

# The Friday Bulletin

## The Weekly Muslim News Update

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## Muslims' Education Secretariat set to be formed

Stakeholders in the Muslims' education are scheduled to set up an umbrella secretariat body to oversee uplifting of the standards of education.

The Secretariat shall address challenges faced by the Ummah and their possible solutions. It shall also address issues of career guidance and sourcing for educational opportunities for Muslims inside and outside the country.

During a one day workshop held in Nairobi, scholars said the establishment of the secretariat was long overdue because the status of Muslims in education was fast deteriorating.

Sheikh Abdulrahman Bashir Mchangamwe the coordinator of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) said the secretariat shall amalgamate the scattered efforts by all those involved in educational boards to yield more results for Muslims. He said a database shall be set up to be used for strategic long and short term planning by the secretariat.

Muslims are lagging behind in both secular and religious education. The scholar said though we make up one third of the Kenyan populace this was not reflected by the admissions into public universities. Muhammad Zafar Niaz the chairman of Islamia Madrassa Society (IMS) said, "Education is a basic human right which every child is entitled to as a way of improving their future lives and the society at large. This objective can only be achieved if we have a unity of purpose". He said more emphasis was particularly required in Islamic education noting that the problem has been further compounded by lack of teachers.

He quoted integration as one of the systems which will ensure our children gain access to wholesome education under one roof.

Muslims students are being taught IRE by non- Muslims or coerced to learn Christian religious education in some public schools.

"One of the solutions to the shortage of IRE teachers is to revamp the In-Service training programme where qualified students who complete high school are given on course training and then posted to other schools," said Abdulrahman.

The Secretariat shall also engage the government on educational policies in the country to ensure Muslims interests are addressed.

Currently lack of Muslims participation in the country's policy formulation has been a major hindrance to the development of Muslims in this sector. Othman Mujahid, a curriculum developer said, Muslims have not properly utilised the existing policies to address their interests. He said the policies in existence were formulated with pre-colonial technical aspect only to prepare Kenyans to serve the whites and therefore should now be amended.

"We should get involved in review forums of the education ministry and have proper representation at all forums to address our affairs. There should be Muslim educators at all levels to safeguard our Islamic identity in educational institutions".

Chairman of Jamia Masjid Committee, Sheikh Muhammad Osman Warfa, said students are derailed from early levels of learning by the current system which is secular oriented. He said, "We should acquire our own institutions which shall offer proper education to Muslim children to safeguard the future generations".

He wondered why the government was employing non- Muslims to teach in universities yet there were qualified Muslim professionals

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## Govt doing little to curb drug trafficking

Muslim anti-narcotics activists have criticized the government over its laxity in curbing the drug trafficking menace in the country.

They said availability and easy access to hard drugs in the streets was an indication that the current system being used had failed and more stringent measures were required to stop the menace.

Drawn mainly from the medical fraternity, they further revealed shocking details that entry into hard drug abuse had further gone down from 18yrs a few years ago to as early as 12 years old in Mombasa.

Murad Saad, the director of Tuonane rehabilitation centre said this has prompted them to set up a female-only rehabilitation program to cater for the rising number of women being recruited into the vice. "The situation has been getting worse that we are now forced to initiate this first female-only centre in sub-Saharan Africa," said Murad. The centre is located at Likoni in Mombasa, one of the areas worst hit by substance abuse.

"We have seen so many young people dying from injecting these drugs into the bodies and keep wondering how people apprehended of drug trafficking are set free to continue thriving with their lethal trade." Murad said.

The government should play an active role to stop drug trafficking using the judiciary and its anti narcotic body the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NACADA)".

In Kaloleni area residents alleged that drug traffickers operate in the midst of police officers and some have even admitted to paying officers upto Kshs. 40,000 monthly to evade arrest.

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## Raila meets NAMLEF officials

Langata MP, Raila Odinga, has expressed gratitude to the Muslim populace and their leadership for supporting him in the recently held ODM nominations.

The ODM presidential candidate accompanied by his Mvita counterpart, Najib Balala on Tuesday held a one hour consultative meeting with the National Muslim Leaders Forum (NAMLEF) officials at Jamia Masjid.

During the meeting Hon. Raila thanked the leadership and Muslims for their overwhelming support in the Saturday nominations at Kasarani where he emerged victorious.

Hon. Najib Balala, after consultations with NAMLEF, had earlier withdrawn his candidature in favour of Odinga, whom the Muslim leaders said had higher chances of winning the polls.

Prior to the Saturday polls, NAMLEF officials led by the chairman, Abdullahi Abdi signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Hon. Raila Odinga at a city hotel. The MOU signing was witnessed by among others Hon. Najib Balala and other NAMLEF officials.

Speaking to the Friday Bulletin, Farouq Machanje NAMLEF coordinator said, "We are trying to change the situation of Muslims in this country by seeking what rightly belongs to us in the social, economic and political spheres. When ODM makes it to the next government, we want Muslims to notice a radical change for the better and not continue being considered as second class citizens."

In his acceptance speech last Saturday Raila vowed to ensure Muslims are properly represented and their rights recognized at the national level.

He has also promised to continue working with and consulting the NAMLEF leadership both during and post the electioneering period.

## Engage in national affairs for development, Muslims urged

Muslim leaders and representatives have urged Muslims to pro-actively involve themselves in political and social matters.

The delegates from more than 25 Muslim organizations, deliberated on the way forward for Muslims on political, social, developmental and spiritual matters in the country.

They said the world over there has been an elaborate onslaught on Muslims thus the Ummah needs to unite and work together to protect the religion.

Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya secretary general sheikh Muhammad Dor called on the faithful to proactively address matters of interest to Muslims. Saying, "We should not always sit back and wait for other people to address our affairs. Allah only changes the status of people when they themselves engage".

Sheikh Dor cautioned that various bills of interest to Muslims were being drafted without Muslims concern yet when they are passed they would have far much reaching effects. Quoting the recent marriage related bills which he said would be resisted since they were in contrast with the religion.

The Muslim leaders present at the gathering were urged to conduct civic education in their localities to educate the masses about their rights such as their need to vote in order to achieve desired changes in leadership. Sheikh Yussuf Murigu said, "We need to establish information centres across the country where our people will be informed about issues concerning them".

They also resolved that any agreements between them and the candidates they support in the general elections should be reduced into written.

The 3- day quarterly forum was organized by NMLF, the umbrella body for Muslim leaders in the country.

## 36 % Return on fixed deposits?

"Where is it that you earn an average return on a fixed deposit this high?" This is the message from Halaal Credit which claims to offer a fixed deposit of 36 percent per annum.

The message on flyers widely distributed by the company goes on to say that the amount is "not a rate of interest but a return on a profit-sharing account."

But according to financial experts who *The Friday Bulletin* spoke to, such a phenomenon guaranteeing fixed returns is not practical in Islamic financial transactions. While this is possible in conventional banking, fixed deposits in Islamic banking are undertaken only if the investors agree in advance to share the profits and losses in a given proportion. Profits are not guaranteed as the rate of return could be positive or negative.

"I do see a grey area in this, unless they tell us which kind of business guarantees this return," said Ibrahim Ibisomi a financial consultant with Africa Re Insurance.

He said in Islamic banking, profits from a fixed deposit account cannot be 100 percent guaranteed and in the event of a loss, then both parties have to share profits and losses. "As Muslims, we cannot pre-determine the fixed rates of return in an investment as there is no business with a track record which guarantees no loss," he added.

The Halal Credit Limited CEO Abubakar Yassin however, played down the matter. While he agreed that he could not guarantee the rate of return, he said, clients are duly informed about this discrepancy before their deposits are taken.

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holding doctorate degrees who understand and could teach these subjects better.

Presently the IRE panel is based at the Young Muslim Association offices.

The workshop organized by the Islamia Madrassa Society and IRE panel was held at the Muslim Academy in Park road where the secretariat will be based.

It brought together scholars and Muslim leaders from various parts of the country. Delegates at the meeting promised to link up and work together with another board which was simultaneously meeting in Mombasa.

## Ramadhan: The Month of Qur'an

Based on Ibn Rajab's -Lataif alMaarif

"The month of Ramadan is the one in which the Quran was sent down, a guidance for mankind, clear proofs for the guidance, the Criterion; so whoever amongst you witnesses this month, let him fast it." (cf. Surah al-Baqarah 2:185)

The word 'so' (fa) in this ayah leads to the following paraphrase of one aspect of its meaning:

"Fast this month because it is the one in which the Qur'an was sent down"

Ibn 'Abbas narrates "that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) was the most generous person, and he would be at his most generous in Ramadan because Jibril would come to him every night and he would rehearse the Qur'an with him." (Sahih al-Bukhari, Eng. trans. 6/486)

This hadith contains recommendation of the following:

\* Studying the Qur'an in Ramadan;

\* Coming together for this purpose;

\* Checking (one's memory/knowledge of) the Qur'an with someone who has preserved it better;

\* Increasing recitation of the Qur'an in Ramadan;

\* That the night time is the best time to recite, when other preoccupations decrease and it is easier to concentrate, as in Surah al-Muzammil 73:6.

Further, Fatimah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated from her father (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), who told her that Jibril would rehearse the Quran with him (in Ramadan) once every year, and he did so twice in the year of his death. (Bukhari 6/485)

After mentioning the above aspects of the Sunnah, Ibn Rajab talks about the situation of the Salaf (the early Muslims) during Ramadan: "... Some of the Salaf would complete reciting the whole Quran during the night prayer of Ramadan every 3 days, others every 7 days e.g. Qataadah, others in 10 days e.g. Abu Rajaa' al-Atardi. The Salaf would recite Quran in Ramadan in Prayer as well as outside it.

Al-Aswad would finish the Quran every 2 nights in Ramadan; Ibrahim an-Nakh'l would do likewise in the last 10 nights specifically, & every 3 nights during the rest of the month. Qataadah would regularly finish the Quran in 7 days, but in 3 days during Ramadan, when he would study the Quran especially, and every night during its last 10 days. Al-Zuhri would say when Ramadan began, 'It is recitation of the Quran and feeding of people.'

When Ramadan began, Imam Malik would cease narrating Hadith and sitting with the people of knowledge, and stick to reciting the Quran from its pages, while Sufyan al-Thawri would leave other acts of worship and stick to reciting the Quran. 'Aishah would recite from the pages of the Quran at the beginning of the day in Ramadan (i.e. after Dawn), until when the sun had risen, she would sleep.

Zayd al-Yaami would bring copies of the Quran when Ramadan began and gather his companions around him. ..."

Ibn Rajab later continues, "The forbiddance of completing recitation of the Quran in less than 3 days applies to this being made a regular practice, but as for favoured times such as Ramadan, esp. the nights in which Laylat al-Qadr is sought, or favoured places such as Makkah for the visitor, it is recommended to increase reciting the Quran to avail the time and place. This is the view of Ahmad, Ishaq & other Imams, and the practice of others indicates this too."

The purpose here is not to discuss whether or not the latter view is correct or not, since that is purely academic for most of us, as we do not get anywhere near reciting the whole Quran in three days! However, the practice of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), his Companions, and those who followed their path, should be clear enough.

As a further example, Bukhari (3/79) quotes from the noble Companion Zaid bin Thabit who answered the question, "How much time

# The Month of Qur'an

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was there between the pre-dawn meal and the Dawn Prayer?" by saying, "Enough time to recite fifty ayat"; since the practice of the Arabs was to measure time in terms of everyday actions, this shows that the Sahabah were pre-occupied with the Qur'an, especially in Ramadan.

Compare all this with our sad state, when we talk so much about establishing Islam, implementing the Quran, etc. and yet have such little contact with it, maybe not completing its recitation ever at all since childhood, or perhaps never!

Hence we become imbalanced in our understanding of Islam, because there are ayat which we rarely or never hear or think about; we repeat only certain selected ayat over and over again; we lost the context of the verses, the overall flow, argument and balance of the Quran, all of which is beautiful & miraculous. Because of this ignorance we go astray from the Straight Path, split up into sects, lose the blessings of Allah...

"We took a covenant from those who said: we are Christians, but they forgot part of the message with which they had been reminded, so we ingrained amongst them enmity and hatred until the Day of Judgment..." (Surah al-Ma'idah 5:14)

In Sahih Bukhari (6/521), there is an amazing piece of advice from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace): "Recite the Quran as long as your hearts agree on it; if you disagree about it, stop reciting it (for the time being)" -- studying the Quran should bring people together!

In Surah al-Mu'minoon (23:53), there is mention of the people before us (in whose footsteps we would follow), who broke up their Deen into sects (zuburan), each party rejoicing in what it had. One understanding of this, from the word *zuburan* meaning literally 'books', is that each sect left the Book of Allah, & concentrated solely on the books of its own sect, so "they split their deen up into books"!

The most twisted, ridiculous, shallow ideas, innovations and superstitions are propagated amongst Muslims when they are away from the Quran, because any little knowledge of the Quran would be enough to dispel them.

Hence, O slave of Allah, leave aside secondary books and concentrate on studying the Blessed Book of Allah in this Blessed Month (use a good translation/ commentary if needed), for it is the source of all Knowledge in other books, and keep away from wasting time, especially in futile discussions and arguments which lead nowhere, for that is a sure sign of being misguided, as the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Whenever a people went astray after they had been on guidance, they were given to argumentation (jahl)." (Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah - Sahih al-Jami' al-Saghir, no. 5633) Finally, remember that the Messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) will complain to Allah on the Day of Judgment that his people neglected the Qur'an (Surah al-Furqan 25:30). Neglect of the Qur'an is of different levels, as Ibn al-Qayyim writes:

Not reciting or listening to it;

Not studying and understanding it;

Not conveying its message;

Not judging by it in personal and communal matters, at all levels of society;

Not believing in it.



## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WITH BARCLAYS LA RIBA BANKING DIVISION

To keep pace with ambitious growth plans for our Islamic Banking Division, we are looking for talented individuals who are passionate about selling to serve as Direct Sales Representatives or Direct Sales Managers.

The main roles of the teams will be to obtain business in new areas as well as grow business in the existing ones. The selected persons will be trained and engaged, initially on a one year contract, renewable based on performance. The remuneration package will include a retainer and performance based commissions.

### Position: Direct Sales Representatives

As Direct Sales Representative, you will be responsible for delivering excellent customer service as you sell Islamic products to meet agreed targets. The more you sell, the better your opportunity to earn higher rewards. The successful candidates will be placed in Nairobi, Coast, Mt. Kenya region, North Eastern, Rift Valley, Western Kenya and Nyanza. Preferences will go to candidates who hail from the specific localities.

### Position: Direct Sales Managers

As Direct Sales Manager, you will be responsible for developing a high performing team and help them achieve their maximum potential. These positions offer exceptional opportunities to persons aspiring to a career in the financial services industry. We invite applications from result oriented, dynamic and self driven applicants with proven selling capacity.

The applicants should match the following profile:

- >A minimum of 2 years sales and supervisory experience for applicants for the Sales Manager role
- >For the Direct Sales Representatives 1-2 years sales experience
- >Candidates should preferably be University graduates.
- >Candidates with "O" levels qualifications will be considered
- >Sales related professional qualifications would be an added advantage.
- >Good networking ability
- >Integrity

Applications with a detailed CV indicating day time telephone contact and three referees contacts, copies of certificates, copy of national ID, two recommendation letters on letter head and dated 2007, as well as a sketch map to one's residence should be sent quoting the appropriate position to:

### The HR Manager Expansion Program

Barclays Bank, Market Branch

Att: Head of Islamic Banking

P.O.Box 30120,

Nairobi.

Applications can also be dropped at Barclays Bank, Market branch Building, 2nd floor in the box marked "La Riba applications".

NB: Applications without the above requirements will not be considered.

Closing date is 14th September 2007

## Pumwani Riyadhha Masjid under reconstruction

The demolition activities at the old Pumwani Riyadhha Masjid have begun in earnest to pave way for the construction of the planned new Masjid complex.

The chairman of the Development Steering Committee, Abdallah Ndope said architectural plans for the new masjid have already been approved by Nairobi City Council.

"Construction work shall begin immediately the demolition process is completed and the site is cleared of debris". He further called on Muslims to donate generously towards the cause.

The new three storey masjid will house a madrassa, library, ablution facilities, Imams residence, a ladies' prayer section and parking facilities.

The Masjid which boosts as one of the existing Muslims heritage and amongst the oldest in the country dates back to 1935 when it was first constructed at Majengo area in Nairobi.

After completion the new complex is projected to accomodate 10000 worshippers.

## Hajj: Apply early for passports, Immigration tell Muslims

The Immigration Department has sent a note to Muslims intending to travel for the Hajj to submit their passport applications early to avoid last minute rush.

Those wishing to obtain the document have to submit their applications from August 24 to November 15.

In a notice which the Public Relations Officer Ms Mary Musasia availed to *The Friday Bulletin*, the department stressed that only bona fide Kenyans are eligible to apply for the documents and went on to advise applicants to desist from using agents and brokers and instead appear in person before an immigration officer.

The requirements for obtaining the passport include the applicant's birth certificate, new generation Identity Card and passport fee of Sh3,040 for a 32 pages A series passport while the 64 page B series will cost Sh4,540.

With mobile phone SMS service, applicants can also check the status of their passports under process. This could be done by writing the word 'pass' space one, followed by reference number and send the message to 6686. For example pass 808080 then send the message to 6686.

## Govt doing little to curb drug trafficking

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Kenya Association of Muslim Medical Professionals (KAMPP), who have extensively done research on the devastating effects of drugs plans to conduct seminars for Imams and other Muslim leaders to incorporate them in the campaigns.

Residents in Lamu and Moyale have lodged complaints with government authorities to take action against known 'drug lords' but the authorities just ignored their pleas, telling them to instead restrain their children from accessing the drugs.

They said, there is need for both rehabilitation and prevention methods to be put in place to be able to effectively fight the pandemic mostly affecting Muslims.

Dr. Muhammad Karama, the secretary general of KAMMP and a lead researcher at Kenya Medical Research Institute, pointed out that tourism was a major contributing factor to the spread of the drugs which are now penetrating remote areas of Mombasa, Lamu and Malindi.

He urged Muslims, who are mainly affected to embrace the fight, saying, "They have left the problem to Muslims thus we should device our own ways of solving it. More resources should be allocated to the campaign to set up committees which will assist in stopping drugs abuse." Parents have been urged to develop a culture of effective communication at the household level, as the first prevention mechanism.

"We should effect proper monitoring of behavior change in our children to prevent them from taking up substances abuse before it reaches a rehabilitation stage".

Sheikh Abdulatif Abdulkarim, who coordinated the Family Resource Centre luncheon at Hurlingham Mosque in Nairobi, said, "We need to address the problem at both the national and local level in our environs", further emphasizing the need to implement preventive measures and rehabilitation.

He called on the Muslims' leadership to take up collective responsibility and use strategic planning to curb the drug menace which is spreading fast across the country.

## Majlis meets on Ramadhan commencement date

Majlis Ulamaa representative members from all provinces in the country will be meeting on Sunday, 09th September 2007 at Jamia Masjid Multi-Purpose hall to discuss the sighting of the moon and commencement of the holy month of Ramadhan.

After the meeting the ulamaas will communicate to Muslims the proper date when fasting of the month begins, once the moon is sighted.

The meeting will be held from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm.



Advertiser's Feature

## Increasing importance of scholarships

Education is the cornerstone of development in a any given society. Communities which have recorded progress owe their success to a vibrant system of education. Seeking of education is one of the meritorious acts performed by a Muslim. The Prophet *salallahu alayhi wa sallam* emphasized the importance of education when he said "Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim (male and female)" (Ibn Majah).

Likewise, education in Islam encompasses a wider spectrum as it does not make a distinction between religious and the so-called secular education.

Here in Kenya, history has done injustice to the Muslim community as far as education is concerned. This can be traced to the colonial era when Muslims were virtually locked out of the education system.

While other communities have been favoured with better education opportunities, in addition to this, an elaborate scholarship programme to help advance their academic careers was also put in place. Through this, thousands of Kenyans have succeeded in realizing their goal of attaining higher education both inside the country as well as abroad.

This programme has however, not gained ground among Muslims in the country. There are few scholarship opportunities for deserving Muslim students wishing to further their careers. As a result, thousands of talented students who could have been teachers, scientists, journalists and entrepreneurs have been denied the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Most of the scholarships within our community are mainly foreign funded. This does not mean however, that we cannot support our students from local sources. In the prevailing Islamophobic environment, it is even more prudent to develop more local sources of supporting the education of our young people rather than relying on foreign sources. Muslim organizations, corporate companies as well as individuals can play an important role in realising this noble goal.

Education and success go hand-in-hand. Investing in the education of the upcoming generations will present a long-term solution for some of the problems facing our community. This will also contribute to the realization of more Muslim experts in areas such as the teaching profession, medical field, journalism, where there is an urgent need for a greater proportion of professionals.

Poverty is one of the major problems facing us as a community and through empowering our youth educationally, this could also turn out to be one of the long term strategies to arrest this social evil.

Ummah Foundation through a scholarship programme has so far supported 50 students in realizing their educational goals. This number in itself is not sufficient and it is our wish that more students are supported to further their education.

As investment in education is investing in a society's future, we will appreciate any support extended to realize the dreams of the future generations.

Assistance to this programme can be channeled to:

**Ummah Foundation**

**Pioneer Building**

**P. O. Box 58717- 00200,**

**Nairobi**

**Telephone 020-221775**

**Email: [info@ummahfoundation.net](mailto:info@ummahfoundation.net)**

## Saturday Lecture

**The Moral aspect of the personality of a leader in Shariah**

**Dr. Hassan Nandwa**

**Saturday 08th September 2007. From 2.00pm-4.00pm**

**Jamia Mosque Multi Purpose Hall**