends also distance themselves from their poor and needy relatives. How sad!

When one assists such people financially, it is only one form of caring which earns lofty rewards as mentioned in this Hadith. However, when a person/s sacrifices valuable time, offers a smile, provides social comfort, moral support, etc. then deep and long-lasting bonds and relationship are formed.

Not forgetting the fact that the rewards are also greatly increased.



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What's Happening at Darul Ihsan Centre

Outreach at Etshelihle Primary

The Muslim Empowerment Fund (MEF), the welfare division of Darul Ihsan Centre, provided a meal for all 650 children - from Grade R to Grade 7 - of the Etshelihle Primary School in New Germany on Wednesday, 22 January 2014. 185 school bags were handed to all the Grade R and Grade 1 pupils and all the children from Grade 2 to Grade 7 were handed school stationery packs.

Road to Marriage Course

Continuing with its education drive to enlighten Muslims on important matters, the Darul Ihsan Social Department held a short 'Road to Marriage' course on Saturday 15 February 2014. The programme was well received and encompassed a wide range of discussions pertaining to marriage.

Aspects regarding the Fiqh of marriage, seeking compatibility, practical realities of marriage, conflict management and other aspects formed part of three presentations conducted by Ulama of Darul Ihsan Centre.

Outreach at Mariathal School

The Ixopo Muslim community, in conjunction with Darul Ihsan Centre, distributed 101 school bags to children at the school on Wednesday, 29 January 2014.

The principal of the school, Mr Mayeza and staff members of the Mariathal School expressed their sincere appreciation to the Ixopo Muslim community and Darul Ihsan Centre for their gesture.

6-A-Side Soccer Tournament

The '6-A-Side Soccer Tournament' hosted by the 'Youth of the Ummah' ('YOU') of Darul Ihsan Centre on Saturday, 01 March 2014 at the Hartley Road primary School was a success.

24 teams of around 200 participants competed against each other in an exciting day of soccer. Prizes were given to the winning teams and the runners-up of both divisions.

Visiting coaches of many teams said they were 'most impressed' with the organising of the tournament and expressed the need for it to be a regular event.

For detailed report visit www.you.org.za



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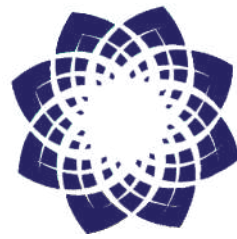
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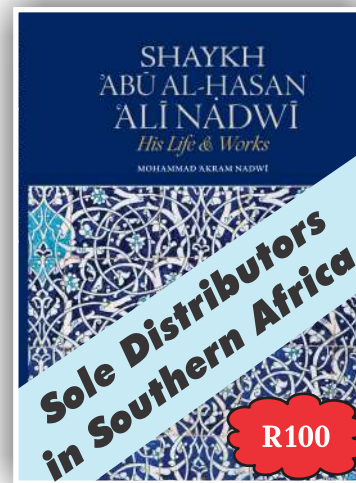


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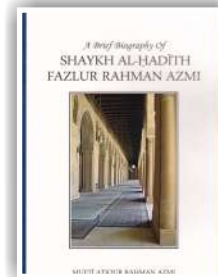


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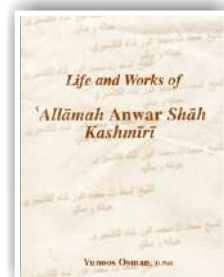
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Ukraine: Muslims fear hard times under Russia

As Russia celebrates annexing Crimea to its territories, native Muslim Tatars in the Black Sea peninsula are voicing increasing fears of losing their identity and freedom under the Russian reign.

Electoral officials in Crimea confirmed that 96 per-cent voted in favour of Crimea quitting Ukraine and joining Russia.

The referendum was followed by several steps from pro-Moscow Crimean parliament, issuing a law that allows Russia's annexation of the disputed peninsula.

Immediately after the referendum Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a treaty to make Crimea part of the Russian Federation, stating that "the peninsula has always been part of Russia." However, the Ukraine government in Kiev has committed to never accept Crimea's independence or annexation, stating that Crimea is an integral part of Ukraine.

After Russian annexation of Crimea, fears of Muslim Tatars were doubled, voicing concerns

over losing freedom and reviving the memories of exile and prosecution they faced in 1944.

More than 250,000 Tatars now live in Crimea, about 13 percent of its population of 2 million people.

The images of 1944 forced evacuation by Joseph Stalin were back to the memories of fearful Muslims. The entire Tatar population, more than 200,000 people, was transported in brutal conditions thousands of miles away to Uzbekistan and other locations. Many died along the way or soon after arriving.

The Soviets confiscated their homes, destroying their mosques and turning them into warehouses. One was converted into a Museum of Atheism. Despite rising tensions, most of Tatars have no intention to leave their homeland.

The terrified minority in Belogorsk has been bracing for the worst by stockpiling food and forming unarmed patrols that constantly check the area.

Lebanon cannot take strain of Syrian refugees

As the conflict in Syria enters its fourth year, there are nearly 2.5 million Syrians registered as refugees in Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Massive international support is crucial as the number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon continues to rise and is on track to reaching 1.5 million by the end of this year.

"It is imperative that the international community helps bear the brunt of the pressure on Lebanon," Ross Mountain, the Acting UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Lebanon, told a news conference in Geneva.

The agency has registered over 950,000 Syrian refugees in Lebanon - now constituting 25 per cent of the total population. Mr Mountain noted that this is equivalent to 80 million Mexicans arriving in the United States over a span of 18 months.

Also, the number of registered Syrian refugees does not include the hundreds of thousands of Syrians that are living in Lebanon

without having asked for assistance, or the over 50,000 Palestinians who have fled to Lebanon since the start of the conflict, adding to the 270,000 that were already there.

If the current influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon - some 12,000 every week - continues, there could be over 1.6 million of them registered in the country by the end of this year. The presence of such a large number of refugees is exerting unprecedented pressure on public services and communities hosting the refugees. It is also creating tension within the Lebanese population and could be a source of future friction, warned Mr Mountain.

He also noted that the bulk of the refugees are coming into parts of Lebanon where the poorest Lebanese live, in the Bekaa and Akkar regions. Accommodation is in short supply, and rents have gone up nearly everywhere, stretching the resources of people in Lebanon's poorest regions that host the largest refugee numbers, he continued. Wages are plummeting, and many Lebanese families are struggling to make ends meet as a result.

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