

IPCI Guests impressed with freedom Muslims have in SA

The Islamic Propagation Centre International hosted a Dawah workshop, which attracted delegates from several countries to its headquarters in Durban. Those who attended came from the America, Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

Amongst them was Mrs Marwa Helmi of Saudi Arabia who teaches English in Jeddah said that she came to acquire skills which would enable her to get her students to make a major mind set change – from Americans to Muslims. “They are very consumer orientated, are engrossed with social media and resist moral instructions. Their minds have moved to the United States. They want to be copy-cats of what they believe to be modern,” she said.

Another set of delegates, a husband and wife team from Cape Town, Yusuf and Mahreerah Gassiep sought “knowledge” to enable them to win back Muslim women who leave the faith to marry. “At this Dawah Course we are being taught how to handle the issue differently. To adopt an approach to get families not to abandon these young women,” said the Gassieps.

While Dr Mohammed Samir Shobain of Jeddah said that he came to equip himself to adopt a “holistic approach to health care. I do not believe that we can simply cure a patient by administering medicine. We have to adopt an approach to ensure that they are morally cured as well,” he said.

Another delegate, also from Saudi Arabia, Dr Mohamed Al Haj Hussein, a “green civil engineer” said that he came to Durban to study the work done by Sheikh Ahmed Deedat. “I am surprised by the extent of freedom Muslims have in this country. What you have here cannot be found in England, the United States or anywhere in Europe. Women walk freely around wearing hijabs. As Muslims



we are safe. My wife is with me on this trip and she marvels each time that she goes out that she is not subjected to a body attack,” he said.

Mr Samuel Shropshire of Washington said that it was his mission to negate the “hateful things that were being said about Muslims. I have visited Durban before and I hope to return. I came to study the works of Sheikh Ahmed Deedat. I have come to learn techniques of Dawah. How to speak with authority, how to present knowledge,” he said.

Hudaifah Al Amreeki asks SA Muslims to “Open up the Deen”

South African Muslims were facing great changes for the better, according to Saudi Arabian scholar and teacher, Hudaifah Al Amreeki.

He was in South Africa as a guest of the Islamic Propagation Centre International who hosted a weeklong Dawa enrichment programme in Durban. He urged the community to “open their hearts and minds” to all people regardless of race and Islamic religious differences.

Al Amreeki featured in Radio Al-Ansar’s 90 Minutes Programme and pointed out that Islam always unified all people. That it embraced communities and brought nations together.

“South African Muslims were facing great changes for the better. For the first time there is a great number of Muslims from other countries like Nigeria, Somalia, Senegal, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Uganda, Ghana who speak different languages and cultures, but are united with the local Muslims in their beliefs.

“I believe that the masjids should open their mimbars and each week, the Jumma lecture should be presented by an imam from each of these communities. This is only one step. We would have to do a great deal of work of bringing all of them together with a common purpose,” said Al Amreeki.

He said that the local Muslims was already doing great work creating and developing Islamic educational institutions, feeding the indigent, practicing charity, providing health care and dawah.

He said that it was up to the local Muslims to make the meaningful change and should “Open up the Deen.”

“Accept all Muslims. We all have shortcomings. We need to drop the differences. We are one when it comes to Islam. If we are divided, we are going nowhere,” he said.

Born in Philadelphia South, Al Amreeki received his basic education in the United States before moving with his family to Japan. “I spent four years in Japan where my father served in the United States military. We returned to the United States and finished high school in 1976. I then went to Virginia State University where I studied microbiology and philosophy, graduating in 1982.

“Next came a stint at the American College in Chicago where I studied until 1985 when I was awarded a scholarship to study Arabic at the King Saud University in Riyadh. I graduated with my Masters in 1989,” said Al Amreeki. He said that he “fell in love with the Haram and at least once a month, he spends a weekend



in Mecca or Medina.

"Comparing the two cities, they are as different from chalk to cheese. They say that New York is a city that does not sleep. That is not true; Mecca is the place that does not sleep. Throughout the day and night, you will find people at the Kaaba. "While Medina is a peaceful city. People are calm and they go about their business at their own pace. The presence of our Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) is very evident," said Al Amreeki.

He married and settled in Riyaad and worked as a teacher and spent his spare time doing Dawah. Then in 1991, when Saddam Hussein invaded Iraq, more than one million United States soldiers were stationed in Saudi Arabia. Never before, he said that there were no many non-Muslims in Arabia.

"I decided to do Dawah among the Military and while my first two efforts to get into the camps failed, I was successful when I allowed to pitch a small tent in a military base. It could not accommodate more than a dozen people. But we were not short of military people who came to fight a war who sought information about Islam. Our tent had to be extended, over and over again. At one time, we ran Dawah classes day and night.

"If there were 10 000 people in the camp, 6 000 became

Muslims. The white women were the majority who accepted Islam followed by black men, then white men and the smallest group was black women. The success we enjoyed was enormous and within a few months, Sheikh Ahmed Deedat arrived at the camp where he ran a campaign which was an overwhelming success," he said.

Al Amreeki continued his dawah work and now almost three decades later, he is back in Durban at the institution founded by Sheikh Ahmed Deedat. "It has been a great honour for me to be here to share knowledge and to learn. I hope that I will be able to return to South Africa and to do even more dawah work among the greater community. I return home with many positive memories and enriched with knowledge to continue my work in Saudi Arabia which is also undergoing great changes, especially with so many non-Muslims now entering the country to work," he said.

While in Durban Al Amreeki and his colleagues were able to visit various religious institutions, charity organisations and were able to confer with leaders across Durban. Al Amreeki singled out Mr Mohamed Khan of the Islamic Propagation Centre International for his dedication, commitment and leadership, which brought so much value to their lives.

Farook Khan- 90 Minutes - Radio Al-Ansar

Tribute to a Wonderful Team: late Aisha & Ismail Manjra

Paediatrician and Allergologist, Dr Ahmed Ismail Manjra in a moving tribute to his deceased parents described them as the "Wonderful Team."

He pointed out that his father, Mr Ismail Manjra and mother, Mrs Aisha Manjra were married for 60 years and during that time not only nurtured the family but served the greater community.

"My parents were humble and hard working. They were not materialistic and valued education. Both were principled and upheld integrity and as such were the wonderful team," he said.

The couple threw their home open to visiting scholars from abroad and ensured that they had a hospitable and meaningful stay in the city. These visits contributed to the community being able to communicate and inter-act with some of the leading thinkers in the Muslim world. All five of their children were encouraged to pursue a sound education. Two of them Ahmed and Shuaib became doctors. One of them a chartered accountant, another a businessman and the only daughter, Fathima a media specialist.

Mr Manjra Senior was a co-founder of the South African Islamic Centre and the Al Mujjaddad newspaper. A long standing member

of the Arabic Study Circle which he served for 60 years.

Being part of a dedicated band of men and women who promoted Arabic as a language, made great demands on his time and energy, but Mr Manjra and his colleagues continued tirelessly.

He was also a founding member of the Muslim Youth Movement and served the Darul Yatama Wal Masakeen and the Reservoir Hills Muslim Society.

A civil society activist who demonstrated publicly against the apartheid government. "My father would not have been able to serve in all these capacities without the support from my mother who shared his desire to be of service to all people," said Dr Manjra. Mr and Mrs Manjra are survived 16 grand children and seven great grand children. May the Almighty confer the highest status of Jannah to them and be an inspiration for all.



Sister Shaheeda Cassim

A senior official of the South African National Zakaat Fund, Mrs Shaheeda Cassim passed away recently. A long serving official who served the greater community she was known for her commitment and dedication.

In a tribute, the Trustees, Executive and Staff said in a joint statement that they are saddened at Cassim's death. "Aunt Shaheeda Cassim as she was affectionately known, was not only considered as an employee of SANZAF but was accorded the status of a revered senior member of the SANZAF family.



"She served SANZAF for more than 30 years with much commitment, dedication and compassion. As the first staff to arrive at work daily, she took her work seriously and often beyond the call of duty. Over the years, Cassim developed an excellent rapport with SANZAF's donors, well-wishers and the recipient community alike. Consequently, she was also highly successful in her unique fundraising methods, securing substantial amounts of goods in kind, contributions, as well as, professional services and interventions from the medical fraternity pro-bono for the organizations recipients over the years."

As SANZAF's Projects Procurement Officer she was also responsible for the Diary Project, the Muslim Feeding Scheme (MFS), monthly food hampers for recipients and the Imdaad Literacy and Madressa classes. "She performed her duties effectively and efficiently. She was undoubtedly an asset to SANZAF and her contribution is highly appreciated by both the organization and donors whom she was regularly in contact," according to the statement.

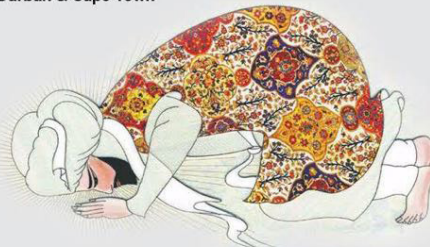


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