

# THE MUSLIM COUNCIL OF BRITAIN

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

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## Muslim Council of Britain Weekly E-Newsletter

*7 Jumaada al-Awwal 1423 AH Thursday 18 July 2002*

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### **Weekly Updates on Reports, Committees and Events:      Issue 26**

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

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- Legal Affairs Committee

#### **Events**

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- Islamic Cultural Centre Reception
- Expoislamia 2002
- Furthering Cultural Ties between Britain and the Islamic World
- Muslim Demographics - the way ahead
- Million Man March For Palestine

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## Reports and Committee updates

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### Interfaith Network AGM

Dr Abdul Raheem Khan, Chair of the MCB Membership Committee representing the MCB attended the Interfaith Network AGM and National Meeting on 15th July 2002. Held at the International Student House, Dr Khan took part in the discussion on the role of interfaith initiatives towards social cohesion. A workshop was also held entitled "Young people and the interfaith dimension of social cohesion." The meeting was attended by Alan Smith, representing the Home Office, who has co-ordinated reports on disturbances in the northern cities.

### Committee Updates

#### Media Committee

##### Media Committee Urges Dropping of the use of "Moslem" in Newspapers

The Media Committee wrote to the editors of the Daily Express and the Daily Mail on 16th July 2002 urging them to standardise their spelling of common Arabic words so as not to cause any unnecessary offence to British Muslims.

Both the Daily Mail and the Daily Express continue to refer to Muslims as 'Moslems'. We will report on their responses at a later date insha'allah.

##### MCB Asks the Guardian and the BBC to Make Clear that Jewish settlements are Illegal

On 16th July 2002, the Media Committee wrote to the Middle East editor of the Guardian, Brian Whitaker, and the Controller of Editorial Policy at the BBC, Stephen Whittle, expressing concern that their reports from the Occupied Territories in Palestine were not making it sufficiently clear that the Jewish settlements that have been established there are totally illegal under international law. A shocking report earlier this year revealed that most Britons wrongly believe that it is the Arabs who are illegally occupying Israeli territory rather than the reverse.

Stephen Whittle, responded positively to this correspondence by adding a line to the latest version of their Palestinian story to make clear that settlements are illegal under international law. Furthermore, he elucidated that the BBC have a standing editorial policy on this matter which is to state where relevant that "Israeli settlements are "illegal under international law" ...this is correct ...We should avoid repeating it automatically in every story - that might give the impression we are on some sort of campaign. But where it's important to the context we should spell it out using this exact wording (the wording "illegal settlements" is open to debate). Israel doesn't accept this view, but almost everyone else does."

#### Finance & General Purpose Committee

The Finance & General Purpose Committee is due to meet on Tuesday 23rd July under the chairmanship of MCB Treasurer Ali Omar Ermes.

#### Youth Committee

The Youth Committee met on Sunday 13th July and appointed Brother Hussain Shefaar as Chair, Sister Basma El-Shayaal as Deputy Chair and Sister Raihana Naseem as Secretary. Attendees included Hashim Charif, Chairman of Amal Trust. Brother AbdulWahid Hamid proposed some objectives for the committee and project ideas. The next meeting will be on 15th September, insha Allah.

## **Research & Documentation Committee**

The Research & Documentation Committee is due to meet on Saturday 20th July. ReDoc is planning a one-day conference 'The demographic profile of Britain's Muslim community: charting a research agenda' on Thursday 26 September in London. Confirmed speakers include Professor Tariq Modood (University of Bristol), Mohibur Rahman (New Policy Institute) and Lucy Haselden (Office for National Statistics). There will be workshops on Education, Health and Social Exclusion, facilitated by Brothers Abdul-Hayee, Dr Shuja Shafi and Rumman Ahmed respectively. A key objective of the conference is to consider the gaps in statistical data on British Muslims and to discuss the Census output from the religion question. Programme details and a registration form are available at [www.mcb.org.uk/events](http://www.mcb.org.uk/events)

## **Europe & International Affairs Committee**

Mahmud Al-Rashid, Chairman of the MCB European and International Affairs Committee (EIAC), and Tanzeem Wasti, hosted a reception on 16th July 2002. The reception was attended by Ayatullah Muhammad Mousaui Bojnoori, Chairman Scientific Committee, Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC), Muhammad Ghari Syed Fatemeh, Member of Scientific Committee, IHRC, Syed Hossein Hosseini, International Office, IHRC, Vahide Asgharbindari, Translator and Secretary, IHRC.

Ayatullah Bojnoori was on a one week tour of the United Kingdom at the invitation of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). The Ayatullah was briefed on various human rights and civil liberties issues within the UK. He was informed that minority rights are generally very well respected in this liberal democracy, although it was pointed out that a major lacuna remained in the law when it comes to the protection of religious minorities. The UK government is proposing to introduce legislation to protect discrimination at the workplace on religious grounds. However, further action must be taken to provide the total protection required in order to create a level playing field in all spheres of society. The Ayatullah briefed the MCB on the work of the IHRC and extended his invitation to visit them in Iran. The FCO representative, Mr van der Hoot, expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the meeting.

## **Legal Affairs Committee**

The Legal Affairs Committee is preparing a response to the House of Lords Select Committee on religious offences. The deadline for submission of responses is 9th August 2002. Iqbal Sacranie, MCB Secretary General, has sent out a letter to all affiliates suggesting that each affiliate should send a response in its own name to the Committee for consideration.

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## **Events**

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### **Event: Forum on the Recent Violence in Gujarat India**

Date: Saturday July 20th 2002, 6-00pm to 9-00pm

Held By: Federation of Gujarati Indian Muslim Organisations

Venue: Grange Interlink Community Centre, Summerville Road, Bradford, BD7 1PX

Contact: Telephone 07814647400

Information: To show solidarity and concern for those affected by violence in India.

### **Event: Islamic Cultural Centre Reception**

Date: Monday 22nd July 2002, 6.00 - 7.30 p.m.

Held By: The London Central Mosque Trust & The Islamic Cultural Centre

Venue: Islamic Cultural Centre, Library Hall

Contact: Abdussalam on 0207 724 3363, Room 102

Information: In honour of His Excellency Dr Abdullah Bin Al-Salih Al-Obaid Member of the Saudi Shura

Council & His Excellency Dr Hamid Bin Ahmad Al-Rifaie Member of Presidency of International Islamic Council for Da'wa & Relief to be followed by a discussion on Islam.

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: **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: **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

Event: **Million Man March For Palestine**

Date: 28th September 2002 Start Time: 1pm

Held By: The Muslim Association of Britain

Venue: Congregate at Hyde Park Corner and end in Trafalgar Square

Contact: MAB Head Office: 020 7272 2888 Mobile: 07958 329 879

Information: Play your part in the biggest mobilisation for Palestine in this country ever, insha'Allah. It is a demonstration in support of all the Palestinian people. It is now no longer a concern only for Muslims; but for anyone, Muslim or non-Muslim, who realises and is aware that every human on Earth has a right to live and be treated fairly.

