

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

So persevere in patience.
For the promise of Allah is true
and whether We show mercy in this life some
part of what We promise them
or We take thy soul to our mercy before that
in any case it is to Us that they shall all return.

AZAD

Issue No. 40

January 2006

Eid Function 2005



■ Looking good at the fashion show



■ Kuresh and Hanif stand up for the females



■ "It was never like this in my day!"

This year's Eid function was organised by Leicester Branch. It was a packed event with a variety of activities to entertain all and of course a great time to meet up with friends and family. The youths did a magnificent job with their fashion show. Little children were captivated by the clown and of course we had the usual raffle prizes. Read on for Huma' impressions of the function.

Ramzan is over, Eid is gone, and so has the Eid function in Leicester. The much-anticipated event this year was well worth the wait. Everyone had their glad rags on and looked super, especially those who were involved in the fashion show, although it may have been fun to see a few ridahs and jhoris! I enjoyed every minute of it. Could I have heard anymore screams when Amir Kapasi and Zainab Vanak came on stage?.... My my my what a gorgeous couple....oops... I meant what gorgeous outfits.

There were so many highlights to the day that I don't think anyone will forget this function for a

long time to come. The way Leicester has worked together could be seen on the day and for me this is what really stood out. I could see how much work had gone into the function and I think everyone involved deserves a pat on the back.

They put on such a grand performance, the fashion show, the hilarious karaoke, and how can we forget our charitable nature when it came to sponsoring Zahir to shave his hair off to fund raise for the Pakistan Earthquake appeal. He turned from Vernon Kaye to Robbie Williams.

To the food...there was Biryani....what more could Bohra's ask for?

This function was a long time due and it really showed how much our community could achieve when people worked together. Well done to all involved.

Huma Vanat
Birmingham, UK

(More pictures on page 6)

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Regional Committee Update and Announcements

Our Regional Committee members from the U. S., Canada, the U.K., Kuwait and Kenya met in Birmingham, U.K., in April 05. About a dozen persons attended at their own expense.

- The R.C. has also had regular teleconferences via the Internet.
- We have been working on our short and long term goals.

- 1) A reminder to those who made financial commitments at the last U.K. conference. Please make your donations now so that the following conference mandates can be realised:
 - Training individuals in religious matters (long term goal)
 - We have identified some people and are working on the difficult task of achieving this long-term goal.
 - A namaaz CD.
 - An Islamic / Bohra pocket calendar
 - Marsiyas and Duas translated into English
 - A booklet of Lailatul Qadr prayers
 - Further educational training
 - A world directory or contact details of reformist Bohras
 - Preservation of Islamic/Fatimid manuscripts (long term goal)

So far we have collected a total of £25,900 or 23% of the pledges. The total for the conference pledges over 1-10 years is £122,000 (approx) and we have so far collected about 21% of the pledges.

We have spent \$3250.00 Cdn on the Namaaz weekend workshop in Canada attended by 30 people.

- 2) HAJ and UMRAH 06. The R.C. is going ahead with plans for Umrah in Easter'06. Please contact us by end of December 2005 if you and your family are planning to join us. We are hoping to reside at the same hotel for Umrah, the Hilton in Mecca and Medina.

Umrah date Inshallah is April 13 to 21st 2006.

- 3) The R.C. is planning a Youth camp in Kenya in Summer 07 courtesy of our Reformists in Nairobi and Mombasa. This will be open to youth and their families from other Reformist centres.
- 4) OTHER UPCOMING ACTIVITIES of the R.C. in the near future Inshallah are:
 - A namaaz C.D.
 - An Islamic / Bohra pocket calendar
 - Marsiyas and Duas translated into English
 - A booklet of Lailatul Qadr prayers
 - Further educational training
 - A world directory or contact details of reformist Bohras

- 5) The R.C. meets once a year for communication face to face. Inshallah, the next meeting will be in April 06 in Kuwait.

Country	Year 1	Year 2	Year3-10	Collected
UK	£50,523.33	£16,973.33	£28,853.33	£16,950
USA	\$14,200.00	\$11,700.00	\$12,100.00	\$14,200
CANADA	\$5,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000
INDIA	20,000 rupees			0

RC Contacts

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Country

UK
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 Canada
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 USA
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Latest from Sweden and Norway

The Bohri Jamaats of Sweden and Norway until now had resident and African Bohri patrongoe Aamils stationed in Norway and Sweden. They performed all the rituals, sometimes with the directives from London, England. During Ramadhan and Moharrum Kothar used to send somebody "educated" from either London, India or Pakistan. Most of the Bohris are originally the refugees from Uganda - the Swedish Jamaat members, most of them being the ex-Ugandan Bohri dissidents who have now crossed the floor, like some of the Udaipuris - but still very much grudgingly autonomous or independent. There are about 25 Bohris in Norway and about 200 in Sweden (guesstimated) All was reasonably well until last month.

The African Bohri Aamil (Shk Saifuddinbhai Zakir- the Ja'amiya Mulla converted to Sheikh)) who was the resident Aamil for Australia, New Zealand and Oceania-Fiji (no Bohris in Fiji though, but sounds sexy to the Kotharis) was asked to leave the lucrative Australian Jammah after seven years or so. He had built the mosque there and Aqua Moola had opened it. He was posted to a little Jamaat near Mumbai. He has a wife and four children.

Sh.Zakir and his family did not like living in a Mumbai's village one bed sitter one bit. He had a brainwave. His wife is a Bohri Swedish and her parents are from Sweden so he promptly moved to Sweden and

somehow convinced the Kothar that a full time Aamil is required in Norway/Sweden - although all his own immediate family from Kenya now reside in the UK - rumours are that he has a father and over 10 brothers and no sisters.

Sh.Zakir and family after spending a few months in Norway and Sweden at the mumineen's homes, directed that the Swedish and Norway Jamaat now pay for his and his family's full-time upkeep and maintenance. He immediately moved to a luxurious villa costing over 10,000 Kroners a month and expected both the Jamaats to share his stipend and stay in Scandinavia.

The Swedish and Norwegian Jamaat members are now up in arms and are upset that they should maintain unneeded full time Aamil who does not want to work outside the mosque but live off the ex-Ugandan refugees.

They hope that either London or Kothar do something about this appointment on which they had no say or control. It was a unilateral Kothar appointment. Failing this, they will have no alternative but to ask the Swedish/Norwegian immigration authorities to send this Aamil and his family packing back to Mumbai or London. Perhaps he and the family are also Australian citizens as well.

Sent to AZAD by **Isufali Kundwalla**

Report from Kenya

The club premises need extensive repairs and redecoration and the committee has sent out appeals for funds. For those who do not know, the club, called Sir Yusufali Sports Club is the Centre at which our Group activities are carried out.

At our majlis we started reciting 'Dua Mangtihu'. We also started reading a few pages of Daimul Islam's Gujarati version. Some of our marsiyas are also written in the English Alphabet

and distributed prior to the majlis so that as many as possible of the attendees can join in the recital.

We had a very enjoyable 'Fungo' function on 25th September to welcome Ramadhan. This was very well attended. After a sumptuous meal, games were played.

Aftab Jivanjee
Nairobi, Kenya

Fund Raising

Members of our community have busy fund-raising for natural disasters around the globe, the most recent being Zahir Kaderbhai generously offering to shave his head at this year's Eid function for the Pakistan Earthquake victims.

Thank you for everyone sponsoring me £1,675.75 for Tsunami appeal. 2.5 days and 60 hours - **Aqeel Kapasi**, Nuneaton, UK
Aqeel informs me this was a really difficult task for him!! Ed.

Peterborough Jumaat members have raised just over £1100 via donations and a charity auction, held on the 21st Ramzaan, for the earthquake appeal in Pakistan. The money has been sent to the Islamic relief appeal.

Naushad Chauhan, Peterborough, UK

Sayedna attempts to take credit for Saifee Hospital

Today Sayedna Burhanuddin Saheb is taking undue credit for building a grand Hospital in Bombay. Actual credit for this Hospital today goes to two grandsons of Sir Adamji Peerbhoy namely, Advocate Abid Hatim Merchant and Mansoor Jaffer bhoy Jani. Let us understand this.

Similar to the land of Sir Adamji Peerbhoy Sanatorium Trust on which Saifee Hospital has now been built, the community's Abdul Kader E Ebrahim Trust and E.A. Currim Trust's land near Byculla in Bombay known as 'Dawood Baugh' was 1130 square worth more than Rs. 300 Crores.

As in case of Sir Adamji Peerbhoy Sanatorium Trust the original trustees of Dawood Baugh were compelled to transfer the entire property in the name of Sayedna Taher Saifuddin.

In 1963 two years before his death Sayedna Taher Saifuddin made an announcement to build a 22 story "Saifee Jubilee Technical Institution" to be constructed at the cost of Rs. 20 Crores. It was a biggest event in the Bohra Community. The photographs of Sayedna with the President of India and other political dignitaries were widely publicised. New York times carried a full page paid advertisement. But for years nothing happened and ultimately in 1984 the entire property was sold to one Amir Builders and money pocketed by the Saifee Foundation Trust.

How could the Sayedna's administration publicly cheat a man of the stature of the President of India, the community and the public at large and get away with it?

It was because then the Dawoodi Bohra Reform Movement was not strong enough. There was non like Abid Merchant or Mansoor Jani to pull the Sayedna's trustees in the law courts and compel them to built the technical institution as it is done in the case of Saifee Hospital.

Strangely Mr. Ismail Kanga the son of the famous reformist, late Khan Bahadur Mohammed Ali Kanga, was pushed in June, 1965 as a trustee of Sir Adamji Peerbhoy Sanatorium Trust with "a proposal to construct a Residential-cum-Hospital Building" on G.S. no. 36 & 37 Maharishi Kurve Road (Charni Road) i.e. on Sir Adamji Peerbhoy Sanatorium Trust land. This was quietly done when Sayedna Tahir Saifuddin had died and entire community was kept busy in mourning and breast-beating.

The trustees by manauvoring the officials in Bombay Municipal Corporation got the plans of "Residential-cum-Hospital" passed. It will be a shock to the Dawoodi Bohras in general and Muslims in peticular that in this plan a Bank was shown in place of the existing mosque and a ladies' lavatory in place of Sir Adamji's existing Darghah.

In order to demolish the existing structures of Sanatorium buildings, which were registered under Charity Commissioner, court's permission was required. So when the trustees went to the court for permission Sir Adamji's grand son, Abid Merchant came to know about the devilish scheme and halted the efforts of userspers.

Advocate Abid Merchant and Mansoor Jani fought the case in City Civil Court and High

Court in Bombay and in Supreme Court at Delhi bearing themselves the entire high cost of the cases. They had the courage and dedication to challenge mighty priesthood. They were alone in front of lawyers and solicitors army of Sayedna. They were cursed, humiliated and discouraged. But they stood firms. All the files brought from B.M.C., Judiciary, Charity Commissioner etc. were stolen from the court room. Sayedna's trustees tried to use Sir Adamji's private plot, backside cemetary land, Sanatorium as Nursing Home etc. but Abid Merchant exposed them in the court and never allowed them to succeed. They were also sucessful in insisting free beds in Saifee Hospital for the Dawoodi Bohras and even for reformist Bohras. They not only fought this case upto the Supreme Court but Mansoor Jani filed a case against the trustees with Charity commissioner for unregistered Saifee Hospital Trust and for not submitting the audited accounts for 13 years, criminal case with Bombay police for illegally transferring the trust money of Sanatorium Trust in the personal accounts of Ali Asghar Kalimuddin and Mudreka Zakiuddin. They caught the trustees on various fronts so much that the Senior Council of Dawat-Hadiya, Mudreka T. Zakiuddin came bagging to them for out of court settlement which they refused. Inspite of all odds they saw to it that Sir Adamji Peerbhoy's name and memory remains and the property is utilised for the benefit of the Humanity.

Posted on the Dawoodi Bohra Reformist website www.dawoodi-bohras.com by **Saifudin Insaf**, India

Latest news from Udaipur Reformists

The Bohra Youth Medical Relief Society has come a long way in its endeavour to provide succour and relief to the needy among the Dawoodi Bohras and the suffering humanity at large.

By the grace of God and with the support of our valuable donors & well wishers, we have made excellent progress in the last few years. Our commitment to the suffering humanity at large does not permit us to stop here. We got to move on in a positive direction. We keep on adding to our services and new expansions regularly come up.

Organizing blood donation camps, establishment of a medicine bank to provide free medicines to the poor, vaccinations for Polio, subsidized vaccinations for Hepatitis "B", Baby shows and

health awareness camps for diabetes, asthma, eye care, gynae and cardiology are notable achievements for the institution.

We had recently organized a very succesful Free Medical Check-up Camp on 23rd Jan, 2005. with the help of a very efficient and dedicated team of specialized doctors from Ahmedabad . Next we organized an Eye camp on 7th Aug, 2005 registered a record no. of 1250 (one thousand two hundred & fifty) patients. Out of these, 102(one hundred and two) were operated for Cataract and other related diseases. Others who had minor problems were given free Medicines. Besides, we distributed Free specs to around 400(four hundred) patients .

Besides, we have a very ambitious plan of

transforming this existing center into a full fledged Hospital . We have already started working on this project and your support to this cause will be highly appreciated.

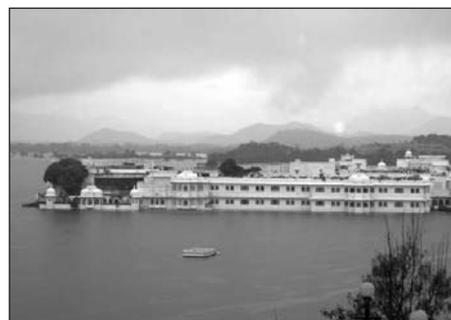
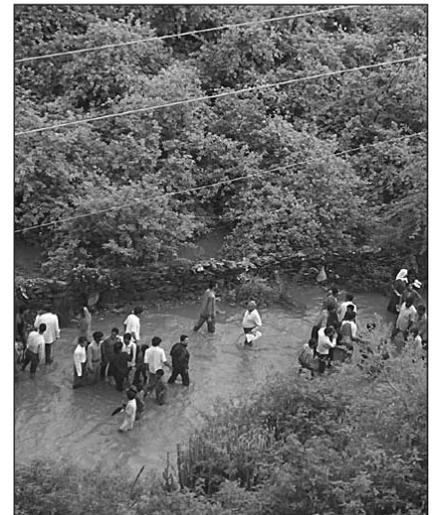
We, therefore earnestly request you to keep generously supporting us in our noble cause and we assure you that your contribution to this cause will be gainfully utilized by us. Your commitment towards helping such poor & needy patients is really appreciable.

Thanking you and looking forward to your mutual co-operation at all times.

Anees Meyaji,
PRESIDENTA. T. Hassanally.
Honorary Secretary

Udaipur after the rains

For those who were lucky enough to visit Udaipur in 2003, you will remember how dry it was due to the lack of rain. These photos show how wonderful the place can be when it does eventually rain.



Protests as wedding solemnised by leader of different sect

What's caused divide between Alavi Bohras?

Ahmedabad Newline

Vadodara, September 6: WHEN Haji Mohsin Marchawala decided to get his son's marriage solemnised by a religious leader who is not from his community, little did he know that his action would create dissensions among members of the close-knit Alavi Bohra community. So much so that some conservative members of the community are now demanding Marchawala's social boycott.

Community members say this is for the first time in the 400 years of history of Alavi Bohras that a call for ex-communication for somebody has been given. In Vadodara, live about 6,000 Alavi Bohras.

For Alavi Bohras, the Saiyedna is the traditional religious leader and he holds an all-important position in the community. For every religious and social occasion, his permission is sought and also an amount is offered to him as nazrana.

But what Marchawala did was that he approached Shehar-e-Qazi for the solemnisation of his son's wedding, defying the Saiyedna. Shehar-e-Qazi usually solemnises marriages of the mainstream Sunni community.

Marchawala did this with the support of Alavi Jamat Trust which enjoys administrative powers over community affairs and properties. The trust takes a liberal approach to community affairs. Marchawala claims that Saiyedna's officials had given him the date for his second son's marriage but were dilly-dallying over officiating the

ceremony. "They asked for Rs 71,000 which I could not afford, so I decided to call Shehar-e-Qazi," said Marchawala.

On Tuesday evening, a section of community leaders met at the residence of Saiyedna Abu Hatim Taiyyab and called for strict action against Marchawala as well as Alavi Jamat Trust leaders. What they contested was that there were allegations that payment was being forced, aspersions on Saiyedna's office, and the support extended by Alavi Jamat Trust.

Another thing that irks the conservative members of the community is that the marriage instead of being solemnised at Saiyedna's residence was done at the Alavi Jamaat mosque. "Our politeness is being considered as weakness, a 400-year-old tradition has been broken in such a manner for the first time...strict action should be taken against them," said Mazun Halim Zakiuddin, Saiyedna's son.

At the meeting, the conservative members called for a signature campaign to go for a social boycott.

"We have never ex-communicated anyone so far, but we will seek legal opinion as to what action can be taken," said Zakiuddin.

But trustees of Alavi Jamat Trust are unfazed. They say that the marriage stands valid and that earlier too Shehar-e-Qazi had officiated over some Alavi Bohra marriages.

They also rule out a case of ex-communication or social boycott.

Forwarded to AZAD by
Yusuf & Farida Kundawala

The Rama Foundation, Thailand

The Rama Foundation has run by Reformist, A.T. Hassanally in Thailand. If you are ever in that area, pay him a visit and you will be assured of the traditional, good, Bohra hospitality.

Dear Sirs, Assalamoalaikum.

In response of your e-mail under subject "Ramazan Donation" we would like to explain regarding "RAMA Foundation" and our activities. Since the formation of this Foundation we are having base at my home up till today, where the Foundation has no overhead at all. No rent, no electric bills, no water supply charges, no staff payment or whatsoever usually

cost running the office. All works is carried on by volunteers.

Nobody is paid for their time or knows how. Our expenses occurred only for renting coach, to reach rural areas, medicines and patients operation expenses as the case may be. Perhaps you man consider to join us in one of our trips next year. You are most welcomed.

I will send you our forth coming year's itinerary as soon as it will be available.

May Allah showers his blessings on you and your family in this Holy month and bestow upon you vigor and virtue with sound health and happiness throughout your long life. Amin.

Friends UK is one year old: Paper anniversary!

The friends UK website, designed to bring young Bohra friends around the globe together was launched at the World Conference in the UK in 2004. It now celebrates its first anniversary.

I'd like to wish everyone a happy first anniversary. I would send you all some form of a paper gift..but then for those of you who are reading this, then you already have it, its Azad!

After a successful World Conference last year, we launched our first progressive friends website,
<http://www.dawoodi-bohras.org.uk/friends>.

What a year it has been..in the first month we had an incredible 55,000 hits on the site, this is the same as having approximately 1000 visitors to the site. So thanks to everyone who's been looking though the site. In September 2005 we had about 200 people looking at the site, which is still quite an achievement!

What is the site for?... Well basically it is to allow people to make friends whether they married or NOT!! It provides a safe way to check someone out, and make a friend. Don't worry no ones looking at you! If you don't feel comfortable giving out your email address, to other people then don't worry it has a built in messaging system so all communications can be carried out within a safe environment. We also have an online chat system so if you want to chat to a group of people then you can do that live. For those of you looking for a longer term partner, then we have a search criteria that can match to your requirements... But remember, its not just for those who want to get married!!!

If an aunty or your parents for that matter have been pestering you in giving your 'bio-data' otherwise known as your personal stats and you've felt uncomfortable with that, because you, like most others, want to find that perfect person all on your own, then this could be the way forward...

Have fun and checkout
www.dawoodi-bohra.org.uk/friends
Web team

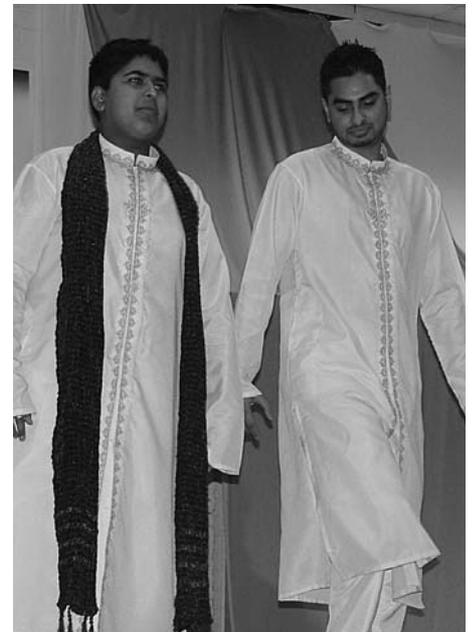
Eid Function 2005 continued



■ Kuresh provides a Canadian flavour



■ Kalim Vanat, President of Leicester Branch, welcomes everyone to the function



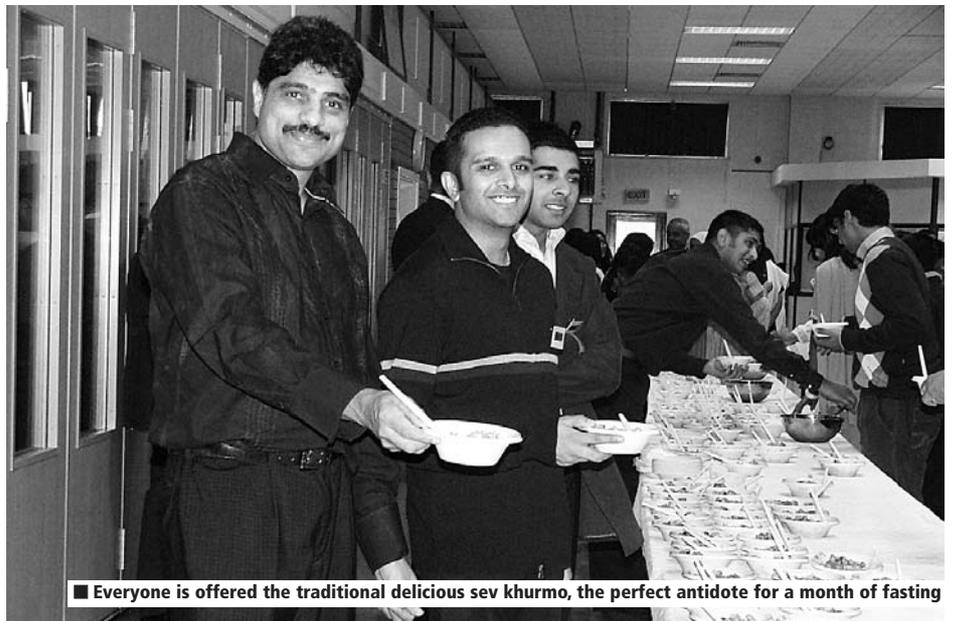
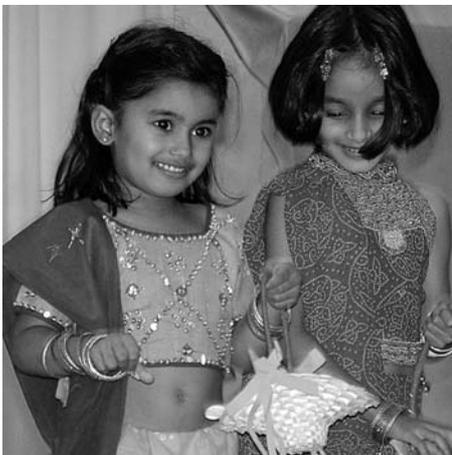
■ Zahir comes clean for the earthquake fund raiser



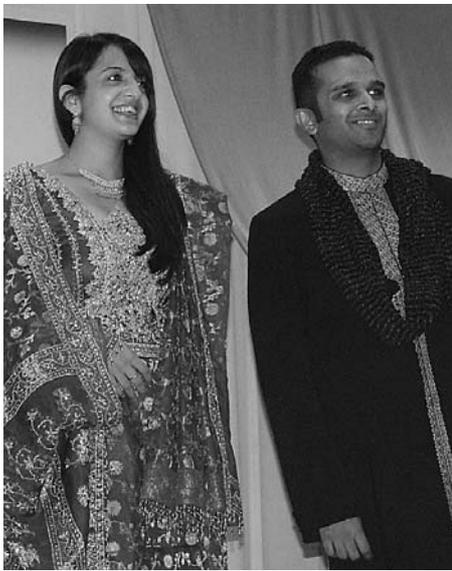
■ Murashia from the children



■ "This is the way it should look!"



■ Everyone is offered the traditional delicious sev khurmo, the perfect antidote for a month of fasting



■ Zubeda and Ruky sell the annual calendar

International Badminton Umpire

Our community has many hidden talents in the arts, science, business, education and sports fields. Rizvan Sadikot from Birmingham, UK, is a well established badminton referee (and a volleyball umpire). He is good enough and lucky enough to travel world-wide refereeing or umpiring. Read his account of his recent trip to the USA and Canada.

I was selected by the International Badminton Federation to go to Anaheim, California (USA) as a Technical Official. I had to help organise a group of International and Local Line Judges and work as an adviser to the Line Judge management team of Carol Bryan and Lily Lei.

I arrived in Anaheim on the Saturday evening, in time to attend an initial introduction and line judges briefing the following day. There were 14 International line judges from around the world, two of them from England plus about sixty local volunteers for the tournament.

Everyone was asked to work on a rotating basis, such as the next available court, not assigned to a court. I think most of the international and local LJs felt this was a fair system so that no particular team worked on the "television court". The groups changed to a pool of 8 LJs in 3 Teams during the quarterfinal on Friday and the semi-final on Saturday because only two courts were used on those days. For the finals on Sunday the organisers reduced the groups to 2 teams.

As we all know that all the best-laid plans sometimes don't work, so I also had to work as a line judge to make up a team. I didn't mind because it gave me an insight into how the line judging duties worked.

There were some minor problems at the beginning of the event, which the experienced LJs helped to resolve without great difficulty. As the tournament progressed all the LJs started to enjoy the routine of the day. The first 4 days' duties were divided into 2 sessions which meant most of us had some time off to enjoy the local attractions and go sight seeing around Anaheim and Los Angeles.

On Saturday evening, after the end of play, most of the officials and organisers went for a celebratory dinner at J T Smiets, a local restaurant. At the dinner Lily Lei on behalf of the Line Judge Team presented all the International Line Judges and Technical officials with a thank you gift bag. The Int LJs before the Finals reciprocated this gesture.

On Monday morning, after the tournament, most of us said our goodbyes to each other and started making our way home or travel on

to other destinations in the USA for a short holiday or visit friends and family

I personally would not say this was one of the best-organised tournaments I have attended, but what the heck, I made new friends, renewed old acquaintances and enjoyed myself whole heartedly

WORLD BADMINTON JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

Richmond Canada
21st-30th October 2004

I was invited by the Badminton Line Judges Association at the request of Badminton Canada to the championship as a Line judge. I was part of a team of ten Line judges from the U.K. and because a fellow team member was unable to attend. I was asked and honoured to be the team leader.

We arrived at our destination on various dates and times before the event. We stayed at the 4 star Executive Inn near the venue, The Minouri Arena. The day before the start of the event the manager of line judges, Mr Abdul Sheik and Chief executive of Badminton Canada Mr Ajay Patel, requested a meeting with the group from U.K. They felt that as the most experienced group at the tournament, we would be able to assist them and their fellow organisers. I think they were overawed by the total years of experience of the group as line judges.

The championship consists of the national team event followed by the individual event. On the first morning we were met at hotel reception and taken to the arena where we were introduced as International line judges, because I believe Abdul and Ajay felt as we had attended so many events worldwide as line judges. We were asked to be court captains and not line judges, look after the local volunteer line judges and make sure all the matches were line judged. We were also requested by the Championship Referee to line judge the team and individual finals

When we were not on duty the organisers had arranged sightseeing trips to Vancouver, which is very close to Richmond and also not forgetting shopping trips to bring back souvenirs.

The one thing we are all proud of is making new friends wherever we attend any tournaments. This Championship was no different.

Watch out for my next instalment of the badminton world

Rizvan Sadikot, Birmingham, UK

Some personal stories of growing up in Reformism

I lived in Bombay, in Nagpada - the centre of "pragati mandal" reformist friends and met with my grandfather Kamruddin Kapasi (Ghadakwalla). I was a kid and I gained a lot of knowledge about the Reformist movement and the several personalities who sacrificed their time and worked really hard to preserve our human rights against Kothar's dictatorship.

They fought for progress, welfare, a better Islamic education system and more. There were no medical clinics or hospitals for the Dawoodi Bohra community. I will never forget these personalities who are no more, may Allah bless their souls with peace, ameen. These people are as follows:

- Family members of Sir Adamjee Peerbhoy Rafiuddin
- Mullah Abbas Aurangabadi
- Fazel Abbas Lakdawala (Headmaster)
- Nazimbhai
- Zaitoon Kapasi (Bhavnagar) state of Gujrat
- Rasool Kaka Sulemanji (Leicester)
- Ismail Luqmani (But I never met him)

Fazleabbas Lakdawala was my Headmaster when I was studying at Dhroll boarding school, also recognised as the Curimjee Jeevanjee Mauritiuswalla D boarding in Dhroll in the state of Gujrat. I am really proud to say that the the boarding school was built and donated by Curimjee Jeevanjee (Mauritius) for poor Dawoodi Bohra people. Unfortunately the Kothar proclaimed baraath on all those who studied there. This boarding school has now changed its name to Sir Adamjee Peerbhoy Rafiuddin Yatim Khana in Dhroll in the state of Gujrat.

The very first reformist newspaper, the "Bulletin", was published and edited by our great strong leader late Mr Norman Contractor who was so popular and the biggest manufacturer of ink and colour paint in the state of Maharashtra. I am proud of him because he was a noble man of peace and was given an award by the Maharashtra Government. The Bulletin Newspaper was officially sold in Bombay and I used to deliver it door to door to earn some pocket money.

The DBWS Reformist Conference 2004 was a success and I was pleased to meet many guests from abroad. Thanks to DBWS's members and everybody who participated in carrying out our conference with joy.

Thank you especially to Mr Fazel Hasanali Kapasi of Birmingham whose speech touched and surprised me because he reminded me of my oldest thoughts and also of more recent matters. He talked about truth and wrong, which the wrong believe we should not follow. I hope and wish that we all, especially the youth, follow his guidelines for the progress of our DBWS welfare. Thank you very much my most dear Fazel Kapasi of Birmingham and everybody who shared with him.

Abbas Kapasi, Grenoble, France

Munajaat (Dua)

One of the tasks set by the World conference in 2004 for the Regional Committee was to develop a collective identity. To help us do this, we are proposing that all the majlises end with this dua world-wide. We hope you find it a suitable way to end our gatherings. Please keep this and pass it on to as many people as you know.

Karam mangtey hai(n), dua mangtey hai(n),
Ilahi hum tujh sey dua mangtey hai(n)
*We ask for your generosity and blessings,
O Allah, we pray to You for your blessings.*

Ata kar tu shaan-e-karimi ka sadqa
Bless us with Your bounties

Dila dey Ilahi rahimi ka sadqa
Grant us forgiveness and mercy, O Allah

Na mangengey tujh sey to mangengey kis sey
Only You can we turn to O Allah

Terey hai(n) hum tujh sey dua mangtey hai(n)
Show us with Your kindness

Karam mangtey hai(n), dua mangtey hai(n),
Ilahi hum tujh sey dua mangtey hai(n)
*We ask for your generosity and blessings,
O Allah, we pray to You for your blessings.*

Ilahi tujhey wasta panjatan ka
O Allah we implore you for Panjatan's sake

Ho shaadaab ghuncha dilon key chaman ka
That our hearts bloom with goodness

Ye daaman hamara murado(n) se bhar do
Fill our coffers with our hearts' desires

Karam ki nazar sey dua mangtey hai(n)
We pray that You grant us generosity

Karam mangtey hai(n), dua mangtey hai(n),
Ilahi hum tujh sey dua mangtey hai(n)
*We ask for your generosity and blessings,
O Allah, we pray to You for your blessings.*

Jo muflis hai unko tu daulat ata kar
Bless those who are poor with wealth

Jo bimar hai(n) unko sehat ata kar
Grant good health to those who are sick

Garibo pey tu reham kar ya Ilahi
Show Your grace on those who are poor

Marizon ki khatir shifaa mangtey hai(n)
We implore You to heal the sick O Allah

Karam mangtey hai(n), dua mangtey hai(n),
Ilahi hum tujh sey dua mangtey hai(n)
*We ask for your generosity and blessings,
O Allah, we pray to You for your blessings.*

Ilahi hamai(n) shaado-masrur rakhna
O Allah keep us happy and contented

Balaa(n) se humko sadaa duur rakhna
Keep calamities at bay from us, always

Pareshaniya(n) ham ko ghery hui hai(n)
Worries have overtaken us

Pareshaniyo sai riha mangtey hai(n)
We pray for freedom from our worries

Karam mangtey hai(n), dua mangtey hai(n),
Ilahi hum tujh sey dua mangtey hai(n)
*We ask for your generosity and blessings,
O Allah, we pray to You for your blessings.*

Huwa hei na maayus tere sawali
*No one has come away from You
disappointed*

Nahi terey dar sey phira koi khaali
*Nor returned empty handed from Your
doorstep*

Nahi Iltija ek hamari hi khatir
We do not plead just for ourselves

Hum sabke liye muddua mangtey hai(n)
But we pray for all others too O Allah

Karam mangtey hai(n), dua mangtey hai(n),
Ilahi hum tujh sey dua mangtey hai(n)
*We ask for your generosity and blessings,
O Allah, we pray to You for your blessings.*

Ba haq'qai payambar, wa ba haq'qai Ali
By the Grace of The Prophet and Ali (SAW)

Ba haq'qai Batul aur Shabbaro-Shabbir
By the Grace of Batul and Shabbir (AS)

Ba haq'qai Imamuzzaman ya Ilahi
By the Grace of The Imam in seclusion

Hum tujhse dili muddua mangtey hai(n)
Our hearts seek Your blessings O Allah

Karam mangtey hai(n), dua mangtey hai(n),
Ilahi hum tujh sey dua mangtey hai(n)
*We ask for your generosity and blessings,
O Allah, we pray to You for your blessings.*

Three Bohra Scholars who have contributed greatly towards recent progress in Ismaili studies

Zahid Ali (1888-1958)

Born in Hyderabad, Deccan, to a distinguished family. His father was a learned shaykh and a prominent leader in the community. He received his early education in the Dar al-Ulum madrasa in Hyderabad and later in Saify Daras, Surat. After obtaining D.Phil. in Arabic from Oxford University he joined Nizam College, Hyderabad, as a professor of Arabic and later became vice-Principal of the College.

He was fluent in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, and English. His access to an extensive range of Ismaili primary sources (in manuscript form) enabled him to produce three widely acclaimed works of research.

- 1 A critical edition in Arabic with commentary of the Diwan of the famous Fatimid poet Ibn Hani' al-Andalusi (Cairo, 1933).
- 2 History of the Fatimids in Egypt, written in Urdu (Hyderabad, 1948).
- 3 The True Nature of Our Ismaili Faith and its Organization, in Urdu (Hyderabad, 1954). It is a compendium of Ismaili doctrines as professed by the Bohras.

Zahid Ali published these works at a time when the Bohra religious establishment ruled with an iron fist and maintained very strict control of doctrinal secrecy from the community. As a result he encountered great hostility and was excommunicated.

Husayn al-Hamdani (1901-1962)

Born in Surat to an illustrious family of scholars whose genealogy goes back two centuries to the renowned scholar Shaykh Ali b. Sa'id al-Hamdani of Haraz, Yemen, who was invited to India by the thirty-ninth da'i Ibrahim Wajih al-Din. Shaykh Ali brought with him from Yemen a large collection of Isma'ili manuscripts.

Since then the family has continuously maintained its scholarly tradition and its private collection of Ismaili manuscripts, one of the finest, has benefited innumerable scholars.

Al-Hamdani received his early education from his father Shaykh Fayz Allah and obtained an MA in Arabic from Bombay University. He then traveled to England and received his Ph.D. from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. After his return he joined M. T. B. College in Surat and then was appointed Professor of Arabic at Ismail Yusuf College, Bombay. He taught there from 1932 to 1948. Then, he moved to newly- created Pakistan and was appointed Cultural Attache at the Embassy of Pakistan in Cairo, Egypt.

In 1950 he was appointed Professor of Persian and Semitic philology at the College of Dar al-Ulum in Cairo by the renowned scholar Taha Husayn, then the minister of education. Soon he was appointed Cultural Attache of the Yemen Embassy in Cairo, and was honored by the then Imam/ruler of Yemen with Yemeni citizenship.

He was fluent in English, Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Gujarati, German, and French. Besides those languages he had acquired good knowledge of ancient Semitic languages and pre-Islamic South Arabian script.

His numerous articles, such as "The Life and Times of Queen Sayyeda Arwa," "History of the Ismaili Da'wat and its Literature during the Last Phase of the Fatimid Empire," "Some Unknown Isma'ili Authors and Their Works," "The Letters of al-Mustansir bi'llah," "A Compendium of Isma'ili Esoterics," were pioneering works as they introduced the whole range of secretly preserved Ismaili literature, once thought to have been destroyed, to modern scholarship.

Among his major works is The History of the Sulayhid Dynasty and its Doctrines in Arabic (Cairo, 1955). During the last years of his life he was engaged in preparing a critical edition of Razi's Kitab al-Zina, a dictionary of Arabic-Islamic terms. Before he died he had finished one fourth of it and it was published in two parts (Cairo, 1957-58).

Asaf Ali Asghar Fyzee (1899-1981)

Born in Matheran, near Poona, to a well-known Tyabjee family of Sulaymani Bohra. His grandfather Tyabjee, the merchant prince of Bombay, visited Europe in 1853, and was one of the first Muslims in Bombay to send his sons to England for education.

Following the family tradition Fyzee studied at Cambridge University and was then called to the bar. On his return to India in 1926 he practiced law in the Bombay High Court. In 1938 he was appointed the Perry Professor of Islamic Jurisprudence and Principal of the Government Law College, Bombay.

In 1949 he was appointed as India's ambassador to Egypt. The last public office held by him was that of vice-chancellor of Jammu and Kashmir University. In recognition of his long and innumerable public services the Indian government honored him with the title "Padma Bhusan" in 1962.

He started his scholarly career with the publication of Introduction to the Study of Muhammadan Law in 1931. The first edition of his Outlines of Muhammadan Law, published in 1949 and followed by several subsequent editions, still remains the best introduction to the Anglo-Muhammadan law of the Indian subcontinent. However, it should be noted that the first chapter entitled "Introduction to the study of Muhammadan law," is dated as it was written almost half a century ago.

His various articles on Isma'ili law and its founder Qazi Nu'man were pioneering. Da'a'im al-Islam, the most important Isma'ili law book, was edited by him (Cairo, 1951-61). The fruits of his research are summed up in Compendium of Fatimid Law (Simla, 1969). He was a great advocate of change in Muslim personal and family law.

On reinterpretation of Islam his short volume A Modern Approach to Islam (Bombay, 1963) is quite remarkable. He is considered an eminent scholar of Muslim law in the Indian subcontinent.

Three Bohras die in Iraq

From the London Evening Standard

Three British pilgrims killed in Iraq were sent there to pray for the ailing leader of controversial religious sect.

The Evening Standard has learned that they were told to go to the war-torn country despite Foreign Office advice that it is too dangerous.

Seffudin Makai, 39, Yahya Gulamali, 50 and Husein Mohammedali, 50, all from London died after a bus they were travelling in was ambushed by Sunni gunmen in Baghdad.

Mr Makai, a travel exchange owner from Streatham and Mr. Gulamali from Greenford, and Mr. Mohammedali from Harrow, who both ran double glazing companies were on a pilgrimage with Zehra Jafferji, 60, from Wimbledon and Ali Qiayoom, 46, from Harrow, who were both wounded.

The dead men worshipped at the Al Husaiyni Mosque in Northolt and belonged to the Dawoodi Bohra community, an offshoot sect of Shia Islam led by the 93 year old Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin from a palatial estate in Mumbai.

There are about a million Dawoodi Bohras in the world, with at least 3,000 living in Britain, half of them in London.

The pilgrims' friends and relatives are angry with community leaders who advised the group to go to Iraq to pray for the benefit of the Syedna after he visited the capital last month and said that their families have been told to stay silent.

A relative of Mr Makai said, "The mosque has hijacked everything since the incident. We are not allowed to talk to the media - they even decided what photographs should be given out, without consulting.

This control over our lives is the way it is in our community - we cannot say anything or we will face sanctions."

Another relative of one of the man said, "We have lost three wonderful, loving fathers and we are expected to hide.

I have been told not to speak to journalists and I will not risk my standing in the community."

Britain's Bohra community is divided between those who follow its traditions by paying "taxes" to the leader's local representatives and reformist disillusioned with what they perceive to be corruption at the heart of the sect.

Dr. Ali Asghar Engineer, a leading progressive based in India, told the Standard that followers were encouraged to go to Iraq and visit the shrines in Karbala and Najaf.

"This has continued despite the war and the group is likely to have business interests in sending people to Iraq", he said. "The relatives will be angry that their loved ones were endangered and killed, but they will not speak of fear of the Syedna".

He said the Syedna had a representative known as an Amil in each town and city who issues orders in his name, including the instruction for the families not to talk to the press about the shootings. "We have been campaigning for several years to end this totalitarian regime which controls so many Bohra people all over the world", said Dr. Engineer.

"It has been reduced to a cult. Most Bohra Families still have to pay seven taxes a year and when marriage and funerals take place they have to be authorised by the Syedna's people and a payment must be made."

"Each year the taxes go up. Those who are good and pay get a green card which gives them access to community events, and those who are in arrears or are suspected of having reformist sympathies are given a red card."

"The group have spread their influence in India. They are above the law. They have given to Indian politicians and senior police officials to make their activities immune from scrutiny."

Dr. Engineer added, "These families have probably paid thousands of pounds to the Syedna but I have my doubts as to whether the mosque will give them money."

Majlis etiquette

We have found some useful information on how Bohras in the moti jamaat are supposed to behave when attending majlises and when in the presence of our Sayedna Saheb. Some uncomfortable reading...

When a mumin enters the royal court of the Dai iz Zaman (tus) for Qadambosi (kissing his hands and feet) he should bear in mind that it is as though he is in the Imam's court, rather he is standing before the Panjatan Paak (a.s).

Thus he should maintain its dignity and bow down in a sajdah and kiss the ground in reverence. He should appear with a contemplation and knowledge of the Dai iz Zaman's (tus) standing and glory.

In accordance with the guidance of the Hudat Kiram (a.s) a mumin appearing before the Dai (tus) should pay heed to his Taharat and cleanliness. He should come in a state of wuzu, donning good clothes, wearing a fragrance and adorned with the beauty of Iman.

Bearing in mind the glory of the Dai (tus) and conducting himself with due decorum he should attain the honour of Qadambosi and the sawab of Haj and Umrah. He should know that performing Qadambosi is equivalent to kissing the Haja re Aswad. He should stand slightly in a calm, composed and dignified manner. Voices should not be raised. Talking amongst each other should be avoided. It is improper to laugh or merry make in any form. One should look at the Dai (tus) with reverence bearing in mind that even looking at Aqa Maula (tus) is a form of Worship (Ibadat).

One should not ill treat anyone, in the glorious presence of the Dai (tus). Even if he is ill treated by some one he should tolerate it and endure, not rebel and fight back. Any perfume or fragrance displeasing the Dai (tus) should not be applied. When a person leaves the presence of the Dai (tus) after performing Qadambosi, he should not show his back to the Dai (tus), instead walk backwards or side wards and only after one leaves the Hall (Bethak) should he turn completely.

The Tashrif (Gift) that the Dai (tus) bestows by his grace should be accepted with gratitude and should not be lessened and measured with worldly riches. He should value it as Barakat and see it as Maula's (tus) grace - not his right. When doing Araz or asking Aqa Maula (tus) anything, one should first say Joil to fidaq or Ja a la nil laho fidaq.

Embryonic Stem Cell Research - Allowed in Islam?

In the last several years there has been much discussion about the use of embryonic stem cells for research purposes. I undertook this limited research to determine what is Islam's perspective on this topic as it is a highly controversial area of research. Opinions and laws on this topic vary from religion to religion and country to country. By no means is this an extensively researched paper, with the opinions of all schools of Islamic thought included, but it is enough to get those interested in the subject started on their own quest.

What are embryonic stem cells?

Embryonic stem cells are cells from a newly formed embryo resulting from conception (a successful meeting of the egg and a sperm). They have the potential to become any cell in the body they want to, e.g. liver cell, brain cell, kidney cell, skin cell, etc...

Why are they important to research?

Because they have the potential to become any cell in the body, embryonic stem cells can be made into any cell in the body that is required. For example, for a person suffering from liver failure, the cells can be made into liver cells and transplanted into the patient. For diabetics, the cells can be created to produce insulin; for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, they can replace malfunctioning brain cells; for spinal cord injury, they can replace damaged cells.

Where do they come from?

All embryonic stem cells used for research come from in vitro fertilization (IVF). IVF is a medical procedure that is used to help infertile couples have a baby.

The IVF procedure consists of the following:

- 1 The female is stimulated with hormones to produce maximum number of eggs in the ovary.
- 2 The eggs are retrieved from the ovaries (usually between 10 -30 eggs) and placed in a plastic dish.
- 3 The sperm (from the male) are added to the dish to allow for fertilization.
- 4 Each fertilized egg results in an embryo. Typically one procedure will yield 3-15 embryos.
- 5 Approximately 2-4 embryos are put back in the female to allow them to grow in the hopes of a baby resulting.
- 6 All extra embryos from the procedure are either frozen or discarded.

It is these extra embryos that are used for research purposes.

What is the controversy?

The source of the cells is embryos. By removing cells from these embryos, scientists are essentially destroying the embryo, which could have otherwise gone on to develop into a child.

Religious stand on the issue

Catholicism - forbids this type of research

Protestants - depends on the church

Judaism - allows this type of research

Hinduism - not clear

Buddhism - allows this type of research

Islam - allows this type of research

The arguments used to validate Islam's position on embryonic stem cell research.

Depending on the source you read, life begins after 40 days of conception. Therefore, before this period, the embryo is not considered to be living. Some sources say that life begins after 120 days (4 months). This is the time when the soul enters the fetus (Imad-ad-Dean Ahmad, Ph.D. <http://www.islam-online.net/english/Views/2001/08/article6.shtml>). Therefore, it is at this time that the fetus is considered to be human. It is also argued that an embryo formed by IVF "is not in its natural environment.... If it is not placed in the womb it will not survive and it will not become a human being." And lastly, "it is obligatory to pursue this research, [which] has great potential to relieve human disease and suffering," (Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0622/p15s02-wogi.html>).

A panel, consisting of medical doctors, scientists, and Islamic scholars, was brought together to deliberate all aspects of this topic at length, in order to develop an Islamic perspective on stem-cell research. The panel represented members from The Fiqh Council of North America (FCNA), North American council of Islamic jurisprudence, Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences (GSISS), and The International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT). The panel concluded the following: The Islamic Institute supports stem-cell research on these spare embryos from in-vitro fertilization. Under the Islamic principle of the "purposes and higher causes of the shariaah (Islamic law)", we believe it is a societal obligation to perform research on these extra embryos instead of discarding them (http://64.233.161.104/search?q=cache:lr-2WuVZ_5QJ:www.islamicinstitute.org/i3-stemcell.pdf+islam+and+stem+cell+research&hl=en).

Governments' stand on the issue:

United States, England, and Canada all allow embryonic stem cell research. However, in Canada and the US only embryos that are excess from IVF cycles can be used. In England, embryos can be created specifically for the purpose of this type of research. This type of cloning to generate embryos for the express purpose of research only is called therapeutic cloning. Islam's stand on therapeutic cloning is not clear from the research I have done as some scholars are in favour of it and some are against it.

Some ethical questions that arise:

Although embryonic stem cell research is allowed in Islam, there still remain some ethical questions to consider. For example, women may be over stimulated for their IVF cycle to produce more embryos without them been aware of it. Women may undergo this type of procedure for monetary reasons.

Doctors may use extra embryos for research without the consent of patient. These are some of the questions that need to be discussed.

Alternatives to embryonic stem cells

- 1 Adult stem cells. Scientist can use adult stem cells but there are limitations to these types of cells. For instance, they exist in small amounts throughout the body and therefore they are more difficult to isolate. They do not grow well in the lab and therefore are limited in their use, and more importantly, they are programmed already to be a specific type of cell. They have lost the ability to become any cell that is desired.
- 2 Cord blood stem cells. Cord blood stem cells are isolated from the umbilical cord. They are harvested during the birth of a child. The limitation to these cells is that they can and have been used to treat blood related disease such as leukemia, cancer, clotting disorders, immune system disorders. They cannot be used to treat liver dysfunction, diabetes, or brain cell dysfunctions, etc...

And finally, a word of caution:

A study published earlier this year [Nature Medicine 11, 228 - 232 (2005)] found that most human embryonic stem-cell lines may be useless for therapeutic applications. The body's immune defenses would probably attack the cells. Why? The cells are grown and maintained in the lab in a plastic dish containing nutrient broth (usually contains animal serum) and other cells (embryonic cells from mice). The stem cells may acquire some of these foreign proteins. Once placed in the human body, they are recognized as foreign cells and the body rejects them.

Kubra Kapasi-Khandwala

Toronto, Canada

Young volunteers needed! Is that you?

DBWS has always organised lots of events such as Sports Day, walking in the hills, Eid functions, fund-raising events and events for young, single people. We need to keep the momentum going but we need volunteers.

Do you have some time to give to organise an event to help bring our community together, share food (of course!), and for maximum enjoyment. Let's build bridges through volunteering.

If anyone is willing to help then please get in touch with me, that is Huma Vanat either by email on huma_vanat@hotmail.com or by telephone: 07970 896 708.

It would be great experience for any youngsters, or any adults who want to help out.

Address book

Salim Vanak has created an on-line form for you to complete for inclusion in the International Bohra Reformist Directory. If you want to be included or change your current (for the UK) details in the address book, visit the site:

www.salim.me.uk/addressbook/

Be informed!

Anyone who wants to receive information about youth activities and are over the age of 19 and above. Please send me their email address by emailing nasreen@mehndidesign.co.uk. Anyone who thinks they already on the data and have not received any information please email me with their info again so that I can update my list.

The next event will be sometime in April 2006 we will be organising a fancy dress party. The other one I am planning is a trip to Spain to see all the Islamic historical buildings and architects. Date to be confirmed in 2006

Anyone with an idea of an event please let me know - **Nasreen Rajabali**, Birmingham, UK

1986 BOHRA REFORMIST TRUST

Registered office:

18 Limes Avenue London N12 8QN UK
UK Registered charity No 298730

The 1986 Bohra Reformist Trust is a UK Registered charitable organisation.

Its objectives are to promote religious education and to support the Reform movement in the Dawoodi Bohra Community.

Applications are invited from Reformist Dawoodi Bohra Organisations for financial assistance in pursuance of the above objectives.

Applications should include as much information as possible of the applying organisation and give full details of the project and its objectives.

Please apply to:
1986 BRT,

9 Anstruther Road, Edgbaston
Birmingham B15 3NN, UK

Logo competition

Are you a talented graphic designer?
Can you design an eye catching, suitable logo that tell the world that we are united collective fighting for justice and accountability?

The world conference in the UK in 2004 agreed that all Reformist branches around the globe should have a common identity. To achieve this, all branches will endeavour to be known as:

Dawoodi Bohra Reformist Jamaats of (insert the country's name).

We need a logo that Reformist jamaats all over the world can use.

If you can rise to the challenge and design a logo, then send you entries to Naseem Jivanjee in Canada on sn.g1g@sympatico.ca

We look forward to receiving some creative solutions!

Visit the Dawoodi Bohra Reformist website for news and views on Reformist activities: <http://www.dawoodi-bohras.com> and friends: <http://www.dawoodi-bohras.org.uk/friends>

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The views expressed are entirely those of the authors and may not reflect those of the editor or publisher.

Umrah trip

April 13th - 21st June

The Regional Committee is organising an international Umrah trip for you in April 2006.

This is the first time that Dawoodi Bohra Reformists will gather from globally and perform Umrah and you can be part of it.

Everyone will stay in the same hotel giving us plenty of time to get to know each other and the Umrah ceremonies will be led by a suitably qualified community member. We will visit both Mecca and Medina.

If you are interested in joining us on the Umrah trip, then please let us have your details as soon as possible and definitely by the end of December 2005. We will then send you information when we have some more details.

Please send your contact details to Huma Vanat at huma_vanat@hotmail.com or Haki Kapasi at Haki@inspire.eu.com addressing the subject as Umrah 2006. You can phone Haki on 0121 429 3202 day time.

Don't miss out on meeting Reformists from around the world and participating in this ground-breaking event!

We look forward to meeting you in Mecca.

Obituary

Fizzabai Yusufali Mamujee

Our beloved Fizzabal passed away peacefully on 12th September 2005.

We thank Allah for blessing her with a long life.

We will miss her warmth and kindness, her lively and playful spirit and her love. We pray that her soul will rest in eternal Peace. Ameen.

We thank all our relatives and friends for their prayers and very warm support which has greatly helped us in our time of grief.

Mamujee Family

