

**PAPER PRESENTED AT THE 6TH GREAT AHMED SHAH MASSOUD FOUNDATION
CELEBRATION IN KABUL
SEPTEMBER 2007**

OBSERVATIONS OF MUSLIMS FROM AUSTRALIA (OR FROM ANY WESTERN COUNTRY)

Bismillah ir Rahman nir Rahim

Assalam o alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barkatahu

Firstly I would like to express my deepest appreciation for the invitation to the Sixth Anniversary of the Martyrdom of the Great Ahmed Shah Massoud, the National Hero of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

Afghans in Australia

I am speaking on behalf of the Muslims of Australia. Islam in Australia has a very long history, and the Afghanistan people were at the forefront of this early Islamic influence in Australia.

After the European settlement started in Australia, the Afghan camel drivers arrived in Australia in 1860. These early pioneers were at the individuals who helped open up the remote and central parts of Australia to civilization and were the people who helped establish the roads and the railway system within central Australia.

These early Afghans remained in Australia and tried to preserve their identity and rich culture. Some of the mosques built by the early Afghans are still in use in many parts of Australia.

Today there are many Muslims of Afghan background in Australia who hold some very important positions in government, public life and civil society.

Background to Outside Influences on Afghanistan

Afghanistan certainly has had a very troubled history with a lot of its grief imposed from outside from the many conquering and invading powers.

But there is no doubt that the Afghani's are a proud people who have stood up for their rights as a sovereign nation over many centuries.

The Great Ahmed Shah Massoud was a leader who was able to bring the many different tribes with different and imposing priorities together during very difficult times.

From the perspective of Australian Muslims, and I could possible be speaking for most Muslims in the Western World, it seems that the world attention is focused on Afghanistan right now because of the presence of the Taliban and possibly the leadership of Al Qaeeda in Afghanistan.

Taliban and Al Qaeeda Influence

Whilst the damage they are doing to Afghanistan and the whole of Islam is enormous, the reality also has to be acknowledged that they do have a following and thus some credibility amongst certain quarters of the population.

The challenge for the government and people of Afghanistan is to demonstrate to the international community that the real Islam is the Islam of moderation, of tolerance, of acceptance of other faiths, the rightful place of women and the many other guidance of a complete way of life.

Whilst it is incumbent on the government of Afghanistan and all Afghani people to speak about real Islam, at the same time it is important that the dream of Ahmed Shah Massoud of a prosperous Afghanistan with opportunities for all Afghans should be realized whilst the world attention is strongly focused on Afghanistan. The present position that Afghanistan has in the international community and especially amongst the very rich and powerful western countries and the United Nations will not last for ever.

The Taliban and Al Qaeda will not last for ever and once they are gone, so will the importance of Afghanistan from the radars of these donor countries.

Challenge for the present Government of Afghanistan and the Massoud Foundation

The leadership of Afghanistan needs to put into place ideas and initiatives to engage all the people of this great nation of Afghanistan, from all provinces and tribes so that every one starts sharing in the assistance from the outside world, as well as provide avenues so that these people can provide their own ideas to rebuild the country.

Assistance from Muslims of the world

The Muslims of the world, and in fact all the people of the western world are willing to assist in the rebuilding of Afghanistan. There are many ways of doing this, with projects at the grass roots level.

When one looks at the opportunities for various projects that could be started, there are so many of these that there could be so many quick wins that could quickly “put the runs on the board” if I could borrow a cricketing phase.

And these are projects that would make a real difference to people's lives. I am speaking about some simple projects like the following:

- Water bore holes
- Health clinics
- Community based schools or learning centres with computers.
- Small scale hydro schemes.
- Small scale irrigation and farming schemes.
- Sanitation projects
- Cultural Heritage Protection

The Australian Muslims will do what it can by pooling its resources to assist the people of Afghanistan at the grass roots level in some projects such as water bore holes, health centers, orphanages etc. Whilst these will be very basic, every little bit helps.

I am sure the Great Ahmed Shah Massoud would have wanted a very prosperous and independent Afghanistan with equal opportunities for all, the rich and the poor, the rural people and those in the cities and towns, the landlords and those with no land to call their own.

On behalf of the Australian Muslims I wish all the people of Afghanistan a very rewarding Ramzan and also Eid ul Fitr. Mahe Ramazan and Eid Mubarak to all.

Waleikum as salaam.



Ikebal Adam Patel
President Australian Federation of Islamic Councils

AFIC SCHOOLS ENROLMENTS FOR 2008

The Australian Federation of Islamic Councils is committed to provide educational facilities to all Australian Muslims that will enable these Australian Muslim children to be schooled at the highest level in an Islamic environment which would then enable them to take their rightful place in the Australian society.

Our Schools provide a centre of educational activities, which will provide a high quality and standard of education in an Islamic environment and thus produce good citizens, imbued with Islamic spiritual values;

Our Schools are designed to create a harmonious and stimulating community atmosphere in which staff are mutually supportive and care for the pupils and in which the pupils can grow as persons developing a feeling of self-worth, a high level of personal integrity, a sincere respect for others, and increasing sense of individual responsibility and competence to form mature value judgements and an ability to establish constructive relationship;

AFIC Schools encourage each pupil to develop self-appreciation, social awareness, reverence of life, integrity and responsibility;

Each pupil is, further encouraged to develop the highest possible level of academic and cultural attainment of which he or she is capable, with excellence as a goal in all activities.

AFIC Schools provide an environment in which education is a happy experience.

Our School aims to involve each pupil in a range of experiences which will enable him or her to participate effectively in society; to develop religious understanding and to provide an environment in which each pupil can make a commitment to Islamic values.

For further information and enrolment details please contact the Schools below:



MALEK FAHD ISLAMIC SCHOOL

405 Waterloo Road, Greenacre NSW 2190

Phone: 02 9642 8766

Fax: 02 9642 5479

Email: mfis@ihug.com.au



LANGFORD ISLAMIC COLLEGE

Knowledge, Faith & Discipline

Lot 176 Southgate Road, Langford WA 6147

Tel: (08) 9458 5206 **Fax:** 08 9258 5661

Email: principal.lic.wa@bigpond.com



ISLAMIC SCHOOL OF CANBERRA

In Knowledge Lies Strength

Block G, 49 Phillip Ave, Watson ACT 2602
GPO Box 45, Canberra ACT 2601

Tel: (02) 6241 9554 **Fax:** (02) 6241 5448

Email: iscat@bigpond.net.au



ISLAMIC COLLEGE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

22 Cedar Avenue, West Croydon, SA 5008
PO Box 147, Kilkenny, SA 5009

Tel: (08) 8349 7799 **Fax:** (08) 8340 9988

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ISLAMIC COLLEGE OF BRISBANE

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ISLAMIC COLLEGE OF BRISBANE - Annual Fete

By Anwar Benjamin

The Islamic College of Brisbane (ICB) held their Annual Fete on Saturday 1st September attracting a crowd of approximately 5,000 to 6,000 people.

Upon reflection we were blessed with great weather, a good crowd, an excellent range of food and a lasting memory of an enjoyable event.

We had a rock climbing wall for the first time this year and it proved a great success, thanks to the kind sponsorship of members of our extended 'family'. The carnival rides proved another winner with the kids, and some parents attempting to out-last and out-perform their children. Yeah right! Good luck with that!

We were joined on the day by Gary Hardgrave, Federal Member for Moreton, Andrew Bartlett from the Democrats and Brisbane Councillor Kevin Bianchi. Mr Hardgrave commented on how the school has grown over the years and in the words of the ICB Board Chairman, Mr Abbas Ahmed, 'thank you for being our friend Gary, and for your support over the years and for the many more years to come'.



Mr Ahmed was also joined by Mr Ikebal Patel, President of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils, who expressed his support and admiration for the effort and community spirit of the day. Dr Mubarak Noor, Principal of the ICB, had this to say, 'while it is important to raise funds, the fete is also an opportunity for the broader community to gather and interact socially'. Well said Dr Noor and don't worry, the rest of the P&C will keep an eye on the fund raising side of the fete.

Other comments and quotes heard on the day:

'A good turnout and lots of food'

'Loved the fireworks'

'The food was fantastic, my body (shape) will pay the price for it later'

'Those kids singing on stage were so cute'

'Good communication'

'Where did all these cars come from?'



'The rock-climbing wall looks great, pity I'm afraid of heights'

'Auction? What auction?'

'Are the lemons halal?'

'With halim, the longer you cook it, the better it tastes'.

'Try the Russian paroska or is it prozky or was it piroshka? I can't remember the name of the food but it's a bread roll with beef and cheese in it and it tasted great!!!'

'Weee' (trying to get a comment from someone on the rides)

'No, I'm not a parking attendant, I'm a First Aid Officer'.

'Where's the dummy?' (possibly a had-to-be-there joke)

and how about this one ...

'Do you sell food here?'

There were a number of memorable moments during the course of the day. Some of these include when a car was found parked precariously close to the fireworks, another was when a towtruck company's phone number ended up on a P&C members' speed-dial, yet another when a group of males wanted to sign up at Fernwood. Mrs Rola's Year 2 students performing on stage impressed many of the attendees. The kids may have been a little nervous but the performance was a delight to watch. Another highlight was when Imam Ghazali and two of his students performed some Nasheeds prior to the fireworks display. Keep up the great work kids!

The Amarah stall was quite impressive and the Moroccan theme caught the attention of many visitors. Sister Fenti's food stall proved another winner for those with an appetite or simply wanting to stimulate their taste buds. Our First Aid Officers looked very professional and although some were teased for looking like parking attendants, they performed a very important duty and were impressive amongst the crowd. Truth be known, only Dr Khateeb was teased and the source of his ridicule was his wife and kids! With loved ones like that who needs enemies, right?

I would be in much trouble with the kids if I failed to mention their delight at Sister Leila's glow sticks & gizmos stall. Sadly there were a few tears for those who missed out but don't worry kids, Sister Leila will have plenty more next year. I believe she is flying to China to secure a supplier contract to satisfy the demand. And speaking of trouble, yours truly got scolded by Mrs Finmore for not visiting her stall regularly enough! Thanks Mrs Finmore, you have brought back some painful scars from my early years at school. All of the teachers' stalls and their involvement with the fete proved a winner! Same applies to the parents and P&C members who volunteered their services.



An event of this nature would not be complete without some controversy and thanks to Dr Noor we had our controversy. Rumour has it that Dr Noor agreed to have his face painted in a really loud design but when push came to shove, Dr Noor requested written evidence of his consent. Unfortunately the P&C could not produce the written consent and Dr Noor retained his unaltered good looks. Sister Laila has not given up on this challenge yet so watch this space kids. By the way, please notice the different spelling as we have a Sister Leila and a Sister Laila. There were some funny moments when Sister Shameem renamed them Layla A and Layla B. Till today we get the A and B confused thanks for the confusion and the funnies Shameem (and for your tireless effort).

The fete would not have been possible without the strong support from the various businesses and individuals that work together and contribute financially, morally and physically to make this event a success.

On behalf of the Board of Management, the Principal, the Faculty, the Administration staff, the Support staff and the P&C, I would like to thank each and every person who once again demonstrated what a strong sense of community we all have. Your efforts do not go unnoticed and god willing contributes to a more positive experience for our students at the College.

To our Muslim friends and family all around the world we would like to wish upon you everything of the best during the month of Ramadan (Ramadan Mubarak).





A school for Students from Kindergarten to Year 6

The Islamic School of Canberra (ISC) is

NOW ACCEPTING ENROLMENTS

For K-6 for 2007/2008 and expressions of interest for Year 7 in 2008.

Please contact the school on: 6241 9554 or email us to receive enrolment forms electronically.

School mission

To provide a high quality education academically and religiously in the Islamic environment, thus enabling students to succeed as life long learners with the guidance of Allah SWT.

The school endeavours to

Instill and uphold Islamic principles.

Provide the highest quality of academic and religious education.

Provide the means for all students to develop to their best potential.

Encourage students to contribute actively and positively to the constantly changing world.

Tel: (02) 6241 9554 **Fax:** (02) 6241 5448 **Email:** iscact@bigpond.net.au



IN KNOWLEDGE LIES STRENGTH



السلام عليكم ورحمة الله
(Peace and Blessings Be Upon You)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

There have been wonderful improvements at the Islamic School of Canberra. Just recently the school has successfully purchased and installed equipment for a computer laboratory from the grant which was secured for our school. With the grant, we are able to set up an impressive computer laboratory in the new and largest room at the school building. The computer laboratory is set up with an interactive board, and work stations for children to complete their IT tasks. The new capabilities set up and ICT latest resources for the children look very impressive. The school will undoubtedly produce technology savvy children; when they graduate they will have been regular users of computers from an early age. InshaAllah.

The Islamic School is expanding in size and many parents have put down their children's names for next year's enrolment. The school with its new size is now able to accommodate significantly more students. In addition to these improvements our students have been able to maintain excellent achievements academically in the International Australasian Competitions. One student was commended for achievement in the International Science Competition. Thank you teachers for your efforts in ensuring that we deliver the best possible outcomes for our students' learning. It is something that we, educators should be proud of.

In the light of Ramadan, the Islamic School was privileged to be invited by the Deputy Speaker, Mr Steve Pratt to the ACT Legislative Assembly for a Ramadan function. This Ramadan function was to honour the arrival of holy month Ramadan and was attended by most Muslim ambassadors and other ACT leaders either in the government or in the Muslim councils.

The children were brilliant in the choir; singing Ramadan songs, reciting the Qur'an and the Australian National Anthem. Parents of the participating children supported their children and encouraged their children to perform in front of a large audience. Many distinguished guests including the Speaker himself congratulated and acknowledged their skills and well behaved manners as they concluded their items.

In the not too distant future, the Islamic school of Canberra INSYAALLAH will hold its IFTAR function for the Muslim Community and non Muslim in Canberra. IFTAR will be held at our school on Friday, the 28th of September 2007. If you happen to come to Canberra and intend to stay with your family or friends, please come and join our IFTAR, Maghrib and Taraweeh prayers. Though there will be plenty of food for everyone, you are required to RSVP by the 20th of September.

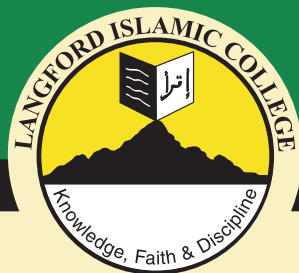
From the first article I have written for AFIC publication, the school has organised many sports activities such as AFL, Gymnastics, Tennis and excursions to the Canberra Zoo, Canberra Aquarium, Botanic Gardens Museums and we even participated in the Science experiences at Questacon. We are as active as bees as other school principals have said. Many other extra curricular activities were also held at our school.

Below are samples of photos taken of the Islamic School of Canberra's Children whilst participating in various activities.

Yours In Islam,

Rima Kemp





الكلية الإسلامية في لنفرد

A project of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils



PRINCIPAL 'S MESSAGE

Langford Islamic College is now in its 4th year of operation. We commenced with 10 enrolments at the beginning of 2004 and amazingly we have now increased to a total of 285. It is important to realize that this growth has occurred despite the fact that there are other Islamic Colleges in close proximity and all of these have been established for quite a while.

With the vision of AFIC, Langford Islamic College has developed a strong reputation of providing very sound educational standards - both secular and religious. The staff – both Muslim and Non-Muslim are dedicated, enthusiastic, professional and above all show willingness to work in harmony. This all goes towards providing an environment which is caring and which provides valuable and exciting learning experiences and equips the young Muslim for life in Australia.

Arabic and Islamic Studies

Ahlan wa Sahlan on our journey with Qassas-ul Ambiyah !!!

Year levels kk- pp has embarked on a journey with Sr Hamidah to explore all the stories of the previous Prophets such as Nabi Adam (AS), Nabi Nuh (AS), Nabi Musa (AS), Nabi Ebrahim and His son Ismaeel (AS) and Nabi Esa (AS).

The theme of the earlier Prophets was also explored with the Year levels 1-3. Learning experiences and various activities were undertaken such as the following:

- Yrs kk-pp made their own ark and animals and colourful worksheets to express their learning in artistic expression.

- Year one and two expressed their stories from a linguistic perspective by re-telling the story and by making a wall poster to show that we are the children of Adam and that the world is one big family. This was related to the story of Nabi Adam and Lady Hawwa (As).

- The year three class re-enacted the walk seven times between the hills of Safa and Marwa on the oval to experience Lady Hajer`s search for water in relation to her son Ismaeel (As) in the barren desert. This was the story of zam-zam related to them. At the same time, this activity also demonstrated, human relationships between mother, son and father.

All above-mentioned classes during the Islamic studies sessions learnt about the Belief and respect for the Prophets of Allah (SWT) as a fundamental part of our Islamic faith. Furthermore, the historical perspective was illustrated as well as the geographical perspective exercising map reading to show the Muslim world. The concepts of Jannah, Man, Jinn, creation, earth, forgiveness, obedience and disobedience, reward and punishment were explored.

The focal points of the Arabian Peninsula and its Bedouin life with barren surroundings and importance of water in the desert were achieved.

Ms Shaamillah Davis
Mrs Hamidah Hans
Sh Muhammad Agherdien





K1 CLOUDY KINDY

Kindergarten 1 have been learning about weather, shape and colours of the rainbow. As part of science, we have observed weather everyday for a week, and displayed it on our self-made weather chart. We are all making our own book of shapes. Painting and colouring rainbows, making a clay man with an umbrella and sunglasses, pinwheel and different weather collages is really fun.



PP1 OUR HEALTHY VEGETABLE PICNIC

We have been learning all about healthy eating and as part of health & P.E. We had a healthy vegetable picnic outside on our veranda. We tried different kinds of vegetables including; cucumber, cherry tomatoes & snow peas. We also tried some with dip. We think healthy food is delicious!!



KPP2 MAKING CRESS CATERpillARS AND DRESSING FOR WINTER

As part of our science program we have been learning about living things and their life processes, depicted here with our cress caterpillars. Over the course of a week, students enjoyed observing their seeds grow into plants with roots, stems and leaves. Also in science we have been learning about how weather affects what we wear. Students devised and role played typical items they wear in winter, and set about dressing their snowmen for a cold winter.



YR 1.1 & 1.2

Our theme this term is "Me" in science we have been looking at our bodies and how they work. On this occasion the students were investigating the tongue and how we use it to taste things. In this picture the students were tasting a lemon and all agreed that it was sour.



As part of our health programme we had an incursion from the Hospital Familiarization Scheme. The students learnt what happens when you are admitted to hospital and the procedures and equipment the doctors and nurses may use. After watching a video and listening to the nurse the children got to dress up and practice what they had seen on the life size doll; play with the crutches and wheel chair; and have their blood pressure taken. The students enthusiastically enjoyed the experience.

YR 2.1 & 2.2

This term the Year 2 class have explored the unique features of Australia, people and animals. The students were eager to know more and more about the Australian Wildlife. This was obvious in their fascinating account of the lives of the creatures that live in Australia.

The incursion on "Reptiles" enhanced their understanding of many of the unique native creatures seen in the wild. The children were encouraged to touch and hold the reptiles, which at first they found very daunting, but soon took up the challenge and enjoyed every moment of it.



YR 3 BUILDING BRIDGES

This term the year 3's were given a challenge for which they had to design, plan and build a bridge, for a pretend building company who was seeking a successful applicant. The criteria for the design was; the bridge had to be 30cm long, practical, and hold a toy car without falling apart. This was a fun activity enjoyed by all students!!