



Address:

2045 Brown Ave.
Evanston, IL 60201
Phone: 847-859-9606

Executive Council Members:

- Abdullah Mahmud Shibly (Imam)
- Muhammad Saiduzzaman (President)
- Zafar Ahmed (Vice President)
- Enamul Karim (Treasurer)
- Mohiuddin Ahamed
- Shariful Islam
- Mosaddeque Hossain
- Osman Ahmed

Resident Scholar:

- Abul Fatah Muniruzzaman

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Dar-us-Sunnah (DUS) Masjid and Community Center Newsletter

ANNUAL FUNDRAISING DINNER ON 5TH APRIL 2014 @ HOLIDAY INN, SKOKIE, IL!!!

PERSONAL HYGIENE IS GREAT — AKTER BHUIYAN

Once, I was praying Jummah Prayer in Chicago downtown Masjid. A gentleman was standing right beside me. He put on his jacket and it smelled so bad that it made me very uncomfortable during my prayer. It seemed to me that he did not take a shower for a couple of months. Right after finishing my prayer, I decided to write about it. The reason for telling this story to you is so that you understand the importance of personal hygiene. I am not putting the man down; I am simply stating an observation.

It is necessary for everybody to maintain personal hygiene. In Islam, cleanliness and purification are not only usual requirements for the performance of worship, but also are part of a Muslim's very faith. A new Muslim takes a full body shower when embracing Islam. God says in the Quran: "Truly, Allah (SWT) loves those who turn unto Him in repentance and loves those who purify themselves (by taking a bath and cleaning and washing thoroughly their private parts and bodies for their prayers);" [Al-Baqarah 2:222] The Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) said "cleanliness is part of faith". Again, The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "Cleanliness is half of faith."

So, we must take care to be well-groomed, keeping our bodies and clothing clean, especially at times of worship. Husband and wife must be clean and maintain their hygiene at all times; otherwise they will stay away from each other. Let me share with you another story. "Once a woman came to Hazrat Omar (RA) [2nd Caliph of Islam] and complained: I will not stay with my hus-

band any more. Omar (RA) asked: Why? She said: Send somebody to bring my husband over. Then, the man was brought over and he was wearing a dirty dress, had long hair on his head and nose and had a very bad smell. Seeing that, Omar (RA) ordered him to be taken for bath. His hair was cut and his clothes were cleaned and he was brought back to Omar (RA). Now, Omar (RA) called the woman. When the woman saw her clean husband, she said: Yes, now, I will stay with my husband. Omar (RA) said to her: Be mindful of your duties to Allah (SWT) and obey your husband! She said: I will do. After the woman gone, Omar (RA) said to the man: Beautify yourselves for your women; they like of you what you like of them. So, regardless of age, everybody should take care to ensure that their bodies and private parts remain as clean as possible.

Three types of cleanliness are emphasized in Islam: (A) Purification from impurity by taking a bath or performing ablution (Wudu) in states in which a bath or ablution is necessary according to Islamic Law. (B) To cleanse one's body, dress or place from an impurity or filth. (C) To remove the dirt (dust) or grime that collects in various parts of the body. For example, cleaning the teeth and nostrils, removing armpit and pubic hair, and trimming nails.

Regarding types of purification Allah (SWT) says in the Quran: "O you who believe! When you intend to offer prayer, wash your faces and your hands (forearms) up to the elbows, rub (by passing wet hands over) your heads, and (wash) your feet up to ankles. If

you are in a state of Janaba (i.e. post sexual relations), purify yourself (bathe your whole body) - [Al-Ma'idah 5:6]"

Ghusl (Complete Bath): This is when all parts of the body are washed with water, including the mouth and the nose.

Wudu (Ablution): This is when certain parts of the body are washed with water. It was narrated by Uthman ibn Affan (RA): "The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: 'He who performed ablution well, his sins would come out from his body, even coming out from under his nails.'" [Sahih Muslim]

Tayammum (Purification without water): This method of purification, which does not require water, is used instead of ablution (Wudu) and Ghusl in certain circumstances (such as when no water is available). Allah (SWT) says in the Quran: "But if you are ill or on a journey or any of you comes from answering the call of nature, or you have been in contact with women (i.e. sexual intercourse) and you find no water, then perform Tayammum with clean earth and rub therewith your faces and hands. Allah does not want to place you in difficulty, but He wants to purify you, and to complete His Favor on you that you may be thankful." [Al-Ma'idah 5:6]

Prophet (PBUH) said, "From the acts of nature are five: circumcision (obligation for men, but not for women), removing pubic hairs, trimming the mustache, cutting the nails, and plucking the hair from under the armpits." [Bukhari and Muslim]. It is not allowed to leave them for more than forty nights. This is based on the Hadith of Anas (RA) who said, "The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) set a time limit for us for trimming the mustache, trimming nails, removing armpit hairs, and removing pubic hairs. They cannot be left for more than forty nights." [Recorded by Muslim].

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) advised us that we should clean ourselves thoroughly after using the toilet. This is called *Istinja*. Wash hands after using the toilet, taking care that no unpleasant odor remains under or around fingernails. Moreover, it is Sunnah to make Wudu after using the toilet, so that you are always prepared for prayer and other acts of worship. It is also a good idea to use underarm deodorant, especially before participating in sports or going to the school, office, or masjid, so that other people will not be offended by one's body odor. Finally, I would like to say that Muslim should emanate fragrance like a flower. May Allah (SWT) help us always to be neat and clean!

AWAY FROM HOME FOR A WEEK — SAJID AHMED

A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to attend a week-long camp organized by the Muslim Youth of North America (MYNA). It was a week of inspiration, of friendship and warmth despite the below-zero weather, and of revival of the self through an immersive spiritual environment. In this week, my fellow campmates and I learned a lot about the nature of life and our relationship with God and those around us. But leaving aside the lectures and workshops which also contained a great wealth of knowledge, one could simply observe and reflect upon the experience to achieve many momentous lessons.

In this camp in the middle of nowhere, a place where you can look up and see the stars at night, where you can hear real owls hooting, where you can pray Fajr with your roommates every single day, you truly understand what blessings Allah (SWT) has given you and how much potential they have for use in His service. One thing you quickly notice about the format of the camp is the schedule arranged for you by others. There is no room for much extra activity besides that which is assigned, and you learn to appreciate how much time a day really contains. Winter break just passed, and in its approximately two weeks, you have 20160 hours of life. Assuming you sleep eight hours a day, you have 13440 hours to be productive. Recognizing what exactly you want to accomplish during free time and then planning accordingly is vital to fully utilizing whatever amount of time Allah (SWT) has allotted for us.

Another thing I took away from the camp was the value of praying consistently. Every morning, streams of bleary-eyed campers and their counselors headed for the main hall, where they gathered to pray *Salatul-Fajr* together. This daily gathering, repeated five times a day, emphasized remembering Allah (SWT) throughout the day as the atmosphere of the prayer pervaded our lives during that week.

Finally, I was able to appreciate my family after being away from them for so long. In the camp, we campers were divided into our groups, each with a counselor (of which my sister was one) to supervise. These groups did indeed bond and create friendships, but nothing can substitute the value of a mother or father or sister or brother. When I came home, the first thing my sister and I did was to give our mother a big hug. After a week of absence, you truly realize the meaning of the saying, 'You only appreciate what you have after you lose it.'

"No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite." — Nelson Mandela, Long Walk to Freedom, 1995

As a leader of the African National Congress, Nelson Mandela participated in the struggle to overthrow apartheid. Mandela thus spent 27 years as a political prisoner. He was released in 1990.

In 1993, the violence became extreme. Because of Mandela's publicized request to end rioting, a civil war was prevented. He was awarded the Noble Peace Prize, shared with President F W De Klerk. TIME honored them both with the "Person of the Year" award and wrote, "The exact nature of what Mandela and De Klerk together have achieved may not be clear for many years; the nation they share has an explosive history of racial, ethnic and tribal violence.... If the chain of events they have set in motion leads to the conclusion they both want, then the future will write of them, that these were leaders who seized their days and actually dared to lead." (1/3/94)

In 1994, South Africa held its first democratic elections and Mandela was the overwhelming winner. As the first black President, Mandela saw national reconciliation as the primary task, while the country was going over the transition from an apartheid minority rule to a multicultural democracy, which represented a rainbow state. He also worked hard to reassure South Africa's white population that they were protected.

After suffering from a prolonged respiratory illness, Mandela died on 5 December 2013 at the age of 95. People from all over the world poured into Soweto Stadium for his memorial.

"We will not likely see the likes of Nelson Mandela ever again," President Obama said. "So it falls to us, as best we can, to carry forward the example that he set."

Many things can be learned from Mandela's "compassion, magnanimity and humility" as commented by South African Muslims Network chairman Faisal Suliman.

Let us now see what is happening in our own communities. We just entered 2014, and according to data from 2013, Chicago again has the highest homicide rate in the country. 2013 started with a high rate of homicides in January, including that of 15-year-old honor student Hadiya Pendleton, who was gunned down a mile from President Barack Obama's

South Side home, but ended with a recorded 415 homicides, 88 fewer than in 2012.

Mayor Rahm Emanuel has said that besides putting more officers on the street, various programs for young people have played a role in bringing the numbers of violent crime down. When we look at Chicago Public Schools, we find out that around twenty thousand students cross the stage to graduate, but close to ten thousand do not. These ten thousand young men and women are at increased risk of poverty, violent crime and homicide. A 2012 University of Chicago Crime Lab report citing nationwide statistics, suggests that in adulthood, the chance of becoming a homicide victim is one-third higher for high school drop outs than for high school graduates. (Chicago Tribune 10-13-2013)

There are many reasons for dropping out. Absence of motivation and relevance of schoolwork to real life are the most reported reasons for dropping out. Pregnancy and teen parenthood, the need to financially assist family, drug use, gangs and violence are others. Chicago Tribune recently published a report describing the unsafe trek that a 15-year-old girl had to make just to go to school.

An inner city school teacher told me that, the kids are eager to learn in the classroom if they can get an appropriate teacher. As they cross the door and go out into the community, they are exposed to the other world, and unlearn what they have learned. The cycle continues.

The solution is not simple. These include increase funding, improved quality of teachers, creation of jobs in the inner city, among many others. There are different funding methods for schools based on their locations. Schools in wealthy suburbs tend to be better funded than schools in urban areas, and students in wealthy schools tend to be better equipped to deal with college and life, and have brighter futures. These needs were addressed on the Council of Islamic Organization's (CIOGC) Illinois Muslim Action Day agenda. We need to request that lawmakers address these issues appropriately.

Many organizations are working on these issues, including WTTW, Public Broadcasting Corporation. The work of Inner City Muslim Action Network (IMAN) and Islamic Oasis are worth mentioning. These organizations need to be strengthened, and more organizations are needed. The most important need is to increase the awareness of the two problems, violent crime and poor education.

As Muslims, we can't be silent. As Allah says in the Qur'an "You are the best of the nations raised up for (the benefit of) men; you enjoy what is right and forbid the wrong and believe in Allah" (3:110)

On the authority of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree (May Allah be pleased with him) who said:

I heard the Messenger of Allah (Peace and blessing be upon him) say, "Whosoever of you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then [let him change it] with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart — and that is the weakest of faith." [Muslim]

I ask readers to think about the subjects, and act upon it appropriately. I wish all a safe and prosperous 2014.

SEERAT PROGRAM SUMMARY

With the mercy of Allah (SWT) another annual program was successfully concluded at DUS on the evening of the 16th of November 2013. The children's program comprised of Quran recitation and speech contests. While trophies were awarded to winners in all events, all participants were recognized as well. Brother Shirazi gave a short talk focused around the theme of anger management. He also urged all in attendance to donate generously towards the purchase of surgical kits that will be sent to treat victims in Syria. Brother Saiduzzaman welcomed all in attendance and introduced our special guests from IFN—President Khan and Khateeb Fahmi. The key note address was given by Brother Farid Fahmi—a regular Khatib at Islamic Foundation North in Libertyville, IL. Prior to his talk, Brother Ishaat Khan, President of IFN, presented a token of appreciation to the community of DUS. Brother Fahmi's talk centered around the different aspects of the life of our Prophet (PBUH). He asked all in attendance to compare our practices with that of our Prophet (PBUH). He asked a question to all of us: "Are we providing a pleasing experience for everyone in our homes or are we a source misery? He concluded with a wish for all of us to emulate the beautiful manners of our Prophet (PBUH) on a weekly basis. After a vote of thanks by the various organizers, Imam Shibly made Dua for all and the evening was concluded with dinner.

Dar-us-Sunnah Masjid & Community Center

Upcoming events:

- 2014/01/04: Tafseer ul Quran and Dars e Hadith Program (Bangla) @ 06:00 PM
2014/01/18: History of Islam Program and Story Time for Children (English) @ 06:00 PM
2014/02/01: Tafseer ul Quran and Dars e Hadith Program (Bangla) @ 06:00 PM
2014/02/15: History of Islam Program and Story Time for Children (English) @ 06:00 PM
2014/03/01: Tafseer ul Quran and Dars e Hadith Program (Bangla) @ 06:00 PM
2014/03/15: History of Islam Program and Story Time for Children (English) @ 06:00 PM

To donate, please visit:

<http://www.darussunnah.org/>

Start Date	Fajr	Zuhr	Jumma	Asr	Maghrib	Isha
1/1/2014	6:15 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	3:15 PM	Sunset	8:00 PM
1/12/2014	6:15 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	3:30 PM	Sunset	8:00 PM
1/19/2014	6:15 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	3:45 PM	Sunset	8:00 PM
2/2/2014	6:00 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	4:00 PM	Sunset	8:00 PM
2/16/2014	6:00 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	4:15 PM	Sunset	8:00 PM
2/23/2014	5:45 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	4:15 PM	Sunset	8:00 PM
3/9/2014	6:15 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	5:30 PM	Sunset	9:00 PM
3/16/2014	6:00 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	5:45 PM	Sunset	9:00 PM
3/23/2014	5:45 AM	1:30 PM	1:15 PM	5:45 PM	Sunset	9:00 PM

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Editorial staff: Javed Iqbal / Ishtiaq Ahmed / Ashik Rahman

Please write to us to provide feedback or to submit articles for possible inclusion in future issues of Barta.

The email address is ashikr@hotmail.com.