

# THE FRIDAY BULLETIN

The Weekly Muslim Update



A Publication of the Jama Mosque Nairobi

## Leaders urged to curb inflammatory rhetoric to safeguard national unity

**P**olitical leaders have been urged to exercise restraint in their public utterances and avoid abusive or inciting language, in a bid to foster national cohesion and preserve the peace and unity Kenya continues to enjoy. Speaking during Jumua prayers at Jamia Mosque Nairobi, prominent Islamic scholar Sheikh Ibrahim Lethome warned that reckless political rhetoric could easily destabilise the country. He called on both leaders and citizens to guard their speech as a means of promoting harmony and earning spiritual reward. "There is nothing that deserves to be restrained more than the tongue. Always think before you speak, because words of goodness reflect what is in your heart, just as harmful words do," he said. Sheikh Lethome noted that speech is a reflection of one's character and significantly shapes public perception. He emphasised that religious leaders have a duty to address moral decay and

social ills while offering guidance that fosters unity. He cautioned against the growing trend of vulgar language, insults and inflammatory rhetoric at political rallies, describing the tongue as a powerful tool that, if misused, can damage faith and cause widespread harm in society. At the same time, he underscored that when used responsibly, speech can serve as a force for good. In Islam, he said, guarding one's tongue is central to spiritual well-being and a key requirement for attaining Paradise. The cleric further described the tongue as both a divine blessing and a vital tool of communication, noting that Islamic teachings strongly emphasise self-restraint in speech. He cited the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), which promise Paradise to those who safeguard their words

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### In Today's Issue

#### 1 7 Are Safe on the Day of Judgment – Are You One of Them?

If you contemplate the seven whom Allah will shade with the shade of His Throne when there is no shade but His, you will find that they deserved that shade because of their opposition to their inner desires.

#### 2 Saudi Arabia Introduces Mandatory Nusuk ID

Saudi authorities have unveiled a comprehensive digital platform, Nusuk platform, aimed at regulating pilgrim entry and curbing the presence of unauthorised individuals in the holy city of Makkah.

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

Boost your Islamic knowledge with our weekly Crossword Puzzle, Knowledge Quiz, and Ayah of the Week. Don't miss your copy!

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## Sheikh Badr Muhammad Al-Turki attends International Qur'an Competition in Tanzania



His Eminence Sheikh Badr Al-Turki (right), one of the Imams at Masjid al-Haram in Makkah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, together with other religious leaders during the closing ceremony of the Tanzania International Qur'an Memorisation Award held on Sunday.

Ten-year-old Kenyan Mohammad Said Ahmed Zamzam won first place in the children's category at the International Qur'an Competition held at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

The competition, sponsored by the Saudi Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Dawah and Guidance and organised by the National Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA), brought together 26 contestants from 26 countries. Participants competed in the memorisation of all 30 parts of the Holy Qur'an.

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## Western region to host Sheikh Badru Jaffar for two-day Da'awa tour

The Western region is set to host renowned Islamic scholar Sheikh Badru Jaffar Swaleh for a two-day Da'awa tour beginning April 11, 2026.

Sheikh Badru, an influential cleric and Islamic finance expert, previously worked with First Community Bank (FCB) and currently serves as the Sharia Coordinator and a member of the Internal Sharia Supervisory Committee at DIB Bank Kenya Limited, a subsidiary of Dubai Islamic Bank. According to a statement by the National Muslim Leaders Forum (NAMLEF) Western Region, the scholar will lead a series of public lectures across Kakamega and Vihiga counties. The sessions

aim to promote a deeper understanding of Islam and highlight its values within local communities.

"Sheikh Badru Jaffar will be visiting Kakamega and Vihiga counties for a series of lectures targeting the Muslim faithful and the wider public," the organisers said.

Sheikh Badru holds a Master's degree in Islamic Banking, Finance and Management from the University of Gloucestershire in the United Kingdom, and a Bachelor's degree in Hadith and Islamic Studies from the Islamic University of Madinah, Saudi Arabia.

Key topics to be addressed during the tour include Zakat: The Forgotten Pillar,

Nabi Musa (AS) na Sayyid Khidhir, and Athari ya Riba kwa Imani Zetu na Jamii, among others. The tour will begin on Saturday, April 11, with a lecture at Bo-Yusuf School Hall in Vihiga County. Later in the evening, Sheikh Badru will deliver another lecture at Mumias Jamia Masjid after Asr prayers.

On Sunday, April 12, he is scheduled to hold a special session at Shianda Polytechnic Hall from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Organisers have encouraged members of the public, particularly the Muslim faithful, to attend and benefit from the scholar's message of unity, understanding and spiritual growth.

## Kenyan Boy wins top prize at International Qur'an Competition in Tanzania

Ten-year-old Kenyan Mohammad Said Ahmed Zamzam has won first place in the children's category at the International Qur'an Competition held at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, which concluded on Sunday.

Amid thunderous chants of "Takbir, Allahu Akbar," Zamzam was awarded US\$8,000 (approximately Sh1 million) by the Imam of the Grand Mosque in Makkah, Sheikh Badr Muhammad Al-Turki, before an audience of more than 60,000 spectators.

Suaid Abdul Fattah of Comoros finished second, receiving US\$6,000, while Ahmad Tamir Mamduh of Egypt secured third place with a prize of US\$5,000.

The competition, sponsored by the Saudi Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Dawah and Guidance and organised by the National Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA), brought together 26 contestants from 26 countries. Participants competed in the

memorisation of all 30 parts of the Holy Qur'an. Regarded as one of the most prominent Qur'anic events, the competition seeks to nurture talent and encourage young people to engage with the Holy Qur'an through memorisation and recitation. In a speech delivered on his behalf, the Minister of Islamic Affairs, Dawah and Guidance, Abdulatif Al-Sheikh, said hosting the competition reflects Saudi Arabia's commitment to its Islamic mission and to fostering friendship and cooperation among nations.

He noted that the ministry supports international Qur'an competitions, oversees the King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an, and implements Dawah and educational programmes aimed at promoting the understanding and values of the Holy Qur'an globally. Saudi Ambassador to Tanzania Yahya Okeish described the 34th Tanzania International Qur'an Memorisation Award as one of Africa's leading



Qur'an events, highlighting its role in encouraging memorizers and strengthening generational attachment to the Holy Qur'an.

Tanzania's Mufti, Sheikh Abubakar Zubeir bin Ali, commended the Kingdom for sponsoring the event and lauded the high standard of competition, noting its importance in showcasing exceptional young talent in Qur'anic memorisation.

## AG rolls out e-Citizen access to Public Trustee services

The Office of the Attorney General has announced the roll-out of access to Public Trustee services in the Nairobi office through the e-Citizen platform.

The move is projected to provide a seamless, efficient and accessible platform for members of the public seeking Public Trustee services.

"This initiative marks a significant step in enhancing access to justice and improving service delivery through digital transformation. Consequently, starting April 8, 2026, all applications for service delivery

to the Public Trustee Nairobi Office shall be done exclusively through the e-citizen portal through <https://publictrustee.ecitizen.go.ke>," read a statement from the Office of the Attorney General.

Members of the public can now access information online in real time, including those in remote areas, without needing to visit the Nairobi office.

Some of the services offered by the Public Trustee that will be accessible on the e-Citizen platform include the administration of the estates of deceased persons and the

distribution of accident compensation dues forwarded to the Public Trustee by various insurance service providers.

Members of the public will also be able to administer trusts for minors, persons living with mental disability, persons who are incapable of making decisions by virtue of age, infirmity or any other reason that may be considered by the Court.

Stakeholders and the general public have been urged to embrace this digital solution as part of the government's efforts to modernize its services.

## Guard your tongue against abusive language, political leaders told

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and uphold chastity.

"Among Allah's blessings upon mankind is the gift of reason and the ability to speak. We must therefore use our speech constructively, and speak only that which is good," he said.

Sheikh Lethome added that responsible speech has the power to overcome evil and earn divine pleasure. He reiterated the prophetic teaching that whoever safeguards what is between their jaws (the tongue) and their legs (chastity) is guaranteed Par-

adise.

He concluded by urging leaders to shift their focus to development-oriented agendas that address citizens' needs, rather than engaging in divisive and confrontational politics.

## Safe on the day of Judgment – Are you one of them?

By Raiiq Ridwan

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Seven are (the persons) whom Allah will give protection with His Shade on the Day when there will be no shade except His Shade (i.e., on the Day of Resurrection), and they are: A just ruler; a youth who grew up with the worship of Allah; a person whose heart is attached to the mosque; two persons who love and meet each other and depart from each other for the sake of Allah; a man whom a beautiful and high ranking woman seduces (for illicit relation), but he (rejects this offer by saying): 'I fear Allah'; a person who gives a charity and conceals it (to such an extent) that the left hand might not know what the right has given; and a person who remembers Allah in solitude and his eyes well up. (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

### 1. A Just Ruler

The concept of Justice in Islam is very important and it is something which the Muslim—the ruler and the ruled—must apply in all matters without exception.

Justice means to give each the right he deserves: Muslim or non-Muslim, relative or stranger, friend or enemy. Allah says:

"...do not let hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness..." (Surah Al-Ma'idah 5:8) Unfortunately, even if we admit this in theory, we quickly forget it in practice. So we find that when we speak about our friends and loved ones, we praise them beyond reason and when we speak about those whom we hold difference with, we can find no good in them and we capitalize on their bad points. This is far removed from the justice which Allah loves and gives great reward for, as mentioned in the following hadith: The doers of justice will be on thrones of light at Allah's Right Hand – and both of Allah's Hands are Right Hands. (Muslim) They are those who were just in their ruling, with their families and in all that over which they were given authority.

### 2. A Youth who Grew up in the Worship of Allah

In another interesting hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him), he says:

Take advantage of five matters before five other matters: your youth before you become old, and your health before you fall sick, and your richness before you become poor, and your free time before you become busy; and your life, before your death. (Ahmad) Shaykh Yaser Birjas states in one of his (sermons): "Youthfulness is a time when a person is the most energetic, when he lays out the foundations for his future, and when he plans his life. So the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to take advantage of this time before the time comes when you do not have that enthusiasm, when you do not have that zeal, or that outlook. The enthusiasm and energy that you have

been blessed with will never again be given to you after this age. Therefore, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to seize the moment and take advantage of it. A person should exercise this energy for the sake of Allah by procuring knowledge of Allah, obtaining halal (lawful) sustenance and worshiping Allah through acts that he might not be able to do later on in life." Moreover, this young age is a time when desires are more, and the will to disobey Allah is more. The mind is rebellious and the temptations of the shaytan (Satan) are at its maximum. The one who does his part in restraining himself/herself and obeys Allah surely deserves the shade under the throne of Allah.

### 3. A Man whose Heart is Attached to the Mosques

Numerous hadiths of the Prophet (peace be upon him) say that praying in the mosque has 27 times more reward than praying in homes (Al-Bukhari and Muslim). Also the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

He does not take a step [towards the mosque] except that because of it, he is raised by one rank and one sin is removed from him. Then when he prays, the Angels do not cease supplicating for him [for] as long as he remains at his place of Prayer [saying]: O Allah send blessings upon him, O Allah have mercy upon him... (Al-Bukhari) It must be emphasized here however, that all the hadiths encouraging the men to be attached to the mosques are not intended to lead one to the conclusion that Islam is a religion which should be confined to the mosques, as many people imagine. Nonetheless, the mosque should be at the heart of the Muslim community, and the

role of those in authority of the mosques is vital here.

They are the ones mainly responsible for making the mosque a welcome refuge for the Muslims, rather than an arena for politics and power struggles as many seem to have become these days.

### 4. Two men who love each other for Allah's sake, meeting for that and parting upon that

Having mutual love for the

sake of Allah is one of the great doors leading to the good of the Hereafter and a cause of tasting the sweetness of faith in this world. Loving one another for Allah's sake means one loves another only because of his deen (religion).

So it does not matter what the person looks like, what he wears, how rich or poor he is, where he comes from, or what the color of his skin is—perhaps you dislike everything about him, but you love him for his iman: this is loving for Allah's sake. "Allah, the Mighty and Magnificent says: "Those who have mutual love for the sake of My Glory will have pillars of light and will be envied by the Prophets and martyrs." (Al-Tirmidhi and Ahmad)

### 5. A man who is tempted by a woman of beauty and position but he says, "I fear Allah"

The same is for the woman tempted by a man and she says, "I fear Allah."

This world is full of temptations which lead to burning in the Fire and amongst them is that which comes from women.

Many a man has led his soul into destruction on account of the lure of a woman, which is why the Prophet (peace be upon him) said that the most important provision which we need to protect ourselves from this and all other temptations in life is the fear (khawf) of Allah.

This fact is alluded to in the following Quranic verse: "But as for he who feared the position of his Lord and prevented the soul from [unlawful] inclination." (Surah An-Nazi'at 79:40)

## From the Holy Qur'an Ayah of the week

Theme: Integrity.

"O you who have believed, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice."

Surah Al-Ahzab (33:70)



## Reasons why we are still single

By Mohamad Bailouni

Why are we still single? Are we going through a marriage crisis? Is love an essential ingredient before marriage?

Many of us have grown thick skins toward the traditional arranged marriage that once used to be the ideal and most successful way for many generations before us. Now, the marriage game rules have changed due to the strong desires for love and romance, creating a beautiful love story, and marrying the love of our lives.

This has driven many of us to take different approaches in our search to find the right one. As a result of our lifestyle, western cultural influences, and taking a different approach to marriage, these changes have brought new challenges to the community that many of us don't understand and underestimate while being unsure of how to react to them. Even some of our community leaders are having a hard time grasping the situation. Why are we still single? We often ask ourselves this due to the pressure placed on us by others.

Others are our own families, friends, and the community we live in. There are many reasons why we're still single. Here are some:

### Lack of Connection with the Muslim Community

If I were to ask you, how many Muslim families do you know in your community? The answer to this question usually ranges between 3-12 families, depending on your location. Out of all the Muslim families we know, how many potential options for marriage do we have?

The answer is usually none to one, without considering compatibility, attractiveness, or the chances of it actually working out. Now, how can we find our future significant other if we're not well connected in our Muslim communities?

Many people give up trying and consider marrying someone from overseas. But is this a true and real solution? This solution works, but mainly for men.

Women are being left out, with barely any men to consider for marriage. As a result of this, we're seeing the rise of single Muslim women in their late 20s, 30s, and 40s. They are very professional, great marriage material, and very mature and capable of handling marriage responsibilities. Due to this disconnection between Muslims, new ideas like Muslim dating websites and single Muslim social groups have emerged to rescue us from this hole we have sunk into.

Yet, the idea of using online dating to find our future significant other has been considered the most viable option by many.

Still, a good portion of us won't give it a chance due to the bad reputation we believe it holds.

Personally, I haven't used online dating yet. But I've been part of a social group

for single Muslims called "Single Muslims of California" on Facebook. I've had a great experience connecting with other single Muslims in town and out of town as well. Nonetheless, I believe any tool available to help us connect better and bring the Muslim communities together should be considered a valid and viable tool to use as long as it doesn't take us away from our deen (faith).

### Paradox of Choice Among Unrealistic Expectations:

The limited options some single Muslims face when searching for their future partner due to the lack of connection within the Muslim community are real.

But the opposite side of this equation is also real. Western industrial societies have introduced us to the idea that the more choices we have, the more freedom and liberation we'll have. We are bombarded with dozens of choices on a daily basis, from which salad dressing to choose in the supermarket to which partner to spend our future with. When we are exposed to a high number of choices of prospective future partners along with their qualities, values, and characteristics, especially via online dating and in cities with a larger Muslim population, our expectations and standards automatically rise to the roof.

### Too High Expectations in Societies

Before I get into this, let's take a look at and analyze the previous generations before us.

We can notice how much easier they've had it when searching for and choosing their life partner for marriage. Things used to be much simpler.

Once they were genuinely attracted to the person of interest, shared some similar values, liked the level of their deen (faith), and got along with them just fine, the two would be committed to engagement, then marriage, while they were committed to working with each other when problems, issues, and conflicts arose.

Nowadays, when the topic of marriage is brought up, we start to ask ourselves many questions.

We get very specific about what exactly we are looking for:

Do We Choose...

- love before marriage?

- someone from the same origin as we are who speaks the same language and shares the same culture?

- an introvert or an extrovert?

- someone at the same level of

intelligence as we are, or someone less intelligent to feel more superior?

- an educated and career-oriented person or someone who wants to stay at home and raise the kids?

- someone who's more attractive and less compatible, or the other way around?

And this goes on and on, escalating our standards and expectations of our future partner to perfectly match the image we have for them in our heads.

We really want to get this decision right, if it is for all eternity. We want to choose the perfect partner for us who's on our level in life. Due to the high number of choices we have to choose from, many of us automatically put the idea of marriage on hold and decide to pursue further education and careers because it becomes overwhelming. As a result, we are starting to see the number of older single Muslims who are still not married rise.

The problem doesn't even stop here.

When we happen to meet someone we're interested in but see him/her as good but not perfect, we subconsciously start to become more controlling over what they can and can't do, what they should and shouldn't do, and who they can or can't be, because until they fit into that image, we are not satisfied and happy with our decision to choose them.

In doing this, we swipe left on them, just like on the online dating app Tinder.

## Light of Knowledge Quiz

Which Surah in the Qur'an contains two sajdahs?

A Surah An-Nahl

B Surah An-Najm

C Surah Al-Hajj

Answer to be revealed in the next issue

Last week's answer was choice A: "42"

## What is your highest purpose in life?

By Kaighla Um Dayo

Our religion has a higher purpose than just avoiding Hellfire and attaining Jannah. These rules of halaal and haraam are not empty rules; they serve a higher purpose. "We're not just here to obey Allah and save our skins," said Sheikh Faraz Rabbani. "There is a higher purpose to religion." But what could be a higher purpose than avoiding Hellfire and attaining Jannah? The reason we were created is to seek nearness to Allah, right here, right now, and for all eternity.

### Ihsan: Awareness of Allah's Constant Watchfulness

This idea is not new. It was mentioned in the hadith Jibreel by Prophet Muhammad. "What is ihsan?" Angel Jibreel asked Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). "That you worship Allah as though you are looking at Him..." He (peace and blessings be upon him) replied. Brothers and sisters: if we are not at that level, if we are not worshipping Allah as if He were in front of us, we are missing out on our highest purpose in this life.

We must strive to make ihsan a living, breathing art. We must live, submit, and pray with total consciousness of Allah.

What is this life? Who determines the Ultimate Reality? Who is more real? Us or Allah? Our reality is a dependent reality. We are only in existence because Allah created us. We should not settle for empty rules and robot-like prayers, checking them off our to-do list. Unless and until we are living in a near-constant state of awareness of Allah's unwavering watchfulness of us, we are not living to our full potential.

That is the purpose of the religion. That's what we should strive for.

That is the driving reward we should seek beyond the pearls and virgins and riches of Jannah.

### Ihsan through Self-Awareness and Time Management

Allah says: "We will show them Our signs in the universe and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that this Quran is the truth. Is it not enough that your Lord is a Witness over all things?" (Surah Fussilat 41:53) Allah makes Himself truly known to us only when we are known to ourselves. He presents signs of Himself both within us and around us. Spirituality, then, requires self-awareness and this requires higher time-management. This is the ultimate wis-

dom behind Surat al-Asr: In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful: Time is witness that, surely, mankind suffers loss, except for those of faith, who do good, and become a model of truthful living, and together practice patience and constancy (Al-Asr, Translated by Kabir Helminski). Rather than trying to fit prayer into our lives as an afterthought, we must schedule our lives around the prayers. If we have any hope of meeting our goals, we must actively plan, and we must be vigilant of ourselves in ensuring we keep to those plans.

### True Love for Allah

How can we claim to love Allah when we don't think of Him, don't draw near to Him, and don't strive to seek that level of nearness that we can feel Him always beholding us? Watchfulness, or muraqabah, means to watch over your inner states and actions, knowing very well that Allah always sees you. Imam Al-Ghazali said:

"The reality of watchfulness is awareness of the One who is Watchful—Allah—and then directing one's concern to Him."

Through that, you're watchful over your actions because of your awareness that Allah is watching you.

This reality, that Allah is always, always watching, should not create fear, but should create gratitude, hope and love, and it should translate into actions.

### The Steps Toward Inner-Awareness and Ihsan

The first step toward developing ihsan is in being careful and conscious of Allah so you don't disobey Him, and making sure you obey Him. Then, because you know that Allah is watching, you strive to avoid whatever displeases Him, and you strive to please Him. Finally, and this could take a lifetime:

you constantly strive to remain conscious of Allah and strive to avoid heedlessness of Him. Constant consciousness of Allah is a gift and a reward for self-awareness and dedicated self-watchfulness. Consider the consequences of your thoughts. Thoughts become intentions and intentions become actions. Ask yourself, "If I implemented this thought, would it preserve and promote guidance with gratitude for the sake of Allah?" If not, abandon the thought. This will prevent the intention from forming in your heart, which will prevent you from acting on it. However, be real. You must cultivate this awareness of Allah in a sustainable way. Don't let yourself get out of hand.

### Excess is from Shaitan

Excessiveness is not sustainable.

It is easy to feel like I have excelled in this or that, this means that I must always excel in this or that. Or, we can easily assume that success in one area this means that I must always excel in everything.

This can lead us to avoid excelling in anything for fear that we would then be expected by Allah to excel in all things!

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

Take up good deeds only as much as you are able, for the best deeds are those done regularly even if they are few. (Sunan Ibn Majah 4240)

If an action is not sustainable, it is against the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad.

When it comes to attaining the ultimate nearness to Allah, the constant awareness of His watchful gaze, remember: consistency is the key.

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

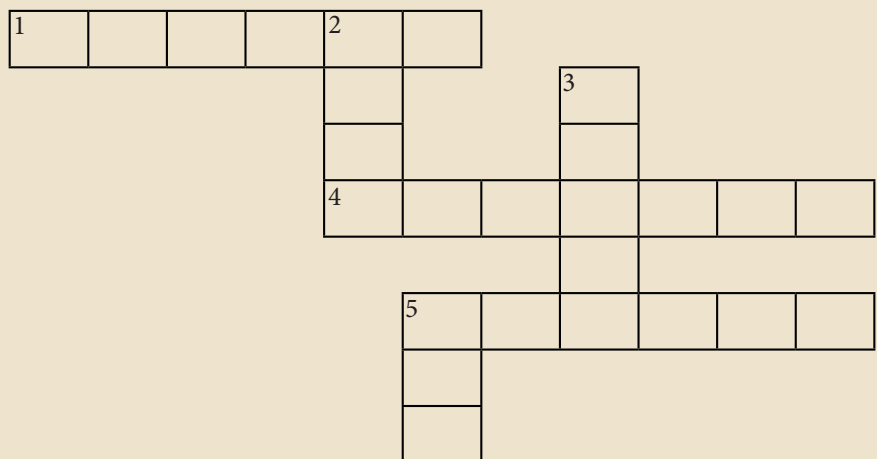
### LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

#### ACROSS

1. Thalj
3. Kawthar
6. Al- Badee

#### Down

2. Jibreel
4. Kufa
5. Seven



#### ACROSS

1. The prophet explicitly mentioned by name only once in the Qur'an.
4. The Name of Allah meaning "The Guide"
5. The Surah whose name means "Small Kindnesses"

#### DOWN

2. The only obligatory (fardh) daily prayer that has no Sunnah prayer before it.
3. Arabic term for Cloud.
5. The only obligatory (fardh) daily prayer that has no Sunnah prayer after it.

## Relief for Pensioners as government to digitize management system starting May

Thousands of retirees are set to receive significant relief starting May 1 as the government implements a new digital management system designed to eliminate years of chronic payment delays and financial hardship.

Government Spokesperson Isaac Mwaura announced that the transition will fully automate pension processing, effectively replacing the manual procedures that have long been blamed for late disbursements and widespread frustration among senior citizens. For decades, the reliance on physical records has compromised the welfare of those who have completed their years of service. Many retirees have been forced to wait months or even years for their funds because of missing files, lengthy verification protocols, and general bureaucratic inefficiency. The human impact of these delays has

been severe, leaving many elderly individuals financially vulnerable and forcing them to depend on family members for basic necessities such as food and medical care. Advocacy groups have frequently highlighted the plight of pensioners who are compelled to travel long distances and endure grueling hours in queues simply to track their pending dues.

The new platform aims to resolve these issues by automating registration, verification, and payment. By centralizing records and removing the need for physical paperwork, the government intends to prevent the loss of critical documents that has historically obstructed the payment process. During the official announcement, Isaac Mwaura emphasized the government's obligation to reform the sector, stating, "The system will enhance efficiency, accountability, and service delivery while ensuring

pensioners access their dues without unnecessary delays."

He further noted that the modernization of the pension office is a critical step in restoring the dignity of retirees and ensuring the state honors its financial commitments promptly. However, despite the benefits of modernization, concerns persist regarding the accessibility of the new system. Experts warn that a significant portion of the elderly population, particularly those residing in rural areas with limited internet access or low technical literacy, may struggle to navigate a digital platform.

To mitigate these challenges, the government has pledged to establish support mechanisms to assist retirees during the transition period. If successfully managed, the May 1 rollout could mark a definitive end to the systemic failures that have defined pension administration for years.

## Saudi Arabia introduces mandatory Nusuk ID for 2026 Hajj Pilgrims

Saudi authorities have unveiled a comprehensive digital platform, Nusuk platform, aimed at regulating pilgrim entry and curbing the presence of unauthorised individuals in the holy city of Makkah ahead of the upcoming Hajj season (1447 AH).

In a statement, the Saudi Ministry of Hajj and Umrah confirmed the expansion of the Nusuk system alongside the implementation of stricter regulatory measures to enhance the management of pilgrims. Central to the new measures is the mandatory Nusuk ID Card, which will be required for all pilgrims seeking entry into Makkah, the Masjid al-Haram, and other designated Holy Sites.

Authorities emphasised that no individual will be allowed access without presenting the card. Additionally, pilgrims will not be permitted to perform Hajj in 1447 AH unless they have obtained prior authorisation through the Nusuk system, reinforcing efforts to streamline and monitor the

pilgrimage process.

The Nusuk ID Card will serve as a key document throughout the Hajj journey, enabling pilgrims to pass through checkpoints and access facilities in key locations, including Madinah, Mina, Arafat, and Muzdalifah.

Officials noted that the platform is designed to enhance safety, security, and the orderly movement of millions of pilgrims arriving from across the globe.

Beyond access control, the Nusuk ID Card will also enable pilgrims to benefit from a range of services during Hajj.

Authorities have directed that the card must be carried at all times throughout the pilgrimage period. Pilgrims will receive the Nusuk ID Card in two formats: a physical card issued through their designated ser-



vice provider, and a digital version accessible via the Nusuk App and Tawakkalna App.

Those who have not yet received their cards have been urged to contact their service providers immediately to avoid disruptions to their Hajj plans.

## Marriage Prohibitions in Islam

By Sheikh Abdirahman D. Guhad

Whom can you NOT marry in Islam? Which marriage is prohibited for a Muslim? It's all set out in the Quran, and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). They are in 3 broad categories:

### Prohibitions in Kinship / Blood Relation

1. The mother
2. The daughter
3. The sister
4. The paternal aunt (your father's sister)
5. The maternal aunt (your mother's sister)
6. The niece through brother (your brother's daughter)
7. The niece through sister (your sister's daughter)

### Prohibitions by Breastfeeding / Nursing/ Foster mothers

["Suckling makes women unlawful (for marriage), the same way birth makes it unlawful." Sahih Muslim]

8. Your mother, through breastfeeding (the woman who nursed you)
9. Your daughter, through breastfeeding (a woman nursed by your wife)
10. Your sister, through breastfeeding (a woman who nursed with you)

### Prohibitions by Marriage Relations

11. Your mother-in-law (your wife's mother)
12. Your sister-in-law (your wife's sister)
13. Your stepdaughter under your guardianship (from a wife previously married)
14. The stepmother (father's wife)

### 15. The son's wife (daughter-in-law) Other Prohibitions

16. The Mushrikah (polytheist woman)
17. The married woman ( a woman already married to another man)
18. A fifth wife (when already married to four)
19. The divorced woman still in her waiting period ('idda)
20. A woman you divorced with an irrevocable 3rd divorce (baynūna kubrā)
21. A woman in pilgrimage (Hajj) or 'Umrah state (Ihrām)

All Others are lawful.

By Sheikh Abdirahman D. Guhad,  
Imam, Masjid Quba, South C  
Nairobi

## Umoja Mosque to host 2nd reverts conference on April 19

Umoja One Mosque in Nairobi is set to host the second edition of the Reverts Convention on Sunday, April 19, 2026.

The event, organized by the community-based organization Noor Al-Umma Da'awa, will take place at the Umoja One Mosque Hall and is expected to draw participants from across the city and beyond. The convention, which is open to both Muslims and non-Muslims, will feature

a lineup of prominent Islamic scholars addressing a range of topical issues. Among those scheduled to speak are Sheikh Ruweis Ahmad, Sheikh Idd Yusuf, Sheikh Hussein Mwinyi, Sheikh Osman Ringo, Sheikh Musa Anis and Sheikh Abubakar Issa, among others. Speaking to the Friday Bulletin, Sheikh Marzuk Shekale said the convention aims to strengthen Islamic faith among reverts while providing a platform

for networking and sharing experiences. He added that the conference, themed "Strengthening Faith and Overcoming Challenges," will also highlight Islamic values and promote a deeper understanding of Islam, particularly among new converts. Organizers say the annual gathering continues to grow in significance, offering guidance, mentorship, and community support to individuals embracing Islam.

## 'Dying of thirst': Inside Gaza's al-Mawasi water crisis

Nawaf al-Akhras begins his day by carrying bottles and jerrycans with his eldest son to a water filling station about one and a half kilometres (0.9 miles) from his tent in southern Gaza's al-Mawasi camp. Upon arrival, they are met with thousands of people crowding the station, waiting under the scorching sun for their turn.

Nawaf, a father of seven who was displaced from Rafah to al-Mawasi two years ago, describes the daily round trip, which can stretch for five hours or more, as a torment for his family, and for other Palestinians displaced as a result of Israel's genocidal war on Gaza.

"My entire day with my son is spent waiting in line to fill water, with people coming from very far distances," Nawaf tells Al Jazeera. "It's daily suffering, just so that we can drink water."

Water shortages have recently worsened in several areas across Gaza, including al-Mawasi, after Eta – a company that provided clean and potable water, serving displaced people across the Strip from Rafah to Beit Hanoun – stopped operating due to what it said was a lack of funding.

"Water trucks used to come almost daily near the tents and eased the burden of collecting and transporting water," Nawaf says.

"But for several weeks now, these trucks have stopped, and our struggle to obtain drinking water has doubled."

Nawaf explains that he can barely fill two small jerrycans due to the overwhelming crowd and intense competition among displaced people to access the filling stations.

"We died from hunger, and now they are testing death by thirst on us... this is what's left," Nawaf says.

"Two jerrycans are barely enough for my family's daily drinking needs, forcing us to ration even drinking water,"

Nawaf and other displaced residents fear that the water crisis will worsen further, especially with the arrival of summer and rising temperatures.

"I won't even begin to describe the suffering of summer in the tents... It feels like we are literally being roasted in a frying pan... There is no roof to protect us or

our children's bodies... and now, with the lack of drinking water, things will definitely be catastrophic," Nawaf says.

Severe water shortages in al-Mawasi have pushed residents to organise protests. Hundreds of displaced people took part in one such protest on Saturday, April 5, demanding an end to the worsening drinking water crisis amid harsh humanitarian conditions, as Israel continues to prevent sufficient aid from entering Gaza.

They have called on international institutions and local authorities to intervene to prevent further deterioration, stressing the need for an immediate response to save the lives of thousands of children and elderly people, and adding that access to clean water is a fundamental human right. Salah al-Koush, a resident of al-Mawasi and one of the protest participants, told Al Jazeera that the struggle to find water has become a daily nightmare since water trucks that once provided limited supplies stopped operating.

He added that his displaced family of 13 has been forced to buy "utility water" with a high salt content for drinking, cooking, and daily use, even though it is typically not considered safe to drink.

"The current crisis has forced many displaced people here to use contaminated water," he said.

"I fear for my four children; every day, there are cases in the camp of children getting sick due to water contamination."

Al-Mawasi, which lies in the west of Khan Younis, has transformed from a sparsely populated agricultural strip into one of the most densely populated areas during the war.

Having previously only hosted a few thousand residents, hundreds of thousands of displaced people flowed into al-Mawasi following its designation as a so-called "safe zone" by Israeli forces during Israel's genocidal war. Despite also coming under attack and lacking the basic infrastructure to accommodate large numbers, tens of thousands of Palestinians displaced from other parts of Gaza moved there, living in overcrowded tents. The population surge has intensified a water crisis that the United Nations has described as catastrophic.

According to UN human rights experts, the majority of Gaza's population does not receive enough drinking water. The crisis "was not only predictable; it was predicted", the experts said.

UN officials have also noted that "people are receiving far less water than they need", leading to the spread of waterborne diseases amid rising temperatures and deteriorating sanitation conditions.

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## Condemnation as Israel enacts death penalty law targeting Palestinians

Israel has passed a law introducing the death penalty for individuals convicted of fatal acts of terrorism, a legislative shift that has triggered immediate diplomatic friction and raised significant human rights concerns.

Approved on March 30, 2026, the law authorizes capital punishment by hanging for those convicted of attacks that result in death and are deemed to threaten the State of Israel. The move has drawn sharp criticism from international bodies and Palestinian officials who warn the law is designed to target Palestinians almost exclusively. The core of the international outcry lies in the jurisdictional design of the new legislation. The law mandates the death penalty for convictions within military courts—which oversee Palestinians in the occupied West Bank—while the language used for civil courts effective-

ly excludes Israeli citizens from the same punishment. Human rights organizations, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, argue this formalizes a "two-tiered" justice system. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk stated the law is "patently inconsistent" with international obligations, noting that its application to residents of an occupied territory could constitute a war crime. From a human rights perspective, experts warn that the law violates the fundamental right to life and lacks essential due process protections. The legislation requires executions to be carried out within 90 days of a final ruling and provides no opportunity for pardon or commutation, both of which are required under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Israel ratified in 1991.

UN experts further cautioned that a death

penalty regime which is discriminatory in "purpose, design, or effect" is inherently arbitrary and irreconcilable with the prohibition of torture and cruel punishment. The diplomatic fallout has been widespread. A coalition of eight nations, including Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Pakistan, issued a joint statement condemning the measure as an entrenchment of apartheid. Meanwhile, the European Union reminded Israel of its human rights obligations under existing association agreements. Israeli officials, led by National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, have defended the law as a sign of "national pride". However, the law has not yet taken effect and is pending review by Israel's Supreme Court after legal petitions were filed challenging its constitutionality.

## Bungoma Jamia Mosque construction reaches key milestone

The construction of the Bungoma Jamia Mosque has reached a significant milestone, marking a moment of pride, unity, and gratitude for the Muslim community.

The new multi-storeyed mosque, set to become an architectural landmark in the town, will replace the original structure built in 1957. The historic mosque, located near the Wamunyinyi building, was demolished to pave the way for a modern facility that can accommodate the growing number of worshippers. Now at approximately 20 percent completion, the project—being undertaken under the supervision of the Bungoma Muslim Association—has successfully concluded its foundation phase, widely regarded as the most demanding and critical stage of construction.

The project has now progressed to the next phase, which includes the erection of pillars and preparations for the first floor. As the structure begins to take shape, it is expected to enhance access to a more spacious and modern place of worship for the local Muslim community.

Once completed, the mosque will have a capacity of 6,700 worshippers and is expected to serve residents of Bungoma and surround-



An architect impression of the proposed Bungoma Jamia Mosque and Islamic centre.

ing areas. Planned amenities include separate prayer halls for men and women, ablution facilities, and other essential services.

Leaders and stakeholders have expressed optimism that the mosque will serve not only as a place of worship but also as a centre for education and community development for generations to come.



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