

EID

MAGAZINE

RAMADAN 1439 AH

JUNE 2018



MASJID UL NUR
LONGDENVILLE

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Assalamu Alaikum Wa
Rahmatullahi wa
Barakaatuhu
May the Peace
Blessings and Mercy
of Almighty Allah be on
each and every one of
us.

On this occasion of Eid
Ul Fitr, allow me to
extend on behalf of my family and our
Jamaat Masjid Ul Nur Longdenville Eid
Mubarak to each and every one of you. I
pray that Allah rectifies all our intentions,
for our action to be for His sake only and
accepts all our acts of worship in the month
of Ramadan.

In Trinidad, we are blessed with religious
harmony and tolerance. But this blessing
did not come without beautiful adab and
sacrifice.

On this day of Eid, we pay homage to those
who came before us that laid the
foundations that ensured that we can
worship and celebrate our religion with
ease.

To pay homage is to honor the great people
of the past. Homage comes from the latin
word meaning human. Part of what makes
us a human, is to honor those that came
before us.

Consequently, we saw it fit, to pay homage
to the founders of Masjid ul Nur
Longdenville. Their lives serve as an
example and inspiration to us. With limited
resources, our elders were able to
practice, maintain and disseminate the
teachings of Islam. Their actions were
grounded in Adab. The ability to put things in
its proper place. Even with information
being at our fingertips, it seems that their
vision far surpassed the limits of ours.

Ramdan is Allah's gift to us, to help us to
have adab. Our body was created to obey
our intellect. Not the other way around.
However, we sometimes find, our intellect
obeying our bodies (eyes, stomach etc).
Ramadan gives us that power and
self-esteem for our intellect to control our
body.

Our body may want that cold water while we
are fasting, but our intellect tells it no, we
are fasting. Our hands and tongue may be
inclined to do wrong but our intellect
restrains it while we are fasting. We put
things in their right places, we put our body
to follow our intellect. Should this continue
after Ramadan, where our intellect remains
in control, and is not deceived or
overpowered by our appetites/desires,
then we can truly be called a human.

Our forbearers, having adab with
everything they did, put things in their right
place They put Allah and His Messenger
salallahu alihi wa salam above everything
else, serving the community, ensuring that
Islam was preserved for us.

On this day of Eid, let us maintain that adab
of Ramadan, remember our struggles and
not sell it cheaply.

May Allah bless each and every one of us to
be good humans and all our brethren who
has preceded us in faith. Eid Mubarak.

Greetings from President – Br. Roshan Ali



Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatahu. May the Peace and Blessings of Almighty Allah be upon us all. It gives me great pleasure in bringing Eid Greetings to you on behalf of the Executive Committee.

After the rigorous period of Self Reflection, Devotion and Discipline during Ramadan, we should have benefited in some way in connecting with Almighty Allah, our Creator.

Our Jamaat has certainly come a long way from its early inception to present. This year could possibly mark our Centenary year with unconfirmed reports of our existence since 1918. If so this is a remarkable achievement and kudos to the five generations of families who ensured the continuity of the Masjid, including the Ali's, Mohammed's, Hosein's, Ghany's, Khan's, Ramjohn's just to name a few.

Today I pay tribute to our founding members especially Khanhai Meah from the Khan family, (who donated the first parcel of Land on which the Masjid still stands) and Haji Shair Ali who played a pivotal role in our development.

We also recognize our Past Imams, Assistant Imams, Maktab Teachers & those who have made contributions to the Masjid. With very humble beginnings, Masjid ul Nur Longdenville started with a 'Tapia house Structure' which has evolved to our current two Storey Building.

We have gone through a period of transition, in which a Governing Structure has been put in place, guided by a constitution, Islamic Shariah and Counsel from our Elders. The Board of Directors, Executive, Sisters, Zakaat & Tribunal Committees have been formulated, utilizing all stakeholders input to render accountability, consensus and delivery at all levels. We are grateful to have inherited the 'Ahlus Sunni wal Jamaah Islamic Ideology' from our forefathers, which we continue to practice. This system has ensured Islamic Propagation, social networking, cohesion and love amongst all members of our Jamaat.

I have the distinguished privilege of leading a very dynamic team of mostly young and energetic members who the membership has entrusted in running the affairs of our Masjid. Along with our recently appointed young Imam, there's a great deal of enthusiasm and innovation in brainstorming ideas of how we continue to make ourselves both relevant and integral in today's society.

Our recent outreach Medical Clinic involved the 'local' Longdenville community and a Fun 5k Run/Walk attracted persons from the National community. These like all other initiatives are aimed at us being ambassadors to Islam & represent ourselves accurately as Muslims. I look forward to your involvement in our Masjid's activities in aiding our development and ability to attain our fullest potential Insha Allah.

Greetings from Chairman of Board of Directors

– Bro. Rafi Ali



Assalamu Alaikum dear Brothers and Sisters. I would like to extend Eid Mubaraak to you and your family from my own family and also on behalf of the Board of Directors of Masjid ul Nur Longdenville.

As we continue to grow from strength to strength, our hope is that the membership increases and get more involved in Jamaat activities. We are all stakeholders and we should take both pride and responsibility in our Masjid's affairs.

To all who have supported our Jamaat with your kind contributions, attendances and best wishes, let me say Jazakallah on behalf of all at Masjid ul Nur Longdenville and hope you continue to do so.

I'm sure that most of you would agree that the blessed month of Ramadan serves to strengthen our Imaan and also brings us closer to Almighty Allah.

Please have an enjoyable Eid, be safe and continue to join us in our progress as a Jamaat and community.

I would like to applaud this initiative of the Imam and the Executive Committee in the publication of this commemorative Booklet, on the 100th Anniversary of our Masjid, along with the so many other projects done over the last few years.

Greetings from Ladies Group – Dr. Fareeaa Ali



Assalamu Alaikum brothers and sisters. Eid Mubarak to you and your loved ones from the Ladies' Group of Masjid-ul-Nur, Longdenville. May Allah swt accept our sacrifices, salat,

deepest duas, and our good deeds over the past month inshaAllah, and may He increase our taqwa. Ameen.

Women are a vital and nurturing part of any community, and I would like to take this opportunity to show my utmost appreciation for your invaluable contributions in making our ventures over the past year worthy successes, mashaAllah, guided by the leadership of our former and new Executive Committee Presidents and our new Imam, Salahudeen. I assumed the role of Secretary of the Ladies' group in February of this year, and four particular ventures that have stood out most in my mind are:

1. Initiation of the weekly Thursday night post-Maghrib/pre-Isha Islamic programme.
2. The weekly after-jumma lunch initiative, made possible via individual financial contributions.
3. Health Fair done in conjunction with ISHAN (Islamic Health Services) in February of this year; which served the wider community of Longdenville and environs. Services included basic health care, distribution of free over-the-counter medicines to treat some complaints, eye examinations, and aromatherapy massages.

4. And my favourite, our first ever 5k run/walk, which was well-supported by our jamaat, wellorganised, and well-attended by the jamaat and the wider running community of Trinidad and Tobago. The participation medals, prizes, and food at the end were an excellent way to end the event.

I applaud the initiative of our Imam in bringing new and inclusive ideas to the jamaat. I share the same sentiment in making our masjid more proactive and more centered in our lives as a place of community and support for each other. Let us seek to have an elevated sense of pride in belonging to Masjid-ul-Nur, for it only serves to strengthen the ummah and our iman.

I look forward to our Annual Eid-ul-Fitr Dinner with as much enthusiasm as I have for all of our events over the past few months in my capacity of Ladies' Secretary, and I look forward to your continued support, inshaAllah. May Allah swt give us all the guidance to understand the status of our mothers, grandmothers, sisters, wives and daughters, and give us the ability to serve them while they are alive. Ameen.

Greetings from Secretary – Br. Hadi Ali



Eid Ul Fitr Greetings to you and yours, from the Executive Committee of Masjid Ul Nur Longdenville. I would also like to extend Eid Greeting from my family to yours. I hope Insha Allah that we would

have all tried our utmost best to seize the various wonderful opportunities for self-fulfillment and self-advancement as Muslims through fasting, reading of Taraweeh Prayer, Charity to poor, and all supplications to Allah during this blessed month of Ramadan 2018.

Indeed it was a busy month for us at Masjid Ul Nur, with many Iftar and Dinner Functions throughout the month, as well as the completion of upgrade works to our masjid facilities. Indeed, the month of Ramadan runs away like a thief in the night. It is anticipated after Eid from the previous year, once we enter the month (with fasting and Taraweeh) before we know it we are planning for Eid celebration activities. During the past year, we at Longdenville Jamaat have made many forward moving strides to ensure our Jamaat stays alive and we tried in many avenues to encourage wider participation from the membership and others in the community.

During this year we got a new Imam (Salahudeen Mohammed) which has made our journey a self-propelled one. We in the Executive Committee would like to thank him for all his efforts thus far and may Allah continue to bless and encourage him in the path of this great Deen of Islam. Below highlights the main activities we would have undertaken for the past year.

Jamaat activities from Eid-ul-Fitr 2017 to 2018 period would have included:

- > Annual Eid Dinner was held on 22nd July 2017

- > Continued Maktab classes for kids of all ages (Sundays 9-11AM)

- > Continued Adult Sisters classes (Sundays 9-11AM)

- > Facilitation of Qurbaani shares for members (Eid-UI-Adha 2017- done at Sugarcane Feed Center, Longdenville)

- > Islamic Lecture: Meelad-un-Nabi function (Imam Maulana Ansar and Imam Salahudeen Mohammed) – Sunday 3rd December 2017

Lunches provided every Friday (after Jumma Salaah)

- > Health Fair done in association with ISHAN (Islamic Health Services) on 25th February 2018 – all residents living in areas surrounding the masjid were invited to attend (event was well attended and was deemed a huge success!)

Weekly Thursday Night Program implemented by Imam (Maghrib to Isha time every Thursday) – started in February 2018 and shall continue Insha Allah (refreshments are provided)

Greetings from Secretary – Br. Hadi Ali

> Islamic Lecture held at mosque: Laws of Calculating Inheritance (17th to 18th March 2018)

> Inaugural 5K Run Event (Sunday 22nd April 2018):

- More than 200 participants
- 5Km run (beautiful scenery of Longdenville)
- Excellent turn out and participation
- Excellent feedback by masjid membership, as well as outside persons
- To be posted as an annual event on our Masjid Ul Nur Calendar of Event (3rd Sunday of April) – next race is scheduled for 21st April 2019

> Curry Que Fund Raiser – 5th May 2018

> Major improvement works done to the masjid's facilities

> Ashura function held at Masjid Hall area

> Isra Wal Meeraj function held at Masjid Hall area – 12th April 2018

> Shabrat Program done in commemoration of 15th Shabaan (3rd May 2018)

> The Holy Quran would have been recited during the Taraweeh prayers by Hafiz Izhar

> Inaugural Eid Brochure for Masjid Ul Nur, Longdenville (highlighting rich past, current activities, and future activities)

> Annual Eid Dinner scheduled for 7th July 2018

The Executive would like to thank all members and non-members who would have participated and gave support in one way or another for all these wonderful and exciting events to be a success over the past year. All funds collect have been and shall be utilized in the best possible way into improving the facilities at the masjid's compound. The aim & objective of the current Executive is to create a comfortable and encouraging masjid atmosphere, in attempts to propagate Islam in the Longdenville area and its environs.



Eid Message from President of ASJA

– HAJI YACOOB ALI - President General - ASJA



Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barkatahu.

The Festival or occasion of Eid ul Fitr marks the end of the fasting period of the Holy Month of Ramadan. It is the time when Muslims all over the world have fasted for the period as ordained by the Almighty Creator, Allah Subhanahu wa Taala. It is an occasion of happiness and joy which Muslims cherish and the prescribed prayer services at the Mosques which many attend and return to their respective families and community.

The self discipline which this compulsory exercise promotes derives from the admonishment of Almighty Allah Subhanahu wa Taala that we should perform this task from dawn to dusk each day in the Holy Month of Ramadan and for the reasons as the Holy Qur'an admonishes:

"O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, even as it was prescribed for those before you, that ye may guard against evil."

The mode of self discipline ought to be reflected in all aspects of our lives which must be done within the rules prescribed for this spiritual exercise and sacred efforts.

Fasting is practised by all faiths in one form or other. It reminds us all of the human kindness which we must display and practise and to be a believer of those principles which will epitomize and promote the goodness in one self.

The faculties of the human being provides for self assessment and personal judgment in the niceties of good behavior and the conduct of one in interaction with the other.

Many parts of the world at this time are faced with much turmoil, domestic and internal squabbles which create instability, resulting in the desires by many to copycat the lifestyles portrayed today in the media and visual entertainment agencies. Faced with the above and the inevitable natural disasters, one can easily recognize the hardships experienced by many leaders in the less developed societies in caring for their populace.

Our leaders must be cognizant of the tremendous burden they face to provide for the national reforms to provide for man's basic needs.

Let us all therefore follow what we are taught as infants, in our youth and the attributes given by our parents in the fulfillment of the objectives of one's cherished ideals.

We must at all times strive for excellence and, while this may be not easily achievable, it certainly will remind us of our duties to the Almighty Creator, to our kith and kin and to serve humanity generally.

We send to all Eid Mubarak and do have a blessed celebration.

HISTORY OF MASJID UL NUR Longdenville



Masjid ul Nur Longdenville started from very humble beginnings possibly as early as 1918. Situated on the Caparo Brasso Valley Road, Longdenville now called Main Road, Longdenville.

At that time the muslims in the area saw the need of building a Masjid to serve the Islamic spiritual needs of the muslims living and working in the area and near environs. At that time there was the then Tait and Lyle sugar estates in Longdenville, the Clay Block factories (now Trinidad Aggregate Products and ABEL), agricultural estates and farmlands.

The land was donated by Ameer Kanhai (aka Kanhai Meah from Railway Road, Longdenville, near Trinidad Clay Products back entrance (now ABEL). A Tapia house structure with a thatched roof was initially built and later developed into a clay structure.

Unfortunately, there after due to a split in the Islamic Ideology amongst the membership, another Masjid was constructed at Cemetary Street, Longdenville. Sadly, due to this split and in the absence of a full time Imam, the Masjid was left abandoned for a few years during the 1940's.

Haji Shair Ali who moved into the area from Caroni upon discovering this, mobilized support and assistance from the families in Longdenville, Palmiste, Raghunanan Road and Enterprise sought the help from future Imam Abbass Ali and managed to revive the Masjid and ultimately its membership.

Whilst Haji Shair Ali never accepted the Imam's position, he filled in whatever capacity required, and ensured that the most appropriate person was appointed as Imam.

He was widely regarded as the pillar and key person in Masjid ul Nur, Longdenville from the 1940's until his death in 1989. He taught Maktab Classes not only in the Masjid but also in several areas like Palmiste, Todd's Road, Raghunanan Road, Talparo, Las Lomas, Brazil, etc.

With the resurgence of the Jamaat, the Masjid became affiliated with ASJA (Anjuman Sunnat ul Jamaat Association) and was very much involved in their regional meeting and programs. (Region B).

In the Early 1960's, a regional lecture at the Masjid by visiting lecturer Maulana Fazlur Rahman Ansari of Pakistan, culminated with a sod-turning ceremony which signalled many new beginnings for the Jamaat. Present was also Haji Shaffick Rahaman, then President General of ASJA and Imam Ishmael Mohammed.

During the 1970's and 1980's, Region B Meelad un Nabi functions were hosted including lecturers like Maulana Noorani of Pakistan, Dr Wahid Ali (then President of the Senate), Haji Kamaluddin Mohammed (then Government Minister), to name a few. Bro. Shamad Ali became the Chairman Region B ASJA and was quite instrumental in securing these lectures and our participation.



Haji Shafik Rahman at one of his visits to Masjid ul Nur Longdenville, with Imam Ishmael Mohammed seated on right.



Jamaat Members Shamad Ali, Rahamut Lennox Ali and Haji Shafik Rahman with members of the ASJA after a program in the Masjid

Also, during this period Young members of our Jamaat participated and excelled in ASJA's National and Regional Quranic Recitation and Qaseeda singing Competitions, gaining invitation to live Broadcast on Radio (Trinidad Broadcasting Network) of our members rendering Qaseedas and also to UWI National Meelad un Nabi function.

During the 1990's and 2000's we also hosted lectures by Maulana Imran Hosein, Maulana Suleimani, and Shabir of Canada, Maulana Chisti, Maulana Kavar, Mufti Asrarul Haqq, the Spiritual head of ASJA.

A Musallah (Praying area) was constructed at Thompson Road, Palmiste for the convenience of the membership of Palmiste and environs, following which a full Masjid was established in the 1990's. Bro. Haman Akbar Ramjohn became the first Imam there until Maulana Imran Abdool was appointed as Imam.

List of Imams.

- Ameer Kanhai Meah 1st Imam approx. 1918-?
- Imam Basheer Khan approx. 1950-1955
- Imam Ishmael Mohammed approx. 1950-1955
- Asst. Imam Sheikh Shakeer late 1950's (moved to San Juan)
- Imam Abbass Ali (1960-1976)
- Imam Inshan Ali (1976-1982)
- Imam Kazim Ali (1982- Aug. 2015)
- Imam Maulana Shazeer Hoosein (Aug 2016-Jan 2017)
- Imam Salahudeen Mohammed July 2017-present

Assistant Imams: Fazal Ali, Sham Riaz Ali, Akbar Ramjohn, Shaffikul Salim

Maktab teachers: Abdool Ghany, Sheikh Shakeer (Studied in Cairo, Egypt), Bro. Syne, Bros. Ghool Khan, Farhad Khan, Haji Shair Ali, Sis.'s Ishra Mohammed, Shafayat Hosein, Isha Mohammed, Bro's Sham Riaz Ali, Roshan Ali, Maulana Shazeer Hoosein.

Infrastructural Development

A Tapia house structure with a thatched roof was built and later developed into a clay structure.



(L-R) Jamadar Ali and Imam Abass Ali. The old masjid can be seen in the background



(L-R) Imam Abass Ali and Haji Shair Ali in front the old masjid

A one storey Concrete structured building was erected. The sod was turned for the construction of new building in the 1960's by a prominent visiting Islamic Scholar Maulana Fazlur Rahman Ansari from Pakistan, thus signalling the beginning of a new chapter in the Jamaat's history.



From Left to Right: Imam Abass Ali, Dr. Fazlur Rahman Ansari, Haji Shafik Rahman, Nazir Ben Ali, Imam Inshan Ali at the present location of Masjid Ul Nur Longdenville

To date many infrastructural upgrades have taken place including the construction of the Majid Hall and enclosure of surrounding corridors in the late 1990's and addition of an upper storey for the Men Praying area around 2005/2006.



Imam Abass Ali, Shamad Ali and Haji Sheir Ali with Jamaat members in the 60's. Its iconic pillars can be seen in the background



Aunt Zulaika with her children in front the old masjid



Members of the Longdenville Masjid in early 1950's. Back(L-R) Razack Ali, Imam Ishmael Mohammed, Jamadar Ali, Ashik Ali, Asgar Ali, Nazir Ben Ali. Front (L-R) Kazim Steve Ali, Saffayat Ali, Rahamut Lennox Ali

Further upgrades were done in the Masjid Hall in 2009 (Ceiling and also recently in May/June 2018 with modernization and expansion of Hall, corridors, Kitchen and Ladies Bathroom.



Upgrade to hall area, replacement of tiles. 2018. The iconic pillars of the old masjid is well preserved.

With a hope for continuing development Insha Allah, Masjid ul Nur Longdenville continues to be the Centre for Islamic Propagation and prayer for the Muslims in the area as well as those many muslims who simply pass through our Masjid.



Present Hall after upgraded works in 2018





Report on Sporting Activities by Members of Masjid ul Nur Longdenville

Compiled by Bro. Jameel Yathali (Sports Cordinator)

CRICKET

Historically, we fielded 'Hard ball' cricket teams named 'Longdenville Muslim Youths' in the late 1980's, participating in various Central Muslim Leagues and Caroni Cricket Association Leagues with creditable performances. We later went on to participate in several wind ball tournaments in the 1990's and early 2000's namely Islamic Missionary Guild Night wind ball cricket etc.

In an effort to re-establish bonds and create linkages with our fellow Muslim Brothers and Sisters, Masjid ul Nur Longdenville participated in a number of sporting activities from 2016 to present.

- * July 2016 Entered the Inaugural IBN Wind ball Cricket league, reaching the playoff stages.
- * Aug 2016 Entered the MSSL (Muslim Social and Sports League) at Constantine Park, Macoya, won Most Disciplined Team Award.
- * Late 2016 entered AS II Double H WINDBALL Tournament at Southern Main Road, Cunupia
- * Early 2017 Entered the Masjid un Nur Carapichaima Masjid Tournament in Waterloo.
- * Early 2017 Entered AS II Double H WINDBALL Tournament at Southern Main Road, Cunupia
- * Late 2017 Entered the Dass Trace Empowerment Committee wind ball cricket tournament
- * Late 2017 Entered the Inshan Ali Wind ball tournament in Couva. We won the Most Disciplined Team award
- * Played Friendly Matches versus Las Lomas and Montrose Jamaats.

Our members teamed up with the Esmeralda Sports Club, Enterprise as we had insufficient players to field a full team for the Hard ball competitions. The leagues were as follows:

- * 2017 Cricket Season participated in the National Championship Reserve League (North Zone)
- * 2018 we participated in the Caroni Cricket Association (CCA) Leagues, Mid-week Limited Overs, Saturday Limited overs, Sunday 2-day league cricket
- * CCA under 15, under 17 and under 19 tournaments.

The under 15 team, managed to win the Central under 15 tournament which included 5 members of Masjid ul Nur, Longdenville. Captain Raul Ali, wicketkeeper Saif Ali, Openers Christopher and Justin Ramjohn and player Joshua Ramjohn.

TABLE TENNIS

We participated in several categories (Junior, Beginners and Intermediate) in the MSSL Table Tennis Tournament at Charlieville Masjid in 2017.



Our 5K Run !



On April 22nd, Masjid Ul Nur Longdenville hosted its inaugural 5K fun run walk event.

Over 240 runners from throughout the country registered, professional and amateur, young and old, senior and toddler.

With the race course being exactly 5km and electronically timed, many runners saw it as an opportunity to improve on their personal best times.



The Finishers Package with our custom made medal



Runners ready to start



The Strollers



The Leading Pack



The Walkers



Tasty sweetbread at the finish line



Finish line goodies



Corn Soup at the finish line



Top Female finishers



The winners of the 5K



Youngest Participant

Masjid Highlights

Top Member Finish: Fahad Hosein.
Overall 34th (26 mins, 3 secs)

3rd Place under 15 Category winner
Raul Ali (32 mins, 22 sec)

Youngest participant Mutasim
Mohammed aged 2 & ½ yrs old

Oldest participant Haji Ghiasudeen
Mohammed aged 76 yrs old

Several Masjid Members finish in Top
100.



Ramadan and The Joy of Completion



Ahmad Saad al-Azhari



With the advent of the holy month of Ramadan every year, Muslims rejoice with happiness with the thirty days of fast ahead of them. However, they dread sometimes the long hours of fast in some countries, the hot weather in some other countries and the challenge of combining study and fasting or work and fasting. To an outsider, thirty days seem too long but for a believer, beauty lies beyond that external challenge. A Muslim knows that he is taking thirst and hunger to free the soul from the chains of its carnal desires. It is a test of resolve, patience and love.

Surprisingly, the days of the month pass like pearls of a necklace. One after another, days are spent in fast and nights in prayer. Muslims' productivity is never touched; rather, increased. It becomes clear that power of the soul can drive one a million miles.

With the month coming to a close, the joy of a fasting person is no more dictated by a wait for food and resumption of normal routine. It is rather the ability to take the challenge and successfully complete the blessed test that marks the real joy.

Almighty Allah instructs us to raise our voices with takbīr at the end of the month to mark the completion of such a blessed season.

Muslims receive the blessed Eid al-Fitr with echoes of Allahu Akbar- Allahu Akbar- Allahu Akbar wa Lillahi al-Hamd. With every chant of takbir, they remember or rather should remember that their love for their Creator is greater than their desires, greater than their challenges; greater than anything they dread. Allahu Akbar which means Allah is Greater is the mark of the Eid; the mark of completion. It is a reminder of man's very purpose; that man can do great things only when he seeks the help of the Great God. Man is empowered once he connects himself to the source of power, that is, his Lord. Without this, man is insignificant and helpless even if he/she thinks they have achieved everything they want. Without God, life is a circle where man roams without an end. Ramadan and Eid give us a purpose, rejuvenate the strength we have, the God given strength.



We should continue to remember these lessons beyond Ramadan and Eid; when they wane and fade, a new Ramadan comes like the waves of the beautiful ocean that comes to wash off laziness and remind the distracted soul of its destination.

Eid Mubarak to all of you. May you enjoy many more Eids with your loves ones in goodness and purposefulness. Amīn.

Ahmad Saad al-Azhari

Ramadan 1439 AH

Shaykh Ahmad Saad l-Azhari Al-Hasani was born into a family of scholars whose lineage goes back to the Prophet Muhammad peace and blessings be upon him, through his grandson Al-Hasan ibn Ali. He memorization the Qur'an at ten, the Alfiyyah of Ibn Malik at 13, Riyad As-Saliheen at the 15. He holds one of the highest chains in Qur'an, as there is 29 people between the Prophet Muhammad Salallahu alaihi wa salam and him. He frequently travels for Dawah and visited Trinidad & Tobago twice.



MUSLIMS AND THE PITFALL OF FAKE NEWS



Br. Nazim Baksh

There is no doubt that Islam and Muslims today get the lion's share of media scrutiny. Many Muslims are often astonished at how an apparently good story can turn ugly in the hands of a journalist with an axe to grind.

A story about Muslims celebrating Eid to mark the end of Ramadan could become a twisted narrative of violence and extremism that further fosters a climate of fear and loathing of Islam and Muslims.

If that's the norm when it comes to institutional media organizations one can only imagine the pernicious impact of twisted lies that are spun on platforms designed to generate and disseminate fake news.

In late 2017, at the height of Donald Trump's "Muslim ban" policy, a story popped up on social media with a bold headline: "412 Muslims arrested in Michigan." The article goes on to state that "the state of Michigan is clearly turning into a Sharia swamp, thanks to the reckless immigration policies of Obama over the last eight years."

It took several days for Facebook and other social media platforms to block the fake story from spreading. Facebook has over two billion users worldwide and it is not surprising that an estimated 44 percent of Americans get their news from Facebook.

Even with the immense resources of Facebook, its founder Mark Zuckerberg says it could take years for his company to develop an algorithm to accurately weed out fake news.

Making his task even more difficult is the extremely clever ways that fake news mimic news from professional outlets. The source of this particular story was "Fresh Media News," an obscure social media site that is linked to a plethora of other fake news sites. There are literally hundreds of them currently in existence.

Revealed wisdom dictates that Muslims interrogate the sources of the information they chose to consume or act upon.

In the context of social media that could mean sharing, liking or commenting on a fake story.

In Sura Al-Hujurat, verse 6, God reveals: "O you who believe, if an iniquitous person (fasiq) comes to you with news (naba'a), verify its authenticity least you cause harm to others out of ignorance and then come to regret your actions."

The Quran introduced the word fasiq into the Arabic language. The classical definition of "fisq" is "khuruj 'an ta'ah" which means to consistently and deliberately flaunt an established truth in pursuit of a course of action that runs counter to that truth. A fasiq could be a believer or a disbeliever in God and His Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him.

Subverting the truth (haqq) by manufacturing outright lies is a stratagem of Iblis. In a landmark speech that Pope Francis recently delivered on the occasion of World Communication Day, he identified the Biblical Satan as the first architect of fake news when he lied to Adam and Eve while they were in the primordial garden.

In the Quranic narrative, a person who engages in wilful distortion of facts, manipulating them for a desired outcome or to cause harm to others, falls into the category of fisq. Al-Hujurat verse 6 is warning a believer to be diligent and not fall prey to the ruse of the fasiq.

The mistake that many Muslims often make is equating fake news with flawed and imperfect reportage that comes from mainstream media organizations. By equating fake news with flawed news, Muslims end up subscribing to a concoction of wild conspiratorial theories that have no foundation in reality.

In the case of the "412 people arrested," the truth is that the U.S. Justice Department did indeed charge that many people countrywide with healthcare fraud and opioid-related crimes in what was the largest healthcare fraud take-

down in U.S. history. Only a handful of them were from Michigan and according to Reuters News Agency which first reported the story, there was no mention of Muslims, Islam or Shari'ah.

Thompson Reuters News Agency employs over 50,000 people worldwide and generated a net income of \$1.46 billion in 2017. In other words, it is not a "fly-by-night" media outfit.

The fact that Reuters is an institutional media organization does not make it immune to bias reporting of Islam and Muslims. However, if a report is flawed, an aggrieved person has the option to file a complaint and seek redress.

That's not the case with fake news sites. There are no oversight bodies to take corrective measures such as an ombudsman, a professional association or a government agency, and there is never contact information associated with fake news sites.

Verse six of Sura Al-Hujurat is a reminder that believing men and women are expected to be faithful to Allah's command and to ensure that all aspects of their communication, online or offline, be a desire for the truth in the pursuit of goodness.

(Nazim Baksh is a distinguished journalist with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) in Toronto. He recently delivered a Friday khutbah on this topic at the Longdenville Masjid).

JURISPRUDENCE OF ZAKATUL FITR

ACCORDING TO:
JAAFARI (SHIITE) HANAFI, MALIKI, SHAFEI AND HAMBALI SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

————— Dr. Musa Mohammed —————



Definition: Zakatul fitr is termed the zakat of the bodies.

We report what the Jurors said about:

1. upon whom it is wajib to pay it
2. The amount to be paid
3. its time of payment and
4. Who is the recipient?

1. WHO SHOULD PAY ZAKATUL FITR:

The jurors agreed that zakatul Fitr is wajib upon every muslim who is able young or old. It is incumbent upon the guardian (Wali) to pay it to the poor on behalf of a child or an insane person from their wealth.

The able person according to the Hanafi School is the one who possesses a NISAB of zakat or its equivalent in excess of his daily needs.

The Shafei ,the Maliki and the Hanbali schools defined the able person as the one who has excess than the food needs to his family on the night and day of the Eid, with the exception of his need for housing ,clothing and other essential needs.

However, the Malikis added that if a person is able to borrow he is also considered as able to pay zakatul fitr provided that he will be able to pay back his debt.

The Imamiya (Shiite) stipulated conditions for the payment of zakatul fitr. These include puberty and sound mind(sane). They said it is not wajib upon a child or an insane person according to the hadith. (The pen is lifted from the child until it reaches puberty(dream) and the insane until he has a sound mind(sane).

2. THE AMOUNT OF ZAKATUL FITR:

The jurors agreed upon the amount of zakatul fitr for each muslim person as one SAA of WHEAT, BARLEY, DATES , RAISEN, RICE OR MILLET (SORGHUM). (Or something similar to the staple diet of the Muslim community in their locality). However, the Hanafis said HALF A SAA OF WHEAT will suffice one person as zakatul fitr.

It is to be noted that the SAA is equivalent to 3kg (3000 grams)

3. TIME OF ZAKATUL FITR:

THE Hanafis said:

From the time of the break of dawn of the day of Eidul Fitr until the end of the life span of the person. This is because zakatul fitr belongs to the wajibs that are very broad. It could be paid in advance or at a later time.

The Hanbalis said:

It is forbidden to delay its payment after Eid day. It could be paid two days before Eid. It will not be considered as valid if paid earlier than the last two days.

The Shafei said:

It is wajib at the last days of Ramadan and the beginning of SHawal. Or before and after the time of sunset of the last day of Ramadan.

It is sunnat to pay it on Eid day and it cannot be paid after Eid day except for a valid reason.

Imam Malik said it becomes wajib at the sunset of the last day of Ramadan.

THE IMAMIYAH (SHIITE):

They said it is wajib on the night of Eidul fitr and it should be paid from that time until noon of the day of Eidul fitr. It is preferable to pay it before Eid Salat.

If no eligible person was found, Zakatul fitr should be put aside until a poor person is found. It should be disposed off no matter how long it took to find a recipient.

4. WHO IS ELEGIBLE(Recipient)

All the jurors agreed that the persons entitled for Zakat (Q 9:V60) are the ones eligible for Zakatul fitr as well.

It is sufficient to pay the cost of the grains or cereals. Preferences in payment should be to close relatives and neighbors according to the Hadith (The neighbors of charity hold the right of being its recipient).

Translator Note:

According to the current market prices 3kg of wheat flour COST: 21\$\$ TT.

3kg of RICE COST: 24\$\$ TT. Rice price varies according to the brand.

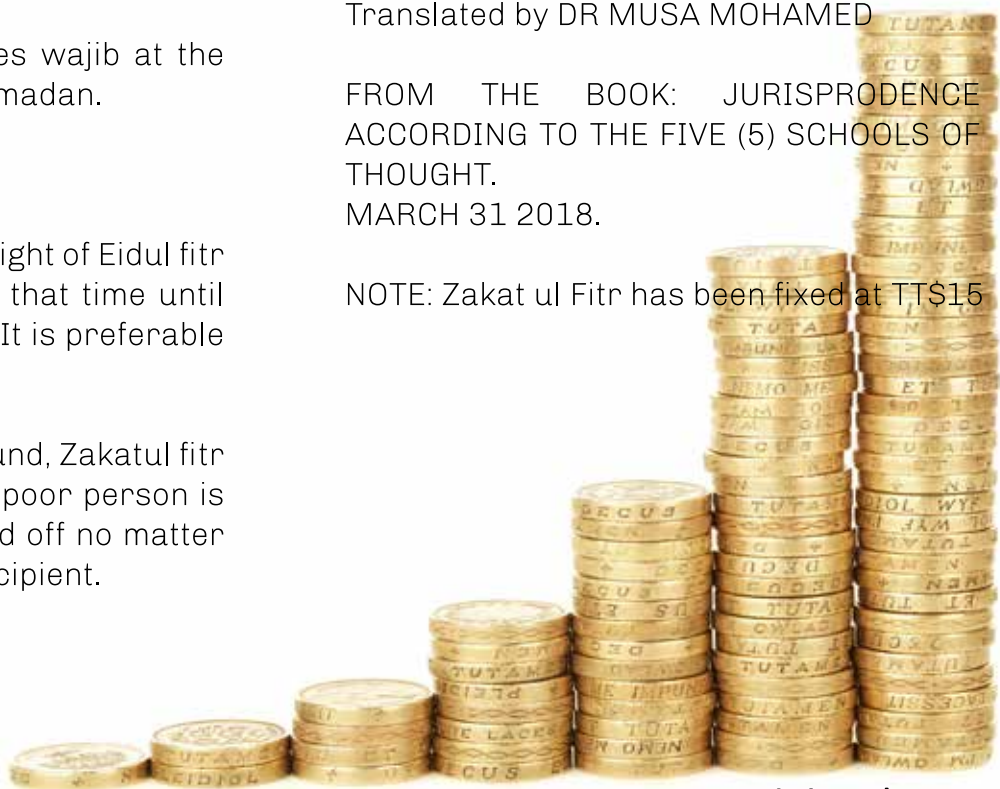
Hence persons have the choice of using wheat flour or Rice to calculate their Zakatul fitr.

You could choose any stable like Dhal pigeon peas red beans etc... and give the equivalent of 3kg in cash or kind.

Translated by DR MUSA MOHAMED

FROM THE BOOK: JURISPRODENCE
ACCORDING TO THE FIVE (5) SCHOOLS OF
THOUGHT.
MARCH 31 2018.

NOTE: Zakat ul Fitr has been fixed at TT\$15



The Danger of Not Making a Will

Maulana Siddiq Ahmad Nasir



The All-Merciful, Ever Bountiful Creator, as the Originator of everything in existence in the heavens and the earth is the Absolute owner of everything. And not only are our persons and our wealth trusts from him, but in addition he has purchased these trusts from the believers.

“Verily Allah (Ta’ala) has purchased from the believers their persons and their wealth promising them Jannah in return” (Al-Quran , 9:111)."

Thus the believers are trustees over their wealth and their persons twice over. He, the All-Knowing, the All- Wise has guided us not only in relation to the acquisition of the trust of wealth but also in connection with the continuation of the trusteeship. Human beings have a limited prerogative in relation to the actual legal usage of wealth and The Real Owner of Wealth, Allah Ta’ala has not delegated to human beings the prerogative to decide on the transfer of trusteeship after death. He, the All-Loving has already decreed on the transfer of trusteeship,

“Allah enjoins (this) upon you concerning the inheritance of your children.....” (Al-Quran, 4:11)

“They ask you to give them a legal decision. Say Allah enlightens you about the laws concerning (inheritance from) those who leave no heir in the direct line....” (Al-Quran, 4:176)

After describing His decrees, the All-Merciful states,

“Those are the limits set by Allah” (Al Quran, 4:13)

And then warns,

“And whoever rebels against Allah and His Apostle and transgresses His limits, him He will commit into a fire, therein to abide, and shameful suffering awaits him.” (Al-Quran, 4:14)

Let us therefore be warned-if we allow our wealth to be distributed after we depart from this world either by making a will in conflict with Allah guidance or through negligence in not making a will and thus allowing the laws of intestacy to come into play we would be putting ourselves in danger of having the above punishment meted out to us. We need to be aware that anyone who dies without leaving a will, the Law of Intestacy will come into effect. This law gives the surviving spouse (husband or wife) fifty percent of the estate of the deceased spouse and the children the other fifty percent in equal shares. And this is in clear conflict with Allah’s laws. We therefore cannot afford to be negligent in not making a will that conforms to Allah’s laws.

May the All-Merciful bless us with the Taufeeq of observing all His limits including those relating to inheritance, And may He guide and bless us all.



The Sunnah to a Blessed Smile

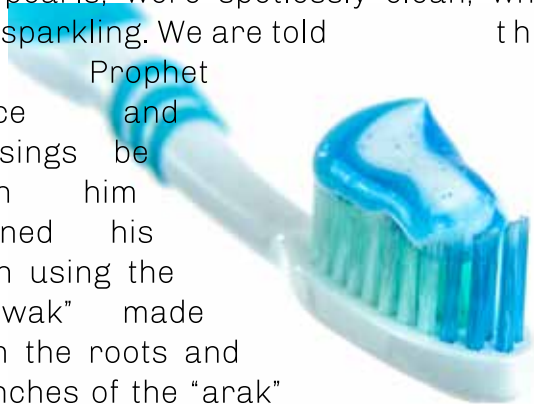
Oral Hygiene Care

Dr. Nuriya Mohammed (D.D.S UWI)

According to American Dental Association, oral health touches every aspect of our lives but is often taken for granted. Your mouth is a window into the health of your body. It can show signs of nutritional deficiencies or general infection. Systemic diseases, those that affect the entire body, may first become apparent because of mouth lesions or other oral problems. Whether you are 80 or 8, your oral health is important. Therefore you must practice good oral hygiene.

In describing the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his companions stated that his teeth shone like pearls, were spotlessly clean, white and sparkling. We are told that our Prophet peace and blessings be upon him cleaned his teeth using the "miswak" made from the roots and branches of the "arak" tree grown in Arabia.

The Prophet ﷺ stated "Crescent cleaning purifies the teeth, whitens them, strengthens their roots and makes the breath smell sweet"



One of the important details set out in the hadith concerns how the teeth are to be brushed. "Crescent cleaning" refers to brushing the teeth using circular, half-moon movements. This technique differs from the right-left brushing technique that damages the enamel and wears away the gums. This is presently known as the scrubbing technique which should be avoided.

Circular movements are recommended by modern dentists, using a soft bristled toothbrush tilting it at a 45 deg angle so the bristles are pointed under the gumline. Recommended brushing time is 2 minutes so that plaque which is a sticky film that contains bacteria is adequately removed. This is with the use of a fluoridated toothpaste.

The Prophet ﷺ used the miswak several times daily

Toothbrushing should be done at least twice a day, last thing at night and any other time since salivary flow is lower when one is asleep hence increasing the risk of cavities. When brushing at night, no rinsing is recommended so that the fluoride remains on the tooth surfaces. This aids in making the enamel stronger.

The use of a fluoridated mouthwash is also recommended, used at a time other than brushing.

The Prophet ﷺ would take care to clean the food from between the teeth after eating. 'It is praiseworthy as there is nothing more grievous to the two angels than to see food in their charge's teeth as he prays'.

Dentist advocate the usage of interdental cleaners which remove plaque in between teeth. One of which is flossing, This involves the usage of floss at least 18" long leaving about 2 inches to work with. This is used around the front and back of one tooth, making it into a "C" shape. This will wrap the floss around the side edge of that tooth gently moving it toward the base of the tooth and up into the space between the tooth and gum using light pressure repeating for all teeth.



In the scenario where people have larger spaces between their teeth and need additional tools to remove food particles and bacterial plaque adequately, interdental brushes can work. These are tiny bristle or filament brushes that can fit between teeth and come in a variety of sizes and handle designs. These brushes clean better than floss when the gum tissue does not completely fill the space between your teeth. These little brushes also can help people with orthodontic bands on their teeth to remove bacterial plaque from around the wires and brackets.

The Prophet ﷺ emphasized on good oral hygiene. Maintaining this is one of the most important things you can do for your teeth and gums. Healthy teeth not only enable you to look and feel good, they make it possible to eat and speak properly. Good oral health is important to your overall well-being.

The Prophet ﷺ Said: Islam is clean, so clean yourself, for only the clean enter paradise.



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An Islamic Approach to Diet and Disease

By Dr. Fareeaa A. Ali (MBBS, UWI)



Assalamu Alaikum brothers and sisters. I hope inshaAllah that you are in good health, and if you are battling with a complaint, may Allah swt grant you sabr and make it easy for you.

The purpose of this article is to highlight a preventative approach to disease. Islam is a complete way of life, which includes a holistic view of health. The Quran highlights two key concepts relating to diet: quantity and quality.

Eat and drink, but not to excess
(Quran 7:31)

O people of faith, eat of the good things which we have provided for you (Quran 2:172)

Attention to diet and nutrition is a part of the holistic health system inherent in Islam.

Obesity is a chronic disease which is due to excessive food intake. Since the average modern-day person leads a less active lifestyle, and no longer requires the same high caloric intake as compared to our ancestors in early agricultural societies, the excess calories we eat are stored as fat in the tissues under the skin, around organs, and in blood vessels (atherosclerosis); and over time leads to obesity.

Some Obesity associated diseases include: type II diabetes, ischaemic heart disease, and osteoarthritis of the joints.

In 2016, the World Health Organization presented a publication focusing on lifestyle diseases and risk factors in Trinidad and Tobago. It showed alarming prevalence rates of overweight people in the population and obesity; which are risk factors for Type II Diabetes. Please see the table below:

Prevalence of diabetes and related risk factors			
	males	females	total
Diabetes	10.9%	14.1%	12.5%
Overweight	58.9%	69.1%	63.1%
Obesity	24.9%	39.5%	32.3%
Physical inactivity	29.9%	53.1%	41.7%

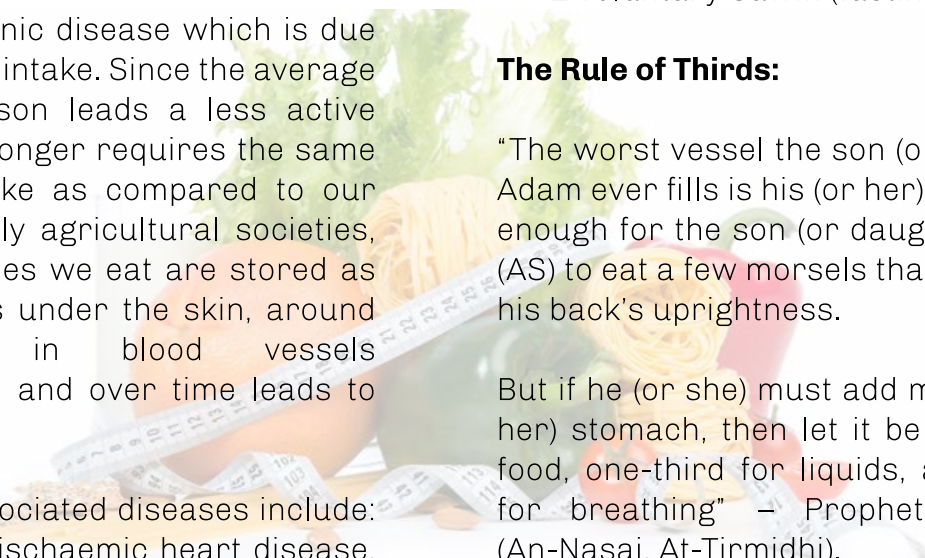
An alarming 32.3%, or roughly one-third of Trinidad and Tobago is obese. Prophet Muhammad pbuh condemned excess eating, and considered it a sign of social denigration in the same way disease burden impacts a population nowadays. He practiced a diet of moderation referred to as The Sunnah Diet. Two particular aspects of this diet include:

- 1.The Rule of Thirds in appetite control
- 2.Voluntary Sawm (fasting)

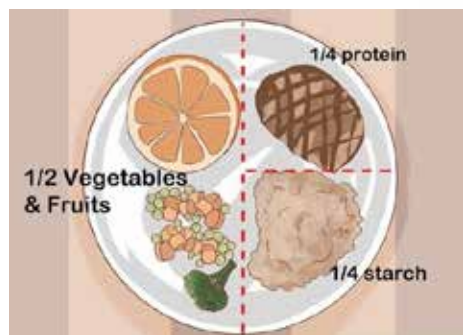
The Rule of Thirds:

“The worst vessel the son (or daughter) of Adam ever fills is his (or her) stomach. It is enough for the son (or daughter) of Adam (AS) to eat a few morsels that will maintain his back’s uprightness.

But if he (or she) must add more to his (or her) stomach, then let it be one-third for food, one-third for liquids, and one-third for breathing” – Prophet Muhammad (An-Nasai, At-Tirmidhi).



Over 1400 years ago, Prophet Muhammad pbuh had a solution for preventing Gastro-Esophageal Reflux Disease (acid reflux), and obesity via the Rule of Thirds to prevent overeating. Some additional tips we can employ in our everyday lives to promote appetite control, is to eat on smaller plates, or sectioned plates for portion sizes. A balanced meal consists of portion sizes of half-plate of vegetables and fruit, one-quarter plate (or a fist-size) of animal or plant-based protein, and one-quarter plate of starches. Please see the below diagram:



The Caribbean diet focuses heavily on starches and animal protein, so it is important to know that eating more than the recommended portion sizes causes the excess to be converted to fat; which is stored if unused by the body. Simple ways to combat excess fat is to eat less red meat and trim fat/skin from meat, prepare foods using less oil or butter, and to eat more complex carbohydrates such as sweet potatoes versus Irish potatoes, or brown rice versus white rice, eat oats, and limit bread and roti intake.

The importance of eating larger portion sizes of vegetables/fruits is that these provide vitamins and minerals, and sources of fibre; which aid in excreting excess fats, and promote healthy bowel habits.

Prophet Muhammad pbuh was fond of fruits like dates (which are high in fibre), watermelon, cucumber,

pomegranates, and vegetables like squash. According to Hadith literature, the Prophet ate meat very rarely, and when he did it was mostly on special occasions, or as a guest. He is indeed the best example for mankind. There is overwhelming medical research to suggest that reducing meat consumption is beneficial in reducing heart disease, curbing obesity, and reducing the relative risk of certain cancers e.g. colorectal cancer.



Voluntary Sawm (Fasting)

Voluntary fasting was a regular habit of the Prophet. His preferred fasting days were Mondays and Thursdays, and the 13th, 14th, and 15th of each month; estimated to be roughly one-third of each month. On his non-fasting days, he never practiced binge-eating. Prophet Muhammad effectively practiced 1400+ years ago what is known today as Intermittent Fasting; which has been proven to balance hormone levels, prevent oxidative stress, and reduce overall inflammation, while promoting healthy weight loss.

In closing, it is important to clarify that any effort to prevent or delay the onset of a disease in no way contradicts any pre-determination by Allah's swt will, but rather, aids a better existence in this world to allow us to perform our pillars of faith and contribute to the ummah optimally. If we are what we eat, then think of appetite control in the same way most of us view smoking cessation, childhood immunization, or driving carefully to prevent road accidents and injury. Let us "Eat what is lawful and wholesome on the earth" (Quran 2:618) inshaAllah, and try to do so according to the Sunnah. Ameen.

How Lifestyle Diseases Could Affect the Eyes

By Roshan Ali - Spectacle World



LP 378 SMR Enterprise, Chaguanas



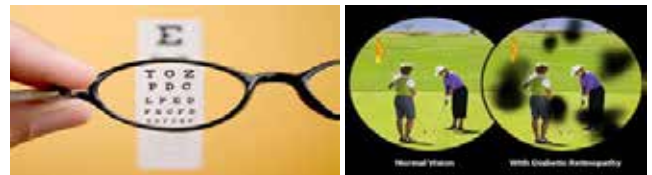
Many persons today are faced with the challenges of major Lifestyle Diseases including Diabetes and Hypertension (High Blood Pressure). Here we'll discuss how these diseases affect the eye.

DIABETES

Blurry Vision

Uncontrolled Blood Sugar levels can lead to fluctuating blurry vision. This is simply because with elevated blood sugar levels, the crystalline lens in the eye swells, causing the incoming light to be refracted differently (Myopic Shift). Hence persons may realize that their vision either suddenly or slowly becomes blurry or they simply can't see well with their glasses.

Once their blood sugar levels become regulated, their vision should be properly restored. For this reason, Diabetic patients are asked to have their blood sugar levels checked immediately before an eye examination to ensure the accuracy of the Spectacle Prescription found on that day by the Optometrist or Ophthalmologist.

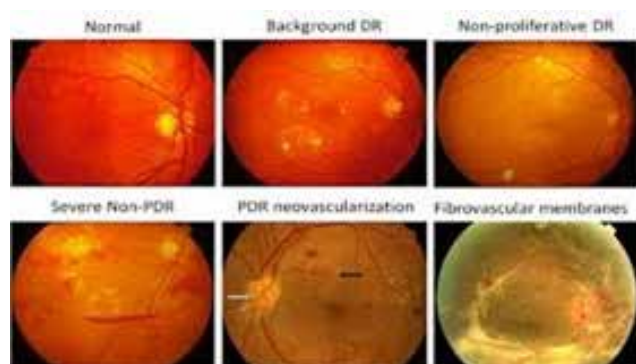


Diabetic Retinopathy

A Chronic (Long Term) effect of Diabetes is Diabetic Retinopathy (DR). They occur in different stages from mild Background DR to Severe Proliferative DR and Retinal Detachment. This is caused by the increase in VEGF (Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor) in the bloodstream, causing leakage of blood plasma (fluid) from the blood capillaries in the retina and neovascularization (growth of microcapillaries). These micro capillaries are unable to contain the flow of blood, and rupture which leads to haemorrhaging (bleeding).

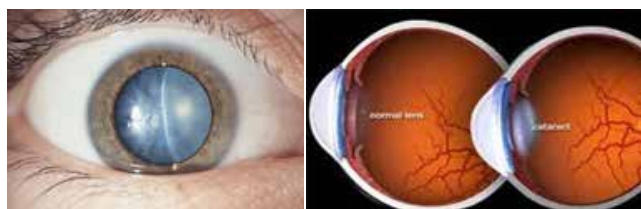
The leakage of this fluid and blood unto the retina may cause irreversible damage to the retinal nerve fibres and hence loss of vision, especially if it occurs in the Central Retina (Macula) leading to Maculopathy. Treatment for Diabetic Retinopathy may include Avastin injections to the eye aimed at drying the leaked fluid and/or laser therapy, intended to seal the leaking

capillaries. In most cases, treatment may not restore lost vision and are aimed at preventing further vision loss.



Cataracts

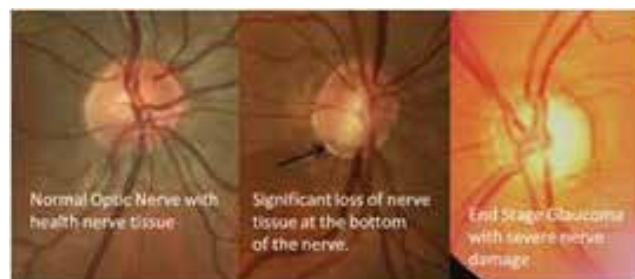
Cataracts or lens opacities are simply the clouding of the crystalline lens which may occur earlier in Diabetic persons. Since Diabetes is a Metabolic Disease, it affects the Natural process of the eye which maintains the clarity of the crystalline lens. Persons with cataract may complain of cloudy/smoky vision, with a feeling that their 'glasses need cleaning', problems with the glare and incoming light e.g. Night driving. Cataracts can only be corrected through minor surgery where the 'cloudy' crystalline lens of the eye replaced by an artificial intra ocular lens implant (IOL).



Glaucoma

Some research has shown that there is an association between Diabetes and Glaucoma which is debateable. In Glaucoma, there is damage to the Optic Nerve in the eye, leading to a loss of peripheral vision. Glaucoma could occur in several types, some of which is elevated intra ocular pressures (IOP's) in the eye.

Treatment is usually the use of eyedrops to reduce the IOP's.



HYPERTENSION (High Blood Pressure)

Hypertensive Retinopathy

Hypertension causes the arterioles to constrict and hence make them narrower to regulate the flow of blood. Consequently, when they cross with the venules, it causes blockage and ischemia (lack of oxygen) in the retina. In severe cases, swelling of the optic nerve occurs (Optic disc Oedema). Usually there's a loss in vision which maybe irreversible. Treatment is mainly medication to lower the Blood Pressure.



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How to Increase Your Likes



— Maulana Ansar Francis —

When the Ice Bucket challenge went viral on social media a couple years ago, it was one of the most successful campaigns attracting millions of US dollars in donations towards research for ALS patients. This is just one of many examples revealing the power of social media.

We didn't let this one slide by locally either, having many enthusiastic challengers that took the cold water splash to raise awareness for the fatal disease (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis), which deteriorates muscle functions in the body with an unknown cause in over 90% of cases and no cure to date.

While there were many vested participants, however, many of the people taking the challenge locally were not even aware of the purpose of the campaign, with even some creating "alternative facts" that the ice water was somehow part of the daily treatment for ALS patients for us to relate. Well Maury would say, we determined that was a lie.

We got likes! According to analysts, it was so successful because the challenge "plays on many of the personality traits that emerge when using social media. It encourages a competitive spirit, with each participant trying to make their video more amusing, absurd or outrageous than the last. It also plays on the fact people often

have narcissistic tendencies on their own social media feeds and enjoy an excuse to post images and videos of themselves."

We have the interesting ability to convince ourselves of almost anything even to justify negative traits, and so, many noble intentions are often mixed with other hidden intentions, especially because the IG and FB reward systems fuel narcissism. It can't be said that simply anyone who

posts something is seeking attention as the intention is something in the heart. Yet, also true is what is inside reflects outwardly, as our thoughts and feelings guide our speech and actions.

How does this affect our lives as followers of the Quran and the Blessed Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)? As with any other tool, we are allowed to use it as long as it brings about some benefit or does not bring about harm. No one can deny the presence of both; benefits in increasing knowledge and spreading Da'wah, or harm in provocative images and video, profanity, gossip and slander to name a few. In order to answer the question, we need to take a sincere look at our social media use and compare it to the principles of Allah and the perfect example of His Messenger (peace be upon him).



“That Day shall We set a seal on their mouths. But their hands will speak to us, and their feet bear witness, to all that they did” Quran 36:65

Perhaps this verse gives modern insight, that social media has given us the ability to do so much with our hands as we swipe, click, snap, record and type content for which we will be held accountable.

We're trending! Our motivation to create amusing or outrageous posts are at risk to include gossip, false accusations, provocative scenes; all of which may attract more views, likes and shares

Being such a connected world gives instant access to information at different ends of the globe but we must also be mindful of the information overload that keeps us occupied scrolling endlessly, with much of our consumption unrelated to our everyday purpose.

It's here to stay; so whichever way we use social media, we should be aware of its benefits and dangers, and navigate responsibly. Increasing our likes and views can mean we are benefitting people or not, and we can find out starting with one question: Does it attract the “likes” of Allah and His Prophet (peace be upon him)?





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SOME SIMPLE BACKYARD GARDENING TIPS

- Br. Kameel Mohammed

Getting into gardening has so many benefits, it is not just knowing that your produce is free of dangerous pesticides but the joy of working on your garden has therapeutic value not to mention the exercise you will be getting.

Gardening provides - stress relief, boosts your immunity, provides an opportunity for getting exercise, improves brain health and can provide you with a green diet.

For your garden to be successful there are several conditions that must be met:

- 1.** Always start off with a small area and as you become more confident you can expand at a time.
- 2.** The area must receive at least 6 hours of sunlight for vegetables.
- 3.** The area should be fairly flat and not be prone to waterlogging or flooding.
- 4.** Create beds with good drainage to avoid the above condition from occurring. Clear the area of all weeds, stones and debris.
- 5.** The width of the bed should be such that you can easily reach the centre of the bed without having to step inside the bed, while the length can be increased as your experience increases.
- 6.** Start off by purchasing seedlings from a reputable outlet, do not plant diseased looking seedlings. You can set your own seeds in the future.
- 7.** Mix well cured manure and sharp sand into your bed. (2 parts of manure to 1 part of sharp sand).
- 8.** Most vegetables do well being planted at 30 cm apart, but varies depending on the crop.
- 9.** Water thoroughly, but not excessively to cause waterlogging.
- 10.** ENJOY!





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