

# THE FRIDAY BULLETIN

The Weekly Muslim Update



A Publication of the Jama Mosque Nairobi

## Pilgrims told to observe discipline during Hajj Journey

**T**he Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) has called on intending pilgrims to uphold discipline, manage expectations, and ensure adequate preparation ahead of the annual Hajj pilgrimage.

Speaking during a Hajj orientation workshop held at Memon Mosque, SUPKEM Chairman Hassan Ole Naado emphasized the importance of early planning, adherence to guidelines, and cooperation among stakeholders to guarantee a smooth pilgrimage experience. The workshop brought together prospective pilgrims, Hajj agents, and religious leaders to address key logistical, spiritual, and administrative aspects of the journey.

Naado urged pilgrims to strictly follow procedures set by both Kenyan authorities and host country regulations, noting that discipline remains critical throughout the pilgrimage process. "Hajj is not just a journey; it requires discipline, patience, and full preparedness from every pilgrim," he said.

He cautioned that logistical challenges are inevitable given the scale of the pilgrimage, urging attendees to remain realistic about the conditions they will encounter and not to expect the same level of comfort and services available at home.

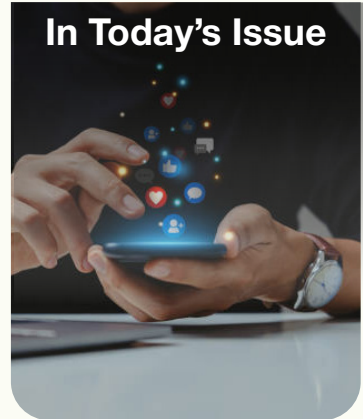
The SUPKEM chairman also underscored the need for coordination between travel agencies and regulators, warning that lapses in

planning could affect the welfare of pilgrims while abroad. The session focused on educating attendees on travel documentation, accommodation arrangements, health requirements, and the performance of Hajj rituals in accordance with Islamic teachings. Organizers also addressed challenges experienced in previous years, including delays, miscommunication, and logistical inefficiencies. Officials noted that such workshops play a crucial role in equipping pilgrims with the knowledge needed to navigate the complex pilgrimage process, particularly as demand for Hajj slots continues to grow.

SUPKEM has in recent months intensified its engagement with Hajj operators through consultative forums and training sessions aimed at improving service delivery and ensuring compliance with established standards. Participants welcomed the initiative, describing it as timely in preparing pilgrims for one of the most significant acts of worship in Islam.

The Hajj pilgrimage, one of the five pillars of Islam, attracts millions of Muslims globally each year, requiring extensive planning and coordination.

The Memon Mosque workshop forms part of broader efforts by SUPKEM and its partners to streamline Hajj operations and enhance the overall experience for Kenyan pilgrims.



### In Today's Issue

**1 The Sacred Months**  
The sacred months hold a great status with Allah. They are among the most beloved times to Him. Therefore, He chose and honored them above others

**2 Parents advised to curb excessive social media use among children**  
Eldoret-based educationist Ibrahim Sora expressed concern that many young people spend most of their time on the internet where they freely access content that is detrimental to their moral, physical, and spiritual wellbeing.

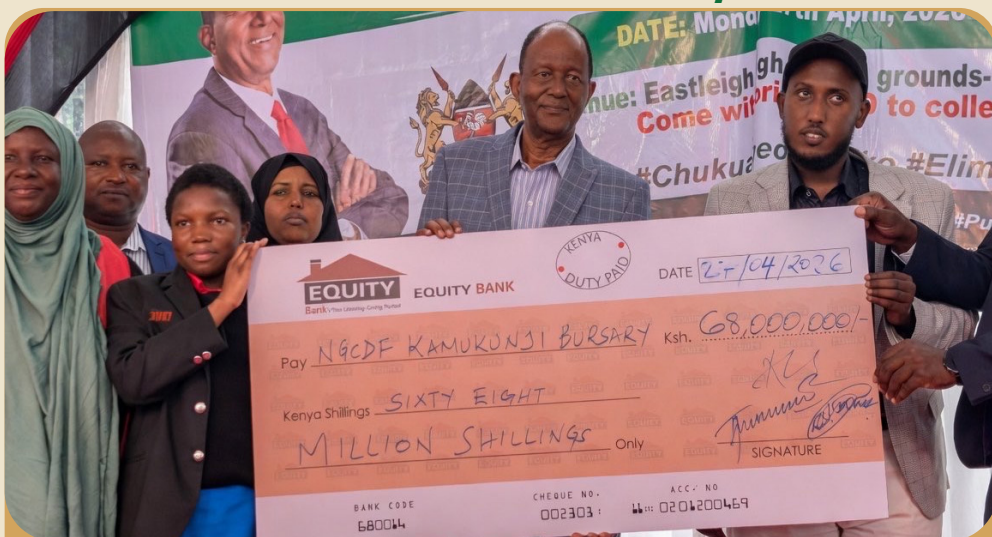
**3 Discover, Learn, and Play – The Islamic Way!**  
Boost your Islamic knowledge with our weekly Crossword Puzzle, Knowledge Quiz, and Ayah of the Week. Don't miss your copy!

### CONTACTS

P.O Box 100786 00101 Nairobi  
Tel: 2243504/5

email: [fridaybulletin@jamosque.co.ke](mailto:fridaybulletin@jamosque.co.ke)

## Over 6,000 Students benefit as Kamukunji MP disburses Sh68m bursary



Kamukunji MP, Yusuf Hassan (SECOND RIGHT) and Eastleigh North MCA, Dabar Ahmedqadar (RIGHT) presents the Bursary Dummy Cheque during the issuance exercise held at Eastleigh High School recently. The Kamukunji NG-CDF committee awarded bursaries to 8,283 students, committing a total of Sh 67.2 million. Full Story on Page 2

Scan Here to Give Us Your Feedback!



## Over 6,000 Students benefit as Kamukunji MP disburses Sh68m bursary

More than 6,600 students in Kamukunji Constituency have received a major financial boost following the disbursement of bursaries worth Sh68 million to support access to education.

The funds, issued through the National Government Constituencies Development Fund (NG-CDF), were distributed during a ceremony held at Eastleigh High School and presided over by Kamukunji Member of Parliament Yusuf Hassan.

The programme targets 6,683 learners across secondary schools, colleges and universities, many of whom face financial challenges in continuing with their studies.

Addressing attendees, Mr Hassan underscored the importance of equal access to education, saying no child should be denied learning opportunities because of poverty.

"This bursary is a lifeline for many stu-

dents in our community. Education should not be a privilege but a right for everyone," he said, while urging beneficiaries to remain focused on their academic goals.

The legislator also recognised the role played by parents and guardians in supporting learners despite economic hardships.

Reflecting on his upbringing, he said: "I remember how my late mother struggled to ensure we received an education. Her efforts shaped my journey, and I remain deeply grateful."

According to Mr Hassan, Kamukunji Constituency has invested heavily in education over the years. Since his election in 2011, more than 73,000 students have benefited from bursary allocations amounting to over Sh533 million.

The constituency has also witnessed the construction of two secondary schools, a technical training college and several ICT

centres aimed at improving access to learning and digital skills.

Looking ahead, the MP announced plans to launch a major digital community hub in Kiambu next month, which he described as the largest of its kind in the country. The centre is expected to accommodate 200 computers and enhance digital access for young people in the area.

Parents and guardians welcomed the bursary initiative, describing it as timely relief amid rising education costs.

"This bursary means my son can continue learning without the fear of being sent home for fees," said Martha Adhiambo, whose son is among the beneficiaries.

The event was attended by area MCA Dabar Ahmedqadar Mohamed, Sub-County Deputy County Commissioner Omar Ali, education stakeholders led by Sub-County Education Director Luley Abdullahi, and beneficiaries.

## Parents advised to monitor children's social media use

Parents have been urged to closely monitor the social media activity of school-going children to shield them from harmful online content and dangerous digital interactions. Speaking to The Friday Bulletin, Eldoret-based educationist Ibrahim Sora raised concern over the increasing amount of time young people spend online, exposing them to content that could negatively affect their moral, physical and spiritual wellbeing. "It is unfortunate that some parents allow their children unrestricted access to social media, exposing them to societal ills such as pornography, online dating, drug abuse, and even prostitution," Ibrahim Sora lamented.

Citing research findings, Sora noted that many youths have become addicted to social media platforms and are constantly exposed to unregulated and inappropriate material. He particularly singled out TikTok, saying it has "massive negative

effects on the masses" due to inadequate content regulation. Sora argued that social media has contributed to moral decadence among children and youth, especially in situations where there is little or no supervision over the kind of content they access online. He warned that digital tools meant to enhance learning are increasingly becoming gateways to harmful content, online exploitation and risky interactions. The educationist observed that behind closed doors, some students are being exposed to inappropriate material, manipulated by online predators and, in extreme cases, lured into physical danger. He stated that the issue goes beyond technology and should be treated as a parenting, societal and policy challenge. Sora emphasized that parents have a responsibility to ensure their children do not deviate from Islamic teachings and instead grow into responsible citizens.

He urged parents to protect their children

from exposure to inappropriate online material by consistently monitoring the content they access through smartphones and other internet-enabled devices. According to Sora, while the digital space offers valuable learning opportunities, parents must remain vigilant about the kind of content their children consume online.

"I urge parents to pay closer attention to how much time children spend on phones, tablets and social media, and whether that screen time is replacing real-world connection." He further encouraged parents to be keen on the kind of content their children watch online and the company they keep, while instilling Islamic values and a strong educational foundation to nurture them into responsible future leaders. "The first line of defence against these vices lies with the parents. They must know what their children watch, whether through movies or smartphones," he said.

## Organization to champion interests of Muslim traders launched

An organization aimed to provide a formal platform to champion interests and concerns of Muslim Small and Medium Enterprises traders has been formed.

Under the umbrella of Kenya Muslim Small and Medium Enterprises Association (KMSMEA), the organization brings together Muslim traders and entrepreneurs to foster and promote economic empowerment and community development focusing on networking and sustainable growth.

Officials of the association are Chairman-Sheikh Khalfan Hassan, Secretary-General Sheikh Ibrahim Muhammad Kazee and Treasurer-Sheikh Sudi Mwachozi.

Among its goals, the association seeks to unite traders, provide access to Shari'ah-compliant finance, and improve

the economic standing of small business owners, promote closer cooperation between the Small and Medium Enterprises traders and financial institutions.

Speaking to the Friday Bulletin on the launch, Secretary-General of KMSMEA Sheikh Ibrahim Muhammad Kazee described the launch as a significant milestone, providing the Muslim entrepreneurs with a formal platform to address their collective interests and concerns.

Sheikh Ibrahim commended Muslim traders for coming up with the association and exuded confidence that it will go a long way in contributing to the empowerment and development in the community as well champion the interests and aspirations of Muslim traders and entrepreneurs.

He pointed out that the association's estab-

lishment reflects a commitment to fostering unity and collaboration among Muslim entrepreneurs and contributing to the economic development of the country as well as enhance on self-employment. "More entrepreneurs are moving away from building their businesses in isolation and instead are stepping into spaces where growth feels supported. This initiative is a testament to our community's strength and determination. Together, we will navigate the path towards prosperity and success," Sheikh Ibrahim said. Sheikh Ibrahim noted the mission of the association is to empower Muslim SMEs through Shariah-compliant finance and also to be leading ethical enterprise ecosystem where Muslim SMEs drive inclusive prosperity while upholding Islamic values.

## The Sacred Months

By Sheikh Jamaludin Osman

Indeed, part of fully glorifying Allah the Exalted is to honor what He has glorified of rituals and acts of worship, and to honor what He has magnified of places, times, months, and days. Among this is the honoring of the sacred months which Allah glorified and mentioned in more than one place in His Noble Book. Before proceeding, we will define these months and mention something of their status and characteristics in the Holy Quran.

The sacred months are the four months that Allah glorified. The Holy Quran beautifully mentions them in His saying:

"Indeed, the number of months with Allah is twelve [lunar] months in the register of Allah [from] the day He created the heavens and the earth; of these, four are sacred..."

(Surah At-Tawbah 9:36)

These months are: Rajab, Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hijjah, and the month of Allah, Al-Muharram, as detailed and clarified by the Prophetic Sunnah. In the hadith of Abubakar (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet (peace be upon him) delivered a sermon during the Farewell Pilgrimage and said:

"Time has completed its cycle and is as it was on the day Allah created the heavens and the earth. The year is twelve months, of which four are sacred: three consecutive months, Dhul-Qa'dah, Dhul-Hijjah, and Al-Muharram, and Rajab of Mudar, which comes between Jumada and Sha'ban."

Scholars have strived to understand the wisdom behind the glorification of these months and the secret of their arrangement. Imam Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "The sacred months are four: three consecutive and one single. This is for the rites of Hajj and Umrah. The month before the Hajj months, Dhul-Qa'dah, was made sacred because they would refrain from fighting. Dhul-Hijjah was made sacred because they perform Hajj and occupy themselves with the rites. The month after it, Al-Muharram, was made sacred so they could return safely to the farthest parts of their lands. Rajab was made sacred in the middle of the year for visiting the House (Kaaba) and performing Umrah for those coming from the farthest parts of the Arabian Peninsula, so they could visit and return safely to their homes."

Imam Ibn Ashur mentions that the sanctification of these months was legislated by Allah for His servants since the time of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) for the establishment of Hajj. He (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "The sanctification of these four months is from what Allah legislated for Ibrahim (peace be upon him) for the benefit of people and the establishment of Hajj, as Allah said:

"Allah has made the Kaaba, the Sacred House, a standing (foundation) for the

people, and (also) the sacred month..." (Surah Al-Ma'idah 5:97)

**The Status of the Sacred Months:**

The sacred months hold a great status with Allah. They are among the most beloved times to Him. Therefore, He chose and honored them above others. Suhayl ibn Abi Salih narrated from his father from Ka'b that he said: "Allah chose time, and the most beloved time to Allah are the sacred months. The most beloved of the sacred months to Allah is Dhul-Hijjah, and the most beloved part of Dhul-Hijjah to Allah are the first ten days."

Honoring these months is part of honoring the rituals of Allah and an indication of piety towards Him. Allah said:

"That [is so]. And whoever honors the symbols of Allah - indeed, it is from the piety of hearts."

(Surah Al-Hajj 22:32)

and

"That [has been commanded], and whoever honors the sacred ordinances of Allah - it is best for him in the sight of his Lord..."

(Surah Al-Hajj 22:30)

Qatadah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "Allah chose select things from His creation. He chose messengers from the angels and from mankind. He chose His remembrance from speech. He chose mosques from the earth. He chose Ramadan and the sacred months from the months, Friday from the days, and Laylat al-Qadr from the nights. So honor what Allah has honored, for things are only honored by what Allah honors them with, according to people of understanding and intellect."

The Arabs in the pre-Islamic era used to honor these months and prohibit fighting during them. If a man met his father's killer during these months, he would not harm him, due to the sanctity and status these months held for them. Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "A man would meet his father's killer during the sacred months and would not stretch his hand towards him."

Rather, they would postpone or advance some of them if they wanted to fight or raid others, making them permissible one year and sacred another, due to their reluctance to shed blood during them. They thought this trick, suggested by their devils, absolved them from fighting in the sacred months. But they were heedless or pretended to be heedless that by

this action, they made permissible what Allah had forbidden and forbade what Allah had made permissible. Allah condemned this practice of theirs, saying:

"Indeed, the postponing [of a sacred month] is an increase in disbelief by which those who have disbelieved are led astray. They make it lawful one year and forbid it another year to conform to the number made sacred by Allah and [thus] make lawful what Allah has forbidden. Made pleasing to them is the evil of their deeds; and Allah does not guide the disbelieving people."

(Surah At-Tawbah 9:37)

Ibn Ashur (may Allah have mercy on him) said in interpreting this verse: "An-Nasi' (postponement) among the Arabs was a delay they would apply to a sacred month, making it profane, and they would sanctify another month from the profane months in its place that year." How ugly was their deed and how severe their crime! Therefore, a believer must adhere to the limits set by Allah, obey His commands, and be extremely cautious not to follow his whims or try to circumvent Allah's commands, laws, and rulings, as those pre-Islamic people did.

"Scholars differed regarding which of the sacred months is best. Al-Hasan and others said: The best of them is the month of Allah, Al-Muharram. A group of later scholars preferred it. Wahb ibn Jarir narrated from Qurrah ibn Khalid from Al-Hasan that he said: 'Allah opened the year with a sacred month and concluded it with a sacred month. There is no month in the year after Ramadan that is greater with Allah than Al-Muharram. It was called the silent month of Allah due to the severity of its sanctity.'"

(Source: *Tafsir Center For Qur'anic Studies*)

From the Holy Qur'an  
Ayah of the week

Theme: Belief

"Unquestionably, by  
the remembrance  
of Allah hearts are  
assured....."

Surah Ar-Ra'd (13:28)

## How to receive advice without feeling hurt or defensive

By Umm Fatima Zahra

Most of us don't struggle with receiving advice because we don't care – we struggle because we do. We want to do what is right, grow in our deen, and please Allah. Yet sometimes, a reminder from a loved one or a sister in Islam lands in a way that feels uncomfortable or unexpectedly heavy on the heart. Instead of feeling guided, we may feel exposed, misunderstood, or even defensive. Understanding why advice can feel painful at times is the first step toward receiving it with humility, grace, and trust in Allah's wisdom.

So, why is advice sometimes so hard for us to hear? A key reason is pride – a trait that quietly blocks our hearts and dims our capacity to listen, learn, and grow.

In Islamic teachings, pride (kibr) isn't simply confidence in oneself. It is a state of elevating the "self" above truth, humility, and the reality that all good comes from Allah.

'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet (Peace be upon him) said, "He who has, in his heart, an ant's weight of arrogance will not enter Jannah." Someone said: "A man likes to wear beautiful clothes and shoes?" Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) said, "Allah is Beautiful, He loves beauty. Arrogance means ridiculing and rejecting the Truth and despising people." [Muslim].

Riyad as-Salihin 611

This hadith isn't about modesty in appearance alone – it speaks to the condition of the heart, the very place humility lives.

### Pride and the Ability to Take Advice

When pride grows in the heart, it acts like a curtain between us and sincere guidance:

**1. It makes correction feel like criticism**  
Instead of seeing advice as care, the prideful heart hears: "You are being judged." This triggers resistance rather than reflection.

**2. It whispers, "I already know best."**  
Even when someone points out a weakness or offers a better way, pride says: "I have this under control." A person's ego often refuses to humble itself under sincere advice, even if it would benefit them.

**3. It devalues the adviser,** not the advice  
Sometimes we dismiss reminders from those we respect because pride makes us cling to image, reputation, or fear of being "wrong" in front of others.

**4. It shifts our focus from the message to the messenger**

Instead of reflecting on what is being said, the heart becomes preoccupied with who is saying it. Thoughts like "Who are they to correct me?" or "They think they're better than me" quietly surface. In these moments, the advice itself is dismissed – not because it lacks truth, but because our ego feels challenged.

Pride can make us perceive correction as superiority, even when it is offered with sincerity, causing us to close our hearts to guidance that may have benefited us.

Islam teaches that true humility doesn't make you small; it is a soul strength with a heart opened to truth. A humble believer says "Alhamdulillah for the guidance, and may Allah soften my heart." This is the spirit that transforms advice into growth.

### The Islamic View on Pride and Humility

Pride is described by scholars as one of the spiritual diseases of the heart. Imam Al-Ghazali explains that pride leads a person to think they are superior, preventing them from recognizing their own flaws and receiving mercy from Allah.

Allah warns in the Qur'an not to be arrogant:

"And do not turn your nose up to people, nor walk pridefully upon the earth. Surely Allah does not like whoever is arrogant, boastful." (Surah Luqman 31:18)

Practical Ways to Let Go of Pride and Receive Advice

Here are real ways pride shows up when we're "advised":

- Denying truth:** "I don't need help."
- Blaming others:** "You don't understand my situation."
- Excuses instead of acceptance:** "I can't change that."
- Feeling offended rather than reflective.**

Here are steps to soften the heart:

- Make intention pure: Recognise advice as a form of ma'rif (goodness).**
- Say "Alhamdulillah" for every sincere reminder.**
- Remember that beneficial advice is a mercy from Allah.**
- Practice listening first, responding later.**
- Thank the adviser — even if you choose a different path.**
- Regularly ask Allah to purify the heart from pride.**

Umm Ma'bad said she heard God's messenger say, "O God, purify my heart from hypocrisy, my action from vain show, my tongue from falsehood and my eyes from wrongful glances, for Thou knowest the surreptitious looks of the eyes and what is concealed in the breasts."

Baihaqi transmitted the two traditions in [Kitab] ad-Da'awat al-kabir. 2. cf. Qur'an, xl, 19.

Allahumma tahhir qalbi minan-nifaq, wa 'amali minar-riya', wa lisani minal-kadhib, wa 'ayni minal-khiyanati, fa innaka ta'lamu kha'inata al-'uyuni wa ma tukhfi aş-şudur. (Mishkat al-Masabih 2501)



The sister who gently corrects you may be doing you a favour that your ego cannot see yet. And the sister who listens to you without judgment is teaching you humility in return.

### Lasting words

Dear sister, receiving advice with humility is not about being perfect. It is about embracing tawadu', a humble heart that recognises we're all learning, growing, and imperfect in this world.

When advice reaches us, it helps to pause and ask: What is Allah teaching me through this moment? When we focus on the message rather than the messenger, and receive reminders as though Allah is speaking to us, even difficult advice can become a means of mercy. May Allah grant us hearts that are humble, open, and receptive to His guidance. May He grant us the wisdom to receive sincere advice with grace and gratitude.

Ameen.

## Light of Knowledge Quiz

The term for Colour Black in Arabic ?

A Aswad

B Abyad

C Ahmar

Answer to be revealed in the next issue

Last week's answer was choice C: "Najm"

## When scrolling breeds despair: A Prophetic cure to comparison culture

By Dr. Jibran Khokhar

In a world of endless scrolling and curated perfection, it's easy to forget that real life is rarely as pristine as the photos suggest. Social media platforms have evolved into highlight reels, showcasing polished moments, filtered bodies, and carefully edited success stories. The more we scroll, the more we compare; the more we compare, the more we despair. But this struggle isn't new, even if its digital form is. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), in his timeless wisdom, offered a solution that not only centers us spiritually but also protects our mental and emotional well-being.

He (Peace be upon him) said, "Look at those who are lower than you and do not look at those who are above you, for that is more likely to prevent you from belittling the favors Allah has bestowed upon you." (Şahih Muslim, no. 2963)

This Prophetic advice is more than moral encouragement; it's a therapeutic, psychologically sound antidote to the damaging effects of upward social comparison, or at least, in the case of social media, what we are led to believe is "upward." Contemporary psychology confirms what the Prophet (Peace be upon him) warned against over 1,400 years ago: constantly measuring ourselves against others can significantly damage our emotional and psychological health. In a widely cited study, researchers Chou and Edge found that Facebook users who spent more time on the platform were more likely to believe that others were living happier, more successful lives than themselves, which in turn led to lower life satisfaction.

Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook are designed to hold your attention by showcasing polished, visually curated content, because in the world of attention economy, the longer you stay, the more profit they make. This design amplifies upward comparisons by repeatedly exposing users to idealized portrayals of others' lives. In similar research, Vogel and her team reported that those who engaged more with social media had lower self-esteem and worse self-perceptions, especially when they compared themselves to others online. These comparisons, often centered on physical appearance, material possessions, or perceived happiness, distort our sense of reality and erode our ability to appreciate our own blessings. A 2023 meta-analysis by McComb and colleagues confirmed these findings on a larger scale, synthesizing data from 48 studies involving over 7,600 participants. They found that seeing people who appear better off on social media can make people feel worse about themselves, hurting their mental health and overall sense of well-being. These negative effects were especially pronounced for body image and self-esteem, showing the psychological vulnerability

of users constantly exposed to "idealized" portrayals of others online. Psychologists refer to this dynamic as the "contrast effect," where individuals view themselves more negatively when exposed to others who appear more successful or attractive. What's even more concerning is that this exposure is relentless and often unconscious. Rather than inspiring self-improvement, upward social comparison tends to provoke discouragement, envy, and a sense that one's own life is falling short. What makes the Prophet's guidance so remarkable is how it addresses this emotional and spiritual misalignment at its core. Rather than withdraw from the world, the Prophetic method asks us to reorient our perspective. Instead of gazing upward at those with more, he (Peace be upon him) taught us to look to those with less, not to breed pity or a sense of superiority, but to ignite sincere gratitude. This shift helps anchor us in the blessings we already possess. In fact, these "downward" social comparisons on Instagram have been shown to have the opposite effect of "upward" comparisons, with body self-esteem scores increasing after downward comparisons, highlighting the timeless wisdom of the words of the Prophet (Peace be upon him). Furthermore, in a randomized control trial, downward social comparisons proved effective in preventing body dissatisfaction in women, in line with the Prophetic model of preventing harm. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) also said, "Whoever among you wakes up secure in his home, healthy in his body, and has food for the day, it is as if the whole world has been gathered for him." A safe home, good health, and food for the day are enormous blessings and are the foundation of well-being. But in the constant noise of social media, these simple yet profound gifts are often drowned out. Comparison blinds us to what we already

have. The Prophetic solution, on the other hand, invites us to see again, clearly, humbly, and gratefully.

It's also important to remember that Islam does not discourage ambition. Our faith encourages excellence, growth, and striving for both worldly and spiritual elevation. But when the fuel behind our striving is envy, and when our benchmarks are shaped by unrealistic portrayals, we risk a life of constant dissatisfaction. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) emphasized that true contentment comes from the heart: "Wealth is not in having many possessions, but wealth is in contentment of the soul." (Şahih al-Bukhāri, no. 6446)

This contentment is not passive resignation but an active spiritual state, one that must be cultivated, especially in the digital age. Practicing digital contentment means being intentional about what we expose ourselves to online. It means unfollowing accounts that trigger comparison, curating a digital space that encourages gratitude, and resisting the urge to seek validation through likes of our carefully selected portrayals. Just as we guard our hearts from toxic or questionable environments in the physical world, we must do the same in our virtual lives. Protecting our internal peace begins with curbing external noise. The Prophet (Peace be upon him) also warned us directly about envy and the spiritual harm it causes. He said, "Beware of envy, for indeed envy consumes good deeds just as fire consumes wood or grass." (Sunan Abi Dāwūd, no. 4903) If we are to protect our hearts and minds from this corrosion, we must be deliberate. One of the first steps is reclaiming our attention. Social media isn't inherently wrong, but it can quickly become harmful when it shapes our sense of self or worth.

### CROSSWORD PUZZLE

#### LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

- ACROSS  
 1. Asr  
 3. Niyyah  
 5. Fourteen
- DOWN  
 1. An-Nafi  
 2. Hisan  
 4. Ghusl

- ACROSS  
 1. The only body part is wiped once during wudhu?  
 4. Arabic term for "Cow"  
 6. At what age should prayer formally begin to be emphasized and encouraged for a child?
- DOWN  
 2. The Name of Allah meaning "The Withholder"  
 3. Surah whose name means, "Rivalry in Worldly Increase"  
 5. Islamic practice performed on a newborn immediately after birth.

## Muslims raise alarm over rising Mosque burglaries in Uasin Gishu

Muslim residents in Kamura village within Kuinet/Kapsuswa ward in Soy Constituency have raised alarm over a series of coordinated burglaries targeting mosques in Uasin Gishu County.

The latest incident occurred at Al-Hudaa Mosque, where thieves reportedly broke into the premises and stole valuable items used by worshippers. Similar theft incidents had been reported in Vihiga County two weeks ago, where Mudete Jamia Mosque lost an amplifier and prayer mats, suggesting a possible pattern targeting religious institutions.

The resident Imam of Al-Hudaa Mosque, Sheikh Ismail Muhammad, said items reported missing at the house of worship include a public address system comprising an amplifier and speakers, water taps, and multiple prayer mats used by the congregation. According to Sheikh Muhammad, the break-in was discovered when he arrived for early morning prayers on Tuesday and found the mosque doors tampered with and the premises ransacked, with items worth about Ksh150,000 stolen. "I was stunned to learn about the missing of a public address system. We want to condemn the theft and vandalism in a strong manner. A mosque or church is a sacred area and should be respected as such," he added.

He noted that this was the second theft incident within a month involving a



mosque in Uasin Gishu County. In early April, thieves reportedly broke into Jua Kali Mosque in Turbo Constituency and made away with water pipes. Sheikh Muhammad said the matter had been reported to Kuinet Police Post for investigation and further action.

Reacting to the incident, North Rift Chairman of the Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya (CIPK), Sheikh Abubakar Bini, strongly condemned what he described as a growing trend of burglaries targeting places of worship, saying the incidents had sparked outrage among local residents.

Sheikh Bini also expressed concern over increasing insecurity cases in the North Rift

region and called on the government to deploy more police officers and strengthen security measures to curb the incidents.

"We are counting our losses, and we do not know how we will recover the lost items. What is more worrying is that, assuming there was a human being inside the mosque, he/she would have been killed, and that is why we demand protection from the police," Bini appealed.

He urged the Ministry of Interior to strengthen community policing and revamp and empower Peace Committees structures to promote peace and cohesion in the region.

## Senate Launches Nationwide Probe Into County Staffing Over Ethnic Imbalance Concerns

The Senate's National Cohesion, Equal Opportunity and Regional Integration Committee has launched a nationwide review of county staffing patterns, targeting both county executive structures and county assemblies in a renewed push to enforce ethnic balance in public service employment.

The committee, chaired by Mohammed Said Chute, has written to all governors, County Public Service Boards and County Assembly Public Service Boards, directing them to appear before the committee and explain whether their recruitment practices comply with legal requirements on equitable representation.

"We have written to all the governors, County Public Service Boards and County Assembly Public Service Boards to come and explain to us if they are complying with the law about the composition of their staff," Senator Chute said.

The inquiry follows persistent concerns that some county governments have adopted skewed hiring practices that favour members of dominant local communities at the expense of minority groups, contrary to the constitutional principles of inclusivity and national cohesion underpinning Kenya's devolved system of governance.

The committee has already completed a parallel review of staffing patterns in national government institutions, where findings reportedly revealed that large ethnic communities dominate key public offices, raising concerns about fairness and equal opportunity in public service recruitment.

At the centre of the review is Section 66 of the County Governments Act, 2012, which stipulates that no more than 70 percent of county public service positions at any level should be occupied by persons from the dominant ethnic community within a county. The provision was designed to prevent ethnic monopolisation of county jobs and promote diversity in public sector employment. Despite the legal requirement, enforcement has remained inconsistent, with several counties allegedly exceeding the threshold by significant margins. The Senate committee is now seeking stronger compliance measures and tighter oversight of county recruitment processes.

Governors have, however, faced mounting criticism over alleged politically influenced hiring decisions, with accusations that tribal affiliation and patronage often determine appointments. Some county leaders have defended their staffing autonomy, arguing that independence in recruitment is a fun-



**Marsabit Senator Mohamed Chute, chairperson of the Senate Committee on National Cohesion, who is spearheading a proposal to centralise county hiring to address ethnic imbalance.**

damental pillar of devolution and warning against what they term excessive interference from the national level.

The Senate committee's review is expected to culminate in recommendations that could shape future amendments to the County Governments Act, including proposals to strengthen penalties for non-compliance and enhance monitoring of ethnic diversity in county public service.

## Muslim girls empowerment mentorship forum opens in Kakamega

A mentorship forum aimed at empowering Muslim girl students through leadership, education, and career guidance kicked off last Friday in Kakamega County.

The three-week annual mentorship workshop, organized by the Kakamega-based Muslim for Development Group (MDG) in partnership with the UK-based Angel Welfare and Education Trust (AWET), has brought together 126 participants, the majority of them from four leavers, for interactive discussions, personal reflections, and networking sessions.

The programme features several keynote speakers, among them Ustadha Rehema Bakari, Ustadha Khadija Akhware, Rafa Ramadhan and Halima Abubakar. The event is scheduled to conclude on May 21, 2026, with Ustadha Rehema Kassim expected to preside as the chief guest.

Speakers at the forum are expected to deliver messages centred on faith, education, resilience, and leadership among Muslim girls and women.

Speaking during the official opening of the workshop, Muslim for Development Group

(MDG) chairman Sheikh Abdalla Ateka encouraged the students to maintain discipline, uphold Islamic values, and serve as ambassadors of Islam within their respective institutions.

Sheikh Ateka urged Muslim girls to remain steadfast in their Islamic identity while pursuing higher education and navigating diverse social environments.

"I take this opportunity to urge you to be sincere and remain steadfast in Islam as you pursue education and knowledge to shape yourselves into capable and balanced future generation," he said.

Addressing the participants, Ustadha Rehema Bakari emphasized the importance of patience, humility, and respect toward others, urging Muslim girls to avoid negative behaviour and instead nurture compassion and understanding.

She further encouraged students to remain focused on their studies while upholding Islamic teachings and values in their academic journeys.

"Don't let anything distract you from whatever that you have to do. We want doctors,

pilots, architects and engineers but whatever you choose be a Muslim first," she advised.

She added that Muslim women should prioritize faith and remain prayerful while working hard to overcome educational challenges.

"Your study shouldn't be only on academics but also to build your faith. Put Allah first in all that you do."

On her part, Ustadha Khadija Akhware urged Muslim girls to exercise aptitude when choosing careers, saying informed decisions would shape their future destinies. She stressed the need for determination and commitment in achieving success. She also encouraged the students to see themselves as ambassadors of Islam by representing their faith positively through their actions, character, and modest dressing.

Meanwhile, Ustadha Rafa Ramadhan challenged Muslim girls to remain resilient, ambitious, and firmly grounded in faith as they pursue their dreams and career aspirations.

## Universities urged to champion solution-based research for Public Service reforms

Higher education institutions have been challenged to shift toward solution-oriented research to effectively transform public service delivery and drive national reforms. The call was made by Harun Maalim Hassan, a commissioner at the Public Service Commission of Kenya, during a public lecture at Islamic University of Kenya (IUK) main campus in Kisumu, Kakamega County.

Addressing students and faculty during the lecture on the role of higher education in public service delivery and reforms, Hassan challenged university students to take a proactive role in transforming public service through research, innovation, and ethical leadership.

The call aligns with broader government efforts aimed at strengthening public institutions through skilled personnel and improved governance. Hassan encouraged students to bridge the gap between academia and public service through solution-based research and innovative initiatives.

He noted that integrating mentorship and continuous professional development is critical in fostering a culture of excellence among the next generation of civil servants. Hassan outlined a vision for impactful public service anchored on three pillars: agile governance to respond to evolving societal needs, high-quality personnel trained in modern administrative practices, and innovative learning approaches that prioritize problem-solving over rote memorization.

The commissioner concluded by urging the academic community to engage in

collaborative research and initiatives that directly improve government service delivery to citizens. He emphasized that the evolution of Kenya's public sector depends on graduates who are both innovative and purpose-driven.

At the same time, the Islamic University of Kenya is encouraging international students to enrol at the institution, citing its quality education, diverse culture, and modern facilities.

Speaking during the event, Chairman of the Board of Trustees Dr. Sheikh Muhammad Osman described the university as an institution committed to diversity and inclusivity. "This is a great opportunity for those international students who are passionate about education," Sheikh Osman said, adding that IUK remains committed to fostering an inclusive academic environment.

He noted that the university strongly emphasizes diversity and inclusivity as core institutional values while positioning itself as a modern international centre of academic excellence. "Islamic University of Kenya (IUK) promotes diversity and inclusivity by balancing its Islamic identity with equal treatment for non-Muslim students and fostering interfaith dialogue. The university accommodates diverse backgrounds, encourages tolerance, and supports needy students through partnerships," Sheikh Osman said.

IUK Vice Chancellor Dr Mohammed Abdinoor Dayow also called on international students to consider joining the institution, saying it offers more than just academic instruction.

"IUK offers more than just education; it pro-



**Harun Maalim Hassan, commissioner at the Public Service Commission, speaks during the public lecture held at Islamic University of Kenya (IUK) main campus recently**

vides a nurturing environment that allows students to excel academically and grow as individuals," Dr Dayow said.

He further noted that the university is enrolling international students by offering affordable education, diverse cultural experiences, and a variety of academic programmes.

Dr Dayow encouraged both Kenyan and international students to consider IUK as their academic destination for programmes including Bachelor of Education and Postgraduate Diploma in Education. Other programmes offered at the university include Bachelor of Business Management, Bachelor of Islamic Shariah, Bachelor of Arts in Arabic Language, Bachelor of Science in Information Technology, and Diploma in Information Technology.

## TAQWA DT SACCO: 25TH AGM HIGHLIGHTS

*Pioneering Ethical Finance. Delivering Shared Prosperity.*

As we celebrate the successful conclusion of our 25th Annual General Meeting, we proudly reaffirm our identity as **Kenya's first Shariah-compliant financial institution**: A legacy of financial inclusion, trust, integrity, and faith-driven solutions since inception. For over 28 years, our mission has remained clear: uplifting the Muslim Ummah and Kenyans through ethical, interest-free financial services that embody true Islamic values.

### Performance Highlights

**Membership Growth:** Expanded by 7.5%, reflecting strong confidence in our inclusive financial model.

**Member Deposits:** Increased by 21.3%, showcasing disciplined saving and trust.

**Share Capital:** Rose by 8.1%, strengthening our financial foundation.

**Asset Base:** Grew by 20.64%, positioning us for long-term impact.

**Revenue:** Up by 22.1%, driven by prudent management and member-focused services

**Dividend Payout:** A 15% dividend declared, delivering value while upholding Shariah principles.

### Our Identity, Our Strength

As the **first Shariah-compliant financial institution in Kenya**, we remain steadfast in offering financial solutions that are

ethical, transparent, and aligned with Islamic principles, ensuring **prosperity with purpose**.

**Leading with Faith. Growing with Purpose.**

Save Halal. Invest Halal. Grow Halal.

**Be Part of the Journey**

Join Taqwa SACCO today:

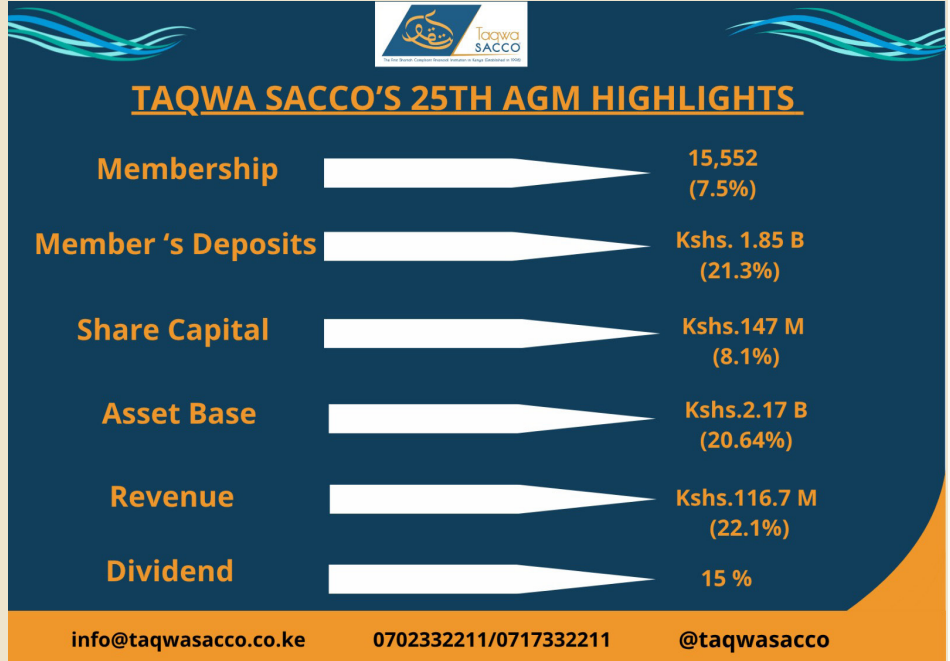
[www.taqwasacco.co.ke](http://www.taqwasacco.co.ke)

Jamia Plaza, Ground Floor, Kigali Street

0702 332 211 | 0717 332 211

[info@taqwasacco.co.ke](mailto:info@taqwasacco.co.ke)

**Taqwa SACCO: The Hub of Halal Wealth Creation.**



## INTERNATIONAL

### Israel seizes nearly 60 percent of Gaza as it plans to resume war, report says

Israel has expanded its control of the Gaza Strip to nearly 60 percent of the territory despite the ceasefire, as it prepares for a possible resumption of the war, Army Radio reported on Sunday.

Senior military officials, cited by the broadcaster, said they are pressing to restart fighting, arguing that now is the optimal moment to defeat Hamas.

Operational plans for renewed attacks have been completed, the report said, with a final decision pending approval from Israel's political leadership.

The military has also reduced forces in southern Lebanon while redeploying brigades to Gaza and the occupied West Bank.

The Army Radio also reported there has been an increase in attacks lately.

Meanwhile, Israeli forces have expanded the so-called "Yellow Line" to absorb more of Gaza, pushing the population into roughly 40 percent of the enclave while troops remain stationed across the remaining 60 percent in the south, north and east.

The US brokered a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip in October, intended to end Israel's two-year genocide by halting attacks and allowing humanitarian aid to flow into the territory. However, Israel has repeatedly violated the ceasefire, killing at least 832



Palestinians in near-daily shelling, according to the Palestinian health ministry. Overall, Israeli forces killed more than 72,000 Palestinians since October 2023. Thousands more remain missing and beneath rubble.

Under the agreement, Israel was required to lift restrictions and allow up to 600 aid trucks a day carrying food, fuel, medical supplies, shelter materials and commercial goods. However, Gaza authorities say Israeli lim-

its have kept the average at just over 200 trucks daily. Additionally, the Israeli military controlled nearly half of Gaza when the ceasefire began, establishing a unilateral demarcation known as the "Yellow Line". The agreement's later phases envisaged a gradual Israeli withdrawal from all of Gaza. However, Israeli forces have since steadily expanded the "Yellow Line" and now control 59 percent of the territory, according to Army Radio.