

THE FRIDAY BULLETIN

The Weekly Muslim Update



A Publication of the Jamia Mosque Nairobi

Muslims mark Eid-ul-Fitr with calls for unity, charity and moral renewal



In Today's Issue



TOP: A section of congregants performing Eid ul-Fitr prayers last Friday at Jamia Mosque Nairobi. **INSET:** Jamia Mosque Nairobi Imam, Sheikh Jamaludin Osman giving Eid Khutba after leading the Eid ul Fitr prayers at the mosque.

1 Lord of Ramadan... Lord of Entire Year

Some pious people used to say: "Try to be a Rabbani (belonging to Allah always), and do not be a Ramadhani (only worshipping Allah in Ramadhan)." We do not worship Almighty Allah only in Ramadhan; we have to worship and serve Him every day of our lives.

2 Kenya Hajj Mission completes Visa processing for 2026 Pilgrimage

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3 Discover, Learn, and Play – The Islamic Way!

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Muslim faithful across Kenya gathered in large numbers on Friday at mosques and open prayer grounds to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr, marking the end of the holy month of Ramadhan after the Acting Chief Kadhi Sukyan Hassan Omar announced the sighting of the Shawwal crescent on Thursday.

The celebrations, declared a public holiday by the government, were characterized by the performance of the two rak'ahs of Eid prayers, sermons (khutbah), and special supplications (munajat) seeking peace, prosperity and unity for the Muslim Ummah, as well as the wellbeing of people across the globe.

Religious leaders used the occasion to deliver sermons centered on gratitude, charity, peace and national unity, urging Kenyans to embrace togetherness, mutual support and responsible leadership regardless of religious, ethnic or political differences. They also emphasized the importance of sustaining the discipline, compassion and moral values cultivated during Ramadhan.

In Nairobi, thousands of worshippers converged at major centres, including Jamia Mosque and Sir Ali Muslim Club in Parkroad.

Similar scenes were witnessed in Mombasa, where large congregations gathered at mosques and open grounds, including Tono-noka Grounds, for the special Eid prayers fol-

lowing the conclusion of the fasting period. At Jamia Mosque in Nairobi, Imam Sheikh Jamaludin Osman thanked Almighty Allah for granting the faithful the opportunity to complete the fast and celebrate Eid, while reiterating the importance of sharing with those in need and maintaining unity. "Today is a day for visiting family members, relatives, friends, the sick, orphans and widows, and sharing with them," he said.

He urged Muslims to uphold the spiritual and moral lessons learned during Ramadhan, warning against abandoning them after the holy month. Sheikh Jamaludin also encouraged the faithful to observe the optional six days of fasting in the month of Shawwal, noting that it carries immense spiritual reward. He stressed that true devotion is reflected in consistency in prayer, recitation of the Qur'an and good character, including kindness and forgiveness, beyond Ramadhan. He further called on Muslims to sustain acts of charity (sadaqah) and continue supporting the less fortunate.

"Ramadhan is a school for life designed to reform character, and failing to maintain its lessons is missing the true purpose of fasting," he said, noting that while the intensity of worship during the holy month may not

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Kenya Hajj Mission completes Visa processing for 2026 Pilgrimage

The Kenya Hajj Mission, under the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims, has announced the completion of visa issuance for all Kenyan pilgrims intending to perform the 2026/1447 Hajj.

The early processing of visas signals a proactive approach to planning for the annual pilgrimage, a move expected to enhance organization and improve service delivery for thousands of Kenyan pilgrims joining millions of Muslims worldwide. The 2026 Hajj is projected to take place between May 24 and May 29.

Speaking to the Friday Bulletin, SUPKEM National Chairman Hassan Ole Naado described the development as a major milestone in the mission's preparations.

"I am pleased to announce that all visas have now been successfully issued in line with the established timeline, as we transition to the next stage," he said.

Ole Naado noted that the process was

conducted in accordance with guidelines set by the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah, underscoring Kenya's adherence to international standards governing the pilgrimage. He also expressed gratitude to the Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Kenya for its cooperation in facilitating timely approvals.

The SUPKEM chairman commended accredited Hajj agencies and Kenya Hajj Mission staff for their dedication, assuring pilgrims of improved services during the journey.

"We are fully committed to enhancing the quality of services. SUPKEM, through the Kenya Hajj Mission, has worked closely with the Saudi Ministry of Hajj to ensure Kenyan Hajj agencies comply with international standards, including health, safety and customer service requirements," he said.

According to the council, accredited agen-

cies will oversee key travel arrangements, including flights, accommodation, transportation within Saudi Arabia, and logistical support in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina.

Ole Naado further cautioned intending pilgrims against dealing with unregistered operators, warning that such engagements could result in financial loss, logistical challenges, or denial of entry into Saudi Arabia due to invalid documentation.

Kenya has been allocated a quota of 4,500 pilgrims for the 2026 Hajj, distributed among 14 approved Hajj groups comprising 65 licensed agents.

Hajj, one of the five pillars of Islam, is an obligatory act of worship for Muslims who are physically and financially capable of undertaking the journey at least once in their lifetime. Each year, millions of faithful converge in Saudi Arabia to perform the sacred rites.

Leaders downplay Eid date differences, call for unity among Muslims

Muslim leaders in the North Rift region have downplayed differences witnessed during this year's Eid-ul-Fitr celebrations, where the festival was marked on two separate days, saying the variation should not be interpreted as a sign of division within the community.

The leaders noted that such differences, which stem from the sighting of the moon that determines the beginning and end of the holy month of Ramadhan, are not unusual and should not overshadow the shared values that unite Muslims.

Speaking in Eldoret, the leaders, under the North Rift Council of Imams and Preachers in Kenya (CIPK), called on Islamic scholars and imams across the country to find a lasting solution to recurring disagreements over moon sighting.

Led by CIPK North Rift chairman Sheikh Abubakar Bini, the leaders emphasized that unity within the Muslim community remains paramount despite the differing

observance dates. "What unites Muslims is far greater than what divides them. There is need for a concerted effort to address and resolve controversies surrounding moon sighting in order to promote unity," said Sheikh Bini.

He acknowledged that variations in determining the start and end of Ramadhan have persisted for years, often leading to confusion among faithful, and stressed the urgency of establishing a common framework. "It is important for our Islamic scholars to sit together and agree on a single guideline for the sighting of the moon so that all Muslims in the country can observe Ramadhan and perform Eid prayers together," he said.

Sheikh Bini, however, pointed out that determining the exact date remains subject to human interpretation and juristic differences, noting that such variations should not be misconstrued as deep divisions.

"It is our desire that we observe Eid on the



same day, but sometimes this is difficult due to differences in jurisprudence," he explained.

He added that adopting a unified scholarly approach to moon sighting, coupled with tolerance among Muslim leaders, would go a long way in fostering cohesion not only in Kenya but across the East African region.

The Sheikh further urged Islamic scholars and leaders to convene a national conference to deliberate on the issue comprehensively and chart a path toward a unified observance of key religious events.

Eid Ul-Fitr Prayers draw thousands across the country

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be sustained year-round, consistency remains key to spiritual growth.

In Mombasa, Muslims joined others across the country in marking the occasion, with leaders echoing similar messages of unity, love, charity and forgiveness.

Speaking after prayers at Masjid Ummu Kulthum in Kizingo, Cabinet Secretary for Mining, Blue Economy and Maritime Affairs, Hassan Ali Joho, thanked Allah for enabling the faithful to complete the fasting period safely and called for continued acts of kindness.

He urged the community to remember orphans, widows, the sick and other vulnerable groups through charity and mu-

tual support, while extending Eid greetings to all Kenyans and emphasizing that unity transcends religious differences. In Wajir, hundreds of residents gathered at major prayer grounds, including ICF Grounds, Orahey Grounds and Wajir Township, to perform the congregational prayers that usher in the month of Shawwal after a period of fasting and spiritual reflection.

Addressing worshippers at Orahey Grounds, Islamic scholar Sheikh Abdiwahab raised concern over social challenges affecting the county, including drug abuse, human trafficking and moral decline among the youth. He cautioned young people against the misuse of social media plat-

forms such as TikTok to spread harmful content, urging them instead to use such platforms responsibly. "We must guide our youth to use social media responsibly and protect the moral fabric of our community," he said.

Sheikh Abdiwahab also underscored the need for unity and moral uprightness, calling on families and community leaders to work together in instilling strong values among young people. Across the country, the Eid-ul-Fitr celebrations were marked not only by prayer and festivity but also by renewed calls for unity, compassion and collective responsibility in building a cohesive and morally upright society.

Lord of Ramadan... Lord of entire year

By Dr. Wael Shehab

Ramadhan is now over. Our eyes shed tears and our hearts ache for the departure of the month of the Qur'an, the month of mercy, the month of solidarity, the month of forgiveness, the month of freedom from the Fire. However, we should continue doing good deeds after Ramadhan since the Lord of Ramadhan is the Lord of the entire year.

Means of Ongoing Obedience

First, be a Rabbani, not Ramadhani!

Some pious people used to say: "Try to be a Rabbani (belonging to Allah always), and do not be a Ramadhani (only worshipping Allah in Ramadhan)." We do not worship Almighty Allah only in Ramadhan; we have to worship and serve Him every day of our lives. So, Muslims must continually do good deeds. We have to observe our daily prayers, fast during Ramadhan, give zakah, and perform Hajj if we can afford it. We should also speak the truth, be honest, and treat each other and all human beings with courtesy and kindness. Remember that good deeds lead to more good deeds and bad deeds only lead to more bad deeds.

"One of the rewards of good deeds is more good deeds, and one of the consequences of evil is committing more evil deeds."

Second, consistently doing good deeds is a sign of sincerity.

When people do something good and then do more good, it means that they really benefited from their good actions and that Almighty Allah accepted their good deeds.

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) stressed the fact that the best good deeds in the sight of Almighty Allah are the consistent, even if they are very few. Islam is the religion of purity and sincerity. This applies to all the seasons of the year; not only to Ramadhan.

Allah the Lord of Ramadhan is also the Lord of the entire year. Thus, we should not confine our acts of worship to the month of Ramadhan; instead, we should seize every chance to show humbleness, devotion and sincerity to Almighty Allah at all times, so that we may gain His pleasure.

Third, there are means to continue doing good deeds.

The following are some of these beneficial means that help us continue doing good after Ramadhan:

1. Seeking the support of Almighty Allah.

Beseech Him the Almighty to guide you to the right path and to help you remain steadfast in faith. Almighty Allah has praised the supplication of people of knowledge, when they said:

"Our Lord, let not our hearts deviate after You have guided us and grant us from Yourself mercy. Indeed, You are the Bestower." (Surah Al-Imran 3:8)

2. Continue to observe optional fasting

after Ramadhan.

The Prophet encouraged us to observe optional fasting after the month of Ramadhan. The days in which optional fasting are recommended are:

- Fasting six days during the month of Shawwal
- Fasting the day of `Arafah, Dhul-Hijjah 9, if the person is not performing Hajj
- Fasting Muharram 10, and if possible the 9th and 11th days of the same month
- Fasting as many days as possible during the month of Sha`ban
- Fasting during the months of Rajab, Dhul-Qi`dah, Dhul-Hijjah
- Fasting on Mondays and Thursdays
- Fasting the 13th, 14th, and 15th of every lunar month

3. Continue offering the Tahajjud Prayer.

During Ramadhan we used to perform the Tahajjud Prayer. So after Ramadhan, we should continue to offer it, even two rak`ahs.

Praising the character of devout believers, Almighty Allah says,

"Their sides part [i.e., they arise] from [their] beds; they supplicate their Lord in fear and aspiration, and from what We have provided them, they spend." (Surah As-Sajdah 32:16)

Likewise, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) is reported to have said:

"Keep on observing Qiyam Al-Layl, for it was the practice of your righteous predecessors. Qiyam Al-Layl is a means to get close to your Lord, atones for your sins, drives disease from the body, and stops from falling in bad deeds." (Classified as Hasan by Imam Al-Iraqi)

Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that he heard the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) say, "There is an hour in the night, in which no Muslim individual will ask Allah for good in this world and the next without Him giving it to him, and that applies to every night." (Reported by Muslim)

Al-Hasan Al-Basri (may Allah have mercy on him) said,

"We know of no harder act of worship than enduring through the night (in Qiyam Al-Layl) and offering our money (in charity)." Someone asked him, "How is it that those who observe Qiyam Al-Layl are among the people with the most beautiful faces?"

To this he replied, "Because they commune with the Most Merciful and He clothes them in light from His light."

Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as having said:

"Whoever wakes up at night and lets his wife do so in order to offer two rak`ahs, will be recorded amongst those who make much dhikr of Allah in that night." (Abu Dawud)

4. Continue reading, listening and reflecting on the Qur'an.

Through the month of Ramadhan, we used to read, listen to and reflect on the Qur'an; therefore, we should not forsake it after Ramadhan. The Qur'an describes the Prophet's complaint to Almighty Allah because of his people forsaking the Qur'an:

"And the Messenger has said, 'O Lord, indeed my people have forsaken this Qur'an.'" (Surah Al-Furqan 25:30)

We should never forsake the Qur'an so that we would not be included in the Prophet's complaint (peace and blessings be upon him).

5. Continue taking care of the poor and needy.

In Ramadhan, we used to feed the poor and take care of them. We paid zakat al-fitr to help them meet their needs; therefore, we have to continue caring about them after Ramadhan. Ramadhan exposed us to hunger and thirst. After feeling the pangs of hunger and thirst we should be more sympathetic to the plight of millions of people who are less fortunate around the world. A true Muslim can never be apathetic about the suffering of others. In a hadith qudsi (Divine Hadith) the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) narrated from Almighty Allah:

"O Son of Adam, I asked you for food, yet you did not feed Me." The man will ask: How can I feed You when You are the Lord of the worlds? Allah will say, "Didn't you know My servant so-and-so was hungry and you did not feed him; didn't you know that if you were to feed him, you would have found Me with him?" (Muslim)

6. Continue offering supererogatory acts of worship.

Focus on the nawafil you like more and which you are capable of doing regularly, even if they are little. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said,

"O people! Do only those good deeds which you can do, for Allah does not get bored (i.e. of giving reward) till you get bored (of doing good deeds), and the best deeds to Allah are the consistent ones, even though they may be few."

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From the Holy Qur'an Ayah of the week

Theme: Prayer

"Guard strictly the
[five obligatory]
prayers, especially the
middle prayer, and
stand before Allah with
devotion..."

(Surah Al-Baqarah 2:238)



First year of Marriage: Is it cozy or complicated?

By Sadaf Farooqi

The beginning of the sacred union of marriage is marked with many bittersweet moments for the newlywed bridal couple.

The new husband and wife cascade through the usual outward rituals. There is the nikah ceremony, the post nikah banquets, the greetings, dua's and endless hugs from close kin.

The incessant showering of gifts; childlike enthusiasm, and euphoria at finding a life partner, are tinged with the nervousness and hidden fears.

These are naturally associated with this milestone transition of stepping into an as-yet unknown realm of life. It is the most natural thing for an adult man and woman to live together as husband and wife.

The first few weeks, months and years of this cohabitation are a crucial time of adjustment. The new spouse is hitherto still a stranger whom the other partner is just starting to get to know.

If the spouses do not tread with care, compassion, patience and discretion, their natural disagreements in the initial years of marriage can blow out of proportion into big problems that are very difficult to solve. It is important for newlyweds to remember a few important tips and advice when embarking on this new life stage:

1- Getting to Know the New Family

A husband or wife will have to live with, make small talk with, and answer questions from many people.

Both close ones as well as mere acquaintances will query them. It is more often than not the extended families and circle of friends and acquaintances on both sides that come together to "jump start" the marital union, not to mention, celebrate it to the hilt over a period of a week or so of banquets and social get-togethers.

Hence, in the first few days, a marriage involves a great deal of interaction. Meeting new people, remembering names and new faces, receiving handshakes and hugs, and exchanging excited greetings with absolute strangers. It can be overwhelming. This can add to the pressure of the new marriage.

There is also moving into a new home (especially for a bride). Of course there is having and getting used to conjugal relations. And then dressing up every day in order to perfectly look and act out the part of bride or groom!

In order to not let the constant barrage of well-wishing but sometimes pushy near and dear ones from causing problems between a new husband and wife, both of them should remember that with the passage of time, at the most a few weeks, this overenthusiastic deluge of meetings with relatives and friends will melt away, giving them more privacy.

They will eventually get time to relax, go

out, sleep in, and breathe freely in their private space.

2- Controlling the Tongue

The less new spouses say to each other in front of family in the beginning of the marriage, the better. This is because they are almost always under close observation by those around them. Saying something at the wrong time, or even in the wrong tone, can lead to misunderstandings and ill-perceptions.

Don't give leeway to the envious trouble-makers of extended family to give their criticism and tongue-wagging. It is advisable for a bride or a groom to not express their opinions about everything too often, too loudly, or too voraciously, especially in large social gatherings. This is because, unfortunately, the first impression is usually the last.

People tend to enjoy memories, recalling and gossiping about any unpleasant situations or scandals that took place during a wedding. Even when talking to each other in privacy, it is important to weigh what you say before you say it.

The first few months are a time of sensitive, nervous and raw emotions and feelings. Treading with care ensures prevention of unwanted problems.

3- Not Sweating the Small Stuff

Sometimes, trivial matters can be blown out of proportion. A spouse should not jump to self-made conclusions and overreact to them, especially in the beginning of a marriage.

For example, a wife might fall sick right after her wedding and consequently, fall behind in doing household chores due to her lack of domestic experience.

At such a point, when she needs her husband to be supportive and caring, if he instead thinks, "If I let this go by being lenient, she might make it a habit," and starts to force her to do all the chores, even when she is sick, because of his innate insecurity that if he does the chores himself it will encourage her to be slothful, this will cause a lot of damage to their relationship. Wife will see him as harsh, oppressive and insensitive.

Similarly, if a wife gets resentful of her husband spending more time with his relatives and at work than with her in the first few weeks after marriage, she should try and quell her insecurities that might be making her think that if she doesn't protest, he will take her silence as approval and



continue to ignore her for the rest of their marriage. Ignoring and overlooking small blows to their personal ego in the first few months go a long way in conveying to one's spouse the loud-and-clear message that, "I will stand by you through thick and thin". And this is one of the most comforting messages that they can give to each other when their marriage is new.

4- Patience during First Pregnancy

The most important tip for a new husband and wife that can help them pass through their first pregnancy and childbirth, is to practice immense patience, compassion and empathy with each other. The arrival of a child means a whole new world of emotions, feelings, and life experiences.

It adds value to the family unit and affects all the existing relationships. It is a fact that the arrival of the first baby, which, in many cases, is a much-awaited blessing from Allah, causes the well-adjusted, comfortable husband-wife relationship to go through its first major transition.

Light of Knowledge Quiz

What is the benefit of fasting six days in Shawwal after Ramadan?

- A** Equals fasting the whole year
- B** Equals fasting half a year
- C** Doubles Ramadan reward

Answer to be revealed in the next issue

Last week's answer was choice C :
" After Eid prayers skip all prayers of the day "

Basic Social Manners – What would Muhammad (Peace be upon him) do?

By Aisha Stacey

Islamic etiquette or good manners is a very important subject. It includes, but is certainly not limited to, greeting another Muslim in the proper way or standing up to let an elderly man take your seat in the bus. All the prophets and righteous people displayed good manners. Their behavior with other people was well mannered and respectful and even more importantly their manner toward Allah was exemplary. A Muslim who takes great care with his manners is a person with a strong moral character and an innate understanding of ethics and responsibility. If Prophet Muhammad was able to see how flippant we are about manners today, it is not too far-fetched to think he would advise us to remember some of the basic teachings of Islam. In Chapter 33 verse 21 of the Quran, Allah said that Prophet Muhammad was a good example for Muslims to follow. He did not qualify that statement by saying in this matter, or that matter.

Following the way of Prophet Muhammad in all matters will hold us in good stead in all aspects of our lives; from the very trivial to the very important. Prophet Muhammad was well mannered and respectful in any situation. In the authentic books of Hadith, Prophet Muhammad is said to have told his companions that Allah sent him to perfect good manners and to do good deeds. (Al-Bukhari) Also from among the authentic hadith is a saying attributed to Prophet Muhammad's beloved wife Aisha in which she describes her husband's character as the Quran. (Muslim) These small, seemingly minor, snippets of information combine to give us a great deal of important advice. Prophet Muhammad's character was a study in Islamic etiquette. He abided by Allah's laws and commands and abstained from Allah's prohibitions.

He did so while interacting with the world around him; his responsibility to Allah was evident in all his interactions. Prophet Muhammad used Islamic etiquette with his family, his companions and neighbors, the wider Muslim community, and all living things. He was also well mannered when dealing with detractors, unbelievers, and enemies. Nowadays and across the breadth of Islamic history, there are people who consider themselves to be righteous; they pray, fast and give in charity and yet they have awful manners.

They spread gossip and back bite, or they treat their employees with contempt and rudeness. In many cases they ignore the spiritual and emotional needs of the ones closest to them and fail to understand that the connection between piety and good manners is symbiotic. One cannot exist without the other. To imagine what Prophet Muhammad would say to these people, we only have to read the guidance and advice he gave his companions. The best among you is the one who is best to his family, and I am the best to my family. (At-Tirmidhi) The angel Gabriel kept advising me about the rights of neighbors until I thought he would make them entitled to some part of the inheritance. (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) Nothing is weightier on the scales (on the Day of Judgment) than good behavior. (Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi) By his good character a believer will attain the degree of one who prays during the night and fasts during the day. (Abu Dawud) The best of you are those who possess the best manners. (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) It is impossible to practice Islam effectively if we neglect the importance of good manners because Islamic etiquette is something that reinforces our faith. It should be a thread that runs through our day-to-day living complimenting and strengthening our worship. Islamic good manners consist of spreading peace and mending broken relationships. It involves praying for our brothers and sisters in Islam, advising and calling each other to good and endeavoring to prevent evil or sinful behavior. Islamic etiquette is also about respect. It directs us to show consideration and care to others; parents, elders, neighbors, members of the community in which we live and those who do not practice our faith.

It is about showing love and compassion to everyone we come in contact with and it includes visiting the sick and staying away from gossip and backbiting.

The scholars of Islam explain that good manners consist of knowing how to treat others. A Muslim must strive to avoid harming, annoying or inconveniencing anyone.

In the Age of Social Media

Prophet Muhammad told his companions that the true Muslim is a person who avoids harming other Muslims with his words or actions. (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) It might be useful to imagine how Prophet Muhammad would react if he could read the words we use on social media. With the greatest of ease, Muslims defame and slander each other in public forums. And they do so without the slightest care and with little or no understanding of Islamic etiquette and the sinful nature of such behavior. Consider another saying from the traditions of Prophet Muhammad:

A man utters a word pleasing to Allah without considering it of any significance and Allah raises his status in Paradise; another one speaks a word displeasing to Allah without considering it of any importance, and for that word he will sink down into Hell. (Al-Bukhari) Perhaps we should replace the word utters with the word types. While there is undoubtedly great good in the proper use of social media, it can also be a way to accumulate sins. There are some people who think that the language and tone they use on the Internet is of no significance. But once the words have been typed and sent, they are out there in cyber space and we are not able to retrieve them or control their entirely say something harmful or untrue.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS ACROSS

- 2. Nasr
 - 4. Tawbah
 - 6. Eid ul Fitr
- Down
- 1. Al Waarith
 - 3. Amtar
 - 5. Eight

ACROSS

- 2. The month that starts on Eid ul Fitr".
- 4. Sunnah prayer before fajr(Dawn)prayers.
- 5. The Surah whose name means "The Disbelievers"

DOWN

- 1. The Arabic term for Rocks.
- 3. The Name of Allah meaning "The Everlasting"
- 6. How many prophets were given holy books?

Let us extend educational support to bright and needy Muslim students

By Umar Swaleh

"Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves." (Qur'an 13:11) Since the implementation of the Presidential Working Party recommendations on education, we have observed a worrying trend in education financing in our country.

During the piloting stage of the new university funding model, we noted elements of exclusion that adversely affected bright but financially needy students, many of whom come from economically challenged families and form the majority in our institutions of higher learning.

The manner in which the system was designed raised serious concerns. Fortunately, a legal challenge was filed, and the court declared the model unconstitutional, leading to the reinstatement of HELB. In recent weeks, we are witnessing a similar trend during the piloting of Grade 10 under the Competency-Based Education (CBE) system. A significant number of students have failed to report to their placement institutions due to financial constraints, particularly those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. This raises important questions regarding the government's level of preparedness in implementing the new education system and addressing its cost implications. While we appreciate the intentions behind the new system as stakeholders in the education sector, these developments serve as an eye-opener regarding the direction we are taking as a country. Last year, a pronouncement by the Treasury Cabinet Secretary regarding the status of free secondary education suggested a policy shift.

Based on current developments, it ap-

pears that the era of fully free secondary education may be coming to an end. This underscores the urgent need for proactive academic and financial planning, as well as full disclosure of the system's structure and cost implications. In recent years, we have witnessed a remarkable academic awakening among Muslim students in national examinations despite numerous challenges. These challenges include restrictions on the practice of their faith, particularly for girls who are not permitted to wear the hijab in some institutions, and the absence of Islamic Religious Education teachers, despite the subject being examinable. As institutions and community leaders, we must complement these efforts by providing the necessary infrastructure and support to enable students to achieve their academic aspirations. Students from areas previously considered marginalized are demonstrating that they can compete nationally when given equal opportunities and adequate resources.

The 2010 Constitution and the introduction of devolution have been transformative for such regions. We also acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of Muslim-founded institutions and individuals, including Nairobi Muslim Academy, Sheikh Khalifa schools, WAMY schools, and Direct Aid schools.

These institutions have significantly contributed to improved academic performance and the rising number of Muslim students in institutions of higher learning, both public and private. For too long, we have avoided openly addressing the challenges facing our community in education financing.

However, the problem continues to esca-

late, and the demand for support is increasing. The absence of a structured and sustainable empowerment system has limited our ability to transform our community across various spheres of life. Reports from Muslim student leadership indicate that many students from poor backgrounds are deferring their studies due to financial hardship. To move forward, we must courageously and honestly address the concerns we often discuss only behind closed doors.

The absence of a coordinated structure and effective system continues to impede our success. We must elevate our approach to education financing and explore sustainable mechanisms, including tapping into facilities such as a waqf commission, to help bridge the funding gap.

The success of any community is ultimately measured by its investment in education. Existing initiatives, such as the Africa Education and Development Trust and other foundations, provide a foundation upon which to build for meaningful impact. Furthermore, we urge mainstream Muslim organizations and leadership to continue engaging HELB to ensure that its financing facilities are Shariah-compliant and serve the needs of Muslim students. This would significantly assist financially disadvantaged students in pursuing and completing their higher education. If we are to transform this Ummah, we must understand that in any struggle, concerted and coordinated action is essential.

Bro. Umar Swaleh is the Nairobi Area Muslim Students Association (NAM-SA) Coordinator.

Pumwani Riyadhha Mosque opens doors to public in landmark Open Day

The Pumwani Riyadhha Mosque in Majengo, Nairobi, hosted its first official open day on Saturday, March 21, 2026, in a landmark initiative aimed at fostering interfaith understanding and community cohesion.

The event, organized in collaboration with the National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC), drew a diverse crowd of men, women, and youth from across the city, offering non-Muslims a rare opportunity to step inside the mosque and gain firsthand insight into Islamic beliefs and practices.

Visitors toured the mosque's interior—many for the first time—while Islamic scholars and preachers guided them through key aspects of the faith, addressing questions and clarifying misconceptions. As the afternoon approached, guests witnessed the Adhan (call to prayer) and observed the performance of Salah, with detailed explanations provided to enhance understanding of the

rituals. Speaking during the event, Imam Sheikh Zakaria Abdallah underscored the importance of such initiatives in dispelling myths and strengthening relations between communities. He noted that in a multi-religious society like Kenya, platforms that encourage dialogue and interaction are vital. "This forum has brought Muslims and non-Muslims closer together and will go a long way in enhancing mutual understanding and relations," he said.

NCTC Chief Liaison Officer Joseph Kanyiri described the open day as part of a broader strategy to build trust between communities and counter extremist narratives through transparency and engagement.

"This initiative reflects a whole-of-society approach to strengthening community ties and addressing extremism by fostering openness among religious institutions," Kanyiri said.

Beyond religious engagement, visitors were also introduced to the mosque's vocational training facilities, which offer sub-



sidized technical courses to members of the local community. The event concluded with a communal luncheon and the distribution of informational materials to help attendees deepen their understanding of Islam.

Buoyed by the success of the inaugural open day, mosque leaders announced that the program will now be held biannually, with the next session scheduled during the Eid ul Adha festivities.

Ruto Pledges Sh20 Million for expansion of Kisumu Jamia Mosque

President William Ruto has pledged Sh20 million towards the construction and expansion of the Kisumu Jamia Mosque, giving a major boost to an ambitious upgrade project spearheaded by the Kisumu Muslim Association (KMA).

The association has unveiled a Sh300 million plan to modernize the 106-year-old mosque to meet the growing needs of the Muslim community in the lakeside city of Kisumu.

According to KMA Secretary-General Rashid Hussein, the project will include the expansion of the current mosque to accommodate an additional 7,500 worshippers, as well as improvements aimed at strengthening its role as a centre for both spiritual nourishment and education. Hussein, who spoke during an Eid-ul-Fitr luncheon hosted by President Ruto at State Lodge Kisumu, said all the necessary plans and documentation for the project had already been finalized. He appealed to the Head of State to support the initiative, noting that the mosque—currently the largest in the Nyanza region—struggles to accommodate worshippers, particularly during Friday prayers and the holy month of Ramadan.

In response, President Ruto announced a Sh20 million contribution as seed capital towards the construction of what he described as an ultra-modern mosque. He further pledged government support in mobilizing additional resources, saying members of his Cabinet who are Muslims would be tasked with helping organize fundraising efforts to see the project through to completion.

“I have Muslims in my Cabinet; I will send



Section of Muslims following proceedings during the Eid-ul-Fitr luncheon hosted for Muslims at State Lodge Kisumu, by President William Ruto on Friday last week. At the event President William Ruto pledged Sh20 million towards the construction and expansion of the Kisumu Jamia Mosque located on Otieno Oyoo Street, which was built in 1919. It was established as the second mosque in the city, following the construction of the earlier Railway Mosque in 1905.

them here so they can take part in the fundraising, so that we can support the construction of the mosque until it is completed,” he said. The President made the remarks during the Eid al-Fitr celebrations, where Muslim leaders and faithful gathered to mark the end of the holy month of Ramadan. He reaffirmed his administration’s commitment to inclusivity and the promotion of religious development across the country.

“We join the Muslim community in celebrating Eid al-Fitr following the sacred month of Ramadan, a time of sacrifice, devotion, prayer, charity, and reflection,” he said.

Ruto added that the occasion serves as a reminder of faith, unity, and gratitude, urging Kenyans to extend kindness to the less fortunate and promote harmony within communities. He also thanked the Muslim com-

munity for their prayers and their role in fostering peace and cohesion nationwide. Leaders who addressed the gathering called for peaceful coexistence among Kenyans despite religious differences. Suna East MP Junet Mohammed commended the President for addressing cases of extrajudicial actions against Muslims, noting that such incidents had been widespread in previous administrations.

“Muslims suffered most from the pattern of extrajudicial killings and disappearances. More than 500 people are still missing, and their whereabouts remain unknown to this day,” he said. Other leaders present included Kisumu Governor Anyang’ Nyong’o, Oburu Oginga, and Kisumu East MP Shakeel Shabbir, among others.

Call to support Religious Leaders as pillars of social stability

The Speaker of the Mombasa County Assembly, Aharub Khatri, has called on the government to urgently establish a nationwide framework to support religious leaders and madrasa teachers, warning that their continued economic neglect poses a serious threat to social stability. Speaking during Eid Baraza in Mombasa, Khatri highlighted what he described as a stark contradiction, where individuals entrusted with shaping the moral and spiritual fabric of society are themselves grappling with extreme poverty.

He revealed that in Mombasa alone, more than 5,000 religious teachers and madrasa instructors survive on less than Sh10,000 per month—a situation he said is likely replicated across other counties. “These are the people we depend on for guidance in our society, yet they face serious financial challenges,” Khatri said.

He noted that despite playing a critical role in mentoring communities and steering young people away from crime and social vices, many of these leaders

lack formal employment structures, steady income, and access to social protection systems. To address the crisis, the Speaker proposed a shift in policy to formally recognize religious educators within national development frameworks.

He suggested that both county and national governments consider enrolling them as Community Health Promoters, enabling them to receive stipends while leveraging their influence to advance public and mental health awareness.

“If we can find a way for them to earn even a small amount, it will go a long way in supporting them and strengthening the community,” he added.

Khatri further urged the government facilitate their enrollment into the Social Health Authority scheme, ensuring access to affordable health-care.

Additionally, he proposed the establishment of a centralized support system to formally register religious

leaders and link their families to government assistance programmes, including bursaries for their children. He stressed the need to recognize madrasas as key components of the country’s broader education system.

The Speaker underscored that supporting religious leaders should not be seen as a financial strain but rather as a strategic investment in national cohesion.

“A stable and supported body of religious leaders is essential for maintaining peace and unity in our society,” he said.

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Rights groups demand law on enforced disappearances as Police killings rise

A civil society coalition has called on Parliament to urgently enact legislation criminalising enforced disappearances and to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, warning that the absence of a clear legal framework continues to shield perpetrators from accountability. The coalition, Missing Voices, made the appeal on Tuesday during the launch of its Annual Report 2025 in Mathare, Nairobi, where members decried persistent cases of extrajudicial killings and disappearances linked to security agencies. In its report, the rights lobby urged lawmakers to either introduce a standalone law or amend existing legislation to explicitly criminalise enforced disappearances, alongside provisions for reparations and legal recourse for victims and their families. "Parliament should enact a law specifically criminalising enforced disappearances or amend existing legislation to do so, and ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance," the coalition said. The report paints a troubling picture despite a marginal overall decline in violations. A total of 131 cases of extrajudicial

killings and enforced disappearances were documented in 2025, including 125 police killings and six enforced disappearances. While the overall number of violations dropped by 17.6 per cent compared to 2024, police killings rose sharply by 20 per cent, from 104 cases to 125, raising fresh concerns over the continued use of excessive force by law enforcement officers. Enforced disappearances, on the other hand, fell significantly by 89 per cent, from 55 cases in 2024 to six in 2025. However, the coalition cautioned that the drop does not necessarily reflect improved accountability, pointing instead to systemic legal gaps that continue to deny justice to victims' families. According to the report, most of the killings occurred during public protests and demonstrations, with June and July emerging as the deadliest months, accounting for 68 deaths—more than half of all cases recorded in the year. Nairobi County remained the leading hotspot for extrajudicial killings for the fourth consecutive year, although other counties also reported worrying incidents. Young people bore the brunt of the violence, with those aged between 19 and 35 forming the largest proportion of victims.

Men accounted for about 90 per cent of the deaths, underscoring what the coalition described as a persistent gendered pattern in the use of excessive force. Firearms were the most commonly used method, with 114 of the police killings involving shootings, raising questions about compliance with national and international standards governing the use of force. Despite years of documentation and advocacy, the coalition noted that accountability remains elusive. Oversight institutions such as the Independent Policing Oversight Authority continue to face resource constraints that slow investigations and prosecutions. The report also flagged shrinking civic space and increasing attacks on human rights defenders and protesters, trends it warned could undermine democratic participation and the rule of law. The coalition called on the National Police Service to reform crowd control practices and improve the documentation of detainees. It also urged the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and the judiciary to fast-track cases involving police abuses and strengthen case management systems to ensure timely justice for victims.

Over 7,000 households in Isiolo benefit from SOHA food rations

Star of Hope Association has successfully distributed food rations to households in Isiolo County, thanks to the generous support of Humanity Without Borders from the United Kingdom (UK). With generous support from Humanity Without Borders, the Star of Hope Association (SOHA) a Non-Governmental Organization, successfully distributed food rations to over 7,000 households across Isiolo North and South during Ramadhan 2026. The initiative comes at a critical time as communities in these arid and semi-arid regions continue to face the harsh effects of prolonged drought and recurring floods. Through this effort, SOHA not only provided essential food supplies but also restored hope and dignity to vulnerable families. This impactful exercise is a reflection of the long standing partnership between SOHA and Humanity Without Borders, a collaboration that has consistently supported humanitarian efforts and uplifted communities in times of need. According to Star of Hope Association

(SOHA) Organizing Secretary Qari Abdul Razzaq said the donations were meant to cushion the affected residents against the biting effects of drought and harsh economic hardships adding that this ongoing collaboration has been pivotal in reaching some of the most underserved communities in the region, especially during the holy month of Ramadhan. The donations are a show of commitment by Star of Hope Association in partnership with well-wishers and donors to provide much-needed aid to needy families. "The prolonged drought has affected many families in the region, and more interventions are needed," he said. "We have a duty to come to the aid of our fellow humanity. I urge all of us to double up our efforts to alleviate the sufferings of our brothers and sisters. We can make a difference in our small capacities." Qari Abdul Razzaq commended Humanity Without Borders for the great gesture, kind donations, and partnering with Star of Hope Association to ensure the donations reach the needy families in Isiolo county. He said this will go a long way in alleviating

their sufferings. "We really appreciate and thank Humanity Without Borders from UK for the donation and efforts, and we pray that Almighty Allah bless and reward them abundantly," said Qari Abdul-Razzaq. He pointed out that through their joint efforts, Humanity Without Borders and SOHA continue to provide essential support, ensuring that those in need have access to vital resources during challenging times. Their partnership is a beacon of hope for many, reflecting their shared mission of service to humanity. Star of Hope Association, through donations from donors and well-wishers, has been at the forefront of supporting those facing challenges and in dire need of humanitarian assistance. Guided by the leadership of Qari Abdul Razzaq and Chairman Dr. Haroon Saeed, the organization continues to expand its reach, ensuring that even the most remote and underserved communities receive support during Ramadhan and beyond.

Lord of Ramadan... Lord of Entire Year

Continued from Page 3

7. Continue performing a lot of dhikr and ask Almighty Allah for forgiveness. This may seem insignificant, yet observing it regularly increases faith and

strengthens the heart. **8. Continue avoiding all sins.** In Ramadhan, we used to refrain from lawful things—such as food and drink—during the daytime. In Ramadhan, we had inten-

sive training to maintain self-control and self-discipline; therefore, we should continue avoiding all that Almighty Allah has forbidden.