

THE MUSLIM COUNCIL OF BRITAIN

A step towards greater consultation, cooperation and coordination on Muslim Affairs in the UK.

Muslim Council of Britain Weekly E-Newsletter

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Reports and Committee updates

'Engagement with the Islamic World'

MCB Secretary General Yousuf Bhailok, and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Social Policy, Welfare and Regeneration Committee Imam Abduljalil Sajid and Shiban Akbar attended the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies lecture on 'Engagement with the Islamic World' delivered by the Foreign Secretary Rt. Hon. Jack Straw, on Friday January 25th.

Dinner in honour of the Grand Imam of Al Azhar

MCB Secretary General Yousuf Bhailok attended a dinner hosted by the Egyptian Ambassador to London, His Excellency Adel El Gazzar in honour of the Grand Imam of Al Azhar University, Dr Mohamed Tantawy on Tuesday January 29th.

FCO reception

Sir Michael Jay, Permanent Under Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office hosted a reception for Islamic community leaders on Tuesday January 29th to discuss affairs affecting the Muslim community in the UK since September 11th.

The MCB Secretary General Yousuf Bhailok, Chair of the International Affairs Committee, Tanzeem Wasti and Vice Chair of the Media Committee Iqbal Sacranie attended the event.

United Religions Initiative UK

MCB Secretary General Yousuf Bhailok met on Tuesday January 29th with Malcolm Stonestreet, Chair of the United Religions Initiative UK, to discuss possible involvement of the MCB in the URI's proposed £25 million project to establish a national inter-faith centre, 'The Peace Centre' in the Midlands.

Community Affairs Committee

Agreement for dialogue between the Anglican Communion and Al Azhar Dr Jafer Qureshi and Imam Abduljalil Sajid attended the signing of the Agreement for Dialogue between the Anglican Communion and Al Azhar Al Sharif at Lambeth Palace on Wednesday January 30th.

The agreement establishes a framework to carry forward the interfaith dialogue between the two institutions in a more structured manner through the creation of a 'Joint Committee'. The objectives of the committee include encouraging Anglicans and Muslims to learn and understand each other's faith; to share in the solving of problems and conflicts that may occur around the world between Muslim and Christian communities; to work together against injustice and the abuse of human rights; and to encourage institutions on both sides to play a positive role in development.

The Archbishop of Canterbury and President of the Anglican Communion, Dr George Carey and the Grand Imam of Al Azhar University, Dr Mohamed Tantawy, signed the agreement.

International Affairs Committee

Arab Ambassadors' Council Meeting

A delegation from the MCB consisting of Tanzeem Wasti, A delegation from the MCB consisting of Tanzeem Wasti, (Chair of the International Affairs Committee) Dr Abdur Raheem Khan and Majid az-Zeer (of the Palestinian Return Centre) met on Friday January 25th with the Arab Ambassador's Council.

Acting Doyen of the Council His Excellency Dr Ghazi Al Gosaibi, Ambassador of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia issued a statement on Friday afternoon to say that the delegation and the Council discussed the current situation in Palestine, the India-Pakistan dispute and well as other issues of concern to Muslims.

His Excellency, on behalf of the Council, expressed his appreciation for the activities of the MCB and stressed that Muslims in the UK should continue to play a constructive role and act as responsible British citizens.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Tanzeem Wasti, Dr Abdur Raheem Khan and Zymer Salihi of the Kosova Islamic Centre UK, met with Steven Wright, Deputy Under Secretary for Defence at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on Thursday January 24th.

The MCB delegation raised the British Muslim community's concerns over the US's treatment and handling of the British captives held in Cuba.

Media Committee

Broadcasting Standards Commission

Secretary of the Media Committee Inayat Bunglawala and Deputy Secretary General Mahmud Al-Rashid attended a second meeting at the Broadcasting Standards Commission on Wednesday January 30th.

The meeting was also attended by media practitioners and regulators to discuss the representation of Islam and Muslims in the British press.

Letter to the Observer

Inayat Bunglawala, Secretary of the Media Committee, wrote to the editor of The Observer to voice the MCB's concerns at the inaccuracies in the front-page article which appeared in the paper on January 27th 2002 ("Terror Video Used to Lure UK Muslims").

Social Policy, Welfare and Regeneration Committee

NCWMP meeting

Shiban Akbar, Vice Chair of the Social Policy, Welfare and Regeneration Committee will attend the National Council for the Welfare of Muslim Prisoners (NCWMP) meeting at the Islamic Cultural Centre, London on Sunday February 3rd.

Bangladeshi Islamic Education Centre & Mosque

MCB Secretary General Yousuf Bhailok and Shiban Akbar visited the Bangladeshi Islamic Education Centre & Mosque in Oxford on Friday January 25th to discuss the expansion of the role of the mosque in the areas of education, youth and development.

Shiban Akbar will arrange a meeting at a later date with mosque personnel and members of the MCB: Nawazish Bokhari, Mohib Rahman; Dr Abdul Bari and Joe Ahmed Dobson to explore ways in which these areas of improvement may be addressed.

Membership Committee

Membership Committee Meeting

The Membership Committee held a meeting yesterday in which great anxieties were expressed over the number of MCB affiliate organisations that has failed to bring their accounts up to date. Chair of the committee Dr Abdur Raheem Khan urged affiliate organisations to settle their accounts as soon as possible before the next Annual General Meeting scheduled for April 28th 2002.

Hajj Advisory Group

Dr Abdur Raheem Khan, Chief Medical Officer of the British Hajj delegation addressed participants at the seminar 'Getting the best out of Hajj' on Saturday January 26th.

Dr Khan informed the participants of the medical and consular assistance available to them as British Hajjis whilst in Saudi Arabia.

London Task Group

GLA forms 'Muslim Coalition Group'

The Greater London Assembly has formed a 'Muslim Coalition Group' under the chairmanship of Kumar Murshid, adviser to the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone.

The group, consisting of representatives of the Muslim community in London, has been set up to address Muslims' concerns about life in the capital. One of the issues currently under review is education and members of the group met with Baroness Ashton of the Department of Education and Science on January 24th. 24th.

Meeting with New Scotland Yard

New Scotland Yard in consultation with the Muslim Council of Britain and other Muslim organisations has formed a new committee to formulate policies to provide guidance and advice to Muslims on crime prevention and personal safety.

The committee's formation follows from reports that attacks on Muslims have increased significantly since September 11th. The Crime Prevention Unit at New Scotland Yard hopes to counter this trend in close co-operation with the Muslim community.

Dr Abdur Raheem Khan represented the MCB at the meeting held on January 24th.

Events

Breakfast at No 11

MCB Secretary General Yousuf Bhailok will be attending a breakfast seminar at No 11 Downing Street on Tuesday February 5th. 5th.

Faith and Community - publication launch

The Local Government Association (LGA) in collaboration with the Interfaith Network for the UK, the Home Office Active Community Unit and the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions has produced 'Faith and Community', a good practice guide to help local authorities

develop good working relationships with faith groups and inter faith structures in their area. Deputy Secretary General Mahmud Al-Rashid will be representing the MCB.

The Bishop of London

Deputy Secretary General Mahmud Al-Rashid will attend an evening reception hosted by the Bishop of London and Mrs Chartres at their home on Thursday January 31st. The Lord Mayor of London will also be present.

