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Pure ISLAM, enticing to Heart and Mind

Not too long after Muhammad (ﷺ), the last messenger of Allah, chose Bilal (رضي الله عنه) as Islam's first caller (mu'azzin) for congregational prayer, Islam was systematically being announced to nations outside Arabia. The rise and spread of the voice of Divinity, through al-Qur'an, the final revelation, quickly advanced in every direction on earth. Europe, far east Asia, and nearby Africa were soon listening to the call towards submitting to One God, and the example of His final Messenger, configured in the holy book to form Islam, a universal code of conduct.

The speed and ease with how this occurred is one of the many grand miracles of the religion, which prevails even in our times of technology and obsessive materialism. The secret of its phenomenal success is noticeable by its adaptability and practicality across cultural, socio-economic, and spiritual norms and conformity. Essentially, this is the root of Islam. By its definition. A divine scheme of unity and equity, not only biased upon Humanity, but weaving the entire creation into one inter-locking tapestry of peaceful co-existence.

Bilal was an African slave. In his time black people were symbolic of slavery, and even when freed, were relegated to the lowest in social class or popularity. The holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) shattered those chains when he showed a distinctive inclination towards Bilal in appreciation of his piety and noble character. The African easily penetrated the inner-circle of God's messenger (ﷺ), securing a regular and special position amongst his honourable Companions (رضي الله عنهم), respectably known as the Sahabah.

Giving the opportunity of delivering the Azaan to a black African ex-slave was a majestic stroke of genius. A revolutionary enforcement of Islamic values of human rights and weighted by a Divine Truth of universal magnitude. The recognition of Bilal, his integration into Arabian

society, his acceptance as an elder in the religious order, but foremostly, in the relationship which evolved mutually from respect to absolute love with the Prophet (ﷺ), is unique in history. Through Bilal's case, Allah and the Messenger (ﷺ) confirmed the Islamic principle and tradition of love, tolerance, and universal brotherhood.

Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه), the man credited with having sacrificed all his wealth to assist the Prophet's religious transactions, until he tasted poverty in doing so, was also one of the most revered of the first muslims. It was his compassion, in any case, a soul-disturbing observation of Bilal's plight that drew out his resources which purchased Bilal's freedom from a cruel slave master. He was also the chosen companion that risked his life in accompanying his bosom friend, Muhammad (ﷺ), after the latter became confirmed as God's final messenger, through most of his trials, none larger than the escape into exile from his homeland when his own people wanted to kill him.

Just as Bilal was the appointed caller, Abu Bakr was the appointed Imam of the prayer to occupy the prayer mat, symbolic of his supreme seniority, chosen by none other than the Apostle Muhammad (ﷺ), only days before his death. His ascension to the leadership of the nation was effectively not unnatural.

Perhaps this is partly indicative of why Islam became, and still is, popular. There is no class or elitism based on bloodline, wealth, or status but only on character, piety, and justice. Anything different would be an insult towards understanding the Justice and Wisdom of the Equitable Creator of the Universe, the Wise, the Merciful Allah. It would be a lopsided evaluation of the most perfect and powerful messenger, teacher, and exemplar who once admonished a man who boasted about his bloodline, "We are all the children of Adam, and Adam was created from mud!"

HAZRAT MAKHDUM ALI MAHIMI

Makhdum Ali Mahimi (R.A.) was born on 10th Muharram 776 Hijri, (1372 A.D.) in Mahim, which was then part of Thane, into the Nawait family, so called because they were newcomers who had landed in Mahim as early as 9th century. Their actual Surname was Paro. They were people of Arab origin, who left their home land to journey to Baghdad and Basra before they came to settle along the west coast of India.

He traces his origins to the descendants of Hazrat Ja'far Tayyar (ؑ) Bin Hazrat Abi Talib (ؑ).

His Father Maulana Shaikh Ahmad (R.A.), a learned and saintly man, was a well to do merchant who belonged to the Paro or Prave family, while his mother Fatima bint Nakhuda Husain (R.A.), a pious and devout lady came from the wealthy Ankolio family.

His father's auspicious mausoleum is situated in Amman (the capital of Jordan) in the city of Moutha, situated at the distance of 112 kms from Amman.

Even before attaining the age of 9 years, under the training of his father, Maulana Shaikh Ahmed Bin Ali (R.A.), Hazrat Makhdum Ali Fakih Mahimi (R.A.) acquired full fledged knowledge of recitation of the Qura'n with correct phonetics, theology, logic, philosophy, hadith and all other extra-religious fields of knowledge and traditionally reported sciences etc.

His father died when he was nine years old, after which he grew up under his mother guidance whom he greatly revered. The incident when he stood by his mother's side for the whole night with a glass of water in his hand, because she asked for it and fell asleep before he could get it, is ample proof of his love and affection for his mother. He did not wake his mother up out of respect and love for her and when she realized his obedience and respect, she prayed to Allah to bestow his choicest blessings on him.

Sources indicate that after his father's death, he acquired knowledge from Khawaja Khidr (R.A.), whom he met in secret on mahim seashore every morning. (Khawaja Khidr - is regarded as patron saints of travelers and mysterious figure connected with initiation and the highest sources of mystical inspiration). Though there is no confirmed proof of the same.

Makhdoom ali mahimi (belonged to a group of Sufis named Uwaysi - those who have not received a formal initiation by a living master and are not affiliated to any known order like the Chishti or Suhrawardi in India.

Makhdoom Ali Mahimi (R.A.) is credited with more than one personal name, among them are Ali, Aluaddin and Abul Hasan. He is also known as Ali Paro and to later followers as Makhdum Ali Mahimi (R.A.)

He also holds appellations that highlight his achievements. He is called Qutb-e - Kokan (Kokan's Pole Star) in recognition of the 19 critically acclaimed books written by him and for his spiritual

eminence and large following along the kokan coast.

Mahimi was the first Indian scholar to write an exegesis on the Qur'an, which gained critical acclaim from numerous Islamic scholars including Shah Waliullah (R.A.).

He is also referred to as Faqih Ali Mahimi for his knowledge of jurisprudence. In fact, Sultan Ahmad Shah of Gujarat appointed him as Qadi for the Muslims of the then, thane district, for both civil and criminal cases and also gave his sister in marriage to him.

Teachings and Achievements: His biographies in Persian and recently in Urdu, state that Makhdum Ali Mahimi (R.A.) was well versed in the traditional Islamic sciences, including theology, jurisprudence, philosophy, and mysticism.

He was one of the first Islamic scholars in India to have written a commentary in Arabic on the Quran, as well as expounding Shaikh ul -Akbar; Ibn-e-Arabi's doctrine of Wahdat al-wujud, or unity of being.

There is little biographical information on his daily conduct but he is known to have observed the obligatory namaz as well as occupying himself with additional prayers, dhikr and contemplation of the Divine.

Among his followers, the only known name is that of his principle disciple, Shaikh Muhammad Syed Kokani.

Makhdum Ali Mahimi (R.A.) has left a legacy of religious and literary works. The most distinguished amongst these is his pioneering commentary on the Quran al-tafsir ar-rahmani. Written in a simple style, it comprehensively examines the subtle links between the different chapters in the Quran and their verses. He discusses the Quran's mystical and non-mystical aspects and the relationship between them.

Uniquely, he explains how the bismillah at the head of each chapter has been named with reference to its contents and why each chapter bears a particular title. Handwritten copies of this work are known to exist but printed copies are difficult to obtain. His numerous treatises elucidating classical manuals and doctrines treatises were read and commented upon by Sufis and scholars like Shah Wajihuddin Alawi ((R.A.), Ghulam Ali Azad Bilgrami (R.A.), and Shah Waliullah (R.A.) in India during later times.

They elaborate on the interpretation of the shariat and the Hadith (traditions) in the light of reason. With remarkable ease he quotes from famous Sufis and philosophers like Razi, Suhrawardi, Qushayri, Sullami, Makki, and Kalabadhi whilst discussing the doctrines of tawhid and predestination.

He passed away where he had lived, in mahim, on 8th Jamadi-al-Awwal and was buried in the nearby graveyard. His mother, who passed away forty days later, lies next to him.

The Dargah, which dates back to 1674, is known for students to pray for success in their exams and police for success in a particular case.

HAZRAT ABU BAKR ﷺ THE SECOND OF THE TWO

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Verse 9:40 of the Holy Quran honors Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ in five different ways:

Firstly: The Quran refers to Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ as the "second of the two" citing Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ as the sole partner of the Prophet ﷺ in this miraculous event. This was indeed such a great honor that the Ansar forfeit their right to Caliphate and gave it instead to Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ based on this verse alone. It could be said that during the Hijra, a spider's web saved Islam, and Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ was there to witness this miracle, Allah referring to him as the "second of the two." In fact, Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ and the Prophet's journey is so monumental that it is the day we start our Hijri calender from.

Secondly: In this verse of the Quran, we see that Allah refers to Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ using the term "sahib" (companion) showing the closeness of the Prophet ﷺ to Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ. In fact, the Prophet ﷺ chose his closest companion to accompany him on this very dangerous journey; nobody other than Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ was given the honor of escorting the Prophet to Medinah. It could be said that Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ was the personal bodyguard of the Prophet of Islam, the one man trusted enough to handle the delicate mission of transporting Allah's Messenger ﷺ to safety and away from the clutches of the scheming infidels.

Thirdly: The Prophet ﷺ lovingly reassures Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ to "grieve not." This is the Prophet's own personal solace and affection being given to this man, and so how can it be then that the Shia would like to curse him? Did the Prophet ﷺ curse him? No, instead he reassured him and told him: don't worry, everything will be alright. This sentence of the Prophet ﷺ proves his close relationship to Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ, showing that he cannot see Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ being in grief.

Fourthly: Most importantly, the Prophet ﷺ continues and tells Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ that "Allah is with us." This is the absolute negation of the Shia paradigm. The Shia say that Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ is doomed by Allah, but here we see

that the Prophet ﷺ says that Allah is with Abu Bakr ﷺ. And indeed it must be in a positive light since the Prophet ﷺ included himself by using the word "us." The Prophet ﷺ is reassuring Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ that no harm can come to Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ because He has the special protection of Allah Himself. If it had been a Shia in the cave with Abu Bakr ﷺ, then the Shia would have said to Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ that "Allah is against you" and not "Allah is with you."

Fifthly: Allah sent his Sakinah (serenity, peace, tranquility, etc.) down upon Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ. Allah sends Sakinah down upon the believers; if Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ was an evil-doer as the Shia claim, then Allah would have sent his Wrath upon him, not his Sakinah. The Shia consider Hazrat Abu Bakr ﷺ to be an agent of Satan. Would Allah send his Sakinah down upon Satan?

DO NOT BE THE FIFTH

Hadrat Sayyiduna
Abu Bakr as-Siddiq ﷺ
narrates that the
beloved Prophet ﷺ said,

Get up in the morning in a state
that you be an Aalim or a student
(of the sacred knowledge)
or one who listens to the words
of an Aalim or
one who loves and
respects the Ulama.

Do not be in the fifth state
(other than the above four)
because you will be destroyed.

[Tabarani, Mu'jam al-Awsat, Vol. 5, Page 231, Hadith 5171]

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THE OLD SOCK

A wise and saintly rich man, sensing his approaching death, called his son to his side and gave him these instructions: "My son, I shall be leaving you very shortly. On the day when I die, and they have washed my body and come to wrap it in the shroud, I want you to put one of my socks on my foot. This is my final request of you."

Soon after this, the old man did indeed die, leaving behind his goods and property, his children and his dependents. Family, friends, acquaintances and neighbours attended his funeral. The body had been washed and was almost completely wrapped in the shroud, when the son remembered his father's wish. Finding one of his old socks, he handed it to the washer of the dead, saying, "In accordance with my father's last request, please put this sock on his foot."

"That is quite impossible!" Said the man. "Such a thing is utterly impermissible in Islam. I cannot act against the Shariah." Despite this valid objection, the son insisted, "That was my father's final request; it must certainly be carried out."

The washer of the dead was unmoved. "If you won't take my word for it," he said, "go and ask the mufti. He will confirm what I tell you, that it is not permissible." Holding up the funeral, they consulted the mufti, preachers and scholars, all of whom declared that this was not permissible in Islam. Just then, an aged friend of the deceased interrupted the debate with these words to the son: "My boy, your late father entrusted me with a letter which I was to hand over to you after his departure. Here, this letter belongs to you." So saying, he gave him an envelope. Taken by surprise, the boy opened the envelope and read out the contents of his father's letter.

"My son, all this wealth and property I have left to you. Now you see: at the last moment, they won't even let you give me an old sock to wear. When you yourself come one day to be in my condition they will also refuse to let you keep anything but your shroud. Eight yards of shroud are all you will be able to carry over from this fleeting world into the Hereafter. So pull yourself together and be prepared. Spend the fortune I have left you, not for the satisfaction of vain desires, but in ways pleasing to Allah, that you may achieve honour in both worlds.

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DO WE OWE IT?

One day, a very wealthy man was walking on the road. Along the way, he saw a beggar on the sidewalk. The rich man looked kindly at the beggar and asked him why he was begging. The beggar said, "Sir, I've been unemployed for a year now. You look like a rich man. Sir, if you'll give me a job, I'll stop begging."

The rich man smiled and said, "I want to help you. But I won't give you a job. I'll do something better. I want you to be my business partner. Let's start a business together. The beggar blinked hard.

"What do you mean, Sir? "I own a rice plantation. You could sell my rice in the market. I'll provide you the sacks of rice. I'll pay the rent for the market stall. All you'll have to do is sell my rice. And at the end of the month, as Business Partners, we'll share in the profits. Tears of joy rolled down his cheeks.

Do I keep 5% and you get 95%? I'll be happy with any arrangement. The rich man shook his head and chuckled. "No, I want you to give me the 2.5%. And you keep the 97.5%. For a moment, the beggar couldn't speak. He couldn't believe his ears. The deal was too good to be true. I want you to give me 2.5% of your profits so you grow"

The beggar now dressed a little bit better, operated a store selling rice in the market. He worked very hard. He woke up early in the morning and slept late at night and sales were brisk, also because the rice was of good quality.

After 30 days, the profits were astounding! At the end of the month, as the ex-beggar was counting the money. He told himself, Gee, why should I give 2.5% to my Business Partner? I didn't see him the whole month! I was the one who was working day and night for this business. I did all the work. I deserve 100% of the profits.

The rich man came to collect his 2.5% of the profits. The ex-beggar said, "You don't deserve the 2.5%. I worked hard for this. I deserve all of it!"

If you were his Business Partner, how would you feel?

This is exactly what happens to us!!! ALLAH is Our Business Partner...

ALLAH gave us life, every single breath.

ALLAH gave us talents, ability to talk, to create, to earn money

ALLAH gave us a body, eyes, ears, mouth, hands, feet, a heart

ALLAH gave us a mind, imagination, emotions, reasoning, language

In fact...ALLAH gave us EVERYTHING INDEED!

So...in giving 2.5% Zakaat (alms/charity) is not only an important pillar of Islam but also an expression of gratitude and love for Allah Ta'ala

HAZRAT KHWAJA SHAMSUDDIN TURK

Hazrat Khwaja Shamsuddin Turk was a Hasani Sayed and according to “Firdaus al-Wajoob” He was destined to be the only mureed and Khalifa of Sabir Paak due to His lineage. He was born in Turkey/Turkistan and like many of the great Mashaaikh He was a direct descendant of Rasool Allah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam).

Hazrat Khwaja Shamsuddin arrived in the Indian subcontinent where He heard of the greatness of Baba Farid and desired to become His murid. He arrived in Paak Patan on 12 Zil Hajj 658 AH. and went to Hazrat Baba Farid requesting him to enrol them into the silsila. Baba Farid told them “Your share is not with me, go to my Makhdoom Alaaddin Sabir. If Allah wishes your share is with him and shall receive it from him. He set out for Kalyar and arrived at the boundary of the 24 miles radius where none could cross. Alimullah Abdaal arrived and requested all of them to continue reciting the name of Hazrat Sabir Paak and took them across safely. There they found Hazrat Sabir Paak ﷺ standing in a deep state of istighraaq. They waited for a period of about 22 days waiting for Him to come into a normal state. In that time, the 21 people who accompanied Khwaja Shamsuddin lost their patience and left. He was left all alone and during that period, He says that he was so awe stricken that He forgot to eat and sleep.

When Hazrat Sabir Paak regained consciousness, He said “Shamsuddin you were sent here by Hazrat Baba Farid?” Khwaja Shamsuddin replied, “The master is aware of everything, what is there for me to say.”

Hazrat Sabir Paak then said: “The sun of Allah is in the sky and the sun of this faqeer is on earth”

Hazrat Sabir Paak then made Him His murid and told him to stay for a period of 3 days then return back to Baba Farid and remain in his service until Hazrat Baba Farid makes wisaal.

Hazrat Sabir Paak was absorbed beyond description. He stood holding the branch of a goolar tree for 12 years waiting for the revelation of godly presence. The body dried up became thin, and immovable. Only eyes worked until at last he realized the Supreme Being. Baba Farid’s inner powers revealed to him Makhdoom Sabir’s state, so he asked his disciples: “Who would go to Sabir and make him sit, I will gave him a gift.” Khwaja Shamsuddin agreed to go there. Baba Farid directed him not to stand before Hazrat Sabir but serve him from behind his back. (As it would be dangerous for Khwaja Shamsuddin). Khwaja Shamsuddin was a Hafiz-ul-Quraan, when he arrived in Kalyar he saw Hazrat Sabir Paak in an absorbed state, motionless like a statue, and standing by holding the branch of a tree, and his eyes are up towards the sky. Khwaja Shamsuddin stood behind him. He then began reciting Qur’aan, when Hazrat Sabir Paak regained consciousness he requested Khwaja Shamsuddin to sit and recite the Qur’aan. Khwaja Shamsuddin said ‘how is it that this servant sits while the master stands’ after this Hazrat Sabir Paak sat down for the first time in many year and Khwaja Shamsuddin continued reciting the Qur’aan for him and also sang some Sufi song in his charming voice. Hazrat Sabir asked Khwaja Shamsuddin, ‘How is my Shaykh?’ Khwaja Shamsuddin replied: “The Shaykh is well”. When Khwaja Shamsuddin reached Pak-Pattan,

and told everything about Sabir Paak to Baba Farid. Baba Farid asked him: “Did Sabir asked about me?” Shamsuddin said: “Yes, he asked ‘How is my Shaykh?’” After listening to this Baba Farid went into wajd, and said: “Today I’ve become a Shaykh”. When Khwaja Shamsuddin asked Baba Farid to give him the gift as he promised; Baba Farid replied: “When you eventually go to Ali Ahmed Sabir, he will give you the gift”.

Hazrat Khwaja Shamsuddin returned to Kalyar Shareef on 12 Muharram 661 AH after the wisaal of Baba Saheb on 5 Muharram 661 AH. Hazrat Sabir Paak bestowed upon him the Khilafat and granted him the title, ‘Shahe Wilayat.’ Khwaja Nizamuddin Aulia was present on this occasion when Hazrat Sabir Paak wrote out the authorisation and appointment with His blessed hand. According to the author of Siyarul Aqtaab, besides being the Khalifa of Hazrat Sabir Paak, he is also the Khalifa of his spiritual grandfather, Hazrat Khwaja Fariduddin Shakar Ganj. Hazrat Sabir Paak also revealed to him the Ism A’zam and instructed:

“The Walayat (spiritual kingdom) of Panipat has been allocated to you. After my death proceed to Panipat and take up residence there. Don’t stay more than three days here (i.e. in Kalyar).”

During the period that he stayed with Hazrat Sabir Paak, Hazrat Sabir Paak remained in an engrossed state, most of the time. When azaan used to be given by Hazrat Khwaja Shamsuddin, Hazrat Sabir Paak used to regain his normal condition and say:

“Shamsuddin, shariat is such a beautiful thing, that it brings a Saalik from the presence of Allah into the presence of His creation.”

Shariah is wonderful, draws one from presence to intimacy.

Khwaja Shamsuddin was taught spiritually by Hazrat Sabir Paak, without any words being uttered.

Hazrat Sabir Paak told Khwaja Shamsuddin that after his wisaal he will see him twice. The first was after the janaza when he saw the face of the person who performed Hazrat Sabir Paak’s janaza was none other then Hazrat Sabir Paak himself. The power of that look was such that Khwaja Shamsuddin fell to the ground unconscious disappeared and landed in a city called Firkhour in Turkistan about 2000 miles from Kalyar. The second time was when after Hazrat Jalaaluddin Mahmud Umri Thanesri kabirul awliya his murid and Khalifa completed a 6 month mujaheda of hubse kabeer. A mehfil-e-sama was held in which Khwaja Shamsuddin was ushered into wajd. While in this state, a person came to see him with a veil on his face but seeing him in that state left a message with the congregation to tell him:

“A fakir has conveyed his salaam but found you in an ecstatic state therefore we did not meet again.”

When this message was conveyed he became so sad saying, “my Murshid came to see me but I was unaware”. Since that day he repented from listening to sama and he commanded that sama should not be held at his grave. Also from that day he spoke to nobody besides Hazrat Jalaluddin kabirul auliya. He remained in this state until his wisaal on the 10th Jamadul Akhir (718 AH/1318 CE).

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

MOULANA SHAH FAISAL KHAN SAHEB

Q1) What is the excellence of asking for forgiveness?

A1) There are many excellences and virtues of forgiving and seeking forgiveness.

Allah Ta'aala says in the Holy Quraan:

"Ask forgiveness for your wrong doing, and for the men and women who believe."

"Then glorify your Lord's praise and ask his forgiveness- He is the ever returning."

Hazrat Abu Huraira (رضي الله عنه) reported that Nabi (ﷺ) said, "By the one in whose hand my soul is, if you did not do the wrong then Allah Almighty would remove you and bring a people who do wrong and then ask Allah for forgiveness and He would forgive them." [Muslim]

It is allusion to the fact that man is fallible by nature and he keeps committing mistakes. But good people are those who ask forgiveness of their wrong doings. It is exhortation to ask for forgiveness. God forbids, it does not mean that Allah likes wrong doings.

Q2) What is the virtue of patience?

A2) Allah Ta'aala says in the Holy Quraan, "And verily we shall try you till we know those of you who strive hard (for the cause of Allah) and the steadfast. (Surah Muhammad)

Hazrat Abu Malik Haris's son of Ashari (رضي الله عنه) narrated that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Cleanliness is half of Imaan, Alhamdulillah will fill the scales, Astaghfirullah and Alhamdulillah will fill the mid in between the earth and the sky or will fill prayer is light, Sadqa (Charity) is light and Patience is guidelight. The Quraan is an argument for or against you. Every human being wakes in the morning to see himself. He either liberates it with righteous deeds or destroys it with bad deeds. [Mishkat]

There are many virtues of patience and Sabr. We

should try to adopt patience and we should always carry on seeking forgiveness from. As you have read that seeking forgiveness has many virtues.

Hazrat Abu Huraira (رضي الله عنه) said that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said, "To whom God Almighty intends goodness, puts him in tribulation."

May Allah Ta'aala grant us the Taufeeq to always have patience and may Allah grant us the ability to seek forgiveness and always remain humble! Aameen!



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9:00 am Mohiwanto Wakhotoo (Julooa March) Hoqala Stop Sign Sa Drieziek 3/5
 Commencing from the STOP sign in Drieziek 3/5 to the Dawah Centre

10:00 am Dithuto Ka Bana (Items to be presented by)
 Saaberie Chishty Dawah Centre Learners.

11:00 am Puo Ka Moeti Warona (Lecture by honourable guests)

12:30 pm Presentation of Awards
 Bana Battofuwa Likhau Tsa Tlotla Le Kamohelo

1:00 pm Jumuah Salaah - Friday Prayer
 Followed by Salaato Salaam, Dua & Lunch
 Thapelo Ya Sechaba
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AN ILL DEFINED METHODOLOGY: A POLITICAL NICKNAME OR A TECHNICAL TERM

BY IBRAHIM VAWDA

Tyranny, dismal social conditions, authoritarian political systems, and the absence of hope provide the fuel that powers absolute resistance. It is not enough to focus on the violent ideology of so-called "terrorism" without devoting sufficient attention to the social conditions that give rise to it. If the recent Arab awakenings succeeded to fill the gap of legitimate political authority, they would have annihilated any threats from violence in the form of "terrorism" or freedom fighters.

Terrorism has become a political nickname designed to place enemies beyond the pale as opposed to a technical term the purpose of which is to define certain criminal acts for which the offenders can be held accountable.

In the Middle East, it has reached the point where opposition to the establishment targets oppression, tyranny, autocracy and dictatorships and is seen to threaten the interests of those in power and their western paymasters is regarded as terrorism.

The illegal military government in Cairo, the family fiefdoms in Riyadh, Bahrain, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates have taken advantage of this elastic, no-holds barred definition of terrorism to label all opposition to their administrations as part of this description. Now that the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas and Hizbullah have been declared "terrorist" organisations, it is any body's guess how and which classification will apply.

The Western, Israeli, Egyptian and Saudi interpretation of "terrorism" lacks any pretence of objectivity. In this context it remains meaningless. Bluntly stated it means "political violence which we (the regime) disapprove". The distinction between right and wrong is abandoned and replaced by brute force.

The armed activities of the state that deliberately targets civilians are characterised as legitimate acts of self-defence.

Sometimes the ludicrous characterization of "terrorism" refers to the ethnicity or religious leanings of the perpetrator as opposed to the perpetrator's actions. Thus we find where peaceful demonstrations - acts that are by definition non-violent and don't

require so much as a water pistol - are termed "terrorism".

It is long overdue that these undemocratic, authoritarian and cruel rulers level with their nationals. Terrorism cannot be eradicated with drone attacks or even massive military interventions. Rather than battling against a mythic foe, the Middle East family fiefdoms should expedite the introduction of democratic rule and democratic institutions.

Saudi Arabia is a country governed by a family dictatorship which tolerates no opposition. Human Rights advocates and political dissidents are severely punished. The ruling elite rely on the purchase of Western arms and US military bases for protection.

The military regime in Egypt seized power in a coup de 'tat in July 2013. It has escalated its attacks on freedom and democracy in the country. By all accounts the military is taking the country back to the darkest days of the Mubarak era or worse.

We are aware that truth and war do not mix. Cairo and Riyadh will resort to disinformation and historical falsification to reinforce their claims against the Muslim Brotherhood. They will justify these prerogatives as a "security matter". Total war will be declared on the Brotherhood. This will enable the Egyptians and the Saudis to use the methods of total war, under the pretext of "self-defence".

This would be reasonable only if it were true. But it is not. It is completely false. The intention is not just to stamp out "terrorism", but also to stigmatise and defame perfectly genuine and valid acts of resistance. Under international law, there can be no doubt that many of the actions carried out by states constitute war crimes that must be punished. Finally, the Egyptian and Saudi military/security/industrial complexes will be allowed to run crazy under the long tail of 9/11. It will subvert civil liberties and place a heavy burden on the tax payer. As the general population in the two countries go about their daily business, they should wonder who are the real terrorists.



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HAZRAT KHWAJA BAQI BILLA

THE SILENCE OF THE TOMBS BY MAYANK AUSTEN SOOFI

Outside is the usual Sadar Bazar chaos, and heat. Enter the green coloured gate and you step into calmness, and coolness. Amidst hundreds of tombs, clustered tightly on a rolling landscape, lays a mosque, a madrassa and the sufi shrine of Hazrat Khwaja Baqi Billah.

Founder of the Naqshbandia silsila in the Indian sub-continent, Hazrat Billah was born in 16th century Kabul. After wandering through cities like Samarkand, Balkh, Lahore and Multan, he settled in Delhi to spread the deen. Here he died; here he was buried making this burial ground a favorite among Delhi's Muslims.

However, if tombs scare you, walk straight to the Dargah. Its hushed ambiance is in sync with the pulse of the Naqshbandia silsila which is known for its silent remembrance of Allah. The Khwaja himself was a silent sort of man. He shunned publicity and was very selective about initiating disciples. That is why there is no celebratory chaos of Nizamuddin Dargah here. No picnicking crowd flock to this shrine as they to Khwaja Bakhtiar Kaki's in Mehrauli. Here there are no qawwals, no khadims, no beggars; only trees, tombs, the dry leaves, the occasional pilgrims, the crows perched on headstones.

They jointly lifts you to a above-the-cloud haven where you feel free of the worldly trappings. Connaught Place is just ten minutes away by auto but, hanging in this suspended quietness, you would refuse to believe it.

If you are not an I-love-solitude type, climb the stairs to the madrassa. In its large hall, you might find almost a hundred children reciting the Quranic verses; each boy rocking to his own rhythm. Thanks to images beamed on BBC and CNN, a few of us unconsciously tag such sights with the would-be Talibani fighters of Afghanistan. That's rubbish. Step inside; the children would smile.

Once back in the courtyard, try chatting with Mr Salamatullah. He can be identified with his long white beard, a frail physique and sunken cheeks. His children are all married, his wife dead and he himself lives alone in this dargah-mosque-graveyard complex. Known as Peer Saheb, he could be curt in the beginning. But if you continue to show unfailing courtesy, he would open up

and tell you all that you need to know about Hazrat Billah.

"Aap lived in a mosque in Ferozeshah Kotla but Aap used to sweep in the kabristan behind (what is now) Maulana Azad Medical College," Peer Saheb told me. According to him, Hazrat Billah one day visited this graveyard and somehow got his clothes muddled here which prompted him to declare that this place would be his final destination.

According to a legend, Khwaja Billah had willed his funeral prayers to be led by a man who had never sinned, never missed a prayer, never skipped a night vigil. When he died at 40, a veiled person appeared from nowhere and declared that the Khwaja had asked him to lead the prayers. It was later discovered that the veiled person was the Khwaja himself.

Having always stressed on the concept of fanaa, the annihilation of the self, the Khwaja had wanted no dome to be built on his grave. So, in his Dargah, you sit under an open sky. They say that even if it is the sunniest day in peak summer, the barefooted pilgrims feel no heat.

Go, check out the claim.

THE DERVISH-LAMP

by Irshad Siddiqi

The hurricane swept with all its might

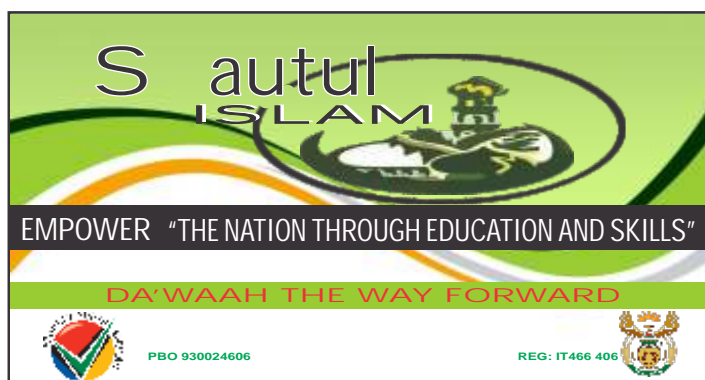
A guiding lamp burnt through the night

Regenerate ignition once again

Eternal the Light like Ink and Pen

Crowned by the king a divine re-birth

Arise, Shamsuddin sun of the earth!





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SARKAR-E-KALA: SAYED MUKHTAR ASHRAF

EDUCATION

He gained his primary education at Kichowcha Sharif under the guidance of elders. But the irony of fate was that the tyrant hand of death snatched his dignified father from him when he was only 13 years old. One can easily imagine his mental anxieties on this heart rending premature death which caused inexpressible grief and sorrow to every member of the family, in particular, and all followers of Silsila Ashrafia in general. There was no one except his old mother and grandfather. Now the whole responsibility of his fostering and education devolved on the weak shoulder of grandfather who too was grieved at heart on this sorrowful occurrence to express it in words.

In spite of this tragic situation, his grandfather did not make him feel the death of the father rather took special care of education. He read preliminary books of theology from Moulwi Imaduddin Maulana Wasi Ahmad Sasarami and Hazrat Maulana Abdur Rashid Nagpuri taught him all books of Darse Nezamia except Bukhari Sharif. Hazrat Maulana Naimuddin Moradabadi taught him Bukhari sharif. Besides these renowned teachers, some qualified teachers were appointed in Madrasa Ashrafia specially for him. Every teacher taught him not only as a pupil but they taught him with due respect as his dazzling face was indicating his bright futures.

TURBAN OF HONOUR

It is only a special characteristics of Hazrat Makhdoomul Mashaikh (R.A.) that he did not go anywhere for education, but he completed his education at Madrasa Ashrafia founded by his grandfather. After teaching Bukhari Sharif to him, Hazrat Sadrul Afazil Maulana Naimuddin Moradabadi (R.A) requested to Alahazrat Ashrafi Mian (R.A.) to award him turban of honour. For this, a colourful function was organised in Khanquahe Ashrafi Hasania Sarkar-e-Kalan in which eminent personality participated. AlaHazarat Ashrafi Mian (R.A.) tied up the turban of honour on his head and prayed for his success in every field. Hazrat Makhdoomul Mashaikh kissed his pious hand and the dignitaries congratulated him for this honour. Now imagine the extreme joy of his beloved mother who must have been exceedingly glad to see his son with turban of honour on his head. It would not be wrong to say that the memory of his father Maulana Ahmad Ashraf (R.A.) must have filled tears in eyes of everyone present there. Alas! He could not see his son obtaining turban of honour from Shabihe Ghouse Jilani Ala Hazrat Ashrafi Mian (R.A). It is true consent of Allah is better than all".

BAIT-O-KHILAFAT (Featly and Dignity of Caliph)

It is true that Ala Hazrat Ashrafi Mian (R.A) had nominated Hazrat Maulana Ahmad Ashraf (R.A.) his son, as his caliph after him but he left this world on 1347(A.H.) and this sacred seat became vacant. He nominated Hazrat Makhdoomul Mashaek (R.A.) as his wali Ahad Janashin on the occasion of Fateha Chehlum of his deceased son. A large number of followers and eminent personalities from every where had thronged the Khanquahe Ashrafia Hasania. In their presence, Ala Hazrat Ashrafi Mian (R.A.) announced his Wali Ahadi (successor ship) in such word.

"Faquir Syed Abu Ahmad Md. Ali Hossain Ashrafi Jilani Sajjadah Nashin Dargah Roohabad ki Chowcha Sharif Dist. Faizabad informs to all members of the family, Islamic brother and followers of Silsila Ashrafia that I have

nominated my son Alime – Rabbani Waeze – Lasani Maulana Abul Mahmood Ahmad Ashraf as his Wali Ahad and Janashine Ashrafussimnani; this Faquir performed third Haj in 1329 (A.H.) and visited Taif Sharif, Madina Monawwarah, Baitul Maquaddas and other important places like karbalai Moalla, Nazaf Sharif, Kazemain Sharifain, Ghare Surmara Baghdad Sharif, Hama Sharif and Hams Sharif etc. I could not reach Kichowcha Sharif on the date of Urse Mahboobe Yazdani Noor Bakhsi Simnani. I asked him to perform all customs of Urs. He did it well like me, served the guests and as a respect instead of putting on Khirquah, he made it see to all. He served me whole life and obeyed my order on every thing. He died of plague on 15th Rabiul Akhir 1347 AH. I, on the occasion of Majlise Chehlum and in presence of members of family, disciples, Kholfas like Syed Gholam Bhik Nirang AIMokhtabba Farquirullah Shah, Haji Moizuddin Raise Ibrahimipuri and Nazir Hasan from Shukhe Jaunpuri and lovers of Silsila from all over India, I made my grandson my disciple and nominated my Wali Ahad. All who were present shook hand with him with due respect and prayed for his knowledge, practice and long life".

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

It is undeniable fact that in the propogation of Islam and showing right path of Shariat (Ravealed Law) and Tariquat (Path), the outstanding services of Auliae Keram (revered friend of Allah) can never be forgotten. likewise, Hazrat Makhdoomul mashaekh's service to the cause of Islam in general, and for Silsila Ashrafia, in particular, is the golden chapter of the history of Khanquahe Ashrafia Hasania Sarkar-e-Kalan . As we have come to know his father passed away when he was only thirteen years old. His grandfather who was his sole guardian and foster, left this world in 1355 AH when he was only twenty-two years old. Now imagine this tender age and so many responsibilities devolved on his weak shoulder. He was alone and there was no one on his back to support and guide him except his old grieved mother whose heart had grievously injured on account of this heart rending situations. In this condition, an ordinary man might have been demoralised but his endowed maturity in spirituality stood by him and he faced all these difficult situations with courage and determination. The old mother continued encouraging him as a result of which he started his journey with the mission of Makhdoom Simnani (R.A.) in every corner of the subcontinent. Wherever he went taking the candle of Hazrat Makhdoom Ashraf (R.A), he was accorded with warm and sincere welcome. He who saw his shining face became fascinated. He brought a revolution wherever he went by presenting Islam in its true sense of term and showing the path of Shariat and Tariquat in a very thoughtful and attractive manners resulting millions of people coming in the fold of Silsila. He not only attended the religious function and delivered spiritual lecture but also eminent learned men and educationist belonging to different sects used to attend special meeting programme and ask questions and get satisfactory answers. His method of presentation of mystical idea and point of the Quran and Hadith was so meaningful and attractive based on reason that great educationist bowed down their heads before him. His speech on knowledge (Marfat) and reality ((Haquiquat) reminded the speech delivered by Syadna Ghouse Azam Mohiuddin Abdul Quadir Jilani (R.A).

TIPS TO HEALTHY HAIR

COMPILED BY HASINA BEGUM SAYED

The first step in hair-care is your diet and the two most important things in your diet are iron and protein. The hair cells are the fastest growing cells in the body but they are also the first ones to be affected you don't eat right or suffer with deficiencies because they are not required for survival.

Try and include iron-rich foods like leafy vegetables, fish, pumpkin seeds, beans, chickpea, soybeans and cereals in your diet. Doctors suggest that you consume around 12 mg of iron daily. You also need protein because that's what strengthens your hair. Include complete proteins which are also rich in amino acids: like cheese, milk, soy, lentils, peas, quinoa and yogurt.

How to Maintain Healthy Hair: A Few Basic Tips

1. It's normal to lose 100 to 150 strands of hair a day so don't panic when you see a small bunch crawling across your tiled floor.
2. Comb wet hair with extreme care because they're fragile and prone to breakage. Take a broad toothed comb and run it from the roots to the ends of your hair as gently as possible.
3. Trim your hair every few weeks to get rid of those brown and rough split ends. Cut about 1/4th an inch of your hair every 6 to 8 weeks to avoid the split ends to grow out again.
4. Don't wash your hair everyday and whenever you do, apply some conditioner on the ends. Try and use the same brand of shampoo and conditioner.
5. Rinse the conditioner off with cold water as it is good for both strength and shine.
6. Unlike the labels on the back of our food items, the labels on the back of our shampoos are mostly left unread. In the last few years, there has been a lot of focus on sulfate in shampoos. What are sulfates? They're the reason your shampoo lathers the way it does. They clean your scalp and hair, departing the dirt from it. But some researchers also suggest that they strip your hair of essential oils. They're also why your eye stings when shampoo runs down the side of your face. If you feel any kind of irritation on the scalp or find your hair drying up over time then try and buy a shampoo that's sulfate-free.
7. If you've got dry hair then it's best to avoid colouring. However, if you can't resist use lemon, chamomile tea or honey as they work as great hair lighteners. You can add lemon juice to water and spray it over your hair when you're heading out. You can rinse your hair with brewed chamomile tea after you wash them with shampoo or add honey to the water you use to wash your hair.

DEEP CONDITIONING

Even though you condition your hair after every wash, nothing quite works as good as deep conditioning. Every once in a while wash your hair with shampoo, squeeze out the extra water and

towel dry it. Then take generous amounts of conditioner and apply it right to the root of your hair. Use a broad toothed comb and run it through your hair to make sure the conditioner reaches everywhere. Now, pull them up and clip them together. Leave the conditioner in for anywhere between 10 minutes to an hour. Pull them down, rinse thoroughly and enjoy silky smooth hair.

KEEP AWAY THE HEAT

If you must use your iron or curler then buy a serum of your choice or if you've got some time on your hands, make one at home.

1. Take some almond oil, coconut oil, hair conditioner, 250 ml water and a small empty spray bottle. Pour 200 ml of water in the spray bottle and add 2-3 drops of coconut and 4 to 5 almond oil to it. Add two really tiny drops of conditioner. Don't use too much of it because it will lather. You can add lavender or some nice smelling oil if you'd like. Add the remaining water and shake well. Let the lather settle and it's ready for use.

2. It's all about butter with this one. Take 4 ounces of shea butter, 4 ounces of cocoa butter and 20 drops of any essential oil of your choice. Heat the butter till it's all liquid and let it cool. Add the essential oil to an empty, sterilized jar and pour the butter. Let the jar cool down till the butter takes a solid form again.

HOME-MADE HAIR MASKS

1. Egg, curd and mustard oil - If you've got hay-like dry hair then here's the answer to all of your problems. Eggs are rich in vitamin A, B12, D and E, fatty acids and protein. The protein helps strengthen the roots, the fatty acids make it a natural hair conditioner and B12 helps add volume.

2. Avocado and peppermint oil - Also referred to as the butter pear, avocados are creamy, rich and the only fruit combines the protein of meat, fat of butter, vitamins and minerals of green vegetables and a nutty flavour. Mash some avocado, add a drop or two of peppermint oil and apply this mask on your hair. Leave it in for 15-20 minutes and wash off.

3. Olive oil, coconut oil and egg - for speedy hair growth. Warm 2 tablespoons of coconut oil, let it cool, add one or two eggs and two tablespoons of olive oil and apply.

OIL IS THE ANSWER

Coconut oil comes most recommended by hair experts and mothers! It can protect your hair from sun damage, dandruff and removes sebum build-up from hair follicles accelerating hair growth. You could also boil some curry leaves in coconut oil, strain the oil and apply.

1. Olive oil with honey and cinnamon powder - Massage this paste into your scalp, leave for 15 minutes and wash.

THE BYSTANDERS

BY FAIZEL KHAMKAR

Musi Maimane the official opposition leader in South Africa has publicly stated that they are tired of being bystanders and for this reason they would support a court bid to bring the motion of no confidence forward. Furthermore he intimated that they are practising coalition government and would therefore be prepared to take over. The blatant flaws of these arguments were already explored. What are interesting are the term bystander and its use. They are players on the same field in relation to other players and if they then still consider themselves bystanders then they must be considered irrelevant. This idea of irrelevancy must be considered. To be relevant it is necessary to be active and contributory. Without both of these factors irrelevancy will prevail. A bystander does not only hamper progress but societal development but at times becomes the negative factor in this development process and progress.

In America the #metoo campaign where women who were sexually abused has come out in the open has to the dismay of Donald Trump forced the resignation of politicians and exposed various corporate giants especially if the field of entertainment for what they are. Had there been inactivity on behalf of this forum and they had remained as bystanders then these despicable acts would have continued. These so called icons would through their influence over a period of time made such acts fashionable and acceptable. We have historic evidence of the racist abuses in America as to how this mind set is created. In terms of upholding the honour and dignity of women this forum has not only created an awareness platform but has assisted in identifying those that provide subtle support and may in fact be closet transgressors themselves such as Donald Trump who is hugely influential. This movement has highlighted the need to be active and the global community must learn that being a bystander is unacceptable and in order to stop the regression of society the people who have the ability to strive for good must be vigorous.

Situations normally dictate the shift from bystander to participant. The Myanmar issue is a case of point. During the ethnic cleansing exercise there were many

contributors but very few influential activists. With the recent detaining of some Reuters reporters by the Myanmar government the contributors also became activist and the pressure that was then levied has resulted in ten army personnel arrested for their part in the atrocities committed against the Rohingya people. These ten are not the only perpetrators and in all likelihood are only the pawns and as a result true justice has not been served. However a very strong message has been sent out those activities is not the norm and cannot be acceptable. This raises another critical point in that being a participant is noble but when the number of participants grows then more can be achieved.

Participation takes on different levels and if those levels are not properly co-ordinated then the required outcomes may not be ideal. Let us look at the Yemen crisis. According to United Nations report more than twenty million people are facing starvation. The situation is escalating to a mass "death bed" situation and various fatal diseases are rife. The participation at humanitarian aid is massive but the situation is not improving. The main reason for this is that the negative political interventions are negating the good work of the aid participants. It can be described as trying to hold water in a sieved container. It is the political agenda which ensures that this crisis is not highlighted in the media. Had the media houses had the moral fibre which they claim to have the highlighting of this and other crises would have garnered more participants. Political activist would then have created more awareness and placed more pressure in the relevant political lobbies to achieve a more holistic solution.

As Muslims we are duty bound to be in the forefront of being participants in the promotion of good. We need to take stock and ask ourselves if we are in the forefront of participation or not? In fact we need to assess if we are truly active or are we simply bystanders leaving this task to those that truly care?

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS FOCUS

BY FAKIR HASSEN

PyeongChang City, SOUTH KOREA - The Korea Tourism Organization had to scrap plans for a prayer room where the Winter Olympics are taking place after anti-Muslim groups voiced strong opposition. The PyeongChang Olympics Gangwon Citizens' Islam Countermeasure Association reportedly launched a petition against the prayer room, collecting over 56 000 signatures. The director of another Islamophobic organisation, the Islam Countermeasure Association, said that Muslims should refrain from prayers at the Olympics. Other similar groups also opposed the distribution of halal food in cafeterias during the Winter Olympics.

Macerata City, ITALY - The far-right Northern League Party has pledged mass closures of Muslim prayer sites if it enters the government following general elections on March 4. "With the League in government, we will close all illegal Islamic centres, and those that do not fulfil the key principles of transparency, legality, openness, and acceptance of our values, starting from the respect of women," the party said.

London, UK - Over 200 mosques across the United Kingdom opened their doors as part of Visit My Mosque Day 2018 with the aim of building more bridges between communities. Harun Khan, secretary general of the Muslim Council of Britain, said: "Muslims across the UK are yet again

sending a strong message that despite what the headlines say, we are open, engaging in dialogue and positively contributing to British public life." Last year saw over 10,000 visitors nationwide attend a Visit My Mosque open day event.

Riyadh, SAUDI ARABIA - Saudi women's rights got a further boost when the Public Prosecutor's office announced that it will recruit women as investigators for the first time, as the kingdom seeks to boost female employment in line with Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman's Vision 2030 reform program that seeks to elevate women to nearly one-third of the workforce. King Salman last year decreed that women would be allowed driving permits from June, a historic reform that could put not just millions of women behind the wheel but potentially many more into the workforce.

Dammam, SAUDI ARABIA - The Guinness Book of Records has acknowledged the Kingdom's Saline Water Conversion Corporation (SWCC) as the biggest seawater desalination facility in the world. Minister of Water and Electricity and SWCC Chairman Abdulrahman Al-Fadli congratulated SWCC personnel for increasing production of desalinated water to five million cubic meters per day. He said that this supports the Kingdom's pioneering status throughout the world in the field of developing the desalination industry.


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Ottawa, CANADA - The National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM) has welcomed the suggestions of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, on taking action against systemic racism and religious discrimination including Islamophobia. "We welcome several of the recommendations made by the Heritage Committee report, including Recommendation 30, which calls for the government to designate January 29 as a national day of remembrance and action on Islamophobia and other forms of religious discrimination," said NCCM Executive Director Ihsaan Gardee.

Makkah, SAUDI ARABIA - The Muslim World League (MWL) has established the world's largest Halal Center in Makkah. MWL said it is in the process of launching a website for halal in more than 20 languages, in line with its efforts to restructure its Halal Commission and transform it into the world's first brand of halal. The League said it had received calls from many governments in Asia and Europe to be the authorised exporter of halal products to those countries.



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