

# THE MWL JOURNAL



Vol.49 Safar 1442/October 2020 No.2



**The Conference of Islamic Universities League**  
**calls for educational strategies**  
**to raise student awareness**





### Muslim World League and rights of refugees in Africa

// The Muslim World League (MWL) has implemented many charitable initiatives and been keen to consolidate the concept of one human family, based on love and understanding. His Excellency the Secretary General of the Muslim World League, Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, has stressed on several occasions that the MWL's humanitarian services "do not differentiate between religions, nor races, but rather are provided to everyone, regardless of religion, ethnicity, or place. This fact reflects a higher moral value in Islam, as Islam does not compromise on what is given for the sake of Allah Almighty, and does not expect praise or thanks from anyone."

The Muslim World League has recently signed a cooperation agreement with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to support 'Live, Learn and Share' Project, which will be implemented over a period of three years in numerous African countries at a total budget of US \$14 million, for the benefit of refugees and asylum seekers between the ages of 15 and 24 years.

The project targets children under the age of 18, including children separated from their families, and seeks to achieve developmental, educational and health goals. It promotes sustainable solutions, provides safe and dignified livelihood opportunities for refugees as well as a suitable protective environment for children and youth. The project also enhances educational and development activities, and improves the scientific skills and vocational training for young people.

Signing this agreement is an added value to the balance of the humanitarian and relief work carried out by the Muslim World League, especially in Africa, as more than 30 million people have benefited from these charitable initiatives in the fields of teaching the Holy Qur'an, and social, educational, health and engineering sectors, community development and

urgent relief.

Choosing Africa is very important and a wise choice for MWL and UNHCR as the countries of the Sahel and sub-Saharan Africa are facing the fastest growing displacement crises in the world. Moreover, criminal terrorist operations committed by armed groups against civilians have forced more than 2.5 million people to flee across the region, according to official statistics of UNHCR. The worsening humanitarian emergency has been exacerbated by the corona virus pandemic.

Taking care of children's education and health and improving their living conditions is necessary. The New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants emphasized the importance of education as an essential component of the international refugee response, and emphasized that education is a fundamental human right stipulated in the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 1951 Refugee Convention.

The UN, through its affiliate agencies, works to convince the international community that education protects refugee children and youth against forced recruitment into armed groups, child labor, sexual exploitation and child marriage, and gives refugees the knowledge and skills necessary to lead productive and independent lives.

Signing this partnership and cooperation agreement is a very important humanitarian initiative. It has a strategic dimension that broadens the international contribution of MWL, strengthens its position among the effective international organizations, and highlights its role in spreading the principles of peace and security, promoting the values of human solidarity, caring for civilized communication and spreading the culture of dialogue, by real actions and not only words. The agreement also highlights MWL's continuous efforts to clarify the truth of the Islamic religion and introduce its universal message.





The Muslim World League

# Journal

Vol.49

No.2

Safar 1442/October 2020

**Secretary-General**

H.E. Dr. Muhammad  
bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa

**Director of Communications  
and Public Information**

Abdulwahab Mohammed Alshahri

**Chief Editor**

Dr. Osman Abu Zeid

The Muslim World League Journal

P.O. Box: 537

Makkah, Saudi Arabia

Tel: 00966 (012) 5600919

E-mail:

[mwljournal@themwl.org](mailto:mwljournal@themwl.org)

[www.themwl.org](http://www.themwl.org)



## CONTENTS



The Conference of Islamic Universities  
League calls for educational  
strategies to raise student awareness

4



"Muhammad" top name in Oslo  
for the 12th year in a row

26

MWL launches urgent relief campaign to flood-afflicted Pakistanis.....	24
The concept of Waqf .....	30
The illustrious contributions of the Islamic world to medicine and medical care.....	38



Muslim World League contributes to sponsoring refugees in Africa

20



The sacred months in Islamic calendar

50

Extraordinary Shaped Mosques around the World..... 44  
 (Manarat Al-Haramayn)  
 provides sources of Islamic knowledge..... 56  
 Italy rejects Islamophobia  
 and supports Islamic activist..... 60

Annual Subscription Rates  
 Saudi Arabia

Individual subscribers: SR. 36

Organizations: SR. 100

Other Countries

Individual subscribers: \$20

Organizations: \$26

Cheques payable to Muslim World

League may be sent to  
 Circulation & Subscription Deptt.

Muslim World League,

P.O. Box: 537

Makkah, Saudi Arabia

All articles and correspondence may please be addressed to Chief Editor, The Muslim World League Journal. While we reserve the right to edit, summarise or reject any contribution, no article, report or letter will be returned to the sender.

Views expressed in The Muslim World League Journal do not necessarily represent those of the Muslim World League. Articles published may, however, be reproduced with acknowledgement.



---

Cairo - MWL

”” *The virtual international conference “The Role of Universities in Serving Society and Consolidating Values” wrapped up its activities in Cairo. The conference was organized by the Islamic Universities League in cooperation with the Muslim World League, Egypt’s Ministry of Al-Awqaf, Al-Azhar University, Alexandria University, Prince Khalid Al-Faisal Institute for Moderation at King Abdulaziz University, and with the participation of a number of ministers, eminent scholars, international organizations and educational institutions.*

The conference recommended the development of teaching and learning strategies based on the development of logical critical thinking rather than on indoctrination, and holding professional development courses for young faculties and their assistants, and training workshops for students to train on critical thinking that enhances student awareness in all universities and colleges.

Conferees demanded the

universities’ contribution in the face of all forms of extremism, spreading discord and rumors, as well as issuing an ethical charter for Islamic universities. They also called for supporting the supreme values of humanity and affirming an established fact that followers of religions and cultures share values that should be highlighted in the system of general values.

The conference also recommended that universi-

ties must open their doors without restrictions. The first is to receive ideas from the elite of thinkers in society for study, analysis and reformulation in accordance with the requirements of each stage. The second is to promote legitimate freedoms within the university professors, and to work on the quality of educating students about different universities on the geography and the history of Arab and Islamic nations to enhance their national identities and loyal-

ties and pride in the system of their Arab and Islamic nations. Transforming universities into real production centers, and encouraging investment in human values were recommended.

The conference was opened with an address by His Excellency Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, the Secretary-General of the Muslim World League, and President of the Islamic Universities League, in which he referred to the importance of this conference and its theme, which discusses several factors considered among the major tasks entrusted to the Islamic Universities League.

He asserted that the responsibility of the Islamic Universities League towards societal affairs is enormous, saying: “We will not find a more informed, insightful analytic discourse than the efforts of the scientific and academic elite participating with us in this conference, while granting their solid knowledge, thought and experience.”

Dr. Al-Issa continued, “Reformers often raise slogans and calls to address community issues, especially



***Dr. Al-Issa: Our Islamic diversity with its national states increases our strength and cohesion.***

---

addressing academic institutions. The universities of our Islamic world have demonstrated their credibility and determination when they established their blessed league that combines its consistent work in the unity of its vision, mission and goals for their own good and the good of their societies and the world. The awareness of the League has effectively contributed to finding solutions to a number of issues”. He added, “The themes of this conference are of this type that has encountered a myriad of challenges, and even multiple transformations. The society must be assigned to this league thanks to its size, capacity, high competence and sense of responsibility”.

He went on saying, “Our Islamic societies are in dire need to strengthen their

system of values in order to preserve their unified identity. Our nation has a unified mission, values and goals, no matter how diverse its races, colors and tongues, and no matter how many national states are, their conscience is one. Plurality and diversity increase its strength and enthusiasm to reinforce its cohesion and to show the whole world that it is one body, and that its organs, no matter how different and varied, are one body in good and bad times. We all hope that the final statement of this conference will fill everyone’s aspiration towards it, with its scientific survey and exploratory studies in its hands, which are increasing and adorned with their enhanced successful dialogues. He added, “We are also happy today to launch the visual identity of the League of



***Dr. Gomaa: Universities can contribute to rectifying our behavior and restoring our noble values and morals***

---

Islamic Universities through its new logo, which carries several connotations that highlight the authenticity of the League for its ancient heritage, and its keeping pace with everything new”.

His Excellency stated, “Islamic Universities League is working, with the help of Allah Almighty, to expand its missions and activities around the world, relying on the authenticity of its identity and the integrity of its curriculum, as well as its competencies working within its regular entity, or in the system of universities included in its membership. He added, “We were pleased with the desire of prestigious universities to join the League, as well as the desire of other friendly universities to obtain a capacity of supporting members”.

He noted, “Our aspiration also extends to the competence of the young students of our Islamic universities, who will take part in the League’s global future activities, and the League will embrace them and act as a base for launching their energies and contributions around the world, sponsoring their talents and creativity. The League will deepen its bonds with all member universities so as to achieve more connotations for its

name and capacity, in terms of its vision, mission and goals”.

His Excellency Dr. Muhammad Mukhtar Gomaa, Egypt’s Minister of Awqaf and Chairman of the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs, thanked the League of Islamic Universities for choosing this significant issue, stressing that recognition of the crisis is the first way to solve it.

He emphasized that nations that are not based on noble morals and values carry the factors of their downfall in their structure and the basis of their establishment, and all people with their normal instincts have nothing but respect for the owner of good manners, whether a person or a nation. He pointed out that universities can contribute greatly to



***President of Al-Azhar University reviews its contributions in the face of coronavirus and environmental contamination and provision of job opportunities***

---

rectifying behavior and restoring our noble values and morals, whether through their curricula, the research they produce or their professors who serve as role models. In the same context, he called for establishing a true and serious code of conduct for every university student, and indeed for every student at every stage. He said, “As we measure the students’ academic level, we should measure their behavior and keenness to maintain noble values and morals”.

His Excellency Mr. Dr. Muhammad Al-Mahasawi, President of Al-Azhar University, reviewed Al-Azhar University’s contributions to confronting the Corona epidemic, and projects carried out by its students to eliminate environmental contamination, invest waste from the environment and

convert it into soil fertilizers, as well as providing job opportunities and eliminating unemployment.

His Excellency Dr. Abdul-Nasser Abu Al-Bassal, former Jordanian Minister of Awqaf, Islamic Affairs and Holy Sites, stressed the need for a serious review of everything related to the educational system to meet the needs of the nation. The education system should keep pace with the times and face its chal-

lenges, and the need to reconsider our strategic plans in light of contemporary developments, especially after the repercussions of this very dangerous epidemic, which brought to the surface our need to rearrange our priorities and the consequent reformulation of plans, curricula and programs. More focus should be placed on strengthening communities internally and externally and activating the foundations of unity among the people of the Islamic nation.

He called for the establishment of a special section within the League of Islamic Universities to evaluate and classify universities in terms of scientific research and the quality, progress and development of programs, and to honor the universities that get first ranks.

His Excellency Prof. Osama



### ***Jordanian Awqaf Minister: We need a review of education system-related matters***

---



### ***Dr. Al-Abed: We seek to take our universities and research centers to better ranking***

---

Al-Abed, Secretary General of Islamic Universities League, affirmed that university education is one of the essential elements in supporting human development worldwide. The university is mainly concerned with building people scientifically, culturally, socially and morally. He said, “Attention to the pillars of the educational process, including professors, students and curricula, is extremely important. University education is one of the most important forces that achieve economic development, progress and prosperity, and therefore the relationship between the university and society must be established by developing scientific and applied research and linking it to the reality of work and production”.



***Dr. El-Feki: Modernization and progress are linked to universities and their role in societies***

---

His Excellency Dr. Mostafa El-Feki, Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, stressed the importance of the university as a community thermometer and a measure of progress. He said no sane person can argue about its importance and role. Therefore, the process of modernization and progress is linked to universities and their role in societies. He added, “We should always

feel that we are true contributors to the scientific and human heritage everywhere and we are never dependent on it, and if the cycles of civilizations have caused us to retreat, then this is definitely interim”.

His Excellency Dr. Essam Kurdi, President of Alexandria University, said that the conference touched upon the decisive role of these universities in the Islamic world, which is currently experiencing a delicate and dangerous phase in its history. He stressed the importance of concerted efforts of Islamic universities to be, as always, beacons for professors and real education, inspired by the authentic Islamic values in all areas of life, especially in the age of globalization and communications revolution, which turned the whole world into



***Dr. Kurdi: Islamic universities should coordinate their efforts to serve as beacons in the age of globalization and communication revolution***

---

a single global village.

Dean of the Prince Khalid Al-Faisal Institute for Moderation at King Abdulaziz University, Dr. Al-Hassan bin Yahya Al-Manakhrah, said such a conference is an opportunity to exchange knowledge. Moreover, he called for benefiting from the experience of universities in the area of promoting and employing values under the banner of the League of Islamic Universities, which strives to collect expertise and knowledge under one umbrella to make it easier for specialists to deliver and benefit from each other.

Dr. Muhammad Al-Bashari, Secretary General of the World Muslim Communities Council, Vice President of the League of Islamic Universities League, said, “The Corona crisis represented a new and unprecedented

turning point in the history of educational institutions in the world to deal with this crisis. This, in turn, created a new reality that will push the education authorities to reconsider the higher education system in terms of its philosophy, goals, systems, methods, curricula, activities, and the world’s need for higher education in the light of the failure of research centers and universities to find a cure for the virus to this very moment. He

emphasized that this conference introduces us to causes of wrong thinking that the programs of our Arab and Islamic universities should avoid, so that they do not turn into barracks that mobilize our children into bloody and terrorist militias against the interests of the national state.

He concluded by saying, “Islamic Universities League has a pivotal role in building a comprehensive strategy to confront extremism and terrorism. It also helps the educational institutions in what they do, focusing on the preventive aspect of extremist ideology by educating students about the dangers of this thought or by establishing a system of positive and moral values that protect them against any extremist or alien ideas”.



***Dr. Al-Manakhrah: League of Islamic Universities bring together experience and knowledge under one ceiling***

---



***Dr. Al-Bashari: The conference introduces us to causes of wrong thinking***

---



Selections from the speech  
of His Excellency Sheikh Dr

**Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa**

Secretary-General of the  
Muslim World League



### In the international conference «Role of Universities in Serving Society and Consolidating Values »

**\* The responsibility of the League of Islamic Universities towards societal affairs is great. We will not find a more informed, insightful and analytic discourse than the efforts of the scientific and academic elite participating with us in this conference, while granting their solid knowledge, thought and experience.**

**\* We all hope that the final statement of this conference will fill everyone's aspiration towards it, with its scientific survey and exploratory studies in its hands, which are increasing and adorned with their enhanced successful dialogues.**

**\* The League of Islamic Universities is working, with the help of Allah Almighty, to expand its missions and activities around the world, relying on the authenticity of its identity and the integrity of its curriculum.**

**\* Our aspiration also extends to the competence of the young students of our Islamic universities, who will take part in the League's global future activities, and the League will embrace them, and will also be the base for launching their energies and contributions around the world, sponsoring their talents and creativity materially and morally.**

**\* We are also happy today to launch the visual identity of the League of Islamic Universities through its new logo, which carries several connotations that highlight the authenticity of the League for its ancient heritage, and its keeping pace with everything new.**



**Selections from the speech  
of His Excellency Dr**

**Muhammad Mukhtar Gomaa**

Egypt's Minister of Awqaf and Chairman of  
the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs



**In the international conference «Role of Universities  
in Serving Society and Consolidating Values »**

- \* Islam affirmed the noble values and worked to consolidate and recommend them and direct them in a more pure direction.***
- \* Nations that are not based on noble morals and values carry the factors of their downfall in their structure and the basis of their establishment.***
- \* People with their normal instincts have nothing but respect for the owner of good manners, whether a person or a nation.***
- \* Universities can contribute greatly to rectifying behavior and restoring our noble values and morals, whether through their curricula, the research they produce or their professors who serve as role models.***
- \* I call for establishing a true and serious code of conduct for every university student, and indeed for every student at every stage. As we measure the students' scientific level, we should measure their behavior and keenness to maintain noble values and morals.***



**Selections from the speech of His  
Excellency Prof**

**Osama Al-Abed**

Secretary General of the  
League of Islamic Universities



**In the international conference «Role of Universities  
in Serving Society and Consolidating Values »**

**\* University education is one of the essential elements in supporting human development worldwide. The university is mainly concerned with building people scientifically, culturally, socially and morally.**

**\* University education is one of the most important forces that achieve economic development, progress and prosperity, and therefore the relationship between the university and society must be established by developing scientific and applied research and linking it to the reality of work and production.**

**\* Educational institutions in general and university institutions in particular, are beacons to instill correct values and principles.**

**\* Islamic values are a host of ethics inspired by the Qur'an and Sunnah that make up the fabric of an integrated personality that is capable of interacting with society, harmonizing with its members, and working hard and sincerely for the sake of the self, family, homeland and humanity.**

**\* My greetings, appreciation and thanks to all those in charge of this conference from the Muslim World League, and in particular His Excellency Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, may Allah protect him.**



**Selections from the speech of  
His Excellency Dr**

**Abdul-Nasser Abu Al-Bassal**

former Jordanian Minister of Awqaf, Islamic  
Affairs and Holy Sites



**In the international conference «Role of Universities  
in Serving Society and Consolidating Values »**

**\* We look forward to the direct impact of Islamic universities on community service in a way that is related to the daily life of people or what is related to the realization of their future hopes while they see millions of students go to thousands of universities throughout the Islamic world today.**

**\* The basis of Islamic education in our universities should be the role of the university professor with a mission, not just the employed professor, and this is the basis for the rise of Al-Azhar, Al-Zaytuna, Al-Qarawiyyin, universities and institutes of Makkah, Damascus, Baghdad, Jerusalem and others.**

**\* Today we need a serious review of everything related to the educational system to meet the needs of the nation, keep pace with the times and face its challenges, and also the need to reconsider our strategic plans in the light of contemporary developments.**

**\* We urgently need to develop scientific thinking, fight thinking that is not based on a sound methodology, and fight the phenomena of ignorance, superstition and atheism that have become spread by penetrating the cultural security system of the Islamic nation and targeting its youth.**



**Selections from the speech of  
His Excellency Dr**

**Essam Kurdi**

President of Alexandria University



**In the international conference «Role of Universities  
in Serving Society and Consolidating Values »**

***\* Our conference today is on the role of universities in the service of society and consolidation of values comes in continuation of the fruitful cooperation between our universities and the League of Islamic Universities.***

***\* The conference of the League of Islamic Universities touches upon the decisive role of these universities in the Islamic world which is currently experiencing a delicate and dangerous phase in its history.***

***\* The reality of the Islamic world requires all our concerted efforts in our Islamic universities to be, as always, beacons for professors and real education, inspired by the authentic Islamic values in all areas of life.***

***\* During the Corona pandemic, Alexandria University hospitals and their medical teams were distinguished soldiers for resisting this disease and effective cooperation with other officials in dealing with the pandemic by various means and procedures.***



Selections from the speech of Dr

**Muhammad Al-Bashari**

Secretary-General of the World Muslim  
Communities Council



**In the international conference «Role of Universities  
in Serving Society and Consolidating Values»**

- \* Making international peace has become one of the Islamic colleges of the modern state, and it is a basis stipulated by Islam.**
- \* Social and moral responsibility is the main entry point to confront extremism and terrorism.**
- \* Comprehensive national security is the fruit of the solidarity of society's institutions, from the family to its largest institution.**
- \* Developing the system of values in education, such as tolerance, coexistence, moderation and acceptance of others, is the first step for ending the nightmare of extremism and exaggeration in societies.**
- \* Realizing the civilizational responsibility of universities means building higher education curricula in accordance with the authentic Islamic perspective that carries the torch of the culture of peace instead of war and destruction.**
- \* Focusing on building the national character and instilling positive values based on the principles of tolerance, moderation, openness and coexistence.**
- \* It is time for a comprehensive, participatory strategy among all societal and educational institutions in the service of the public interest, according to a system of values that govern national cohesion.**



**Selections from the speech of  
His Excellency Dr**

**Muhammad Al-Mahasawi**

President of Al-Azhar University



**In the international conference «Role of Universities  
in Serving Society and Consolidating Values»**

***\* With life standstill in many institutions due to the epidemic, scientific research did not stop at Al-Azhar University, and the epidemic did not prevent the holding of conferences, seminars and workshops.***

***\* One of the efforts of Al-Azhar University in community service is the implementation of pioneering community projects by students, including the extraction of materials that had medical and pharmaceutical uses to produce masks for doctors during Corona, and were also used in making reactions to desalinate and purify water.***

***\* Al-Azhar University's students contributed to creating job opportunities for more than 800 families, which resulted in reducing the unemployment rate, reducing the student dropout rate, training parents on projects, and cooperating with local and international institutions to market products.***

***\* The investment returns of these projects are USD 5.5 million for the first year only, and the expected returns are USD 13 million in 2023.***



## Selections from the speech of His Excellency Dr

**Al-Hassan bin Yahya Al-Manakhrah**

Dean of the Prince Khalid Al-Faisal Institute  
for Moderation at King Abdulaziz University



### In the international conference «Role of Universities in Serving Society and Consolidating Values »

**\* This conference draws up a roadmap for Islamic and Arab universities in order to contribute to re-arranging their priorities, enhancing their important role in community service and consolidating the noble values that Islam brought in the light of the new reality.**

**\* Whoever follows up the history of societies clearly notices that a society cannot exist without values and ideals that support its existence, govern its dealings and serve as the basis on which it can build its future and development.**

**\* Values have always been, and will always be, the reference and control for the state.**

**\* This conference is an opportunity to exchange knowledge, present experiences and benefit from the experience of universities in the area of promoting and employing values under the banner of the League of Islamic Universities which strives to collect expertise and knowledge under one umbrella**

**\* We expect the conference to come out with results and recommendations to benefit universities in building and developing the value system in university education.**



Selections from the speech of  
His Excellency Dr

**Mostafa El-Feki**

Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina



In the international conference «Role of Universities  
in Serving Society and Consolidating Values»

*\* The process of modernization is linked to universities as they are a community thermometer to measure progress, and no one can argue about their importance and role in the service of societies.*

*\* I salute the Islamic universities that have contributed to the human heritage, and when I went to study in Oxford, we were told that they had taken the idea of a university college from Al-Azhar.*

*\* Perhaps we notice the correlation of societal growth and progress in the regions in which the university is established. A city like Assiut flourished and grew after the establishment of the university in it. The same applies to the city of Alexandria when it was honored by the university's establishment in it in 1942.*

*\* The Bibliotheca Alexandrina were absent for two thousand years, but it has not lost one year of its impact on the human heritage, and here it is returning today as a meeting place for new cultures and a reference for creativity.*

*\* I salute our brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and I salute the Islamic universities participating in this important conference.*



## Muslim World League

### contributes to sponsoring refugees in Africa

---

By Dr. Al-Mahjoob bin Saeed

🗨️ ***Signing the cooperation agreement between the Muslim World League (MWL) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees contributed to MWL's efforts in the field of human development, especially as it targets children and youth, taking care of their education, health and improving their conditions, through the project (Live, Learn and Share).***



***Signing this agreement is an added value to the balance of the humanitarian and relief work carried out by MWL***

The agreement provides for the implementation of this project over a period of three years in a number of African countries with a total budget of 14 million US dollars, for the benefit of refugees and asylum seekers between the ages of 15 and 24 years, and children under the age of 18 years, including children separated from their families. The project seeks to achieve a number of developmen-

tal, educational and health goals, including promoting sustainable solutions, providing safe and decent living opportunities for refugees, providing a suitable protective environment for children and youth by strengthening educational and development activities, and improving youth skills in terms of science and vocational training.

This agreement is within the framework of the objec-

tives of MWL, which seeks to build bridges of Islamic and humanitarian cooperation among all. The charter of this agreement stipulates the call for “nations in general to compete in the field of work for the good and happiness of humanity, achieving justice among their members, creating a better human society, and supporting all that calls for good”. To achieve this, MWL has implemented many charitable initiatives in the world within the framework of its endeavors aimed at introducing the correct and noble Islamic values in their human and civilizational dimension and in their full conformity with the common human values. It was also keen to consolidate the concept of a single human family that is based on love and cooperation in building a civilized society, and to strive to combat all forms of abuse against this family in its harmony, rapprochement, cooperation and love in its various religions, ethnicities, cultures and countries. The Secretary General, Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, has always emphasized that the humanitarian services of MWL are intended for all religions and races, and

provide its humanitarian services to everyone, regardless of their religions, ethnicities, and countries. As that represents a higher moral value in Islam, as Islam does not compromise on what is given for the sake of God Almighty and does not expect praise or thanks from anyone.

MWL was keen to achieve what was called for in Makkah Al-Mukarramah Document, which affirmed that promoting initiatives and programs to combat hunger, poverty, disease, ignorance, racial discrimination and environmental degradation depends on the solidarity of all responsible authorities, governmental, international, civil and relevant activists in the service of humanitarian work, and preserving human dignity and rights.

Refugees are among the individuals most in need of protection, because their problem is among the most complex global issues, due to its connection to the issue of human rights and the violation of the rights of minorities. The causes of displacement have multiplied to include natural and environmental disasters, extreme poverty, wars and conflicts, which has led



to a significant increase in the number of forcibly displaced people around the world. The number of refugees reached 79 million by the end of 2019, thus the percentage of displaced persons reached 1% of the total world population, and the percentage of displaced children around the world reached 40%, according to official statistics of the UN.

Signing this agreement is an added value to the balance of the humanitarian and relief work carried out by MWL, especially in the African region. More than 30 million people benefited from these charitable initiatives in the fields of teaching the Holy Qur'an, the social, educational, health and engineering sectors, community development and urgent relief.

The UNHCR has, for more than half a century, assisted

millions of individuals to rebuild their lives, including refugees, returnees, stateless persons, internally displaced persons and asylum seekers.

Choosing the African region as a geographical area for the implementation of this agreement is of great importance, and represents a successful choice for MWL and UNHCR. This has many considerations, the most important of which is that the countries of the Sahel and sub-Saharan Africa are facing the fastest growing displacement crises in the world. Also, criminal terrorist operations committed by armed groups against civilians have forced more than 2.5 million people to flee across the region, whether within countries or across borders, according to official statistics of UNHCR. The worsening humanitarian emergency



has been exacerbated by the coronavirus epidemic.

The New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants emphasized the importance of education as an essential component of the international refugee response, and emphasized that education is a fundamental human right stipulated in the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 1951 Refugee Convention. The UN, through its specialized agencies, works to convince the international community that education protects refugee children and youth from forced recruitment into armed groups, child labor, sexual exploitation and child marriage, strengthens community resilience, and gives refugees the knowledge and skills necessary to lead productive, productive and independent lives.

According to UNHCR

reports, refugee youth between the ages of 15 and 24 often find themselves in an ambiguous world and are at risk of sexual and gender-based violence, forced recruitment, exploitation and detention. In addition to losing their homes, many young refugees may also lose the ability to access skills, confidence, and social milieu and fulfill aspirations and dreams.

According to UNHCR reports, children constitute about half of the number of refugees in the world, and many of them spend their entire childhood away from their homes, and sometimes even from their families. They may have witnessed or been subjected to acts of violence, and they may be at risk abroad of abuse, neglect, violence, exploitation, trafficking or military recruitment. UNHCR works

with national authorities and other international and local organizations to assist, protect and find solutions for displaced children, and is keen on caring for unaccompanied or separated people and ensuring that they have family tracing and reunification services, registering newborns at birth and supporting children with disabilities. Children are also being helped to rebuild their lives through psychosocial support and education activities.

Signing this partnership and cooperation agreement between MWL and UNHCR is a very important humanitarian initiative. Moreover, it has a strategic dimension that broadens the international contribution of MWL, strengthens its position among the effective international organizations, and highlights its role in spreading the principles of peace and security, promoting the values of human solidarity, caring for civilized communication and spreading the culture of dialogue, by real actions and not only words. In this way, MWL continues its efforts successfully to clarify the truth of the Islamic religion, and to introduce its universal message.

# MWL launches urgent relief campaign to flood-afflicted Pakistanis



## Islamabad - MWL

Urgent relief program convoys were launched by the Muslim World League (MWL) to help the flood-afflicted people in a number of regions in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, under the supervision of the President of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)

in Pakistan, Lieutenant General Muhammad Afzal, and with the participation of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques' Ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf Al-Maliki, and a number of Pakistani officials.

Lt. Gen. Muhammad Afzal praised the MWL's efforts, saying it

is one of the best relief organizations operating in Pakistan, and is known for its dedication and professional work, and the aid it provides to alleviate the suffering of those afflicted by the disastrous torrents and floods that struck Pakistan.

Regional Director of the MWL's Pakistan office, Saad Al-Harithi, pointed out that the program, in its first phase, aims to distribute food baskets to the neediest segments of those affected in the areas struck by torrents and floods.

Al-Harithi stressed that this response comes within the humanitarian efforts of the MWL to stand by the needy around the globe after direct coordination



with the relevant government agencies in each country. He also affirmed that this program is part of the myriad programs and projects in the fields of development and relief that are carried out by the MWL in the Islamic Republic

of Pakistan. He wrapped up saying that the MWL's relief and developmental activities are not provided to people of certain faith or race, but rather to all those in need, and this represents the guidance of Islam in its great human dimensions.



# “Muhammad” top name in Oslo for the 12th year in a row

---



By Dr. Saeed Al Khotani

“The name “Muhammed” has continued to top male children names in the Norwegian Capital, Oslo, for the twelfth year in a row.

The name become at the top in 2008 through 2019, according to Norway News and Statistics Norway, the Norwegian National Statistics Agency, It is unknown whether this trend will continue in 2020, as the figures for the year will be released in the 1st quarter of next year.



This trend is attributed to the existence of a large Muslim community in Oslo, estimated in 2017 at 8.7 percent of Oslo's 624 thousand population, composed mainly of ethnic Pakistanis, Somalis, Iraqis and Moroccans, according to Norway News.

### Norway's 2nd Religion

Islam is the second largest religion after Christianity in Norway, though it is considered a minority religion. The contact between Norway and Muslim World seems to be old, dating back to the sixties of the 13th century (1260s).

At the time, delegations sent by the Muslim governor of Tunis arrived to Norway. This was in return and appreciation to the Norwegian King Hakon Haonsson's delegations who carried rich gifts to the Tunisian Ruler, as a gesture of good will towards Muslims.

However, Muslim population in the country has not been noticeable until the second half of the 20th century, when it started to gather pace until the late 1960s.

However, the first registration of Muslim in official statistics was in 1980 when they were estimated at 1006 Muslims. Since then the number started to rise in some decades marginally and in others dramatically.

For example, the 1980 Muslims numbers had multiplied almost 53 times in 1990 to reach 54000, a figure that rose only 4.6 percent in 2000 to 56458. The 2000 Muslims numbers rose three times in 2010 to 144.000, but this figure rose only by 15.9 % to 166861 last year 2018, to make Muslims represent almost 3 % of the current population of Norway.

The Pew Research Centre estimates that with the high flow of migration to Norway, this last figure could reach 2,200,000 by 2050.

These statistics mainly are based on membership of a registered congregation, but Norway Muslims numbers in reality could be higher due to the fact that not all Muslims are members of a mosque.

The historian of religion, Kari Vogt, the professor at the Department of Cultural



Studies and Oriental Languages in Oslo University, estimates that 10% of Norwegian Muslims were members of mosques in 1980, a proportion which had risen to 70% by 1998.

Being a member of a particular mosque is an alien concept to Muslims, as any Muslim can join any congregation at any mosque regardless the ethnic or country affiliation of that congregation.

In Norway, as in most western countries, the government provides grants to religious congregations based on registered members in them. This caused many Muslims to join a particular Mosque, especially the one that belongs to their ethnicity or country, to fulfill their religious duties in addition to having a sense of belonging at their new home.

### **Norwegian Muslims Rise**

Islam is growing in Norway as more native Norwegians are choosing to become Muslims.

The number of converted Muslims among

native Norwegians increased to at least 3,000 in recent years from 500 during the 1990s, professor Vogt was quoted as saying in a report on the subject at *Verdens Gang*, Norway's leading newspaper.

The report suggested that the number of native Norwegians choosing to become Muslims has been on the rise since the 1990s when they were estimated at 500. The interesting thing in this is converts include women who were introduced previously to Islam as a result of marrying Muslim men,

Nevertheless, this way of converting to Islam among women has changed, according to Professor Vogt. "Now, women are choosing Islam after reading and researching about Islam," he said.

In addition, women are converting to Islam because they are in many times inspired by Muslim immigrants' behavior.

To find out about the most common reason that makes Norwegian women convert to Islam, the newspaper had interviewed some of the converted women who ex-

plained why they embraced Islam.

Monica Salmouk told the newspaper that she chose Islam four years ago after researching and reading books about the religion and visiting the Islamic Cultural Center (ICC) mosques in both Greenland and Oslo.

Solva Nabila Sexelin, also said she decided to become Muslim after being inspired by the Muslim asylum seekers which she had been helping out.

Though considerable numbers are centered in Oslo (12%), Muslims are spread across the eighteen counties of Norway in varying percentages (2% - 5%).

### Mosques across Norway

Every Muslim (male or female) is required to pray five times a day in prescribed timings. It is strongly recommended that his prayer be performed in a congregation. Even some scholars see praying in a congregation is obligatory, except in unusual circumstances. Therefore, having a mosque to pray in a congregation is a pursuit for all Muslims wherever they are.

In line with these principles, Muslims in Norway started to work to have mosques. The first mosque in Norway by design was the Islamic Cultural Centre, which opened in Oslo in 1974.

The initiative for the mosque came from Pakistanis who were helped by the Islamic Cultural Centre, which had already opened in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Since then more mosques started to be built in major Norwegian cities, even in remote regions. For example in the city of Tromsø that accommodates around 1000 Muslims of its 53000 population, in the northernmost region of Norway, a mosque by design was built in addition to the existing



mosque of Al-Noor Center, that some claim it is the closest mosque to the North Pole.

Though admitting Muslim immigrants, mostly victims of political unrest or economic hardship in their home countries, were mainly based on humanitarian consideration, Norway has started to yield the economic fruits of its kind gesture.

Muslim immigrants have become an essential part of the solution to the effect of demographic changes resulting from the declining fertility rate in the country by keeping the labor force alive, according to TRT World website report.

Norway's fertility rate, once was a 2.9 (per 1000) high in 1960, fell to 1.7 (per 1000) in 2018, an all-time low, risking the country's economic stability.

The minimum fertility rate in any country that needs to sustain its population, without including migration, should be 2.1 (per 1000).

# The concept of Waqf

By Tasnuva Jahan

 *The concept of waqf has been recognized in the early period of the Islamic legal system. The waqf is an important instrument in Islamic financial as well as social culture. It is a voluntary religious endowment. The objective of waqf contains the religious provisions through distributions of wealth for socioeconomic relief among the unfortunates and other purposes.*





***The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: ‘When a man dies all his good deeds come to an end except three: Ongoing charity (Sadaqah Jariyah), beneficial knowledge and a righteous child who prays for him’***

At present world, waqf institution has limitless potential. It can play a key role to cut the scarcity and support society. Unfortunately, this huge potential of the waqf institution has not been realized by many Muslim countries around the world. This paper aims to discuss the historical context and development of the waqf institution. As a history of awqaf institution, reveals the position of this Islamic financial institution to strengthen societal construction. The paper also attempts to shed light on the importance of waqf to eliminate the poverty problem for social-economic development.

#### **Introduction:**

The waqf is an important instrument in Islamic financial as well as social culture. It is a voluntary religious,

charitable endowment. In Islam, there are different types of social instruments and structures to fulfill the basic needs of society. From ancient times, the institution of waqf has been accepted as one of the most commonly known Islamic endowments. Awqaf (plural form of waqf) has played a vital role to improve the economic growth in early Muslim societies. It aims to create a charitable scheme for improving the condition of underprivileged sections such as the poor, needy, insolvent, orphans, widows and others (Cizakca, 2002). The waqf institution is a non-profit oriented as well as a redistribution institution. Its core objective is to support the private or public concern for the wellbeing of society (Hasan & Abdullah, 2008). Awqaf help to strengthen business and

build infrastructure. The welfare purpose of waqf may be related to the societal, spiritual, cultural and economic grounds. However, many modern Islamic economists opine that the waqf is a significant scheme of the Muslim society’s socioeconomic development.

#### **Definition of Waqf:**

The Arabic term ‘Waqf’ literally means cause to stop, detention, contain, or preserve. Juristically waqf means detention or dedication of a property for religious or charitable purposes. In Islam, waqf is one of the continuous charities. It means the waqif gets reward either alive or after death. According to Syed Ameer Ali (1976), waqf is the dedication of a certain property to the Almighty. Its devotion for a spiritual or a charitable cause to secure the benefit of human beings. Different Muslim jurists defined the meaning of waqf within their personal considerations.

The institution of waqf is a revenue-generating asset. Customarily, the profits or revenues are used for wellbeing purpose. However, in other Islamic charity, donations or money received can be spent directly. The

benefits of a waqf property can be distributed among the unfortunates, hospitals, schools, graveyards, roads, religious establishments, and so on. The list of beneficiaries is not limited. It depends on the donor's decisions, but must not be contradictory to the Shari'ah.

The person creating waqf is called waqif or donor. At the time of donation, waqif must own the property. Waqf founder must specify the Mawquf 'alaih or beneficiaries. If beneficiaries are not specified, then waqf will be allocated to the charitable purposes. The donated assets may be detained by a charitable trust, without any plan of reclaiming the assets. It is essential to appoint a mutawalli or a manager of waqf property as legal custodianship. The waqf property manager is responsible for maintenance and management of waqf property. In the Islamic legal system, there is no fixed formula for waqf institution. It may be made in oral or written. In the present world, only declaration is not sufficient. A written contract is vital for waqf institutions. Previously, fixed assets as lands and buildings were the common forms of



waqf. Currently, cash waqf has become a trend. Cash waqf can act as a pool of donation. It can be utilized to construct different establishments, for instance, schools, hospitals and so on. Cash waqf can ensure more contribution of individual donors (Sadeq 2002, Aziz and others 2013).

#### **Characteristics of Waqf: Contemporary Muslim**

jurists agree about the characteristics of waqf, such as religious purpose, perpetuity, irrevocability, and inalienability. According to the Islamic teachings, the purpose of waqf must be religious and generous. Thus, a waqf is not valid without any spiritual or charitable goal. Perpetuity is one of the essential features of wakf. A waqf institution

must be permanent. It can be created for any particular period. Some opined that in irrevocability nature, a waqif cannot revoke a waqf property after the declaration. Inalienability is another important structure of waqf. As the waqf assets are dedicated to the Almighty, so they belongs to the Almighty. As a result, no one would be able to alienate the waqf property. It cannot be a matter of sale, gift, inheritance, or any division. Waqf institution becomes a 'frozen asset'. The main purposes of waqf are not confined to one's future generations. Waqf aims to serve the benefits to unfortunates and can be spent on the mosques. It also extends to cover schools, libraries, orphanages, marriage, repatriation of foreigners



to their native country, building hospitals, digging water wells, protection of the environment, caring for animals, and other actions related to social development.

#### **Waqf in the Noble Qur'an:**

The term waqf does not directly appear in the Noble Qur'an. But many Qur'anic focus on charity and helping others generously. Waqf is an act of virtue that is extremely encouraged in Islam.

Muslim religion places highest emphasis on charities in human life. Thus, Surat Al-Imran, verse 92, declares that 'Never will you attain the good [reward] until you spend [in the way of Allah] from that which you love. And whatever

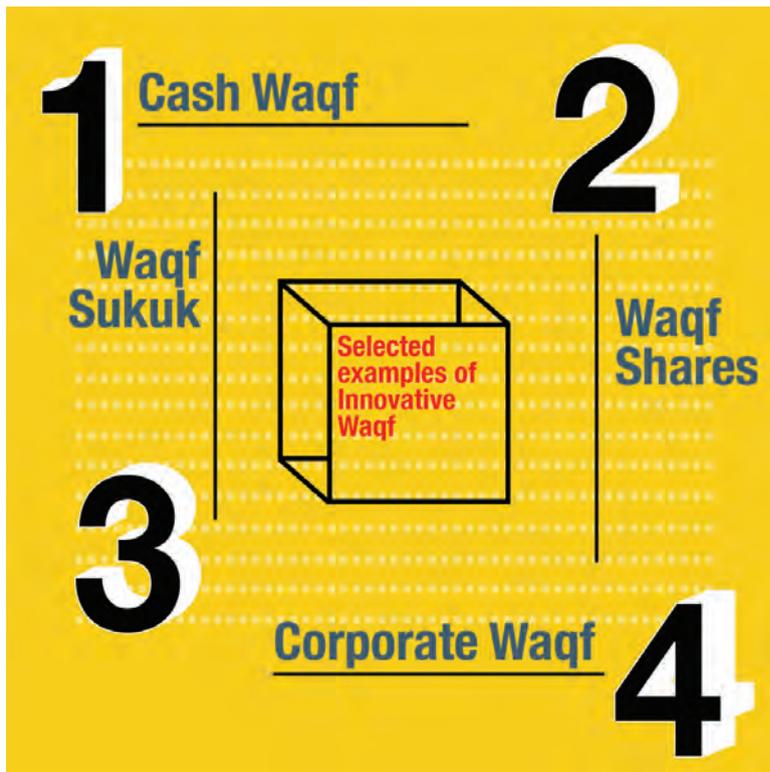
you spend - indeed, Allah is Knowing of it.' According to Surat Adh-Dhariyat, verse 19 'And from their (rich persons) properties was [given] the right of the [needy] petitioner and the deprived.' The above verses clarify the distribution of wealth among the underprivileged.

According to Surat Al-Baqarah, verse 177, 'Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; [and who] establishes prayer and

gives zakah; [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous.' This verse implies that faith is related to doing good to others.

Surat Al-Baqarah, verse 267, also ensures that 'O you who have believed, spend from the good things which you have earned and from that which We have produced for you from the earth. And do not aim toward the defective therefrom, spending [from that] while you would not take it [yourself] except with closed eyes. And know that Allah is Free of need and Praiseworthy.' Surat Al-Baqarah, verse 272, particularly affirms that, '... And whatever you spend of good - it will be fully repaid to you, and you will not be wronged.' Islam attaches so much importance to awards the righteous deeds of person. The Noble Qur'an repeatedly states, '... But whatever thing you spend [in His cause] - He will compensate it; and He is the best of providers' Surat Saba, verse 39.

One of the Hadiths of



(peace be upon him) visited Madinah and noticed that Ruma Well was one of the very few sources of drinking water in the town (Abdelhady, 2013). Even water price was so high. Then, he asked his companions to buy the well and render it for public service. Consequently, Othman, one of his companions, purchased the well, made it free for every person.

Omar bin Khattab, the second Caliph, got some valuable land in Khaibar, during the partition of Khaibar. He went to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to consult about the land. Omar asked the Prophet about what he would do with the land as he never had it. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) replied, 'If you like you can give the land as endowment and give its fruits in charity.' Accordingly, Omar gave it to charity. Additionally, the land should neither be sold, nor given to anybody as a gift or inheritance. But its yield reserved for charity to the poor people, needy kith and kin, freeing slaves, guests, travelers, and for Allah's Cause. The administrator or manager of the endowment is allowed to reasonably

the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) further complements these Quranic verses. It also traced the origin of waqf. Abu Hurairah narrated, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: 'When a man dies all his good deeds come to an end except three: Ongoing charity (Sadaqah Jariyah), beneficial knowledge and a righteous child who prays for him' (Narrated by Muslim).

From the above verses of the Noble Qur'an and the Hadith, it is apparent that charitable purposes such as Awqaf are highly

encouraged in the Islamic tradition. Hence, Islam is a religion that cares about the benefits of all humankind.

#### Historical Context of Waqf:

In the Islamic history, first waqf was created by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He bought a land in Madinah and built a mosque. It is known as Prophet's Mosque or Quba Mosque (Ahmed, 2004). At present, the mosque is located in the same place with a new, enlarged structure. Another example of waqf is donation of the Ruma Well. At that time, Prophet Muhammad



***Previously, fixed assets as, lands and buildings were the common forms of waqf. Currently, cash waqf has become a trend***

consume its crop. But the administrator is not allowed to store it for the future to become richer (Sahih Al-Bukhari).

In historical context, the Prophet Muhammad's advice to the Ruma Well and Omar's property provides solid proof of waqf. It also encouraged other companions to establish different types of waqf institutions.

**Development of Waqf:**

The institution of waqf has developed over the period and across different nations. Waqf institutions played significant roles in developing societal welfare throughout Islamic societies. Rich Muslims, particularly rulers, donated properties or even entire villages for waqf institution. Awqaf has developed with the spread of Islam. However, the developmental trends include significant growth, lack of progress and

even periods of downturn (Aun,1975).

In the healthcare sector, Awqaf has been recognized from the earliest period.

In Islamic countries, most hospitals were financed by the waqf revenues (Abattouy and Al-Hassani, 2013). Many famous hospitals, including Al-Mustansiri in Makkah, hospitals of Madinah also administered by the waqf. In 1145 AD, Al Noori Hospital was established on a waqf land in Damascus. It is an ancient hospital in the Muslim world. Later, it developed as a medical school. Many prominent physicians were trained in that medical school. It was the first hospital to adopt patients medical record (Ahmed, 2004). Throughout the Islamic culture, every city had a reputation to build at least one waqf hospital. In 261 H, Ahmad ibn Tulun, constructed the first hospital

in Egypt. Also, he endowed it with several waqfs to bear expenses (Abattouy and Al-Hassani, 2013). Some suggest that early Umayyad caliph Al-Walid bin Abd Al-Malik [ruled from 705 to 715 (86-96 H)], was first to establish a bimaristan and appoint doctors. He also arranged expenses of doctors and for quarantine of the lepers. Previously, an Islamic hospital was known as bimaristan. The Persian word bimaristan means hospital. Bimar means sick person and place. In the earliest history, hospitals and medicine sectors were the most well-known sub-sectors of awqaf (Ahmed, 2007).

In the education sector, the Muslims established different types of awqaf institutions. It supported scientific research in religious as well as non-religious fields, for example astronomy, physiology, pharmacology and so on (Ahmed, 2007). Al Azhar University, in Cairo, Egypt, Al-Qarawiyyin in Morocco and Al-Zaytura in Tunisia were Awqaf institutions (Ahmed, 2004).

Even business places and shopping centers have been built by waqf fund. In Bangladesh, Dhaka Baitul Mukarram shopping com-

plex is a good example for waqf financed establishment. The reason behind waqf financed business center is to make some revenue for supporting any target projects. Target projects may be related to education, orphans, health services, and so on.

Surprisingly, the utilization and contributions of waqf extend outside the main Islamic finance jurisdictions, namely in Canada, South Africa, United States. The National Awqaf Foundation of Canada (Awqaf Canada) was founded in 2014 to provide a positive contribution to the Muslim students both in Canada and throughout the world. Awqaf Canada also dedicated to the communities of immigrants and minorities in Canada to develop through the development of social enterprises and endowment projects.

Overall, through the waqf development process, it will support and develop the socioeconomic conditions of Muslims.

#### **Importance of Waqf:**

Today's world poverty is a complex and multidimensional problem. Globally, more than 767 million people are living in extreme



poverty conditions. Nearly 385 million children are among them. Extremely poor people are surviving on less than \$1.90 per day (The World Bank report, 2016). Tremendously poor people spend the lion's share of their income to get staple foods. Many poor are suffering from hunger problems at certain times of the year. The poverty problem is linked with poor economies, poor human resources, poor guidelines to tackle the challenges and socioeconomic development. Over the years, poverty alleviation has become a global concern since the United Nations declared the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) in 2000. To remove extreme poverty, the World Bank has also set a new target around the world by 2030. There are many ways to reduce

poverty problems. Sometimes it requires a long-term commitment to improving the living conditions of people. But poverty eradication policy measures vary from one country to another. Our focus is only on Islamic teachings and traditions to reduce the poverty problem. As most of the African and Asian Muslim-majority countries are normally poorer than other countries on average. These countries are not able to spend enough on education and health services due to poverty, population burden, etc. Even their formal financial sector is small and weak. They do not have enough revenue collection. Governments are also fragile in effective governance, let alone initiate any long-term development plans.

A potential way to overcome these difficulties in



***The welfare purpose of waqf  
may be related to the soci-  
etal, spiritual, cultural and  
economic grounds.***

---

the Islamic finance framework is through waqf. The waqf institution's ancient role highly recommends that this social institution can again play an effective role to promote sustainable development goals (Khan and Jareen, 2015). Historically, the waqf has been widely used by Muslim countries to support public objectives, such as better health care, clean water, roads, education, as well as eradication of poverty (Ahmed, 2004). The waqf provides a suitable tool to fill the gap in societal intercession. Due to its permanent nature or perpetuity character, it can contribute in an effective way to the targeted social sectors for better socioeconomic advancement of society. Traditionally, it has been a key source of support for socioeconomic development.

Waqf resources are not limited to Muslim com-

munities and religious activities. Non-Muslims are able to enjoy waqf welfare services. It encompasses a wider scope of activities to strengthen the social and economic environments of a society (Cajee 2007, Monzer Kahf 1998). Finally, the ancient waqf institutions reveal their importance to society.

**Conclusion:**

Nowadays, waqf can play a significant role in the Muslim community. As the needs of society are multifaceted and increasing day by day. Societal challenges like poverty, unemployment problem, and inequality are major challenges to socioeconomic development in many countries. In this situation, a waqf institution has myriad potential. It can support the government in numerous state-responsibilities. Islamic theory and approaches can lead to re-

ducing the poverty problem, inequality and so on. Islam has its own established economic principles. Unfortunately, the significance of Islamic economic systems has not totally been realized by the Muslims and their governments throughout the world. In many countries, the waqf management system is mostly unclear. Some consider waqf as a problematic institution as it requires immovable property for donation. Most of the Muslim countries have failed to identify the gaps existed in waqf institution. The waqf is not an obligatory practice to Muslims. It is executed to seek Allah's blessing. Muslims are required to share their wealth with the destitute to develop society's economy as a whole. Nevertheless, everyone should be very careful about the societal and spiritual purpose of waqf. But one should never view the prospects of waqf as a social thing because the waqf property belongs to the Almighty. It is hoped that with proper management, waqf institutions can repair the economic systems of society. Islam indeed provides the modern economic policy to ensure equality and justice for human beings.

# The illustrious contributions of the Islamic world to medicine and medical care

---

By Aftab Husain Kola

🗨️ *The global annual health spending touched US\$7.077 trillion in 2015, and this metric is expected to go up to US \$8.734 trillion by 2020 end. Little wonder then that across the world, cities, towns and villages are mushrooming with hospitals and clinics.*



Like many inventions and discoveries, the contribution of the Islamic world to medicine and medical care is humongous, reflecting the glory of the Islamic civilisation.

The setting up of hospitals was one of the great achievements of the medieval Islamic society, and an examination of the history of the development of medical care will throw ample light on the contribution of the Islamic world towards one of the primary needs of human beings.

### Mobile dispensaries during Prophet's time

Probably the earliest hospitals in Islam were the mobile dispensaries that accompanied the Muslim armies and trade caravans during Prophet Muhammad's time. The earliest known Islamic care centre was set up in a tent by Rufaydah Al-Aslamiyah dur-

ing the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). During Ghazwah Khandaq (Battle of the Trench), she treated the wounded in a separate tent erected for the purpose on the western edge of the Sela mountain in Madinah.

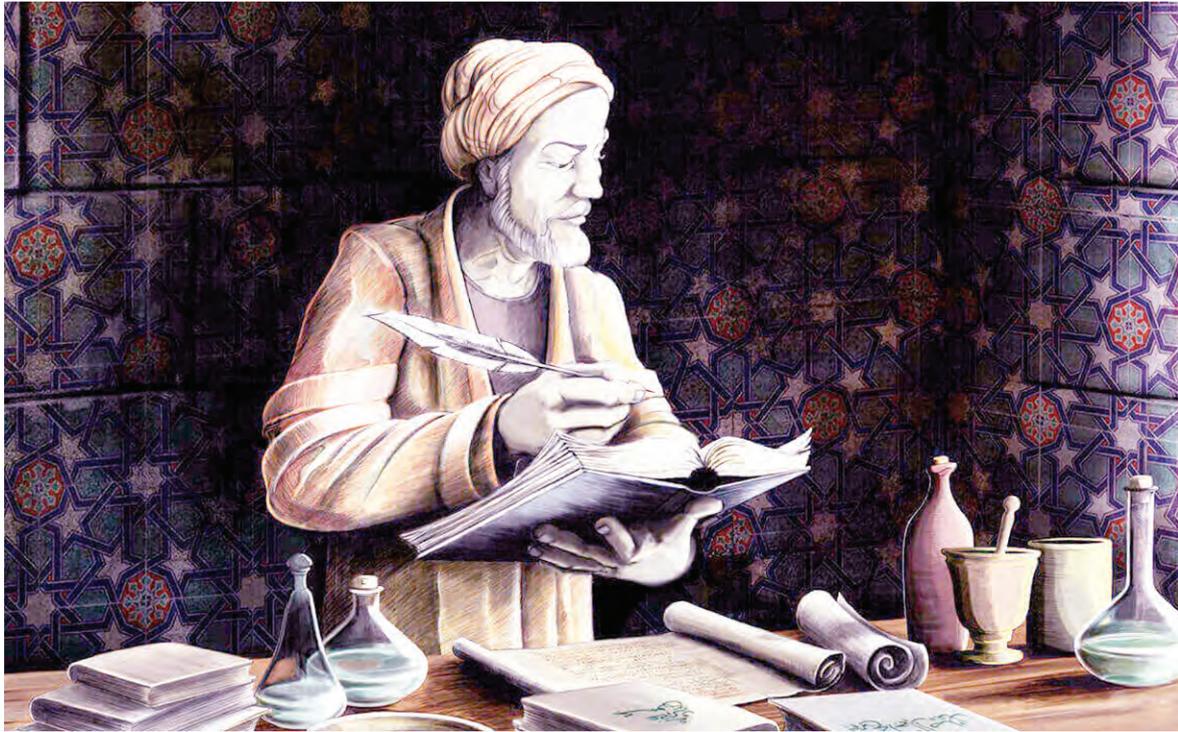
Subsequent rulers developed these pioneering units into true travelling dispensaries that were armed with trained staff, medicines, food, drink and clothes. Such mobile clinics catered to the needs of the outlying communities who had little or no access to healthcare facilities.

### Setting up of hospitals

The hospital built in Damascus (Syria) in 706 CE by Al Walid, the Umayyad caliph, was considered as a prototype for the hospitals that came up later. This hospital, equipped with instruments and trained staff, served the needs of all patients, including the blind and the lepers. Many medical procedures were pioneered thereafter. Subsequently, Baghdad in Iraq was home to hospitals established by caliphs Harun Al-Rashid and Al-Mansur. However, it was the hospital built in the south-western quarter of the present-day Cairo in Egypt that became the talk of the world.

Established by Ibn Tulun, the governor of that city in 872 CE, it was the first modern hospital with nurses and a training centre. Ibn Tulun, when he built his world-famous mosque in Egypt, constructed as annexes on its one end a dispensary as well as a place for ablutions. The dispensary was well equipped with medicines and had attendants. On Fridays, there used to be a doctor on duty at this dispensary to attend to emergency needs of the huge gathering at the mosque. Later, it was developed into a full-fledged institution, the Ahmed ibn Tulun





hospital (named after the founder of the Tulunid dynasty), where all patients were treated free of cost – a Muslim policy that was institutionalized with the advent of the hospital. Here, following the tenets of the Waqf document, no one was turned away and there was no limit to how long a patient could stay. This hospital was to serve as the template for hospitals across the world. In Kairouan, present-day Tunisia, a hospital was built in the ninth century, and two others were established at Makkah and Madi-nah. Persia had several; the one in the city of Rayy was headed for some time by its Baghdad-educated native son, Muhammad ibn Zakariya al-Razi.

### Two in Cairo

By the end of the century, two hospitals were also said to have been built in Old Cairo (Fustat). In the 12th century, Saladin

founded the Nasiri hospital in Cairo; it was surpassed in size and importance by the Mansuri hospital, completed in 1284 (638 H) after eleven months of construction. The Mansuri hospital remained the primary medical centre in Cairo through the 15th century. It had four entrances, each with a fountain in the centre.

The king appointed male and female attendants to serve male and female patients, respectively, and they were housed in separate wards. In one part of the building, the physician-in-chief was provided a room for teaching and training.

The Nuri hospital in Damascus, entrusted with the physician, Al-Bahili, was a major institution from the time it was established in the middle of the 12th century well into the 15th century, by which time the city had five additional hospitals. There was a medical school in Al Nuri hospital. Early

in the 13th century, a physician by name Al-Dakhwar served here for a while; later he opened his own medical school in Damascus.

In Marrakech in Morocco, the Almohad ruler, Al-Mansur Ya'qub ibn Yusuf, built a hospital in 1190 in a spacious area surrounded by fruit trees, flowers, herbs and vegetables.

### **The concept of Bimaristan**

In the days of yore, a hospital was called Bimaristan, or its shortened version maristan (from the Persian words bimar, meaning an ill person, and stan, meaning a place). Bimaristan, or asylum of the sick, was the true forerunner of the modern hospital, and was indistinguishable from the modern multi-service healthcare and medical education centre. Not only did a bimaristan serve variously as a centre for treatment, it was also a convalescent home for those recovering

from illness or accident, a psychological asylum and a retirement home that offered rudimentary care to the aged and the infirm who lacked a family to care for them.

In the late ninth century, leading physician and polymath Muhammad ibn Zakariya Al-Razi helped establish a bimaristan in Baghdad staffed with 25 doctors, optometrists, surgeons and bone-setters. Bimaristans were open to everyone on a 24-hour basis. Some only treated men while others, staffed by women physicians, treated only women; there were still others, which cared for both men and women in separate wings that had all facilities and resources. To treat less serious cases, there were outpatient clinics where doctors prescribed medicines to be taken at home.

A policy statement of the bimaristan of al-Mansur Qalawun in Cairo, circa 1284 CE reads thus: "The hospital shall keep all patients, men and women, until they are



completely recovered. All costs are to be borne by the hospital whether the people come from afar or near, whether they are residents or foreigners, strong or weak, low or high, rich or poor, employed or unemployed, blind or signed, physically or mentally ill, learned or illiterate. There are no conditions of consideration and payment; none is objected to or even indirectly hinted at for non-payment. The entire service is through the magnificence of God, the generous one.”

Infections were treated with special care. A system was in place by which inpatients were provided hospital wear from a central supply area while their own clothes were kept in the hospital store. The hospital wards were well maintained and had clean sheets and special stuffed mattresses. The hospital rooms were neat and tidy with abundant running water and sunlight.

The rulers of the day were strict about the upkeep of the hospitals and would make surprise visits. A patient was attended to immediately after arrival, and was put on a diet depending on his/her condition and disease. The food served was of superior quality and included



chicken and other poultry, beef and lamb, fresh fruits and vegetables. This was to ensure that patients would not feel further sick on account of malnutrition.

These early hospitals were seen all over the Muslim world, and even in Andalusia in Spain, Sicily and North Africa. These hospitals were admired for their services by the local people as well as the travelling traders, who later built similar systems in their own countries. Being competent administrators, Muslims managed hospitals very efficiently. In Europe, people took the help of Muslim physicians and administrators to set up hospitals there.

Speaking about the Al-Nuri hospital, Ibn Jubayr, a famous 12th century traveller, wrote, “The new one is the most frequented and

the largest of the two, and its daily budget is about 15 dinars. It has an overseer in whose hands is the maintenance of the registers that have the names of the patients and the expenditures for the required medications, foodstuff and similar things.”

The 13th-century doctor and traveller Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi, who also taught at Damascus, has narrated an amusing story of a clever Persian youth who was so tempted by the excellent food and service at the Nuri hospital that he feigned illness. The doctor who examined him figured out what the young man was up to, but admitted him nevertheless, providing the youth fine food for three days. On the fourth day, the doctor told him with a rueful smile, “Traditional Arab hospitality



lasts for three days: Please go home now!”

Patients who were ready to be discharged but too weak to leave the hospital were transferred to the convalescent ward and remained there until they were strong enough to leave. Generosity was such that needy patients were provided new clothes besides a token sum to support them in re-establishing their livelihood.

### **Bimaristan Al-Arghuni**

Soon more countries in the Islamic world began setting up hospitals. Besides the Nuri hospital in Damascus, which was the leading bimaristan from the time of its establishment, in 1354 CE there came up a large full-fledged hospital, Bimaristan Al-Arghuni, in Bab Qinnisrin quarter, built by Arghun Al-Kamili, who represented the Mam-

luk Sultanate in Aleppo. Considered one of the most important traditional hospitals in the Islamic world, it was used as Aleppo’s main healthcare institution with the Mamluk sultanate generously patronizing it for medicine, equipment, training and research. With its airy, high-ceiling rooms, Bimaristan Arghuni functioned as a hospital until the early 20th century. Later, it was converted into a museum.

The Nur al-Din Bimaristan, a hospital and medical school in Damascus, which was founded in the 12th century, is today the Museum of Medicine and Science. The great Syro-Egyptian hospitals of the 12th and 13th centuries were built on a cruciform plan with four central iwans or vaulted halls, with many adjacent rooms including kitchens, storage areas,

pharmacy, living quarters for the staff, and sometimes a library.

### **Funding**

These hospitals were funded mainly through Islamic religious endowments called Wakfs. Wealthy men, especially the rulers, gifted property as endowments, whose revenue went towards building and maintaining the institution. The property could consist of shops, mills, caravanserais or even entire villages. The income from an endowment would pay for the maintenance and for meeting the running cost of the hospital. Part of the state budget also went towards maintenance of the hospital. The services of the hospital were to be free, though some individual physicians charged a nominal fee.

The end of the 15th century saw many of these hospitals either ceasing to exist or paling in significance, even as new hospitals began mushrooming all over the civilized world, especially in many countries in Europe and Asia. However, here what is most significant is the glorious role the Muslim community played in the development of medical care in the medieval world and the illustrious legacy it left behind.



*Kul Sharif Mosque, Russia*

## Extraordinary Shaped Mosques around the World

---

By Mohseu Minhaj Niloy

🗨️ *Many of us visited many places and countries. Also prayed in different mosques to find peace and see the beauty of each mosques in the world. There are numerous beautiful, mind-blowing mosques in different parts of the globe. But have we ever seen or thought that there can be of mosques which got extraordinary or unusual shaped. Now I will describe some of those unique shaped mosques that are different from the usual mosque's design.*

### 1. Lala Tulpan, Russia:

Lala Tulpan is one of the largest mosques in Russia. It is located in Ufa, Bashkortostan, Russia. The most attractive features of the mosque are its 53-meter-tall twin minarets. There are two golden color crescent finial above the two minarets. Roof of the mosque and top of the minarets are painted with red color to make it more attractive. In Lala Tulpan mosque up to 1000 worshippers can pray together. It was built between 1990 and 1998 to a modernist design by architect Wakil Davlystshin.



*Lala Tulpan, Russia*

### 2. Mashkhur Jusup Mosque, Kazakhstan:

The Mashkhur Jusup Mosque is one of the largest mosques in Kazakhstan. It is located in the center of Pavlodar. The mosque



*Mashkhur Jusup Mosque, Kazakhstan*

contains an area of 6 ha. It took one year for construction. Finally, it was opened for public in 2001. It can accommodate up to 1,500 worshippers. The mosque was named after the Kazakh poet and historian Mashkhor Jusup (1858-1931). Extraordinarily, the base for the building is constructed in the shape of an octagonal star with eight points having a diameter of 48 meters by 48 meters. The height of the mosque minarets is 63 meters. The main dome is nicely painted on blue-sky color. The dome is 54 meters high which is based on the shape of a shanyrak, a circular opening at the top of a yurt. A magnificent chandelier adorns the interior of the mosque, which was made in Tashkent. The crystal chandelier "Zumrad" has 434 lamps. The total area of the mosque is 7,240 square meters. The base is composed of bricks, and the cupolas in metal. The building has two floors. The men's prayer room can hold up to 1200 people. Its height is 33 meters and has a diameter of 30 meters. The first floor includes the male's prayer hall, a museum of Muslim culture, a library, a projection room and offices. The main entrance of the build-



*Jami-Ul-Alfar -Alfar Mosque, Srilanka*

ing gives access to the first floor. The mosques ground floor contains a prayer room for women, a teaching room of the madrassah, a wedding hall, a 300-seat canteen with auxiliary rooms, ablution place and a wardrobe. In case of alternative the wedding hall and canteen can be integrated by removing the portable walls. The architecture of the mosque is designed to resemble an open heart symbolizing that the building is for good and open to the world.

### **3. Kul Sharif Mosque, Russia**

Historically, this mosque was built in the 16th century

in the Kazan Kremlin, Russia. It was named after Kul Sharif, a religious scholar who served there. However, in 1552, the original mosque was destroyed by Ivan during the Siege of Kazan.

In 1996, the mosque has been rebuilt. Several countries contributed to the fund that was set up to rebuild Kul Sharif Mosque, namely Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates. Finally, the mosque was completed in 2005. The mosque has one sky colour painted traditional onion dome and four minarets. This mosque has a capacity to hold 6,000 worshippers. It is one of the nicest mosque in the world.

#### 4. Jami-Ul-Alfar -Alfar Mosque, Srilanka

Jami-Ul-Alfar Mosque is a historic mosque in Colombo, Srilanka. It is one of the oldest mosques in Colombo. It is a popular tourist place in the city. Jami-Ul-Alfar mosque's construction start out in 1908. Finally the mosque was completed in 1909. The mosque was commissioned by the local Indian Muslim community to perform their required five times daily prayers and Jummah prayer on Fridays. The architecture of this mosque draws elements from native Indo-Islamic and Indian architecture and

combines it with the Gothic revival and neoclassical styles. It is a typical red and white candy-striped two-storied building, with a clock tower. The mosque is reminiscent of the Jamek Mosque in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia which built in 1910. In 1975 with the assistance of the Haji Omar Trust, the mosque bought a number of the adjacent properties and set about building an expansion to the mosque to increase its capacity to 10,000.

#### 5. Niujie Mosque, China

Niujie Mosque also known as "Oxen Street

Mosque". This Mosque is situated in the Niujie area of Beijing's Xicheng District. It is the oldest mosque in Beijing, China. In 996 it was built during the Liao Dynasty. It was renovated as well as enlarged under the Kangxi Emperor (r. 1661–1722) of the Qing Dynasty.

This mosque holds an area of approximately 10,000 square meters. The mosque reflects a combination of Islamic and Han Chinese cultural and architectural influences. Its outside architecture shows traditional Chinese influence. The inside architec-



*Niujie Mosque, China*



*Pink Mosque, Philippines*

means Oxen and jiē means street) this mosque is simply known as Niujie. It is now one of the main mosques in north China. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, respectively in 1955, 1979 and 1996 the mosque has undergone three renovations. As of 2002 the master plan of the renovation of Niujie stated that the mosque will stay at its present location and that a green space and large square would be developed around the mosque.

ture has a blend of Islamic calligraphy and Chinese design. The main prayer hall is 600 square meters in area. It can hold more than 1,000 worshippers. The mosque, built out of timber. The mosque was originally designed by Nazaruddin, the son of an imam. In 1215 Genghis Khan destroyed it with his armies. Then in 1443 the mosque was rebuilt in the Ming Dynasty. In 1496, Muslim eunuchs donated money for repairing Niujie Mosque.

In 1696 under the Qing Dynasty this mosque was considerably expanded. The actual name of the Mosque is Lǐbàisì, that is given by

the Chenghua Emperor in 1474, since it is located on the Oxen Street (Niú

## 6. Pink Mosque, Philippines

The Masjid Dimaukom or Pink Mosque is situated in Datu Saudi Ampatuan,



*The Cave Mosque, Kazakhstan*

Maguindanao, the Philippines. It was built in 2014. The mosque's construction was financed by Datu Saudi Ampatuan Mayor, Samsodin Dimaukon. The land of the mosque was a property of the mayor's family. The mosque was painted pink to symbolize peace and love. It was built by workmen to symbolize unity and inter-faith brotherhood.

### 7. The Cave Mosque, Kazakhstan

Isn't it a really astonishing matter that a mosque can be in underground? Now it's not astonishing anymore. There is an underground mosque in Kazakhstan. It is a unique place and impressive monuments of Mangystau. The Mangystau peninsula located on the east coast of the Caspian Sea. This underground mosque is one of the most ancient monuments of Islamic architecture. Also, it has some links with cave temples of ancient religions: Zoroastrianism (fire worship), Hinduism, Buddhism and early Christianity.

### 8. Pyramid shaped mosque, Kuwait:

We have seen above many unusual shaped mosques, but did we ever



*Pyramid shaped mosque, Kuwait*

imagined that there is also a mosque which is a pyramid shaped. Yes, there is a pyramid shaped mosque in Kuwait which is really an unusual architecture. The name of the mosque is Sheikh Nasser El Sabah Mosque, also known as a pyramid shaped mosque. It was built in 1981 which is located in Ras-Salmiya area, Kuwait. It has 30\*26 meters' pyramid shape main prayer hall. It also has two storied annexes attached at rear for ablution room and administrative offices on the ground. Women prayer section is in the second floor. It has a library and an Islamic

research center. The mosque area has covered 2150 square meters. It's minaret height is 50 meter. It took 3 million USD to build the mosque. Henri Montois from Belgium was one of the main architects for the mosque. Many tourists visit the mosque for such an extraordinary shape.

In conclusion, we can say that our minds always search for uniqueness, want to see the unseen, want to know the unknown. If it is related to religious then everyone becomes more curious and interested than anything else to know it, to see it with one's own eyes.

# The sacred months in Islamic calendar

By Fatima Taneem Ruknuddeen

 *Millions of Muslims worldwide ushered in the New Hijri Year 1442 of the Islamic Calendar in the month of August 2020. The Islamic Calendar has been in use since more than 1400 years and till date continues to be utilized by umpteen Muslims across the globe for their festivals and religious observances like fasting and pilgrimage.*



The Islamic Calendar is purely based on 12 lunar cycles of 29 or 30 days duration. It has about 354 days divided into twelve months, which chronologically are named as Muharram, Safar, Rabi Al-Awwal, Rabi At-Thani, Jumada Al-Awwal, Jumada At-Thani, Rajab, Shabaan, Ramadan, Shawwal, Dhul Qadah and Dhul Hijjah.

### **The sacred months**

Among these months, four of them are considered as 'Sacred Months' according to Islam and are Muharram, Rajab, Dhul Qadah and Dhul Hijjah. These four Sacred Months are called 'Ashurul Hurum' in Arabic. They are mentioned in the Noble Qur'an as well as specified in the Prophetic narrations (Hadith).

The 'Sacred Months' were known and respected in the Arabian Peninsula even during the Pre-Islamic times; their sanctity established since the time Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) and his son Prophet Ismail (peace be upon him) settled in Arabia. However, after the advent of Islam, these 'sacred months' became even more glorified, making them a 'Season of Extra-Obedience to Almighty Allah'.

### **Origin And Names Of The Sacred Months**

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, '...The year consists of twelve months, four of which are sacred. Three of them are consecutive - Dhul Qadah, Dhul Hijjah and Muharram and (the fourth) is Rajab...' - Sahih Al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim

The four 'Sacred Months' were a part of the lunar months of a pre-Islamic Arab Calendar whose origins can be traced to Prophet Ibrahim's (peace be upon him) time. Throughout their long history before Islam, the Arabs used the names of lunar months known at that time until these names throughout the Arab

land began to take on the forms by which they are presently known.

During pre-Islamic times, the different Arab tribes were always at war with each other except during the 'Sacred Months'. The main purpose of the sanctity of these months was to abandon and prohibit fighting and looting between the Arab tribes so as to guarantee a safe passage to and from Makkah during the annual pilgrimage 'Hajj' as well as the minor pilgrimage 'Umrah'; a traditional ritual passed down from the days of Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him).

Thus, the month of 'Hajj' (Dhul Hijjah), a month preceding it (Dhul Qadah) and a month succeeding it (Muharram) along with the middle month of Rajab were specified as being the 'Sacred Months'. This enabled the warring Arabs to perform the pilgrimages at ease in a safe and secure environment. In addition, the Arab caravans also took advantage of the safe routes to cross the Arabian Desert to Syria and Yemen during the sacred months; thereby increasing their trade and wealth.

Thus, these four 'Sacred Months' have a special status and honor attached to them with their names typically related to the season of warfare. They are mentioned briefly as follows:

### **Muharram**

It is the first month of the Islamic Calendar. The name is derived from the Arabic word 'harama' meaning 'to be forbidden' and denoted the prohibition of fighting to ensure safe passage to the pilgrims returning to their homes after performing Hajj in the preceding month of Dhul Hijjah.

The 10th of Muharram is of special importance in Islam as many historical events occurred on this day and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) fasted on this day

and encouraged others also to fast.

### **Rajab**

It is the seventh month of the Islamic Calendar whose name is derived from the Arabic word 'Tarjib' meaning 'to honor' indicating the sanctity of this month. During this month the minor pilgrimage 'Umrah' was usually undertaken by the Arabs. It was also called as such as the Arabs used to remove the heads of their spears and refrained from waging wars to guarantee safe passage to pilgrims.

### **Dhul Qadah**

It is the eleventh month of the Islamic Calendar which is derived from the Arabic word 'Qadah' meaning 'to sit' referring to the Arabs being at home and avoiding fights, raids and killings to ensure safe passage for the pilgrims travelling to Makkah to perform Hajj in the following month of Dhul Hijjah.

### **Dhul Hijjah**

It is the twelfth and the last month of the Islamic Calendar and was named as such as the annual pilgrimage 'Hajj' was performed during this month.

Hajj is one of the five



***The Noble Quran states - 'Indeed, the number of months with Allah is twelve (lunar) months in the register of Allah (from) the day He created the heavens and the earth***

fundamental pillars of Islam. The 10th of this month is celebrated as Eid Al-Adha festival by Muslims all over the world.

Thus, when the Islamic Calendar was started by Caliph Omar Bin Al-Khattab (May Allah be pleased with him) in 17AH (638 CE); the names of all the months of the Pre-Islamic Calendar along with the status of 'Sacred Month' was retained in the Islamic Calendar as ordained by Almighty Al-

lah and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

### **Pre-Islamic Arab Calendar And Its Manipulations**

The people of Pre-Islamic Arabia used a lunar and occasionally Lunisolar Calendar system to calculate their months and years but without utilizing the year numbers. Instead, they identified the years by important historical events and related them to their own life events. For instance, 'Year of Elephant'



***Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, ‘...The year consists of twelve months, four of which are sacred***

denoted the year when Abraha came to Makkah with his army on Elephants intending to destroy the Kabah but failed miserably due to Divine help. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was also born during this year (570 CE).

The Pre-Islamic Calendar had 12 lunar months with the annual pilgrimage ‘Hajj’ in the month of Dhul Hijjah and the four ‘Sacred Months’ wherein fighting was prohibited; thereby the sanctity of these months being estab-

lished prior to Islam or birth of Prophet ( peace be upon him).

However, the Pagan Arabs manipulated these twelve months and each ‘sacred months’ position for their vested interests - both political and financial. Their practice of postponing or transposing of the months is referred to as ‘al-nasi’ in Arabic meaning intercalation. The Arabs practiced ‘Nasi’ in two ways which were as follows-

1. Whenever it suited their needs of revenge and

fighting, they would declare a ‘sacred ‘month to be an ordinary month and later make the ordinary month ‘sacred’ to make up for the deficiency.

2. They would also add an extra 13th month every few years in order to synchronize their lunar year to the solar year to make the ‘Hajj’ fall in the same season every year to avoid inconveniences caused by seasonal variations and to increase trade.

Hence, they were observing ‘Hajj’ for 36 years on dates other than the actual days of ‘Hajj’ and this cycle of manipulation continued for generations.

When the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) performed his Farewell Pilgrimages in 10 AH (632 CE), it was Divine Decree that the dates of ‘Hajj’ occurred exactly at their natural and proper days after a long period of circulation as stated by Prophet (peace be upon him) ‘ O people! Time has come back to its original state which it had when Allah created the heavens and the earth; the year is 12 months, four of which are sacred’. The Prophet (peace be upon him) also announced the abrogation of meddling with the months and the practice of ‘nasi was thus forbidden.

Thus, the twelve months

# The Significance And Virtues Of Muharram: The First Islamic Month



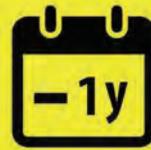
Muharram is one of the four sacred months in the Islamic lunar calendar



Doing bad in these months incurs extra sin; doing good brings extra reward



The Prophet (PBUH) said that the best fast after Ramadan was in Muharram



Fasting on the 9th and 10th of Muharram is expiation for sins of the last year

were ordained. Muharram was left as the first month of the Muslim calendar year. But the determination of the first year of Muslim Calendar came much later.

## The Quranic verse regarding 'nasi' is as follows-

'Indeed, the postponing (of restriction with sacred months) is an increase in disbelief by which those who have disbelieved are led (further) astray. They make it lawful one year and unlawful another year to correspond to the number made unlawful by Allah and (thus) make lawful what Allah has made unlawful. Made pleasing to them is the evil of their deeds;

and Allah does not guide the disbelieving people' (Surat At-Tawbah, Verse 37).

Thus, a strict Lunar Calendar was adopted by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) which was completely disconnected from the Solar Calendar and to this day the same calendar system continues to be followed by Muslims.

## Significance Of The Sacred Months

The Noble Quran states - 'Indeed, the number of months with Allah is twelve (lunar) months in the register of Allah (from) the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these four are

sacred. That is the correct religion, so do not wrong yourselves during them.....' (Surat At-Tawbah, Verse 36)

The above mentioned verse specifies the excellence of the four Sacred Months and commands the Believers not to wrong themselves generally and especially during these months. Wronging oneself implies committing sins, refraining from Allah's obedience and wronging others.

The following excerpt from the exegesis on Qur'an-titled 'Tafseer Ibn Katheer', sheds light on the above Quranic verse and the Quranic phrase - '...do not wrong during them,..'.

Abdullah bin Abbas (May

Allah be pleased with him) said, “In all twelve months, Allah chose four out of these months and made them sacred, emphasizing their sanctity, making sinning in them greater, in addition to multiplying rewards of righteous deeds during them.”

Qatada (May Allah be pleased with him) said, “Injustice during the Sacred Months is worse than injustice done in other months. Verily, injustice is always wrong, but Allah makes things graver than others as He wills. Allah has chosen some of His Creation above others. He chose Messengers from Angels and from men. He also chose His Speech above all Speech, the Mas-

jids above other areas of the earth, Ramadan and the Sacred Months above all the months, Friday above all the other days and Laylatul Qadr (Night of Decree) above all nights. Therefore, sanctify what Allah has sanctified, for doing so is the practice of people of understanding and comprehension.”

Thus, all Muslims are urged to give special reverence and honor to what the Almighty Allah has favored and made sacred for it is part of the piety of the heart. Therefore, the four Sacred Months are significant for the Muslims for their great virtue, immense rewards given to righteous deeds and serve as reminders to be wary as

the recompense for evil deeds is also magnified. Therefore, during these months, Muslims are encouraged to increase good deeds, both compulsory and voluntary, and refrain from disobeying Almighty Allah.

In conclusion, the Almighty Allah, out of His Favor and Mercy, has deemed these four months to be ‘sacred’ to enable the Muslims to earn His Rewards, Mercy and Blessings through Obedience to Him alone. Thus, Muslims should strive for the utmost to earn Almighty Allah’s Pleasure always and especially during these Sacred Months and not miss the bounties of rewards that these Sacred Months offer.





## **(Manarat Al-Haramayn) provides sources of Islamic knowledge**

---

Nizar Abdel Baqi Ahmed

**” To provide Shari’ah Sciences from its reliable sources, and to deliver speeches and lessons in the Two Holy Mosques to students of knowledge in various Islamic countries, the President of the General Affairs of the Grand Mosque and the Prophet’s Mosque, Sheikh Dr. Abdul Rahman bin Abdulaziz Al-Sudais, and the Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Engineer Abdullah bin Amer Al-Sawahah, inaugurated the electronic platform (Manarat Al-Haramayn), which aims to broadcast speeches, lessons and lectures from the Two Holy Mosques and provide them in audio and video on the Internet.**

The new project is being carried out in cooperation between the General Presidency of the Two Holy Mosques' Affairs and the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. It will make a qualitative leap in electronic services for people all over the world. This step is of great importance at this age in which people rely heavily on technology. It also comes at a time when the world is busy confronting the COVID-19, which has infected millions around the world and has claimed hundreds of thousands of lives in various countries, a fact that necessitates strengthening the preventive precautions and relying on technology in order to reduce the chances of social intermingling and ensure social distancing.

#### Exceptional circumstances

In his speech on the occasion of the inauguration of the electronic platform, Dr. Abdul Rahman Al-Sudais indicated the great interest and care that the Two Holy Mosques receive from Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz, and his Crown Prince Mouhammad bin Salman. He also thanked the Leadership for all the projects that facilitate the movement of visitors and pilgrims and for harnessing the latest technologies and electronic platforms for the service of Muslims all over the world.

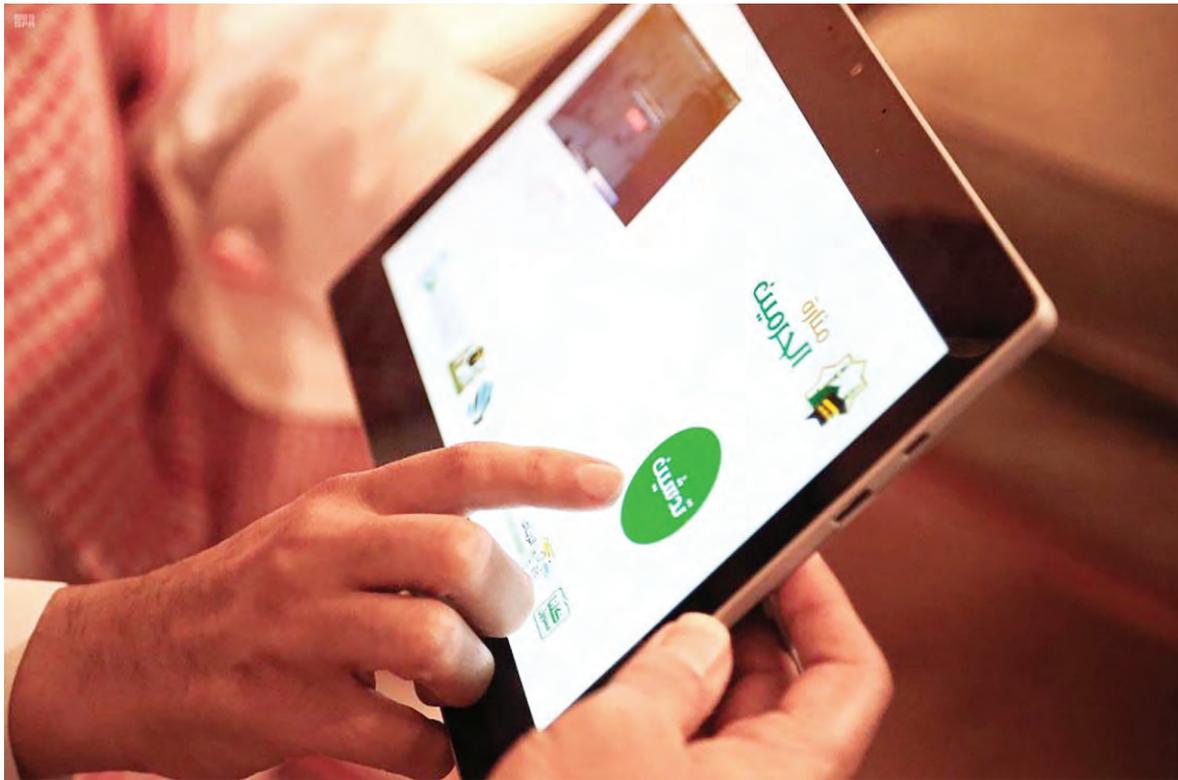
Sheikh Al-Sudais said in the speech on the occasion of the inauguration that “The platform reflects another technical accomplishment for the Presidency. We have made several qualitative leaps in technology and launched numerous integrated electronic services in the past, including the application of the Two Holy Mosques, and the implementation of the project of translating the sermon on the Day of Arafa, and other



electronic services that have contributed to conveying the message of the Two Holy Mosques, which is characterized by moderation and aims to combat extremism, terrorism and misguided ideas.”

#### Integrated services

Sheikh Al-Sudais underscored the important role of the platform in delivering the correct information to students across all Arab and Islamic countries. It will act as a direct response to those who interpret the facts of religion without their basic meanings, and extract the verses from contexts and try to interpret them in a way that fulfills their bad intentions and purposes.



This would refute the false claims promoted by terrorist groups. Another benefit that the platform will achieve is correcting the image of Islam and dispelling suspicions raised by the actions of the terrorists who use religion for their own purposes. University students, Sheikh Al-Sudais added, will reap the benefits of the platform and will use it to get reliable information and opinions of leading scholars, preachers and preachers of the Two Holy Mosques.

#### **Active cooperation**

The Minister of Communications and Information Technology explained that the platform aims to enable Muslims everywhere in the world to access the lessons and lectures of the Two Holy Mosques, thanks to the digital capabilities the Kingdom enjoys, especially at a time when the world is imposing preventive and precautionary measures against the coronavirus pandemic.

He pointed out that the

platform reflects the keenness of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, and his Crown Prince and the importance and care they attach to the Two Holy Mosques. The minister commended the great cooperation between the ministry and the presidency, which contributed in short time to the launch and completion of the platform, which would not have been achieved without the strong support of the Leadership.



***The platform aims to achieve multiple goals, including enriching the religious digital experience of the Two Holy Mosques***

**Innovative Solutions**

Al-Sawahah said that the circumstances in which we face this global epidemic necessitate the urgent creation of a platform for broadcasting the Friday sermon of the Two Holy Mosques, scientific lessons, speeches, lectures and preaching words, so that goodness continues among people and to support the efforts made by scholars to spread knowledge. Because the Kingdom is a pioneer in digital trans-

formation, this will unite the efforts exerted in spreading knowledge and facilitating access to all Shari’ah material and lessons as well as sciences, thus achieving the desired goal for all Muslims.

He added that the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology aims to achieve an interconnected present through innovative digital solutions, therefore it introduced, in cooperation with the Presidency, the platform and other solutions

such as “mobile application” to maintain continuous communication with the imams and sheikhs of the Two Holy Mosques

**Goals of the initiative**

The platform aims to achieve multiple goals, including enriching the religious digital experience of the Two Holy Mosques and improving it in a way that contributes to the integration of the digital services, overcoming the barrier of the place and enabling and enhancing the continuity of the spiritual connection with the holy places from any part of the world. It also aims to activate the role of the imams of the Two Holy Mosques in providing continuous support through participation in daily lessons and sermons, including the Friday sermon which Muslims across the globe listen to every Friday. The platform will facilitate the provision of religious preaching, and enable the public to access the relevant services of the Two Holy Mosques through high-quality digital platforms in which sermons and lessons are broadcast live, with the option to have a direct communication with a scholar.



## Italy rejects Islamophobia and supports Islamic activist

---

### Tariq Mehdi Siddiq

The Italian judiciary has opened an investigation into threats related to Islamophobia against an Italian humanitarian worker that converted to Islam during her kidnapping in Kenya

and finally returned to her country after her liberation. Judges in the northern city of Milan are investigating threats against Silvia Romano, and police have stepped up patrols around her home.

Silvia Romano was 23 years old and worked as a volunteer in an orphanage in Chakama village in southeast Kenya when gunmen kidnapped her in November 2018, and after

her liberation she announced her Islam and called herself Aisha.

In Rome, Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte met with Romano, who announced that she had embraced Islam of her own free will while in detention. After the interview, the Prime Minister's Office said Conte announced that his government would never tolerate religious hate crimes, whatever their source, and that clear instructions had been issued to the security services to investigate the threats made by right-wing extremists to Romano, and to bring the accused - whatever their characteristics and personalities - to justice.

Romano said in press statements, "During my detention in Kenya, I was not subjected to ill-treatment. Rather, the kidnappers showed humane treatment with me. I am not defending them because they committed a kidnapping in my right, which is an act that the law is responsible for. Their good treatment for me cannot justify that crime, because arresting a person against his will, whatever the justifications, is an unacceptable behavior, but I wanted to tell everyone that no one forced me to convert



***Romano strongly denied what some people are saying about the connection of Islam with violence, and said "It is necessary to differentiate between the principles of religions and the behavior of their followers."***

to Islam.

"During the arrest period, I read Islamic books, and I also read a translation of the meanings of the Noble

Qur'an in the Italian language and reached a conviction that Islam was the religion that convinced me and found enough answers

to many questions that were going on in my mind. I discovered that there was a great distortion for the principles of Islam, and I don't know its truth. The counter-propaganda promoted by the far-right followers conceives of Islam as not what it is. Therefore, I will make great efforts in my community to show these facts. I will tend to argue and logic to prove my point of view, and this is the method of Islam that strongly refuses to compel people to convert or force them to do what they do not want.

Romano strongly denied what some people are saying about the connection of Islam with violence, and said "It is necessary to differentiate between the principles of religions and the behavior of their followers." There may be terrorists who condemn the religion of Islam, but these people have gone astray from its original principles, so they do not represent Islam and it is unfair to attribute their objections to the religion as a whole. Likewise, there are Christians and Jews who have committed terrorist acts. Does this mean that all of the heavenly religions call for terrorism? Likewise, the majority of Arab and Islamic countries, led by Saudi Arabia, reject terrorism and make great efforts to confront and eliminate it. An official statistics prove that Arab and Islamic countries are the most affected by terrorist organizations. So why do others ignore these facts and focus on the actions of minorities that only represent themselves?"

The far-right parties in Italy have launched a major media campaign against Romano, directed explicit threats against her on social media, and have also tried to file lawsuits against her. On his Face-



## ***The far-right parties in Italy have launched a major media campaign against Romano***

---

book page, Simon Angelosante, regional advisor of the League party, known for its hostility to immigrants and Muslims in general, wrote "Romano should be brought to trial and should not be allowed to call for Islam in Italy, which is the capital of Christianity. Also the refugees who have become a burden on our country





***I discovered that there was a great distortion for the principles of Islam, and I don't know its truth***

and should be expelled immediately and deported back to their countries of origin. If the government does not carry out this task, we will organize mass demonstrations to force it to do so.

Immediately after Angelosante published that publication, many human rights activists quickly responded to his

allegations, accusing him of racism and of calling for riots. Some of them also demanded an urgent trial.

On the other hand, Romano received support from many groups active in the field of human rights, called for stopping these attacks and asserted her freedom to choose what she wants, “Not all Muslims are terrorists, and this is a fact that everyone knows. There are Muslims who reject violence in all its forms and live with us in Europe in peace, and even many of them assume leadership positions and they have a great contribution to European life. In Italy, there are Muslim doctors, engineers, and teachers. Is it fair to say that all of these are terrorists?”

“Italy protects freedom of worship, and therefore there is no ruling for the arrest of those who declare their conversion to Islam. For example, journalist Gabriele Torcello, who returned from Afghanistan in 2006, converted to Islam, where he said at the time that he had read the Qur’an in those days and was convinced of its principles. What is faith if not a tool for resting oneself?” Cristallo said.

About one and a half million Muslims live in Italy, practicing their religious rites freely, and they are keen on positive interaction with community issues, participating in national holidays and opening their mosques during those holidays. Italy was also affected by the Islamic rule of Sicily, where the influence of Islamic architecture on many modern buildings appears to be evident. The Federation of Islamic Communities is motivating Muslims not to isolate themselves within their societies, and asks them to participate in elections and present a modern image of Islam.



# With our dear readers

**By Dr. Othman Abuzaid**

**Editor-in-chief**

One of our dear readers asked me why there is such interest in Kerala State. He commented that there are many stories and articles about Kerala published in the Muslim World League Journal.

In fact, the question was relevant and so was the comment.

The answer to this question can be found in some Islamic countries that have shown a great interest in the journal. Through this, we can find out why there is more focus on Kerala than other Indian states. For example, there has always been a strong bond between the journal and the Algerian reader.

Algerians have developed this bond with the journal because MWL's publications have been distributed continuously in Algeria for many years. As for India, the MWL Journal reached the readers only as gifts or through subscriptions.

A friend from Kerala told me that one of the English Journal's articles went viral on social media (especially WhatsApp). This is a shining example that shows the great bond we have with our esteemed readers.

A visitor from Algeria came to the MWL headquarters and asked for an old copy of the journal, which was issued a long time ago. He told us that the Islamic Center there keeps the entire collection of the MWL's Journals, except this copy.

Moreover, we have strong ties with the North African countries including Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco, and receive great contributions from their writers and scholars. I still remember when a Tunisian scholar wrote to us about the idea of a WAQF bank. Then he

visited us a few months later and told us that a major international organization in Jeddah brought him over to attend a brainstorming session about the idea of the Islamic Solidarity Fund, which then became a reality. They came to know about this idea from the MWL Journal.

Another example of this unique relationship with some of our readers across the Islamic world can also be found in the words of a mosque imam in Jakarta who said to me, "When we receive the MWL's Arabic Journal by mail, we place it on a table at a corner in the mosque, and readers line up waiting for their turn to read it".

Another friend from South Africa protested to us that the journal had stopped arriving at their center, saying, "We are blessed with the Arabic letter, and many of our mosque-goers may not have the opportunity to enjoy their sight by looking at the MWL's Arabic Journal".

I do not forget the letters from an Arab prisoner incarcerated in the United States who regularly participated with us and commented on the articles published in the journal with high professionalism that helped us do our job perfectly. His story is another example of the stellar relationship we have with our readers around the world.

It is not possible for me to give all the examples showing the great relationship we have with our readers. It is not just a "relationship on a paper", rather it is a living reality that is embodied in an annual competition that brings to us every year one of the creative persons to perform the Hajj in the hospitality of the Muslim World League, so that we can get to know him closely.

*Murabba Palace - Riyadh*

