

THE FRIDAY BULLETIN

The Weekly Muslim Update



A Publication of the Jamia Mosque Nairobi

Review of Kadhis' Courts Act Begins as Muslims Push for Reforms



TOP: Muslim Professionals drawn from different organizations following proceedings during the Kadhis' Court stakeholders meeting held at Jamia Mosque Nairobi on Wednesday and yesterday.

INSET: Supreme Court Judge Justice Mohamed Warsame addressing the gathering during the stakeholders meeting.

The review of the Kadhis' Courts Act has commenced, with Muslims and other stakeholders being invited to submit views on legal and administrative reforms aimed at strengthening the administration of justice and improving access to justice for the Muslim community.

The commencement of the review follows concerns raised by the Jamia Mosque Committee and other Muslim leaders with Chief Justice Lady Justice Martha Koome over a series of cases in which decisions made by Kadhis' Courts were subsequently challenged or overturned in other courts. The Muslim leaders expressed concern that such developments could undermine the application of Islamic law in matters falling within the jurisdiction of the Kadhis' Courts.

The review seeks to enhance the effectiveness of the Kadhis' Courts and strengthen public confidence in their ability to resolve matters falling within their jurisdiction.

The current Kadhis' Courts Act, enacted in 1967, has its roots in the colonial-era legal framework. Over the years, Muslim leaders and members of the community have called for reforms to bring the law in line with the 2010 Constitution and contemporary needs.

Earlier this month, Chief Justice Martha Koome appointed a committee to review the legal and procedural framework of the Kadhis' Courts,

chaired by Supreme Court Judge Mohamed Warsame.

The committee comprises Court of Appeal Judge Lady Justice Abida Ali-Aroni, who is the deputy chairperson, Acting Chief Kadhi Sheikh Sukyan Hassan Omar, Dr Adam Mwamburi Khamis, Dr Moza Jadeed, Advocate of the High Court, and Nairobi-based lawyer Ali Mohamud.

Speaking during a stakeholders' engagement forum held on Wednesday at the Jamia Mosque Multi-purpose Hall in Nairobi, Justice Warsame said the committee had commenced its work and urged Muslims and other interested parties to take ownership of the process by submitting their views.

Justice Warsame said the committee would soon announce a series of public meetings across the country to give members of the Muslim community an opportunity to present their views and make submissions.

He said the committee had identified several issues affecting the work of Kadhis' Courts, including undefined personal status, submission to jurisdiction, the role of a non-Muslim next friend, jurisdiction over children's matters and burial disputes.

The committee has also identified structural

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In Today's Issue



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The wearing of hijab by Muslim students in schools has once again come under scrutiny after learners at Dukana Nomadic Girls Primary School in Marsabit County were allegedly sent home for covering their heads.

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SUPKEM Calls for Swift Probe into Death of Madrasa Student in Makindu

The Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) has called on the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) to fast-track investigations into the death of 28-year-old Ahmed Amir Rosa, who died following an alleged assault at a religious learning institution in Makindu, Makueni County.

Ahmed died on September 10, days after he was allegedly assaulted at the Naqsh-bandi Zawiya Madrasa, where his family had taken him for spiritual guidance and Islamic education.

SUPKEM Director of Religious Affairs Sheikh Yusuf Maki Abuhamza urged investigators to conduct a thorough and speedy probe, establish what happened and ensure that anyone found responsible is held accountable.

He also called for the findings of the investigation to be made public, saying this would help address speculation surrounding the death and maintain public confidence in legitimate Islamic learning institutions.

"It is very regrettable and unfortunate, disturbing news that life has been lost in a religious learning institution which is supposed to be a safe haven for young learners pursuing religious education," Sheikh Abuhamza said.

"We as SUPKEM are calling on the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) to fast-track its probe into the matter, make public the findings to stop wide speculations and instil trust in the religious insti-

tutions."

Sheikh Abuhamza further urged madrassas and Islamic learning institutions across the country to comply with the rules and regulations governing education, particularly in the manner they handle learners.

He clarified that SUPKEM does not currently have conclusive information on the circumstances surrounding Ahmed's death and said the Muslim umbrella body would issue a statement once investigations are completed.

The call comes amid growing questions from Ahmed's family and human rights activists over the circumstances surrounding his death and the progress of the police investigation.

Human rights activist and Vocal Africa CEO Hussein Khalid has questioned what he described as a lack of decisive police action, particularly the absence of arrests in connection with the case.

Hussein also raised concerns over possible attempts to frustrate investigations, alleging that the head of the madrasa appeared to wield considerable influence.

He further alleged that Ahmed's death could be linked to a wider pattern of abuse at the institution, saying his organisation had received reports of other alleged cases involving students.

"We are getting reports of disturbing cases of abuse at the madrasa. We are compiling reports which will reveal in the coming days,"

he said, while calling for the immediate arrest of officials linked to the incident.

Police officers visited the institution and inspected the premises following Ahmed's death. However, authorities had not publicly provided a detailed account of the investigation or explained whether arrests were imminent.

According to accounts cited by media reports and attributed to witnesses, Ahmed was allegedly assaulted by five young men following instructions from a madrasa teacher. He reportedly sustained serious injuries and later sought medical attention but was allegedly denied treatment by the madrasa administration and left to recover in his room.

Four days later, on September 10, he died from his injuries.

The circumstances of his death have also raised questions after his family said they were initially informed that Ahmed had died from a flu-related illness.

A subsequent postmortem examination, according to the family, found severe blunt-force trauma, including widespread injuries, bruises, burns and cuts which they believe were consistent with physical abuse.

The allegations have yet to be conclusively established by investigators, and no finding of criminal responsibility has been made public.

Review of Kadhis' Courts Act Begins

Continued From Page 1

concerns within the existing law. Justice Warsame pointed out that Section 3 of the Act gives the President the power to prescribe the number of Kadhis, a provision he said raises questions in light of Article 170 of the Constitution and the principles of judicial independence under Articles 160 and 172.

He further highlighted provisions in other laws that affect the operation of the Kadhis' Courts.

These include the Marriage Act, 2014, which makes a Kadhi's authority to officiate or dissolve a marriage subject to authorisation by the Registrar of Marriages, placing the Kadhi in the same category as other religious marriage officials.

The Matrimonial Property Act, 2013, was also identified as an area requiring consideration, particularly because it makes the application of Islamic law optional for Muslim spouses in matters relating to matrimonial property.

Justice Warsame further cited the Work Injury Benefits Act and issues relating to Islamic estates, including provisions concerning death compensation that may conflict with the Islamic concept of Tarikah and fixed inheritance shares.

Other issues include the Kadhis' Court Rules of Practice and Procedure, whose legal basis and empowering provisions

require clarification, as well as advocates' remuneration.

Lady Justice Abida Ali-Aroni said the Kadhis' Courts Act had been in place since 1967 and needed to be reviewed to enable the courts to effectively serve the Muslim community.

She encouraged Muslims to make greater use of Kadhis' Courts in resolving family-related disputes.

During the consultative meeting, Muslim leaders and professionals drawn from various organisations, including the Jamia Mosque Committee, Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM), Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya (CIPK) and National Muslim Leaders Forum (NAMLEF), presented a memorandum calling for comprehensive amendments to the Act.

Also represented at the forum was Masjid Al-Ameen Juja Road, Ummah Foundation, WAMY, Shia Ithna Ashari, Ismaili community, and Memon Jamaat among others.

The stakeholders included lawyers and judicial officers, community leaders, Imams, Islamic scholars and Muslim women leaders. They called for reforms to strengthen the status and mandate of Kadhis' Courts and enable them to serve the Muslim community more effectively.

The leaders said amendments were particularly necessary to ensure access to justice

for vulnerable members of society.

They proposed an expansion of the concept of personal status under the Kadhis' Courts Act to give Kadhis a greater role in matters involving children, arguing that this would improve service delivery and ensure that disputes affecting Muslim families are addressed within an appropriate legal framework.

Speaking at the forum, prominent Islamic scholar Sheikh Ibrahim Lethome who is a member of Majlis of Jamia Mosque Nairobi noted that the Kadhis' Courts were retained under the 2010 Constitution following negotiations and cautioned Muslims against taking the constitutional recognition of the courts for granted.

Sheikh Lethome said the review of the legal and procedural framework presented an important opportunity to strengthen access to justice while ensuring that Kadhis' Courts respond effectively to constitutional and contemporary needs.

The committee has called on members of the public, Muslim organisations, legal professionals, scholars and other interested parties to submit their views and memoranda as part of the review process.

Views and memorandum in soft copies should be submitted at:
review.kadhi@court.go.ke

Loving Allah

Love is the greatest station the seeker on the path to Allah (subhānahu wa ta'ālā) can attain. The love of Allah is the purest and greatest of all loves. It gives life to the heart, it is sustenance for the soul, and is the roadway to eternal success.

Love is the road to Paradise. It is the main reason why we worship Allah, and it is the only way to live a true meaningful life on earth. Without the love of Allah, life is bleak. This is because there is a void in every person's heart which can only be filled with the love of Allah. Without love, a person's life will be full of sadness, anxiety, pains and regrets. On the other hand, when the heart overflows with His love, a person will experience bliss and contentment. Ibn al-Qayyim (rahimahullāh) writes, "Undoubtedly, the greatest pleasure of this world is the pleasure of knowing and loving Allah. This is the highest level of bliss one can experience in this world. In contrast, other temporary pleasures of this life are like a drop in the ocean – for indeed, the soul, heart and body were created (to know and love Allah). The most joyous aspect of the world is to know and love Allah, and the greatest pleasure in Paradise will be to see Allah."

Love: The Essence of La ilaha illa Allah
Love is the essence of 'ubūdiyyah (servitude) and the secret of Lā ilāha illā Allāh. Loving Allah is the basis of our īmān. Allah says, "Still there are some who take others as Allah's equal—they love them as they should love Allah—but the believers love Allah even more"

(2:165). When a person lacks the love of Allah, he is like a body without a soul. Our purpose in life is to worship ('ibādah) Allah. 'Ibādah consists of: (1) utmost humility and (2) utmost love. Without love, there is no 'ibādah, as love is the 'soul' of worship. Without love, we cannot realise our purpose of existence. Without love, there is no Islam. There is a vast difference between someone who obeys Allah out of love for Him, and someone who obeys Him without love. When a lover obeys his beloved, the obedience is done willingly and sincerely. Without love, however, a servant obeys out of a weary compulsion. The former experiences happiness and joy in willingly complying to the orders, whereas the latter feels burdened, and even resentful. Love, therefore, is the driving force and the impetus of 'ibādah. How Can You Not Love Him?

As humans, we adore perfection, and Allah is the epitome of perfection. Similarly, we love beauty and our hearts are naturally inclined to it. Allah is al-Jamīl, The Most Beautiful. Although we cannot comprehend the beauty of Allah, it is enough to know that every beautiful thing we see on this earth is from Him.

Likewise, our hearts have been created

with a natural disposition to love those who do good to us. How can we not love Allah when every single blessing and good that we have is from Him?

There is no one kinder, more appreciative and more generous than Him: He is al-Wahhāb, The Ever-Giving. Allah is al-Wadūd, The Most Loving. Anyone we love – from the creation – loves us for their sake. Allah, on the other hand, loves us for our own benefit. People interact with us because they hope to attain something from this relationship.

Allah however calls us to love Him so that we can benefit. Not only does He benefit us, but He gives us compound benefit: the reward of a good deed is multiplied from 10-700 times, whereas a sin is recorded as one single bad deed; and even that can be swiftly erased. Allah does not need us, yet He feeds us, honours us, and guides us.

Allah is al-Ghaffār, The Most Forgiving. He loves to forgive and will forgive us even if we go to Him with mountains of sins. He is al-Sittir, the Concealer of sins. He does not expose us, nor humiliate us. Instead, He offers us endless opportunities to repent, and delights when we turn to Him in repentance.

Allah is al-Qarīb, The Ever-Near, and al-Hayy, The Shy, who feels shy to reject our du'ās. Whilst our fellow humans tire of our persistent questioning and begging, Allah, our Generous Lord, does not stop giving and is angered when we don't ask from Him! In fact, He gives us even before we ask Him.

How can we not love Him?

Love, Hope and Fear As believers, we journey to Allah with love, fear and hope. Ibn Taymiyyah (rahimahullāh) said, "Know that there are three things that push the hearts towards Allah: love, fear, and hope. The strongest of these three is love; and it is something that is sought-after in and of itself, since it is something that is desired both in this world and the hereafter, as opposed to fear, which will disappear in the Hereafter. Allah says, 'For certain, the friends of Allah shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve' (Surah Yunus 10:62)."

Similarly, hope has its limit. Too much hope leads to wishful thinking and lack of action. Fear too has a limit, as too much of it leads to despair. Love, on the other hand, has no limit. A servant can continue increasing in his love for Allah, and it will never be too much.

True Love

When the love of Allah solidifies in the heart, nothing can come between the person and his Beloved, Allah. One becomes ready to give up everything for Him.

Loving Allah ('azza wa jall) can only be achieved when you prefer Him over everything else. You must love Him more than you love your parents, children, spouse, friends and wealth.

Allah says, "Say: If your parents, children, siblings, spouses, extended family, the wealth you have acquired, the trade you fear will decline, and the homes you cherish — (if all these) are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and struggling in His cause, then wait until Allah brings about His command. Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people" (Surah At-Tawbah 9:24).

The Companions (radiy Allāhu 'anhum) lived this verse, and were thus honoured and loved by Allah. Allah says, "Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him" (Surah Al-Mujadila 58:22).

Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāsh narrates that in the Battle of Uhud, 'Abdullāh b. Jaḥsh said to him, "Won't you come so we can make du'ā' together?" They went to a corner and sat. Sa'd supplicated, "My Lord! When I meet the enemy tomorrow, let me encounter a man of enormous strength and whose enmity is severe. I shall fight him for Your sake, and he shall fight me. Then grant me victory over him until I slay him and acquire his spoils." To this du'ā' 'Abdullāh said "Āmīn", and then he himself supplicated, "O Allah, grant that I encounter a man tomorrow of enormous strength and whose enmity is severe. I shall fight him for Your sake, and he shall fight me. He shall kill me, and then cut off my nose and ears.

And when I meet You, You will say, "'Abdullāh! Why were your nose and ears cut off?"

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From the Holy Qur'an Ayah of the week

Theme: Striving towards the Right Path



"O mankind, indeed you are laboring toward your Lord with [great] exertion and will ultimately meet [Him]...."

(Qur'an 84:6)

Is Declaring a Big Amount of Mahr on Paper Valid?

By Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi, Dr. Sabri

Mahr (dower) is a woman's right and that signifies a husband's love and appreciation for his wife. However, it should be reasonable and not too expensive. The bride's guardian and family should focus on the religious commitment and character of the suitors rather than asking for huge amounts of dower which burden the youths who want to get married and protect themselves against temptations.

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) never demanded huge amounts of dower when giving his daughters in marriage. He is also reported to have said, "The best woman is the one whose mahr is the easiest to pay." (Al-Haythami)

Unfortunately, many people are now going to extremes in imposing great amounts of money as a dower on husbands. They also follow the same vein when it comes to signing the marriage contract and agree upon which amount of money they are going to specify as a deferred dower.

The poor husband finds himself at the end of the road in a dilemma, especially when he finds it extremely difficult to continue with his wife when divorce becomes inevitable.

Why Is Mahr a Wife's Right in Islam?

There is an agreed upon rule among Muslim jurists that the husband is required to furnish the marital home according to the status of his wife without any form of show-off or extravagance.

Every serious husband should try to furnish the home according to his means. Referring to this Allah Almighty says:

"Let him who hath abundance spend of his abundance, and he whose provision is measured, let him spend of that which Allah hath given him. Allah asketh naught of any soul save that which He hath given it. Allah will vouchsafe, after hardship, ease." (Surah At-Talaq 65:7)

Now, if the husband agrees on the terms and conditions stated in the bride's household stuff menu, and agrees on the high amount of mahr (dower) stated by the father of his would-be wife, the husband shoulders the responsibility and he has to pay the money before the worst comes to worst.

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is reported to have said, "Muslims are to abide by their conditions." (At-Tirmidhi) He is also reported to have said: "Muslims are to abide by their conditions save a stipulation that deems an unlawful thing lawful and vice versa." (At-Tirmidhi)

What Happens When a Husband Agrees to a Large Mahr?

It makes no difference whether the amount the husband is going to sign (i.e. 30,000\$) is fake or real. In all cases, the husband has to abide by what he is going to sign keeping in mind that it is a trust and a Muslim is supposed to be truthful in all his

affairs. Elaborating on this issue, Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi, former President of the Islamic Society of North America, adds,

Mahr is a wife's right, which becomes binding upon the husband once the marriage is contracted. It is fully payable after the consummation of marriage but if divorce occurs before the consummation of marriage then half of the Mahr is required to be paid unless

the wife or her guardians waive it. Allah says: "And give unto the women, (whom ye marry) free gift of their marriage portions..." (Surah An-Nisaa' 4:4)

He Almighty also says: "And those of whom ye seek content (by marrying them), give unto them their portions as a duty..." (Surah An-Nisaa' 4:24)

Is a Large Mahr Written in the Marriage Contract Binding?

Mahr is very important in Islamic marriage. Allah has used the word "faridah" for it. It means something fixed, decided and obligatory. It is obligatory on the husband to pay mahr to his wife unless she expressly by her own will without any pressure forgives him or returns the amount of mahr to him.

Mahr belongs to the wife and it is to be given to her only. It is not the property of her parents or her guardian. No one can forgive the husband to pay the mahr except the wife herself or, in case she did not go to her husband and the marriage ended without consummation, then in that situation her guardian can also forgive the mahr on her behalf. If a husband dies without paying mahr to his wife, it will be an outstanding debt on him and it must be paid before the distribution of his inheritance among his heirs.

Mahr is not a bride price. It is a woman's right and it signifies a husband's love and appreciation for his wife. In the Qur'an it is called "sadaqah" which means a token of friendship. It is also called "nihlah" which means "a nice gift or present." Mahr also signifies a husband's commitment to take care of his wife's financial needs (nafaqah). Can a Husband Declare a Mahr He Does Not Intend to Pay?

People often make part of mahr advanced (mu'ajjal) and part of it deferred (mu'akkhar or mu'ajjal).

The advanced mahr should be paid at the time of nikah while the postponed should be paid later. The wife has a right to demand it from her husband; it's her right.

A wife should also not feel threatened that her husband may leave her if he pays her all her mahr. All these notions belong to various cultures but they have nothing to do with the Shari'ah.

What Is the Islamic Ruling on Excessive Mahr?



According to the Shari'ah, the mahr should also be reasonable. There is no fixed amount of mahr in the Shari'ah. It should be given according to the financial status of the husband and according to the time and place.

However, it is a principle of the Shari'ah that the mahr should not be too expensive. It is wrong to declare large amount of mahr at the time of marriage to show off or to boast. Sometimes, bride's family put pressure on the groom and his family for a large amount of mahr so that they may show their pride to their relatives and friends boasting that their daughter was married for a big mahr. Sometimes, the groom declares a big amount and secretly thinks that this is just a commitment on paper. People are often heard saying, "Write whatever you want, no one asks and no one pays." This is playing a game with the rules of Allah. Muslims should only commit to what they are really capable of paying and what they intend to pay. It is haram to enjoy relations with a wife and then deny her the mahr when she demands.

Light of Knowledge Quiz

The Hijri year in which the Qiblah was changed toward the Kaaba.

A 1 AH

B 2 AH

C 5 AH

Answer to be revealed in the next issue

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

Powerful Strategies for Developing Gratitude

By Aisha Stacey

In the twenty first century, our knowledge about mental health has grown in leaps and bounds. Slowly the stigma attached to mental health issues is being eradicated and people are more able to talk about issues surrounding mental wellbeing.

This is most likely due to the fact that, in today's constant hustle and bustle, more people are suffering from stress and its close associates, anxiety and depression.

Islam is constantly referred to as a way of life that is perfectly applicable to all situations in all eras. However, many people, while acknowledging this, fail to turn to Islam as the solution to the psychological problems and mental health issues that afflict them.

In Islam, and in modern western thinking, gratitude is acknowledged as one of the best ways to promote mental and spiritual wellbeing.

When reading the Quran, we find that God mentions gratitude regularly. Thus we cannot fail to see that gratitude is a commandment from God.

"So remember Me; I will remember you. And be grateful to Me and do not deny Me." (Surah Al Baqarah 2:152)

"...If you are grateful, I will surely increase you in favor; but if you deny, indeed, My punishment is severe." (Surah Ibrahim 14:7) For some people, it is very easy to get into the habit of showing our gratitude. We praise God and we thank Him, we feel that the good things that come to us are indeed from God and we try to acknowledge this fact privately and publicly.

The word 'Alhamdulillah' slips out of our mouths without a second thought. Whilst being grateful without thinking about it does not negate our gratefulness, imagine if we could take that gratefulness to another level.

What if we could have a whole new level of gratitude and positivity in our lives?

There is a big difference between saying 'thanks', and saying 'thank you' with deep affection and appreciation. Many books and websites offer us ways to develop long lasting positive gratitude, because, they say, this is the sort of gratitude that helps a person to weather the stress and anxiety that is inherent in the human condition.

It should come as no surprise that Islam offers many of these strategies. God knows the human condition; after all, He created it.

Brendon Burchard is a "high performance coach". He motivates people to succeed in business and in life. And surprise, surprise, a lot of his theories and methods fit very neatly into the principles of Islam.

They tend to emulate the commandments of God and the advice of Prophet Muhammad.

Let us, through this series of articles, take a closer look at the strategies suggested by Burchard in the hope that they will help us cultivate a higher level of longer lasting gratitude and higher levels of positivity.

Stop Complaining

It is virtually impossible to complain and be grateful at the same time. Start to take notice of how many times you complain and what you complain about.

Perhaps it is your husband or wife, or your children. Perhaps you complain about the traffic, or the weather or the price of the groceries.

Figure out what it is you complain about most often and set yourself goals to help you stop. Constantly whining and complaining sets you upon a path of negativity. You are responsible for how you act in each and every situation. Stop blaming others and be grateful.

If you are stuck in traffic, be grateful that you have a car. If the price of food is too high, think about the people who have no food.

Don't complain that your blessings are too small or limited. Treat all the blessings from God with both respect and gratitude.

Prophet Muhammad was with his beloved wife, Aisha, one day when he noticed a scrap of bread on the floor. He picked it up, wiped it and said:

"Treat the blessings of God with respect because if they depart they might never come back." [Ibn Abud Dunya]

Complain to Your Creator

Sometimes a person is faced with trials and tribulations and feels they have no recourse except to complain.

Complaining to others has no benefit; oftentimes it just exacerbates the situation and surrounds you with negativity.

If a person must complain, then who bet-

ter to complain to than your Creator? Even the Prophets felt the trials of this life and they had no problem turning to God when they felt overwhelmed, or felt that life was not going well.

We should all be familiar with the story of Prophet Jacob's grief when losing not one but two beloved sons.

He had every reason to complain and feel sorry for himself. He did complain and he did feel sad and sorry but he complained only to the One who could alleviate his suffering, God.

Advice

Do not allow yourself to get trapped in a circle of complaining. Take some time to become aware of just how often you complain. Is it every day, or every hour or all the time?

Do you express your complaints out loud or are they a constant internal dialogue?

Observe the people around. Do they look happy or grateful?

Sometimes the way people stand and use their arms and hands, and their facial expressions reveal their level of gratitude. What does your posture tell you about yourself?

Listen to the people around you and listen to yourself. Are the words you hear negative and pessimistic?

If we follow God's commandments and emulate the Prophets' ways of behaving, we will have very little cause to complain. Take account of yourself and try to become aware of when and why you are complaining and then stop!

Replace your complaints with expressions of gratitude; there are many benefits from writing regularly in a gratitude journal.

Try this and other strategies to feel genuinely thankful for the life that you have.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

ACROSS

3. Am al Fil

5. Umar

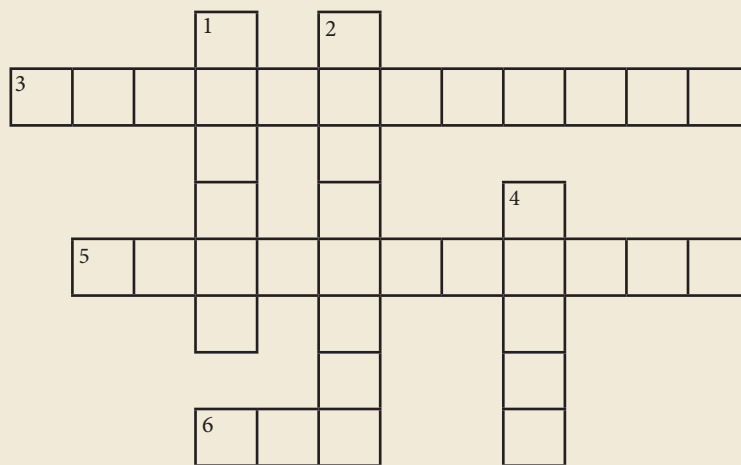
6. Second

DOWN

1. Tariq

2. Fam

4. Al Ahad



ACROSS

3. The first Qiblah direction before it was changed to the Ka'bah

5. The verse which the Prophet identified as the greatest verse of the Qur'an.

6. The Arabic term referring to Hand

DOWN

1. The Caliph who standardized and distributed copies of the Qur'an.

2. The Name of Allah meaning "The One, Unique"

4. Surah whose name means "The Constellations"

Government turns to religious leaders in suicide prevention drive

The government has turned to religious leaders as frontline partners in Kenya's suicide prevention efforts, equipping them with a new handbook to help identify people at risk, offer initial support and connect them to professional mental-health services.

The handbook was launched in Nairobi during the World Suicide Prevention Day, in a move aimed at extending suicide prevention beyond health facilities and into communities.

Developed by the Ministry of Health in partnership with the Interreligious Council of Kenya (IRCK), the handbook provides practical guidance to religious leaders on recognizing warning signs, responding compassionately to people in crisis and facilitating referrals for specialized care.

The initiative comes as mental-health services continue to handle a significant number of people seeking help. The Kenya Red Cross Society said its 1199 mental-health hotline had received 7,394 calls seeking mental-health support since Jan-

uary, including 634 classified as suicide-related crisis calls. The organization said all the suicide-related cases were responded to and averted.

Dr. Mercy Karanja, head of the Division of Mental Health at the Ministry of Health, said suicide prevention was a shared responsibility that could not be left to the health sector alone. Religious leaders are being brought into the response because of their trusted and accessible position within communities. People experiencing emotional distress often approach pastors, imams and other faith leaders before seeking professional mental-health services.

The handbook is intended to give religious leaders the skills to recognise warning signs and respond appropriately without attempting to replace psychiatrists, psychologists or other mental-health professionals.

The initiative follows earlier consultations involving the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI), IRCK and religious leaders on strengthening the role of faith communities in suicide prevention.

Dr Linnet Onger, a KEMRI mental-health researcher, has been involved in the development of the training curriculum and resources for religious leaders.

The wider initiative has brought together mental-health experts and organizations including Mathari National Teaching and Referral Hospital, Aga Khan University's Brain and Mind Institute, Befrienders Kenya, Kenya Red Cross Society and Chiro-mo Hospital Group.

The government hopes the involvement of religious leaders will encourage earlier identification of people at risk, reduce stigma surrounding mental-health challenges and strengthen links between communities and professional care.

The approach places faith leaders within a wider suicide-prevention network, giving them a defined role in recognizing distress, offering compassionate support and ensuring vulnerable people are referred for appropriate professional help.

Hijab dispute erupts at Marsabit girls' school

The wearing of hijab by Muslim students in schools has once again come under scrutiny after learners at Dukana Nomadic Girls Primary School in Marsabit County were allegedly sent home for covering their heads.

The Muslim female students were reportedly sent home on Monday morning, prompting the local Muslim community to seek intervention from education authorities.

Community elder Hassan Bille called on the Marsabit County Director of Education and the Dukana Sub-County Education Director to intervene and resolve the matter.

"We are aware of what has happened today. We want the issue to be sorted out by the Ministry of Education to avoid the discrimination that we are seeing. We as Muslim leaders will not remain silent,"

Bille said.

He said Muslim students continued to face harassment over wearing hijab, which he described as a religious symbol reflecting dignity, modesty and devotion to Islam.

"No child should be denied the right to education on the basis of religion. This amounts to discrimination, and as Muslim leaders, we will not keep quiet," he said.

Bille said it was unacceptable for students to be sent away from school because of their religious dress, and called for the matter to be addressed through the appropriate education authorities.

The latest incident comes about a month after the Marsabit Interfaith Council reportedly reached an agreement on the wearing of hijab in schools.

The Muslim community is now seeking clarification from education authorities on the implementation of the agreement, saying a

memorandum of understanding allowing Muslim girls to wear hijab in schools had allegedly been disregarded.

The incident is not the first reported dispute over hijab in Kenyan schools.

Earlier this year, St Mary's Lwak Girls' Secondary School in Siaya County barred a Grade 10 Muslim student from wearing hijab while at school.

The matter sparked debate among Muslim leaders and Members of Parliament, including discussions at the National Assembly over the rights of Muslim learners to observe their faith while accessing education.

The Marsabit community is now calling for intervention by education officials to clarify the status of the agreement and prevent further disruption to the education of Muslim learners.

Loving Allah

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Then I will say, "For Your sake and for the sake of Your Prophet." And then You will say, "You have spoken the truth."

Sa'd (raḍīy Allāhu 'anhu) related this incident to his son and said, "The du'ā' of 'Abdullāh b.Jaḥsh was better than my du'ā': I saw him at the end of the day. (He was martyred) and his nose and ears were hanging on a thread."

Allāhu Akbar! The Companions did not just verbally affirm their love for Allah, but they proved their love with their actions.

Do We Truly Love Allah?

How do we know if we truly love Allah?

Are our claims of loving him genuine?

Allah says, "Say: If you (sincerely) love Allah, then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive your sins.

For Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful" (Surah Al-Imran 3:31). Thus, the litmus test of loving Allah is whether one follows and obeys the Messenger (Peace be upon). Ibn Rajab (rahimahullāh) writes, "Whosoever loves Allah and His Messenger sincerely from his heart, it will necessitate that he loves in his heart what Allah and His Messenger love; hate what they hate; be pleased with what pleases them;

and be displeased with what displeases them; and his limbs and body will then conform to whatever this loving and hating necessitate."

Abū Ya'qūb al-Nahrujūrī said, "Whosoever claims to love Allah, – Mighty and Majestic is He – but doesn't comply with Allah in His commands, his claim is false. For every lover that does not fear Allah, is deluded."

Attaining the love of Allah is a journey. It may be that at the beginning, one is unable to fully love what Allah loves as his heart is imprisoned by his desires.

Riyadha College launches TVET institution in Lamu

The Riyadha College of Islamic Studies has officially launched a Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institution in Lamu, opening a new chapter in skills development and youth empowerment in the coastal region.

The institution was launched on Friday, September 11, 2026, following a public forum on "Beyond Vision 2030" held at the Lamu Youth Alliance Hall.

The initiative was spearheaded by the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) Lamu Sub-County Chapter in partnership with the historic Riyadha Mosque.

The transition of the long-standing Riyadha Islamic Centre into a registered TVET hub is expected to provide young people with practical and marketable skills while complementing their religious education. The launch was officiated by Principal Secretary in the State Department for Science, Technology and Innovation, Prof. Abdurazaq Shaukat.

Addressing the gathering, Prof. Shaukat

said the institution would equip young people with skills aimed at improving employability, promoting entrepreneurship and supporting sustainable livelihoods.

He pledged his support for the college, noting that its technology-focused vision was aligned with ongoing infrastructure and development projects in Lamu County.

Ahead of the launch, SUPKEM and Riyadha Mosque hosted a public forum bringing together community leaders, youth and Islamic scholars to discuss the future of work, Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET) and the importance of skills development. The establishment of the institution marks an effort to combine vocational training with Islamic studies, giving students an opportunity to acquire both religious knowledge and practical skills needed in the modern labour market.

The initiative follows a similar integration of vocational training and Islamic education at the Mombasa-based Siraj Rahman College of Islamic Studies.

In May 2026, academic programmes at

Siraj Rahman College received recognition from the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Curriculum Development, Assessment and Certification Council (TVET CDACC), paving the way for greater integration of vocational and Islamic education.

The model is expected to enable students to pursue employment, entrepreneurship and other economic opportunities while maintaining a strong foundation in Islamic studies.

The launch was attended by SUPKEM National Vice Chairman Sheikh Shariff Muhdhar Khitamy, Sheikh Al Siraj Al-Rahma Foundation Executive Director Dr Musa Shauri, SUPKEM Coast Region leaders, religious scholars, community representatives and other guests.

The Riyadha TVET initiative is expected to strengthen access to skills-based education in Lamu while contributing to efforts to prepare young people for emerging opportunities in the digital and modern economy.

Muslim Leaders Call for Greater Inclusion in Government Economic Programmes

Muslim leaders in Western Kenya have called for greater inclusion of the Muslim community in government economic programmes, urging the State to accelerate grassroots development and expand access to affordable and Shariah-compliant financing.

The leaders from Kakamega, Busia, Vihiga, Bungoma and Trans Nzoia counties said greater participation in economic programmes was essential to tackling poverty, creating jobs and improving livelihoods at the grassroots.

Speaking during the inaugural Gumzo la Uchumi Mashinani Muslim Public Participation Forum at Bukhungu International Stadium in Kakamega on Thursday, Kakamega Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya (CIPK) chairman Sheikh Idris Luvare Muhammad called for sustained engagement between the government and Muslim communities on economic development.

Sheikh Luvare said the integration of Shariah-compliant finance, ethical entrepreneurship and social welfare systems could help address inequality and improve financial inclusion.

"Economic development is essential for reducing poverty, promoting financial inclusion and empowering communities," he said.

The forum, held under the theme "Empowering Our Community Through Unity, Education, Economic Growth and Social Responsibility," brought together Muslim religious leaders, entrepreneurs, women, youth and other stakeholders to discuss economic opportunities and the implementation of government programmes at

the grassroots. Participants also discussed ways of strengthening public participation in monitoring the implementation and progress of the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) in local communities.

A key highlight of the forum was the launch of the Western Muslim Council (WEMUCO) Savings and Credit Cooperative Society (SACCO), which is expected to expand access to finance and promote economic empowerment among Muslims in the region. The SACCO was launched by Principal Secretary for National Treasury and Economic Planning Dr Boniface Makokha alongside Kakamega Governor Fernandes Barasa, who contributed Sh300,000 as seed capital towards its establishment.

The initiative is expected to strengthen financial inclusion, support enterprise development and provide Muslims in Western Kenya with greater access to Shariah-compliant financial services.

Dr Makokha said the Gumzo la Uchumi Mashinani initiative was designed to take economic dialogue directly to communities and ensure government policies respond to the realities facing ordinary citizens.

He identified three key objectives of the initiative: sharing achievements under BETA within specific localities, listening to the views of wananchi and building a network of trusted and empowered leaders and ambassadors.

The PS said the government remained committed to supporting grassroots economic initiatives capable of improving livelihoods and creating opportunities for citizens. He stressed that meaningful development required collaboration between government,

communities and other stakeholders who understand the challenges facing local populations. State Department for National Government Coordination Principal Secretary Ahmed Abdisalan said the initiative was also creating opportunities for greater accountability in matters concerning the national economy.

Governor Barasa described the launch of the WEMUCO SACCO as a significant step towards expanding financial inclusion and accelerating grassroots economic growth in Western Kenya.

He said SACCOs were important vehicles for wealth creation at the community level by providing access to affordable financing, supporting businesses and creating employment opportunities.

Barasa said his administration had embraced inclusivity in its programmes and would continue working to ensure development opportunities reached all residents.

He added that the forum provided an important platform for Muslim leaders, women, youth and entrepreneurs to engage government officials on economic opportunities and discuss how communities could participate more effectively in the country's development agenda.

The forum also provided community members with an opportunity to raise challenges affecting their economic progress and propose solutions.

Those attending included Western Regional Commissioner Allan Macharia, CIPK National Chairman Abdallah Ateka, Sheikh Idris Luvare Muhammad, Muslim religious leaders and other stakeholders.

Former Deputy Chief Kadhi Calls for Dedicated Islamic Finance Law

Former Deputy Chief Kadhi Sheikh Rashid Ali Omar has called for the establishment of a dedicated legal and regulatory framework for Islamic finance in Kenya, saying existing banking laws do not fully reflect the sector's distinctive principles and operating structure.

Speaking at the Islamic Finance Forum and Dialogue 2026 in Nairobi last week, Sheikh Rashid said Islamic banking currently operates within the framework of the Banking Act and the Central Bank of Kenya Act, despite significant differences between Islamic and conventional financial systems.

He said some monetary policy instruments and prudential requirements applied by regulators may not be fully aligned with the principles governing Sharia-compliant finance.

"Islamic banking operates under the Banking Act and Central Bank of Kenya Act," Sheikh Rashid said, stressing the need for legislation that recognises the specific

structure and requirements of Islamic finance. Islamic finance prohibits the charging and payment of interest, known as *riba*, and places restrictions on transactions involving excessive uncertainty and speculation. Instead, financing arrangements are structured around permissible trade, investment and asset-backed transactions.

Sheikh Rashid said applying conventional regulatory requirements without adequately considering these differences could create challenges for Islamic financial institutions as they seek to develop and expand their products and services.

He urged policymakers, regulators and industry stakeholders to pursue reforms that would provide Islamic finance with a clearer legal and regulatory foundation.

According to Sheikh Rashid, a dedicated framework would also help address areas where existing monetary policy and prudential mechanisms may not readily fit the operational model of Islamic banks and other Sharia-compliant financial institutions.

The call comes as Islamic finance continues to establish a presence in Kenya, with banks and other financial institutions offering products structured to comply with Islamic principles.

Industry stakeholders have previously identified regulatory and policy issues as areas requiring attention to support the sector's further development.

The forum brought together stakeholders to examine the growth of Islamic finance and challenges affecting the industry.

Sheikh Rashid said strengthening the legal framework would provide greater certainty for financial institutions while supporting the expansion of Sharia-compliant financial products to a wider section of the population.

He called for closer engagement among government agencies, regulators, financial institutions and Islamic finance experts to develop reforms suited to Kenya's financial sector and the specific requirements of Islamic finance.

Wang'uru Jamia Mosque land case set for judgment at Nyeri Court of Appeal

The Court of Appeal in Nyeri is set to deliver its judgment on Friday, September 25, 2026, in a long-running land ownership dispute involving Wang'uru Jamia Mosque in Kirinyaga County.

The dispute centres on land parcel Mwea/Tebere/B/199, on which Wang'uru Jamia Mosque, a madrasa and several commercial and residential properties serving the local Muslim community are situated. The case involves the Wang'uru Jamia Mosque Committee, the estate of the late Ndegwa Warui and other interested parties.

The mosque committee appealed to the Court of Appeal after a previous court decision affected the community's occupation of part of the disputed land. Nairobi-based advocate Ali Mahmud Mohamed is representing the mosque committee in the appeal.

Wang'uru Jamia Mosque Committee chairman Ismail Bakhit maintains that the Muslim community has a legitimate claim to the land, which he says was allocated to the community by the then Kirinyaga County Council in 1980.

According to Bakhit, an allotment letter was subsequently issued in 2004, recognising the community's use of the property for the mosque. He said the community also obtained the necessary approvals to develop the mosque and madrasa.

"The piece of land on which the mosque stands was allocated to the Muslim community by the defunct Kirinyaga County Council in 1980, and a letter of allotment was issued confirming the use of the land as a mosque," Bakhit said.

Court records show that the ownership

dispute is part of a much older succession case concerning the estate of Ndegwa Warui. The High Court at Kerugoya has previously dealt extensively with competing claims over Mwea/Tebere/B/199, including claims concerning its registration, subdivision and alleged transfers.

In its 2024 judgment in the succession matter, the High Court examined evidence concerning the history of the parcel and the claims by the County Government of Kirinyaga that the land had been acquired for the expansion of Wang'uru Township. The court also considered evidence from the Land Registrar and various interested parties over the status and ownership of the property.

The court records further indicate that the dispute has involved multiple parties claiming interests in portions of the original parcel, making the case one of the long-running land disputes in Wang'uru Township.

Bakhit has expressed concern that the responsibility of defending the mosque's interests has largely fallen on the local Muslim community. He said attempts to secure stronger support from national Muslim organisations had not yielded the assistance the community expected.

"This has further emboldened those with insidious plans to continue their onslaught because they know we lack strong backing from the main Muslim institutions," he said.

The chairman also said local leaders had been made aware of the community's concerns, naming area MP Mary Maingi, Kirinyaga Senator James Murango Kamau, Governor Anne Waiguru and Woman Representative Jane Njeri Maina among those approached.

The Wang'uru dispute comes amid other land-related cases involving Muslim institu-



tions in the Mount Kenya region. A separate dispute concerning Kagio Jamia Mosque in Kirinyaga has also involved competing claims over land on which a mosque and school have been established.

Muslim community leaders have described the disputes as a wider concern for the security of Islamic institutions and community properties in the region. However, allegations by some local residents that unnamed individuals are motivated by Islamophobia or are orchestrating attempts to take Muslim-owned land remain allegations and have not been established by a court.

The Court of Appeal judgment on September 25 is therefore expected to determine the next legal position in the Wang'uru Jamia Mosque land dispute, which has remained before the courts for several years.