



Muslim News

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Christchurch Muslim Youths help out

The tragedy unleashed on the city of Christchurch by the 22nd February earthquake has left various parts of the garden city water logged, collapsed or collapsing infrastructure including roads and sewage system.

The huge silt deposits have become eye sore in many parts of the city.

About 47 Muslim youths assembled at the mosque on 28th February and went out to assist Christchurch residents in cleaning the city.

Some of the youths knocked on doors and asked residents what help they needed so they could assist.

This saw many Muslim youths taking part in tidying and cleaning homes.



Conference Report:

First Gulf Conference on Halal and its Services

Mustafa Farouk

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The First Gulf Conference on Halal and its Services took place on 24-26 January 2011 at Holiday Inn Hotel, Al-Salmiyah, State of Kuwait. The main organizers of the conference were the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs of Kuwait, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, and GCC Standardization Organization. Others involved with organizing the conference included Kuwait Awqaf Public Foundation, the Public Authority for Industry in Kuwait, Halal Industry Development Foundation for the Awqaf Ministry of Malaysia, International Halal Integrity Alliance of Malaysia (IHIA) and the Association of awareness and information to the defence of Muslim consumers in France ASIDCOM.



Delegates discussing at First Gulf Conference on Halal and its Services. L to R the FIANZ representative at the conference Dr M. Farouk; Darhim D. Hashim the CEO of International Halal Integrity Alliance Ltd; The Honourable Haji Abdul Malik Kassim State Minister of Islamic Affairs, Domestic Trade, Consumer Affairs and Chairman of Halal Steering Committee of Penang, Malaysia; and Dr S. Abdul Rahman the Secretary Commonwealth Veterinary Association from Bangalore India.

Continued on Page 8

Response of Christchurch Mosque to the 22nd February Earthquake

Tuesday 22nd February is an unforgettable day in the history of the Garden City. The 6.3 magnitude earthquake that hit Christchurch has inflicted huge damage and brought colossal loss to an otherwise calm and serene city.

About 190 are so far confirmed dead with many more still unaccounted for. The individual and collective emotional loss brought to the city and nation by the quake is irreparable.

Thousands of displaced people sought refuge at designated welfare centres at Burnside, Rangiora etc.

At An Nur Mosque on 101 Deans Avenue over 450 people sheltered on the first night of the quake. Of this number, Saudi students were about 400 and the remaining were families who suffered either damage to their homes, loss of water and power or simply going through psychological trauma.

Food and water were provided in the mosque that also opened its doors to non-Muslims who needed shelter or company in this trying time.

Christchurch Muslim Community Briefed on aftermath of quake

In the aftermath of the 22nd February earthquake in Christchurch, representatives of Maori, Pacific and Ethnic Services in the New Zealand police visited An Nur mosque on Friday 26th February and briefed the Muslim community on welfare and emergency arrangements put in place by Civil Defence and other government agencies.

Head of the Police delegation Superintendent Wallace Haumaha accompanied by Snr Sergeant Rakesh Naidoo informed the community about the rescue and recovery efforts that are in place. They also explained the process of body identification that must meet international best practices. While these could understandably be slow at times, the Police emphasized it is most important to get it right and ensure that families are handed the body of their deceased relation.



Christchurch Muslims bury earthquake victims

Among the people that were confirmed dead from the Christchurch earthquake are two Muslim medical practitioners.

Both Dr Meysoon Abbas and Dr Hossam Alany are medical doctors working in a clinic on the 4th Floor of the CTV building. The two are New Zealanders of Iraqi background. The body of Dr Meysoon Abbas was released on 3rd March and buried on Friday 4th March after janazah prayer was performed in the An Nur mosque.

Sheikh Mohammed Amir, Chirman New Zealand Ulama Board led the funeral prayer and joined the procession that accompanied Dr Mesoon's body to the cemetery.

In a brief speech at the graveyard Sheikh Amir reminded Muslims that the lesson from every death is the reminder that death is a necessary end and we must all prepare for it because when it comes we have only our deeds to carry along.

The body of Dr Hossam Alany was released on 9th March and buried on Friday 10th. A Janazah prayer led by Sheikh Anwar Sahib was performed at An Nur mosque after which a procession escorted the deceased to the cemetery where he was buried.

Patients as well as professional colleagues of the deceased came to the mosque to witness the funeral prayers. They described both Dr Meysoon and Dr Hossam as dedicated professionals who loved their job and were always committed to it.

Islamic Stance On Calamities

Khutbah delivered at An Nur Mosque, Christchurch on Friday 4th March by Sheikh Mohammed Amir, Chairman, New Zealand Ulama Board

All praise is due to Allaah, may peace and blessings be upon the Messenger, his household and companions.

Fellow Muslims! Fear Allaah as he should be feared, for fear of Allaah brings more blessings and prevents afflictions.

Dear Muslims! Allaah has foreordained the fate of all creatures, written down their impacts and deeds, portioned out between them their livelihood and wealth and created death and life that He may test them which of them is best in deed. Indeed, belief in Allaah's decree and preordainment is one of the pillars of faith. Nothing happens in this universe except by His will.

This life is full of misfortune and sorrow. It is destined to be a place of hardships and trouble. Trials and tribulations are as inevitable in this life as cold and heat. Allaah says, "And certainly We shall test you with something of fear, hunger, loss of wealth, lives and fruits, but give glad tidings to those who are patient." (Al Baqarah: 155)

Pre-destination is a test by which the truthful ones are distinguished from untruthful ones. Allaah says, "Do people think that they will be left alone because they say, 'We believe,' and will not be tested." (Al 'Ankaboot: 2).

The human soul does not become pure except through trials, and it is during tribulations that real men are known. Ibn Al Jawzie said, "Whoever wants to have everlasting peace and well-being with no affliction does not understand the meaning of Allaah's commandments, nor does he perceive the meaning of submission to Allaah. Every soul (either believing or disbelieving) shall inevitably taste suffering in this world, for this life is based on hardships. Man lives between comfort and suffering. Prophet Aadam, for instance, had the angels prostrated before him and yet was soon after expelled from paradise. A believer is afflicted with trials in order to refine him, not to punish him. He is tested in ease as well as in hardship. Allaah says, "And We tried them with good (blessings) and evil (calamities) in order that they might turn (to Allaah's obedience)." (Al-A'raaf: 168).

Brothers in faith! Something undesirable may sometimes have a pleasant result, while something seemingly desirable may turn out to have an unpleasant and detestable result. Do not therefore feel that harmful things cannot come to you through hardship. Allaah says, "...And it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you. Allaah knows, and you do not know" (Al-Baqarah: 216).

Prepare yourself mentally for afflictions before they occur so as to make their occurrence light on you. Do not be worried

because of tribulations, for they have their limits, and watch what you utter during your hard times for many a word has ruined its utterer. A resolute Muslim stands firm during hardships, his heart does not change and he does not complain.

Console yourself whenever afflicted with a promise of reward from Allaah.

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Allaah has foreordained the fate of all creatures, written down their impacts and deeds, portioned out between them their livelihood and wealth and created death and life that He may test them which of them is best in deed. Indeed, belief in Allaah's decree and preordainment is one of the pillars of faith. Nothing happens in this universe except by His will.

Brothers in Islaam! Be patient over afflictions, they will soon be removed from you. the patient ones are being recompensed with good rewards. Allaah says, "And those who are patient, we will certainly pay them a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do." (Al-Anaam: 96).

The reward of the patient ones will be doubled for their patience and Allaah will be with them, remove their afflictions and make them pleased.

O afflicted one! Your Lord does not deny you what you want except what is better than that, He does not test

you but for your well-being and He does not subject you to tribulations but to purify you. He tries His slaves with pleasure as he blesses them with calamity. Do not therefore waste your time thinking over what has already been guaranteed for you. As long as one is still alive his provision will no doubt come to him. Allaah says, "And no (moving) living creature is there on earth but its provision is due from Allaah." (Hood: 6).

Further, if Allaah – out of His wisdom – closes a door against you, He opens out of His mercy a door better for you than the closed one. It is by afflictions that righteous and understanding people are increased in rank and reward. Sa'd bin Abee Waqqaas said: I said, "O Messenger of Allaah, who are the most afflicted of all people?" He replied, "The Prophets, then the righteous people, then those who are nearest to them in perfection and those who are nearest to them.

Man is tested according to his religiosity; if he is strong religiously, his test is increased and if he is weak in religion, his test is reduced And a believer will be tested until he walks on the earth sinless [i.e. his sins have been erased by series of afflictions that he endured.] (Al-Bukhaarie).

Fellow Muslims! Prophet Aadam labored along difficult paths beset with affliction; Prophet Ibraahiem was thrown into a blazing fire; Isma'iel was laid down for slaughter; Yoonus was swallowed by a whale; Prophet Ayyoob suffered from a severe illness; Yoosuf was sold for a small price, thrown into a well and wrongfully jailed, and Muhammad suffered different kinds of injury. You also are in path of calamities moving, for the life does not give pleasure only to anyone. The Prophet said, "If Allaah wants to do good to somebody, He afflicts him with trials." (Al-Bukhaarie).

Continued on Page 7

News in Pictures: IWCNZ Conference



Sisters at the IWCNZ Conference preparing for their wagon ride.



Two more sisters happy about the wagon ride during the IWCNZ Conference

Sisters trying to stay dry during the wagon ride during the IWCNZ Conference.





Sisters starting their canoe practice at the IWCNZ Conference.



Sr. Silma Ihram, the Keynote Speaker of the IWCNZ, talking about the importance of Muslimah being active and involved in their communities.



Horseriding in the rain during the IWCNZ Conference

IWCNZ HOLDS NATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE IN HAMILTON

BY ALIYA DANZEISEN

On the weekend of January 21-23, 2011, over 200 Muslimah from around New Zealand came together for the Annual Conference of the Islamic Women's Council of New Zealand (IWCNZ) which was held this year in Hamilton at the University of Waikato and which was hosted and organised by the Women's Organisation of the Waikato Muslim Association (WOWMA) on behalf of the IWCNZ. The Conference addressed the topic of Muslimah Living Active and Fulfilling Lives and included Islamic lectures, workshops and activities throughout the weekend, which focused on that theme. Conference attendees came from diverse backgrounds and there was a good representation of all cultures including solid numbers from Africa, Arabia, the Pacific Islands, the South Asian subcontinent, Southeast Asia, New Zealand and other Western countries.

Friday Evening Sessions

On the first evening, the Muslimah attended a presentation on "How to Support New Members to Our Communities including reverts, immigrants and individuals who relocate," and a discussion forum on "Developing Relevant Programming for Our Communities." The sisters also participated in an hour of exercise by partaking in the "Sit and Be Fit" activity designed to keep women healthy with exercises they can do in their own homes. The "Sit and Be Fit" hour was run by a female instructor from Sports Waikato. Simultaneously, WOWMA Youth Leaders ran ice-breakers and a trash to fashion competition which permitted the younger sisters who attended the conference to get to know each other.

Saturday Morning Workshops

During the Saturday morning, IWCNZ offered seven workshops of which

participants could select two sessions to attend. The workshops included: a) The Importance of Providing an Islamic Education for Our Children presented by Dr. Maysoon Salama; b) Settlement Issues in New Zealand—Legal Rights and Responsibilities- organised by the Fatimah Foundation; c) What Makes a Good Story-A Youth Media Workshop



Sr. Assil Russel speaking about ICARE at the Conference Public Forum. ICARE (Iraqi Children's Aid & Repair Endeavor) is a non-profit organisation started in New Zealand to provide free medical and dental services to Iraqi children.

offered by Sapna Samant, d) Optimism and Resiliency—Tips to Get Through Difficult Times addressed by Beverly Burns; e) Active Citizenship and Supporting the Community presented by Ann Dysart of the Ministry of Social Development, f) Parenting, Discipline and Taking Care of Self—Legal Rights and Responsibilities- offered by the Fatimah Foundation, and g) The Means and How to Get Your Story Out-a Youth Media Workshop lead by Sapna Samant. In between workshops, there were 15 vendors as well as Islamic organisations selling items and providing information to the conference attendees.

Public Forum

Mid-day on the Saturday, IWCNZ offered a one-hour public forum as part of Da'wah (outreach) to the wider community in which non-Muslims from the local Hamilton area as well as embassies, government officials and organisations were invited to attend. The event was well received. Government

officials attending included: Hamilton City Mayor Julie Hardacker, Deputy Mayor Gordon Chesterman, Sue Moroney (MP for the Labour Party), David Bennett (MP for the National Party), Dianne Yates (retired MP for the Labour Party), and Martin Gallagher (Councillor of the Hamilton City Council). The United States Embassy sent

its representative Pam Hamblett. New Zealand Ministries and organisations that also had representatives in attendance were the Ministry of Social Development, the Human Rights Commission, the Office of Ethnic Affairs, the Waikato Interfaith Council, Hamilton City Council, SHAMA Hamilton Ethnic Women's Centre, NZ Ethnic Social Services and the University of Waikato.

A Qur'an recitation of Ayat 4:36, which inspired the conference

theme, opened the forum and then a remembrance of those in Christchurch that were impacted by the September earthquake with the recitation of Surah Al Zalzalah given by three Muslimah youth from Christchurch. Sr. Silma Ihram, an Australian revert, gave the keynote address at the public forum and discussed how Muslimah have lived active lives in the past and how they are presently doing so. The following people also briefly addressed the public forum: Nasreen Hannif, IWCNZ National Coordinator; Ismail Ghamadid, President of the Waikato Muslim Association (WMA); and Anwar Ghani, President of the Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand (FIANZ). A presentation by Sr. Assil Russell from ICARE closed the event with a brief presentation of the free medical and dental assistance her organisation that provides to children in Iraq. A casual luncheon followed, and the sisters left to prepare themselves for the afternoon outdoor activities.

Continued on Page 9

Continued from Page 3

Real trial, dear brothers and sisters, is the trial in one's religion and whatever trial besides that is regarded as well being, for it raises one in the rank and erases one's sins. Also all comforts that do not bring one closer to Allaah is a tribulation. Do not therefore grieve over what you miss in worldly materials, for worldly pleasure begets pain and disobedience. Aboo Dardaa' said, "Of the insignificance of this world to Allaah is that He is not disobeyed except in it, while what is with Him cannot be obtained except by abstaining from it. Engage yourself in what will benefit you more. Keep away from what is in peoples' hands you will be the wealthiest of them; do not lose hope in Allaah's mercy lest you are disgraced; always remember Allaah's favor on you and drive away your distress by being pleased with Allaah's decree, for however long the night may be, it will be followed by the dawn. Supplicate to Allaah. He will give you relief and if you are patient Allaah will provide a way out for you. Ponder over the story of Prophet Ya'qoob who lost a son for a long period and yet did not lose hope of relief from the Almighty One, but rather said, "Maybe Allaah will bring them all (back) to me."

Dear brother! It is only Allaah who deserves all praise and is capable of attending to all complaints. It is only Him you must beseech to remove your misfortunes. Pray to Him during the night with submission and humbleness and request Him to make your affairs easy for you. He says, "Is it not He who responds to the distressed one when he calls Him" (An Naml: 62).

Put your trust in the all-powerful Lord and take refuge with Him with a humble heart, He will open the doors of His mercy for you. Fudayl Ibn 'Iyaadh said, "If you lose hope in all people and you do not ask anything from them, your Lord will give you all that you want." Whoever leaves his affairs to the hands of Allaah will achieve what he aspires: Always recite the prayer of Prophet Yoonus: "None has the right to worshipped except You (O Allaah) Glorified (and exalted) are You (above all that they associate with You) Truly I have been of the wrong doers." (Al Anbiyaa': 87).

If your provision seems delayed, do a lot of Istighfaar, for misdeeds necessitate punishment; and if it does not seem that your supplications are having any impact, then examine yourself, for it may be that you have not been sincere in your repentance. Endeavor also, to give charity to the needy, for charity prevents and removes affliction. However, if your affliction is removed, give a lot of thanks and praise to your Lord and know that a false sense of safety is a big trial. Allaah says, "Say: Nothing shall ever happen to us except what Allaah has ordained for us. He is our Lord and Protector, and in Allaah let the believers put their trust" (At-Tawbah: 51).

Dear Muslims! No condition is permanent. Fortunate is he who is always God-conscious. Fear Allaah in any condition you may find yourself. You can do nothing to prevent what has been destined to happen as you do nothing to attain what has not been pre-ordained. The ability to choose and control is with Allaah alone and His choice for His slave is better for him than his choice for himself. Daawood Ibn Sulaimaan said, "Three things indicate the piety of a believer; his trust in Allaah in what he has not attained; his satisfaction with whatever he has attained and his patience over what he has missed."

Allaah is the All-Wise, All-Knowing in all that He wills and decrees, and He is the All-Wise, All-Knowing in all that He legislates and commands. He creates and decrees whatever signs He wills, to frighten His slaves and remind them of their obligations and duties towards Him, and to warn them against associating anything in worship with Him, going against His

commands and doing that which He has forbidden. Allaah says: "And We sent not the signs except to warn" [al-Israa' 17:59] "We will show them Our Signs in the universe, and in their own selves, until it becomes manifest to them that this (the Qur'aan) is the truth. Is it not sufficient in regard to your Lord that He is a Witness over all things?" [Fussilat 41:53]

Allaamah Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: "Allaah sometimes gives the earth permission to breathe, which is when major earthquakes happen; this makes people feel scared, so they repent, give up sins, pray to Allaah and feel regret [for their sins]. When there had been an earthquake, some of the Salaf said: your Lord is warning you. When Madeenah was struck by an earthquake, 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab addressed the people and said: if there is another earthquake, I will not stay here with you." And there are many similar reports from the Salaf.

Our response when there is an earthquake or some other sign such as an eclipse, strong winds or floods, should be to hasten to repent to Allaah and pray to Him for safety, and to remember Him much and seek His forgiveness, as the Prophet (pbuh) said: when there was an eclipse: "If you see anything like that, hasten to remember Him, call on Him and seek His forgiveness." (Al-Bukhaari (2/30) and Muslim (2/628)).

It is also mustahabb (recommended, encouraged) to show compassion to the poor and needy, and to give charity to them, because the Prophet said:

"Show mercy, you will be shown mercy." (Narrated by Imaam Ahmad, 2/165)

"Those who are merciful will be shown mercy by the Most Merciful. Have mercy on those who are on earth, and the One Who is in heaven will show mercy to you." (Narrated by Abu Dawood (13/285), al-Tirmidhi (6/43)).

"Whoever does not show mercy will not be shown mercy." (Narrated by al-Bukhaari (5/75), Muslim (4/1809)).

It was reported that when there was an earthquake, 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azeez R.A would write to his governors telling them to give in charity.

Allah Azza Wa Jall says: "And whosoever fears Allaah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty). And He will provide him from (such sources) he could never imagine. And whosoever puts his trust in Allaah, then He will suffice him." [al-Talaaq 65:2-3] And there are many aayaat on this topic.

The Prophet said: "Whoever meets the need of his brother, Allaah will meet his needs." (Agreed upon; al-Bukhaari, 3/98; Muslim, 4/1996).

And he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever relieves a believer of some of the distress of this world, Allaah will relieve him of some of the distress of the Day of Resurrection. Whoever makes things easier for one who is suffering hardship, Allaah will make things easier for him in this world and in the Hereafter. Whoever conceals a Muslim's faults, Allaah will conceal his faults in this world and in the Hereafter. Allaah will help a person so long as he helps his brother." (Narrated by Muslim, 4/2074).

Allaah is the One Whom we ask to reform the affairs of all the people and to bless them with proper understanding and help them to adhere steadfastly to it and repent to Allaah from all their sins.

Dr Saeed stresses promotion of Islamic social values

ISLAMABAD, March 5 (IINA)- Renowned religious scholar and Functional Director Inter-faith and Community Alliance for Islamic Society (North America) Dr Syed Muhammad Saeed has stressed the need for promotion of social traditions and values in the light of Quranic teachings.

Talking during the Waqt News programme "Barwaqt" Friday night, he gave the example of US Blacks' struggle to bring change in the society and said that social change could be

brought in Pakistan by following and promoting the Islamic teachings. He said that the teachings of Holy Prophet (PBUH) and the Holy Quran provide guidance in this regard. He stressed the need for acknowledging the golden vision of Islam.

He said that the entire Islamic world has associated expectations with Pakistan adding that was why they welcomed the slain federal minister for minorities affairs Shahbaz Bhatti on his arrival in the US. He said that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) taught the

Muslims to scarify and forgive.

Dr Saeed urged the Pakistani media to play its due role in creating religious harmony in the country. He said that presently there are about 6,000 mosques in the US. He observed that it was made possible by the US Blacks' role in the social development. He observed that Islam was rapidly spreading in the US and the European world. He emphasised upon the Muslims to follow the spirit of sacrifice and tolerance.

Continued on Page 1

The primary objectives of the Conference were:

1. To provide accurate and up to date information on the Halal Industry and its services.
2. To discuss the status of the use of all types of stunning and mechanical slaughtering in the Halal industry.
3. To acquaint participants with the techno-economic and financial aspects of the Halal industry and its services.
4. To recommend ways of ensuring the Halal Industry and its services are according to Islamic teachings, and to help formulate international Halal standards.

His Excellency Chancellor Rashed Abdulmohsin Al-Hammad, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Kuwait; His Excellency Hj. Abdul Malik Bin Abul Kassim, State Minister of Islamic Affairs, Domestic Trade, Consumer Affairs and Chairman of Halal Steering Committee of Penang, Malaysia; Dr Anwar Al Abdullah Yusuf, Secretary General, the GCC standardization organization; Dr. Naji Mohammed Al-Mutairi, Director General, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), Kuwait; Shaikh Salih Abdullah Kamil, Chairman of the Islamic Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), and Chairman of the General Council for Islamic Banks and Financial Institutions, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia were among the dignitaries and scholars who spoke at the conference.

Delegates from many countries representing a cross section of the Halal industry were represented at the conference. A number of the delegates also made formal presentations; however, the presentations were mostly by those who oppose the use of stunning and mechanical slaughter in Halal meat processing.

The conference recommended the following:

1. To establish a unified Gulf office with a mission to oversee the Halal industry and its services. The GCC Standardization Organization (GSO) to act as the Technical Secretariat. The office will also establish corresponding national committees to be formed in each of the member states comprising of religious, scientific, and enforcement bodies. The head of the committee will be a member in the Office. The Office will set its objectives and mechanism of functioning. Members from outside the Office may also be invited to participate in its activities.
2. To standardize and control procedures for verifying the Halalness of imported food products for the GCC common market and to coordinate the exchange of information with other Muslim countries.
3. To provide the necessary financial support for scientific research centres and universities to conduct research on ways to detect prohibited materials in foods due to the great need for such research in substantiating the religious decisions adopted by the Islamic jurisprudence bodies.
4. To apply caution in the use of

stunning methods as much as possible and alternatively advocates wider use of hand slaughtering and the enforcement of the decision of the International Islamic Fiqh Academy No: 95 (3 / 10).

5. To reaffirm the right of consumer to know the slaughtering method used in meat processing by declaring the methods on food packaging labels.
6. For regulators to enforce standards for Halal products and to increase the frequency of inspections of Halal Food processing plants and slaughterhouses.
7. The submission of all the scientific papers presented throughout the conference sessions on stunning methods to the International Islamic Fiqh Academy for review and appraisal.
8. For Muslim businessmen to invest more in the Halal industry and its services.

The conference organizers did an excellent job of hosting the delegates. FIANZ attendance at the conference provided a great opportunity to establish contacts with others in the Halal Industry and to present the New Zealand Halal slaughter practices as the one that best harmonises the spiritual and the temporal requirements for processing Halal meat in the world. FIANZ presence at the conference also helped in focusing the discussions on pre-slaughter stunning on facts rather than emotions bereft of facts, which was the preference of some speakers at the conference that argued against all forms of pre-slaughter stunning.

Continued from Page 6

Outdoor Adventures

In coordination with the conference theme, outdoor activities were arranged for the participants. The ladies were permitted to choose from three adventures. The first option was horse-riding and canoeing, the second was a Mystery Tour with sisters being taken to a surprise location, and the third was Waka Ama on the Waikato River and a rock-climbing activity. Despite the first summer rainstorm occurring, the buses departed for the activities full. The sisters who went horse-riding and canoeing visited the Karamu Trail Trek site and all were allowed to ride horses in the area fields and received instruction on how to canoe and were given the opportunity to paddle around a lake. The Mystery Tour visited Pirongia Clydesdales and the sisters received a tour of the Pirongia Village by wagon and were allowed to visit a local cafe. The third tour headed to the Waikato River and Hamilton Skills Centre where the ladies were instructed on Waka Ama and then rowed single-hull wakas up and down the river. They were also given an opportunity to rock-climb in lieu of the high ropes course because of the slippery inclement weather.

Evening Celebration and Awards Ceremony

On Saturday evening, WOWMA organised a dinner to celebrate women's achievements for the IWCNZ Conference. Once again attendance by the sisters was strong and diverse cultures were represented. The hall was decorated in an Islamic theme with a tent, brass lanterns and urns, flowers were on the tables and petal scatters around. Silma Ihram spoke once more and followed up her earlier speech with additional advice on how to be an active Muslimah. Recitation of the Qur'an by Sr. Julie Webb of Christchurch occurred along with a speech by a young sister. IWCNZ recognised the efforts of four sisters for their contributions to their communities. These sisters are Srs. Munira Khan, Leila Adam, Maysoon Salama and Qamar Rahman. A separate article detailing these sisters' efforts has been included herein. Dinner followed Maghrib prayer and then women performed nasheed and were permitted to share their culture with each other. It was a lovely and fun evening for the sisters to get together and celebrate.

Sunday IWCNZ AGM

On Sunday morning, the Annual General Meeting was held with a report of IWCNZ's past activities for the year provided,

elections taking place and plans for the upcoming year's activities proposed. Sr. Nasreen Hannif was re-elected at National Coordinator, Sr. Noolen Van de Lisdonk was elected First Assistant Coordinator, and Sr. Leila Adam was elected Second Assistant Coordinators. Sr. Anjum Rahman was elected at the IWCNZ media representative. Regional Associations are reminded to send the names of their female representatives to IWCNZ directly to Sr. Nasreen. Due to torrential rain, the scheduled morning outdoor activities were canceled, so the conference closed slightly early with a prayer that all the sisters return safely to their homes and that the Ummah may benefit from this Conference.

Thank You's and Acknowledgements

The Conference would not have been possible without the generous funding and support received from FIANZ, the Government of the United States of America, the Ministry of Social Development, WMA and WOWMA. Both IWCNZ and WOWMA thank all the presenters for their wonderful contributions and hope the attendees found the conference rewarding.

The effort of many individuals went into the organisation of this event and they should be acknowledged. The following sisters worked on behalf of WOWMA to support this year's conference and their contributions were invaluable: Aliya Danzeisen, Anjum Rahman, Sakina Bibi, Aisha Boulanouar, Qamar Rahman, Jannat Maqbool, Dr. Asma Rahman, Mominah Ahmed, and Zahrae Benaiche. The WOWMA youth also contributed significantly including: Ayesha Ghani Aaminah Ghani, Radiya Ali, Eman Hepburn, Koyna Ali, Khatra Omar, Khatra Mohammed, Hasda Jama and Ifrah Awad. The following individuals also provided support of the event and deserve a thank you: Br. Mubarik Ahmed, Br. Anwar Ghani, Br. Mohamed Feroz and his wife Yasmin, Br. Zakaria Boulanouar, Br. Ismail Ghamadid and Br. Musa Muhammed.

Planning of Next Year's IWCNZ Conference

The date and location of the next year's IWCNZ has yet to be set; however, if you would like to receive updates about the forthcoming event, please register with IWCNZ by contacting Sr. Nasreen Hannif or look for notices in the Muslim News put out by FIANZ. .

Innalillahi Wa inna ilaihi rajiun

It is with regret that we advise the passing of Haji Mohamed Ibrahim Musa of Sandringham, Auckland, on Sunday 6th Feb 2011 at 11pm. Janaazah was held Monday 7th February 2011 at Waikumete Cemetery. Mohamed Musa was the 1st Muslim born in New Zealand some 73 years ago. His family originated from Gujarat in India nearly 100 years ago.

He held the position of Secretary in the early days of New Zealand Muslim Association. He is survived by his wife, four sons, grandchildren and great grand children. He was regular at Masjid Umar Mt Roskill, Auckland and had his favourite spot. May Allah (swt) give him Jannah, amin.

OIC Warns of Human Tragedy in Gaza

TEHRAN- The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) warned of a human tragedy in the Gaza Strip due to the dire lack of water and food supplies as well as electricity and reconstruction facilities in the besieged region.

According to a report issued by the OIC's humanitarian affairs department, 10% of the Gaza residents have access to water every fifth day, while 80% can use water only twice a week and the daily water consumption of individual citizens in Gaza hardly amounts to 86 liters, half the amount of the world average.

Also the diesel-engine generators supplied by Egypt cannot generate sufficient power to meet the Gazans' need to electricity and the people of this region face 4 to 6 hours of power cuts on a daily basis, the report added.

Perspective on Christchurch Tragedy

By Farid Ahmed

Introduction:

Recent earthquake in Christchurch is a great tragedy for the whole of New Zealand. It is impossible to describe the horror feeling during the quake. Being disabled and a wheel chair bound paraplegic, I could not run out of my house when the quake struck and I saw the whole house was swinging from one side to another. I thought the house would fall on me. I didn't realize until after the quake had stopped that I was screaming "ALLAH. ALLAH" constantly!

Alhamdulillah! Allah saved me, my wife and child along with about half a million people in Christchurch. But the quake didn't leave everyone alive. It was a monumental tragedy that resulted in loss of lives, grief, horror and terrible destruction of infrastructure. My heart goes to all victims and their families and I am constantly praying like many others that may Allah save the city and grant His mercy on its people.

The tragedy has triggered questions to many minds, is it fair that so many people have been killed and so many made to suffer? Or where is the mercy of God and so on. I would like to write few words about the question of fairness. May Allah give me guidance in writing the correct words on this issue! Ameen!

Why tragedy?

Every little or big happening on this earth has great reasons. Some reasons the creator has informed us through His divine message [Like Holy Quran] and some reasons He kept with Himself. But what we know from holy Quran is that every difficulty happens for good reasons, for positive outcome. For example, Allah says in holy Quran: 6.42 "And We gave the nations suffering and poverty that they may learn to be humble."

From this verse we find the following facts:

- Everything in this world is under the control of Almighty Allah,
- Only Allah provides good time and bad time for a great purpose [For trial],
- Often mankind become arrogant by their achievement, they begin to think that their achievement is their making – not a favor from Allah,
- Often mankind misuse those God given favor to abuse each other for

greed and selfishness and they spread widespread corruption on the earth,

- So Allah often reminds them with suffering/tragedy to be grateful to Him and to use Allah's favor to share among citizens fairly, honestly according to divine prescription. Also to learn from mistakes and correct themselves for a positive and better future.

So every tragedy is a learning curve and men must use it for positive outcome. We find in our daily life the same thing. When a child learns how to ride a bicycle, the child makes mistake, stumbles and learns from the mistake and ride better in next attempt. The merciful Allah grants respite for mankind to learn and change for a better future, for prosperity.

Question of Fairness:

To understand what is fair we depend on accurate information and evidence. In court the judge tries to get as much as information possible with evidence like test results, witnesses etc.

The same theory applies in the question of fairness about Earth quake tragedy in Christchurch. Have mankind got full knowledge to determine exactly what is fair and not fair about the natural calamities? The answer is (a) No human knows all the mysteries of the creations and its management and (b) They would disagree with one another due to the limited and different degree of knowledge.

Holy Quran teaches this simple fact that only the creator Almighty Allah has full knowledge and only He knows what is exactly fair. Holy Quran describes about Allah's full knowledge: 6.59

"And with Him are the keys of the Unseen, the treasures that no one knows but He. He knows whatever is in land and in sea. Not a leaf falls without His knowledge: There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything fresh or dry, except what is written in a clear record."

Example in holy Quran:

Now let us look at an example in holy Quran how the perception about "what is fair" changes with what information one has.

In Holy Quran Allah merciful informs a story of a great prophet of Islam Musa [A.S] and a wise man Khidir. Allah granted Khidir some knowledge of unseen so he could see what was fair

with his knowledge. On the other hand Allah granted Musa the knowledge about apparent things so he saw fairness based on his knowledge. Holy Quran describes: 18.71

"So they both proceeded on: Until, when they boarded in the boat, (and) he (Khidir) damaged it (by making a hole in it); (Musa) said: "Have you damaged it in order to drown those in it? Truly a strange thing you have done!"

According to Musa, damaging the boat was not fair at all. So he spoke up and labeled the action as very strange, very unfair. In his observation and knowledge he was not wrong but Allah [SWT] wanted to give him and the mankind a very important lesson from it.

Later, Khidir explained the reason of damaging the boat. Holy Quran describe: 18. 79

"As for the boat, it belonged to certain men who were in great need: They used (it) for working in the sea: I only wished to make it useless (Temporarily), because, after them was a certain king who took over every boat by force."

So Khidir did not do anything unfair. He damaged the boat a bit so the king would not seize the damaged boat and the poor boys would not miss out their work, their livelihood. Khidir could see with his far reaching knowledge that his action was very fair but Musa could not see it because of his lack of knowledge in unseen in that matter.

This Quranic example teaches us that the perception of Fairness/ Unfairness depends on full knowledge about everything. No men possess full knowledge except Allah. That's why they can't say for sure about Allah's action whether it is fair.

Conclusion:

Now, let us come back to the original question, how do we understand the context of Christchurch tragedy?" The answer is:

- We are not qualified to question Allah's decision.
- We do not know enough to challenge Allah's justice
- We believe Allah never does anything unfair to His creation but our knowledge is limited.
- We believe there is great wisdom and benefit behind this Christchurch tragedy and Allah knows best about it
- So we accept Allah's management and pray for the best.

PUT
YOUR
FAITH
INTO
PRACTICE!

Help Us Expand An-Nur Mosque In Christchurch



The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “Whoever builds a mosque for Allah, Allah will build for him likewise in Paradise.”

Dear Brothers and Sisters: As-Salam alaikum wa rahmat Allah wa barakatoh Muslim population in Christchurch has been growing over the past years, the space and facilities of An-Nur mosque have simply become inadequate and over stretched , and because of this there is currently a project to upgrade the prayer and ablution spaces. When completed, An- Nur mosque will be better placed to cater fully for the needs of the growing Muslim population. **To this end you are humbly invited to donate generously towards this noble project. Details of Bank and postal address as following.**

Bank Details

Muslim Association
Canterbury
Bank of New Zealand
Account number
02-0800-0041468-01



Postal Address

Muslim Association Canterbury
101 Deans Avenue
Riccarton
Christchurch 8011
03 3483930

IWCNZ National Conference pays tribute to Sr. Qamar Rahman and gives special recognition to three additional sisters

As part of the Conference's Saturday night celebration, the Islamic Women's Council of New Zealand (IWCNZ) recognized four sisters for living active lives and contributing to their communities. Sr. Munira Khan of Auckland, Sr. Leila Adam of Wellington, Sr. Maysoon Salama of Christchurch were acknowledged for particular work they are doing to support the Muslim community within their cities and Sr. Qamar Rahman of Hamilton received the Supreme Award for being the epitome of a Muslimah Living an Active and Fulfilling Life in New Zealand for well over 40 years.

These sisters were nominated by other Muslimah from around the nation to receive this acknowledgement and those putting forward a name provided reasons for why the sister should be recognised. At the dinner, the ladies were recognised and provided with a ceramic ware as a gift of appreciation

On a national level, Sr. Munira Khan has served as the treasurer of IWCNZ and, on behalf of the Muslim community, has arranged regular prison visits to prison to sisters who have been incarcerated. Sr. Munira makes these efforts to support sisters in truly trying circumstances while still supporting her family, maintaining fulltime career in banking, and actively participating in talks and events in her local Muslim community.

Sr. Leila Adam is a founding member of IWCNZ and has been active in the Wellington community for well over 20 years. In the last decade, she had the opportunity to live in the UAE and to study the science of tajweed. She received an Ijazah in Qur'an recitation with Tajweed from Damascus, Syria. Since returning to New Zealand nearly three years ago, Sr. Leila has been sharing her knowledge with the Muslim community in Wellington including teaching at the Masjid. Sr. Leila is also a trained teacher and has a loving family including five children.

In Christchurch, Dr. Maysoon Salama has been an active member of the Muslim community for nearly 15 years. Together with her husband, she founded An-Nur Childcare which offers an Islamic programme for the youngsters in a nurturing environment and provides employment opportunities for other Muslimah interested in childcare. Dr. Maysoon manages the facility while supporting her family which includes three children. She is an active member of the Muslim Association of Canterbury teaching classes and she was integral

in organising the MAC Muslimah youth camp this past January.

Sr. Qamar Rahman has been an integral part of the Muslim community in Hamilton for over 40 years and she remains active still today providing Islamic lectures and advice to the Muslimah in the community. She was honoured with the Supreme Award for several reasons and you are invited to read the full biography of her accomplishments which was read at the presentation of the Award at the formal dinner at the IWCNZ and which is included separate in this publication.

Please congratulate these sisters for their efforts. We pray that Allah Reward these sisters for their good works, and may other Muslims be inspired by these sisters dedication to the community and to the members of the Ummah.



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The Federation of Islamic Associations
of New Zealand (Inc.)



اتحاد الجمعيات الإسلامية النيوزيلندية

Memo

To: Secretary, Local Associations and Islamic Trusts
From: Dr Anwar-ul Ghani, President
Date: 23 February 2011
Subj: CHRISTCHURCH EARTHQUAKE - FIANZ APPEAL

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Assalaamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatahu

I pray to Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala that you all are in the best of health and progressing well in the path of Taqwa. At this most tragic times in the history of our nation, I appeal to Muslim New Zealanders to show their most generous support to ease the pain of our fellow citizens in Christchurch.

In just under six months, the city of Christchurch has been struck once again by a 6.3 magnitude earthquake yesterday. This time, this tragic earthquake is deadly. There has been loss of many lives (73 bodies have been recovered thus far) and widespread damage to properties and infrastructures. Many more are missing and feared trapped or dead under the collapsed buildings. Alhamdulillah, by the Grace of Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala, we have received news that there has been no serious damage to Masjid An-Nur (Muslim Association of Canterbury) and the Masjid in Lincoln Road. Christchurch Muslim community is largely unaffected.

It is now time for us to come together to lend our hand to assist fellow citizens in the Canterbury region. Although at this stage there are no requests for volunteer-support, if you are a handy person and willing to volunteer your time please give your name to Dr Muhammad Musa (021-0660634) who will get back to you if your services are needed.

In the meanwhile, FIANZ has launched a fundraising appeal to raise money for our fellow citizens in Christchurch affected by the horrific tragedy. We request all Brothers and Sisters to donate generously towards this noble cause. Appropriate announcement/request should be made at Masajid and Islamic Centers. Donations are to be directed to FIANZ's Appeal Account as detailed hereunder:

Bank of New Zealand
020 500 – 0737236 – 006
FIANZ Appeal Account

A United and Progressive Community


7 - 11 Queens Drive, Lyall Bay, Wellington
PO Box 1415, Wellington 6140 • New Zealand

Telephone +64 4 387 8023 • Facsimile +64 4 387 8024
Email fianz@vodafone.co.nz • Web fianz.co.nz

Local Associations should coordinate the fund raising at regional level and deposit the money raised into the abovementioned account Regional Associations and individual community donor are kindly reminded to state clearly that they are donating for "Christchurch Earthquake Fund" when depositing the money in the FIANZ Appeal Account.

I look forward to your usual support for this very deserving humanitarian cause. May Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala reward you all for your charitable acts.

Jazak ALLAH Khair and Wassalaam



DR ANWAR-UL GHANI
PRESIDENT

Following is the full text of the letter sent from FIANZ to the Japanese Ambassador HE Mr Hideto Mitamura in Wellington on 14th March 2011.

It was with extreme sadness that we learnt of the recent devastating triple tragedy (a major 8.9 magnitude earthquake, 10 meters high Tsunami and the potential nuclear meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant), that struck Japan 3 days ago.

While as New Zealanders we are trying to come to terms with the recent earthquake tragedy that occurred in Christchurch that saw 182 lives lost, Japan's loss of more than 10,000 lives is indeed very catastrophic and difficult to bear.

At this time of great devastation, the Muslim community of New Zealand wishes to convey its deepest sympathy to the Government and the citizens of Japan, especially those directly affected in the current tragedy. We share with you in their plight and struggle in seeking relief from this calamity.

We supplicate to God Almighty to bestow His mercy and benevolence to those affected. May He also give them the endurance and strength to reconstruct their lives again.

Write to us

Muslim News is published fortnightly by the Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand. We welcome news and information about the Muslim community in New Zealand and the world. Please email news, views and photos, to nzmuslimnews@gmail.com

The Federation of Islamic Associations
of New Zealand (Inc.)



اتحاد الجمعيات الإسلامية النيوزيلندية

Memo

To: Secretary, Local Associations and Islamic Trusts

From: Dr Anwar Ghani, President

Date: 22 February 2011

Subj: CHRISTCHURCH EARTHQUAKE

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Assalaamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatahu

Please be informed that we have been in touch with our Local Association in Christchurch with regard to the earthquake that struck Christchurch this afternoon, in particular on the news of our community members affected. Alhamdulillah, we have received confirmation that, so far, there has been no news of our community being affected by the earthquake.

Be that as it may, the earthquake has caused major damage to properties and there have been reports of injuries and fatalities. Our thoughts are with those who have been adversely affected by this natural disaster.

Please make Du'a for all people and in particular, our brethrens, who may have been affected by the earthquake in Christchurch to have patience and perseverance to see through this calamity.

We as a community have to be ready to lend a helping hand to fellow citizens of Christchurch.

In due course I will get back to you for specific help that may be required.

Insha Allah, we will keep you posted of any significant developments on the news of the earthquake.

Wasalaam


DR ANWAR GHANI
PRESIDENT

A United and Progressive Community

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