

# 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

*1 Jumaada al-Awwal 1423 AH Friday 12 July 2002*

---

### **Weekly Updates on Reports, Committees and Events: Issue 25**

#### **Reports and Committee Updates**

- Letter: Boycott of Israeli Academics
- Muslim Community Meeting with Metropolitan Police.
- Legislative Review Of Religious Offences
- Farm Animal Welfare Council AGM
- Sex Education Policy
- European and International Affairs Committee (EIAC)
- Social Affairs Committee
- Health & Medical Committee
- Media Committee
- Research & Documentation Committee (ReDoc)
- London Task Group
- MCB in the Press

#### **Events**

- Al-Ansar Centre Breaks Muslim Women Stereotype
- Furthering Cultural Ties between Britain and the Islamic World
- Expoislamia 2002
- Muslim Demographics - the way ahead

---

## Reports and Committee updates

---

### **Boycott of Israeli Academics**

A letter to the Editor was sent to The Guardian, published in the Comments Section on 12th July 2002. It was signed by a number of Muslim representatives including Iqbal AKM Sacranie, Secretary General of The Muslim Council of Britain, Majed Al-Zeer, Director of the Palestinian Return Centre, Dr Munir Ahmed, President of Islamic Society of Britain, Ayatullah Mohsen Araki, President of Islamic Centre of England, Mohammad Sawalha, President of Muslim Association of Britain, Masoud Shajarah, Chairman of the Islamic Human Right Commission, Betty Hunter, Secretary General of Palestinian Solidarity Campaign, Dilwar Hussein, President of Islamic Forum Europe and Tanzeem Wasti, President of Muslim Solidarity Committee.

The letter underlined the need to apply moral pressure in the absence of decisive Government action to condemn the illegal Israeli occupation. It firmly supported the campaign to boycott academics from Israel in order to send a clear message to Israel that it is committing moral outrage analogous to that of the now defunct apartheid government of South Africa. Furthermore, the signatories called for "academic communities in the UK to advocate a more general policy of divestment of British academic, financial and commercial investments from Israel."

### **Muslim Community Meeting with Metropolitan Police.**

A meeting between representatives of the Muslim Community and the Metropolitan Police took place at New Scotland Yard on Wednesday 12th June. Dr Abdul Raheem Khan, Chair of the MCB Membership Committee represented the MCB. Amongst the subjects discussed were the problems faced by the relatives visiting Muslim prisoners.

### **Legislative Review Of Religious Offences**

The MCB and its affiliated bodies will lobby Parliament for a comprehensive law that prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion. A Select Committee of the House of Lords is addressing problems faced in this area by the faith communities, and the last date for sending evidence is 9th August 2002. An information pack has been sent to all affiliates.

### **Farm Animal Welfare Council AGM**

The second Farm Animal Welfare Council AGM, held on 27th June 2002, was attended by Dr Abduljalil Sajid who represented the MCB. The FAWC is a government established organisation which provides advice on all areas of farm animals, slaughter, environment, food and rural affairs. Muslim recommendations and responses have also been requested by the FAWC for input to the Government Commission. Further details on the comments provided at a later date insha'allah.

### **Sex Education Policy**

In an interview broadcast on BBC Asia Network, Sunrise Radio and Southern County Radio on 27th June 2002, Dr Abduljalil Sajid commented on the new instruction by the Department of Health to provide free contraception to all pupils under 16 years of age where appropriate. Dr Sajid clarified the Islamic Shariah position stating that contraceptives are only allowed on the grounds of health to married couples. He also commented on the high record of teenage pregnancies in European countries and the need to take a responsible stance where sex education is concerned.

---

## Committee Updates

---

### **European and International Affairs Committee (EIAC)**

The European and International Affairs Committee held a meeting on 4th July 2002. Those present included Iqbal Sacranie, MCB Secretary General; Mahmud Al-Rashid, Chair of the MCB European and International Affairs Committee; Tanzeem Wasti and Zymer Salihi. The meeting served as a

forum to discuss and modify the remit for the EIAC which will, insha'Allah, be finalised in August. A schedule for future meetings was also agreed. The next meeting has been arranged for Thursday 8th August 2002 at 6.30pm. Thereafter, the meetings will occur every three months.

### **House of Lords Meeting to Discuss Palestine**

A meeting was arranged at the House of Lords on 11th July 2002 by Baroness Uddin on events in Palestine. This was attended by leaders from the Muslim, Jewish and Christian communities. The MCB was represented by Tanzeem Wasti, Inayat Bunglawala and Dr Abdul Raheem Khan.

### **Social Affairs Committee**

The first meeting of the Social Affairs Committee was held on Sunday 7th July at the Islamic Cultural Centre (ICC). Those that attended included Sr Shiban Akbar, Chair of the Social Affairs Committee, Dr Abdul Bari, Deputy Secretary General, Unaiza Malik, Assistant Secretary General, Dr Abdul Raheem Khan, Br Aslam Ijaz, and Dr Suha al Mahawi, Karima Mustafa, Zafar Iqbal, Dr Sabiha Saleem, Sr Sarah Sheriff and Puan Maria McLoughlin, Muhammad.

During the meeting, the Social Affairs Committee remit and restructure was brainstormed. Work for the next two years was also prioritised. The dates for the next meetings were decided upon and arranged for Sunday 15th September, Saturday 2nd November, Sunday 9th February 200 and Sunday May 11th 2003.

### **Health & Medical Committee**

On behalf of the MCB Health and Medical Committee, Dr Mujahid Qureshi, Dr Shuja Shafi, Dr Abdul Raheem Khan and Dr Wasim Haneef attended a meeting held on 29th April 2002 with Dr Sheila Adam, Deputy Chief Medical Officer and Director of Policy at the Department of Health, The meeting was also attended by Professor Richard Parish, the Chief Executive of Health Development Agency, and by several senior officers in the Department of Health (DoH).

Dr Abdul Rahim Khan led a series of short presentations from the MCB team containing specific proposals on how to reduce the burden of diseases such as Diabetes, heart disease, mental illness among our communities. The team urged the DoH team to use the facilities of mosques for health education and to promote healthy living messages. They underlined the need to proactively establish health check ups and screening in mosques and to 'fastrack' heart operations within the Muslim community.

### **Primary Care Trust (PCT) Contract Seminar**

On behalf of the MCB Health & Medical Committee, Dr Shuja Shafi, Secretary, MCB Health and Medical Committee, and Dr Abdul Raheem Khan, attended the "PCT Contract Seminar" held at the Department of Health on 17th June 2002. The seminar was used to discuss ways of achieving the Government's objective, as outlined in the document "Delivering the NHS Plan", for developing a new contract relating to the rights and responsibilities between PCTs and their communities. Its main aim was to forge a new relationship between the public and public services generally and the NHS in particular in order to engender a new working contract between the providers, users and citizens. Furthermore, the seminar sought to gain a wider appreciation of the responsibilities that all parties have to each other.

Matters such as faith and culturally sensitive NHS issues were discussed in order to issue the same message to the PCT at the local level. The seminar raised the need to establish a mechanism for cascading information and providing guidance to member organisations that participate locally at their PCT level. The MCB Health & Medical Committee is to receive information on achievements at the local level that has proved to be of benefit to others. The deliberations of the seminar will serve as a useful framework to take this concept forward.

### **Media Committee**

#### **MCB Expresses Appreciation to Alice Mahon for Stand on Warplanes Sold to Israel**

The Media Committee wrote to Alice Mahon, MP on 9th July 2002 to express their appreciation for her principled stand on the government decision to allow the export of British components for warplanes sold to Israel. The MCB

said: "Despite the government's verbal calls on Israel to abide by UN resolutions by withdrawing from all illegally occupied Palestinian lands, we seem by our actions to be supporting the very opposite and actually helping the Israelis maintain their apparatus of repression and terror."

### **MCB Lodges Complaint with PCC Over Headline in The Times**

The Media Committee wrote to the Press Complaints Commission regarding the headline "Muslims Linked to Greek Terror" which appeared in The Times on 8th July 2002. The MCB argued that the article misrepresents Muslims, contravening Section 1 on Accuracy and Section 13 on Discrimination of the PCC's Code of Practice.

### **Letter of Appreciation Sent to The Independent**

The Media Committee wrote to Paul Valley, of The Independent, to express appreciation for his article "All Quiet On The Northern Front?" in The Independent on 3rd July 2002. The article reported sympathetically on recent developments in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley, one year on from the riots. He portrayed the Bengali and Pakistani Muslim youths as more reflective, determined and keen to work for the good of the wider society in the face of rising Islamophobia. The MCB drew Mr Valley's attention to the worrying phenomenon of under achievement in many Bengali and Pakistani children, requesting further media examination.

### **Research & Documentation Committee (ReDoc)**

The Research and Documentation Committee will conduct its first meeting of the 2002 session on Saturday 20th July. The meeting will take place at 3 pm, at the MCB office in Wembley. For further information email [admin@mcb.org.uk](mailto:admin@mcb.org.uk).

### **London Task Group**

The London Task Group will conduct their first meeting of the 2002 session on Monday 22nd July 2002. The meeting will take place at 6.30 pm, at the East London Mosque.

---

## **Events**

---

### **Event: Al-Ansar Centre Breaks Muslim Women Stereotype**

Date: Friday 12th July 2002

Held By: Al-Ansar Islamic Centre

Venue: Ilford, Essex

Contact: Press enquiries contact Tahmina Saleem on 0208-5998578

Information: Women only event including a fashion show, specially-commissioned plays and sketches about living as a Muslim woman in the UK, Islamic nasheed songs, a three course meal

### **Event: Furthering Cultural Ties between Britain and the Islamic World**

Date: Monday 5th August 2002

Held By: Brent Islamic Circle

Venue: London Inter Faith Centre, 125 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6RG

Contact: G Jones, Telephone 020 7604 3053

Information: Speakers include Professor Jamal Badawi and other distinguished scholars

### **Event: Expoislamia 2002**

Date: Sunday 4th August 2002 11.30 am - 8.30pm

Held By: Young Muslims Organisation UK

Venue: Kensington Town Hall, London NW6 6RG

Contact: Telephone 020 7247 7918

Information: Speakers include Imam Siraj Wahhaj, Br Dawud Warnsby Ali of Canada, Imam Abdullah Hakim Quick of South Africa amongst others.

### **Event: Muslim Demographics - the way ahead**

Date: Thursday 26th September 2002

Contact: Chair of ReDoc, Dr Aziz Shaikh, c/o MCB office

Information: Topics for discussion include the census output on the religion question

---

## **MCB in the Press**

---

[-The Winners Profiles Guardian, Monday June 17, 2002](#)

[-This Whistle-Blower They Like, June 13, 2002](#)

[-Israel links](#)

### **Pork protein in chicken alarms UK Muslims**

The MCB was mentioned in a news item from Reuters on 8th July 2002. Entitled "Pork protein in chicken alarms UK Muslims" the article highlights the Food Standard Authority and Muslim concern for the inaccurately labelled imported chicken, possibly containing pork, which may have been on sale in the UK for the past six months. "This is deeply worrying for the Muslim community. All food should be labelled accurately. This is very important to us because pork is absolutely forbidden according to the Koran," said Inayat Bunglawala, spokesman for the Muslim Council of Britain."

### **Support for single faith schools.**

An article from Reed Business Information on 11th July 2002, shows that "Single faith schools promote greater understanding of other cultures, offer children more opportunities and deliver better academic performance," according to delegates. Muhammad Abdul Bari, Deputy Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Britain, added that faith schools provided a sense of identity. "People from ethnic minorities care about having children educated where they are surrounded by their own culture but in a way that is not isolated from society."

