

To determine the Halal-Haram status of foodstuffs and other material, Islam has laid general guidelines on this matter, namely:

1. All raw materials and ingredients used must be Halal.
2. Naturally Halal animals such as cattle, goats etc., must be slaughtered according to Islamic rites, the rituals specify that the act must be performed by a mentally sound Muslim, to sever the blood and respiratory channels of the animal, using a sharp cutting tool such as knife.
3. The Halal ingredients must not be mixed, or come into contact with haram materials such as products from pig or dog during storage, transport, cooking, serving etc.

It must be understood that the production of Halal food is not only beneficial to Muslims, but also to food producers, by means of increased market acceptance of their products.

Manufacturers and exporters of Halal products can receive Halal certification for their products from AFIC.

AFIC Sydney Office:

Telephone: (02) 9319 6733

Fax: (02) 9319 0159

Email: halal@afic.com.au

Melbourne Office:

Telephone: (03) 9329 1228

Fax: (03) 9329 1677

Email: aficmelb@bigpond.com



Farming goes Halal

Snowy Mountains is a family owned company of farmers in Australia, which expanded with a difference; they too believe in humane farming activities, less use of chemicals, cleanliness, safety and hygiene. Therefore, "this move to Halal production was not a problem, and we saw it as a system that is worth going into," says Roger Burns, Chairman of Snowy Mountains Australia.

Snowy Mountains also saw Halal as a lucrative business venture, as there is a great demand for Halal meat and produce.

Snowy Mountains started with only managing livestock and farming activities, and moved to produce dairy products, wool, and meat. They own an abattoir and as a result they are the only company in Australia that has control of its entire livestock supply chain. With their experience in

livestock from farming to processing, and their attitude of promoting 'clean food for healthier living', Snowy Mountains decided to invest in a system for Halal production, providing consultancy services to Muslims wanting to go into Halal production business.

Snowy Mountains farming service is targeted to Muslim business people and farmers to encourage Muslims to own and produce Halal. Included in this service is hands-on assistance and training by Snowy Mountains' farmers. They also raise cattle of Muslim-owned businesses on their farm, or on farms in Australia, managed by Snowy Mountains. All Halal business activities by the company are supervised by Mr Mohamed Adil Rahman, who is the Manager of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils Inc. Snowy Mountains is fully Halal accredited, the only such Australian farming company.



Under this farming service, there is an on-going farm project of 110,00 acres in East Africa. The focus in East Africa is to improve product activities, feed and types of animals raised, especially cattle and goats raised for export to the Middle East.

With the success of this project in East Africa, Snowy Mountains expanded further by looking at Malaysia as their next potential project. Malaysia is spearheading the development of the global Halal industry with a vision of becoming a global Halal Hub.

In addition, based on Malaysia's Third National Agriculture Policy (NAP3), Malaysia is currently looking at improving the agriculture sector as one of the engines to boost Malaysian economy, and promoting self-sufficiency in agriculture and food industries. Snowy Mountains saw this as a great opportunity to provide assistance.

Roger Burns said "I was impressed with the government's aims of self sufficiency, boosting their agriculture sector and developing a Malaysian brand, but I felt that these aims would be more efficiently implemented if Malaysians had access to Australian farmers and their generations of farming knowledge. I felt that by making this knowledge available I could make a real difference in Malaysia."

"Snowy Mountains operate on small holding and high scale companies, and the level of national policy," says Burns, and therefore sees fit to assist Malaysian companies at all levels in the livestock sector.

He added "I went to a seminar in Melbourne and heard your Trade Minister, Rafidah Aziz, and I was struck with her energy and commitment to Malaysia, so I wanted an opportunity to be involved.

Having seen the natural resources available in Malaysia, I know that with the right knowledge, these aims can be achieved."

At the end of February 2008, Snowy Mountains Australia agreed to a joint venture with a Malaysian family-based farm, Al-Falah Farm Sdn Bhd. In response to Malaysia's call for improvement and establishment of self-sufficiency in its local agriculture and food sectors, Al-Falah went forth into livestock venture, seeing this as an opportunity, as Malaysia is currently dependent on imports of livestock and its by-product from countries such as New Zealand, Australia, Brazil, India and others.

"I believe that without knowledge, we will not be able to grow and be successful..."

Al-Falah, realising that lack of technology, knowledge and expertise in farming and livestock production was a major hurdle in Malaysian livestock sector, went on a search for a remedy to this problem. "I believe that without knowledge, we will not be able to grow and be successful," says Md Zubir Abdul Rahman, Chairman of Al-Falah.

Their search for expertise, through the Malaysian Embassy and the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils Inc, led them to Snowy Mountains Australia, who are, problem solvers. "Australian farmers are not merely farmers, but are problem solvers," says Burns. "We were delighted to meet Al Falah. They are an entrepreneurial company with considerable energy and vision. They wanted our knowledge, and we wanted to provide it."

The initial stage of this project will begin by the end of March 2008, with plans to set up the property and conditions fit for raising livestock. During the initial stage, Roger Burns, along with another farmer from Snowy Mountains, and Md Zubir will start training local farmers in Al-Falah in the correct methods of managing a farm.

Al-Falah will start with raising local goats, and some Australian and East African breed of goats. They will also develop a milk and beef industry. This joint venture will also be looking at developing a sort of Malaysian cattle breed by inter-breeding two different breeds of cattle. The purpose of this initiation is to develop cattle that are bigger and more productive, with tropical capabilities, tick resistance and higher growth rate to prepare Malaysia for the beef and dairy export market.

"We have already started work on this, and this can be done easily and effectively. It is only a matter of finding the right mix," Burns added, and his confidence is based on successful breeding in Australia and East Africa.

Beginning with Al-Falah as a pilot project in Malaysia, Snowy Mountains is looking for more local farmers who want to go into this business, especially for Halal production throughout the livestock supply chain, from raising, to breeding, to feeding, all the way to the abattoir and the boning room. This will be done with Al-Falah and farmers.

Al-Falah is optimistic that this project in collaboration with Snowy Mountains and support by government will be successful, and will grow from a small-scale farm to become bigger. Al-Falah hopes to secure Malaysia's supply of livestock and meat; and perhaps establish a strong foothold in Malaysia's dairy products.



HALAL LOGISTICS

Benefiting from a ready-made global customer group of nearly two billion Muslims, the international halal food industry was valued at \$570 billion during 2005. And with the total spend on logistics operations accounting for around 5-10% of total revenue, it is not surprising that logistics companies all over the world are keen to grab a piece of this growing market.

However, it is fast discovering, the complexities of the halal supply chain extend much further than the usual concerns regarding unbroken cool chains and the efficient delivery of fresh food produce. To be at the top of the halal

logistics game, players need to be well versed in the whole ethos in order to maintain what is known as the 'halal integrity' of a food product. With the legitimacy of some halal products coming under fire, the industry is now demanding more specialised halal compliant solutions for its supply chain process.

Careful and highly regulated transport of livestock is a key logistical component as is the separation of halal products from 'haram'.

"The reality is that science has moved far ahead. It has become very simple to test whether some thing is halal or not," says

Nordin Abdullah, co-founder and executive director of KasehDia, and trustee for the International Halal Integrity Alliance (IHI Alliance). "This means that any contamination, however small, can be detected. Food manufacturers have too much riding on the integrity of their brands and, if halal is part of that, anything that brings that into question could be a very costly affair."

The halal industry implements a 'farm to table' operation, presenting opportunities for various players in the logistics industry to climb aboard the process including ports, shipping and freight forwarding, warehousing and

handling facilities. Abdullah maintains that this area still needs great improvement.

"Developing nations, need to look at improving their supply chain and become more competitive in the global food market," he adds.

"What needs to happen is that all parties, including major ports and logistics companies, come together and be a part of the development of industry best practices to avoid confusion at a later stage," he says.

With global standardisation in the certification process for halal products now including strict criteria throughout the supply chain process, some countries such as Malaysia, Singapore and even some western countries are stepping ahead of the Middle East when it comes to taking halal logistics very seriously.

Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA), for example, has launched a halal brand for Australian meat in the Middle East, in recognition of the increased sophistication of meat retailing throughout the Muslim world. This response has already brought impressive dividends. In 2006, Australia exported 43,071 tonnes of mutton, 17,685 tonnes of lamb and 3312 tonnes of beef to the Middle East, valued at US\$242 million. "Australian meat exporters wishing to supply halal meat to Muslim countries must source meat from abattoirs operating under the Australian Government Muslim Slaughter (AGMS) programme, which is under the control and oversight of the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS)," explains Ian Ross, MLA's regional manager for the Middle East and Africa.

With such a stringent process supported by government regulation and supervised by independent Islamic organisations, all Australian halal meat products are identified with government secured stamps. Meat consigned to Muslim countries also bears an official certificate, which is endorsed with an original authorised Islamic Organisation stamp.

The usual requirements of ensuring an adequate infrastructure to transport, store and market fresh produce such as cold chain management are also on the top of MLA's priorities for halal meat.



In addition, staff are trained on the specifics of halal logistics to ensure that all personnel involved in the supply chain understand and respect the religious, regulatory and technical requirements to safely deliver halal meat into Islamic markets.

Measures to preserve the halal integrity of the meat continue throughout the supply chain process, under the watchful eye of the Australian government. "As well as correct slaughter procedures, the welfare of animals being raised for slaughter is a key requirement of Sharia law," Ross points out. "Careful and highly regulated transportation of livestock is a key logistical component as is the separation of halal products from those which are 'haram'; after slaughter, during processing, storage and transportation to the customer."

Avoiding compromising halal integrity in this way may become an issue of contention for those companies that deal with both halal and non-halal products. Nevertheless, the separation of halal products is one of the most critical components of an intact halal food chain process, and measures need to be put in place to avoid such contamination from ever occurring.

As one of the most reputed halal distributors across the Middle East, Al Islami Foods is well versed in these necessities of halal food logistics. With sales boosted by 25% up to an impressive US\$41 million between 2004-5 alone, the company has been going from strength to strength, capitalising on its long-standing experience of the industry.

"Halal supply chains include everything from the procurement and preparation of genuine halal ingredients to the manufacturing and delivery of the final product all the way to customer shelves," says Hasan Rimawi, chief technical officer at Al Islami Foods. "This includes the separation of halal ingredients or finished products from non halal products, such as alcoholic or pork-related products, throughout the entire chain. Similar measures need to be adopted in other areas of the logistics process, such as transporting halal fed animals to slaughterhouses or when shipping chilled or frozen halal meat in enclosed shipping containers," he adds.

Al Islami proactively avoids comprising the integrity of its products by taking control of the entire process from production, storage and transport, and through the supervision over the local suppliers it uses for certain products. "Supervising the process is the single

most important aspect of controlling genuine halal products," Rimawi says. "Al Islami has joined hands with multiple partners in different regions to ensure that each product is manufactured to the highest quality standards and is not mixed with any non halal ingredients."

Earlier this year the company announced a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with one of its most ambitious partners, Malaysia's Halal-Industry Development Corporation (HDC), to introduce the Al Islami Cart franchise concept to Southeast Asia and identify further opportunities in the region.

With Malaysia setting itself up to be the world hub for halal products and the leading edge on halal supply chain logistics, other companies in the region are also jumping on the bandwagon to develop partnerships with the ambitious country. Amongst those, Emirates SkyCargo is keen to be in the forefront of supporting the Malaysian government's initiative. With its Dubai hub having the vantage point of being a geographically-placed meeting point between East and West, the carrier is optimistic that it can provide the much needed synergy in the distribution of Malaysia's halal products globally. "This development will be good to promote halal food and non-food based products, especially to cater for the West Asian market," explains Bobby Chang, cargo manager, Emirates in Malaysia. "The move will also help pave the way for more Malaysian producers and manufacturers to penetrate the West Asian supply market."

According to Chang, Emirates currently carries a few hundred tonnes of cargo nine times a week in the belly of its B777-300 wide-body aircrafts from Kuala Lumpur to Dubai, with connections to more than 80 destinations worldwide. "We have sent halal food products from Malaysia to the Middle East meant for local distributions in the past, with shipments arriving fresh to various Middle East markets," he adds.

To ensure that the halal products that it uplifts arrive fresh and in good condition at the appointed destinations, the carrier has developed a new service called Cool Chain, which is a premium solution designed especially for the movement of perishables and temperature sensitive products. Using specialised air cargo temperature controlled containers, Cool Chain offers a seamless air transportation chain suitable for the carriage of halal food products. "This service has been well-received by the food industry and had proven to be able to meet the high service standards required for uplift of halal food products," Chang says.

"An increasing number of companies are producing halal goods to tap into the billion dollar global demand," Chang points out. "With more than 1.8 billion muslims globally, the global halal food and non-food industries is estimated to have an expected growth rate of 10-20% each year," he adds.

With logistics companies doing similar money-making equations on their potential profitability from the halal industry, it comes as no surprise that so many are eager to learn how to position themselves most favourably in the global marketplace.

Christine Weaver, group exhibition director of IRR Middle East, organisers of this year's inaugural Halal World Expo in Abu Dhabi, agrees.

"For the logistics industry, halal is a dynamic market that should not be ignored," she says. "The rate of growth driven by consumer demand for high quality halal products worldwide is a market to be taken seriously," she adds.

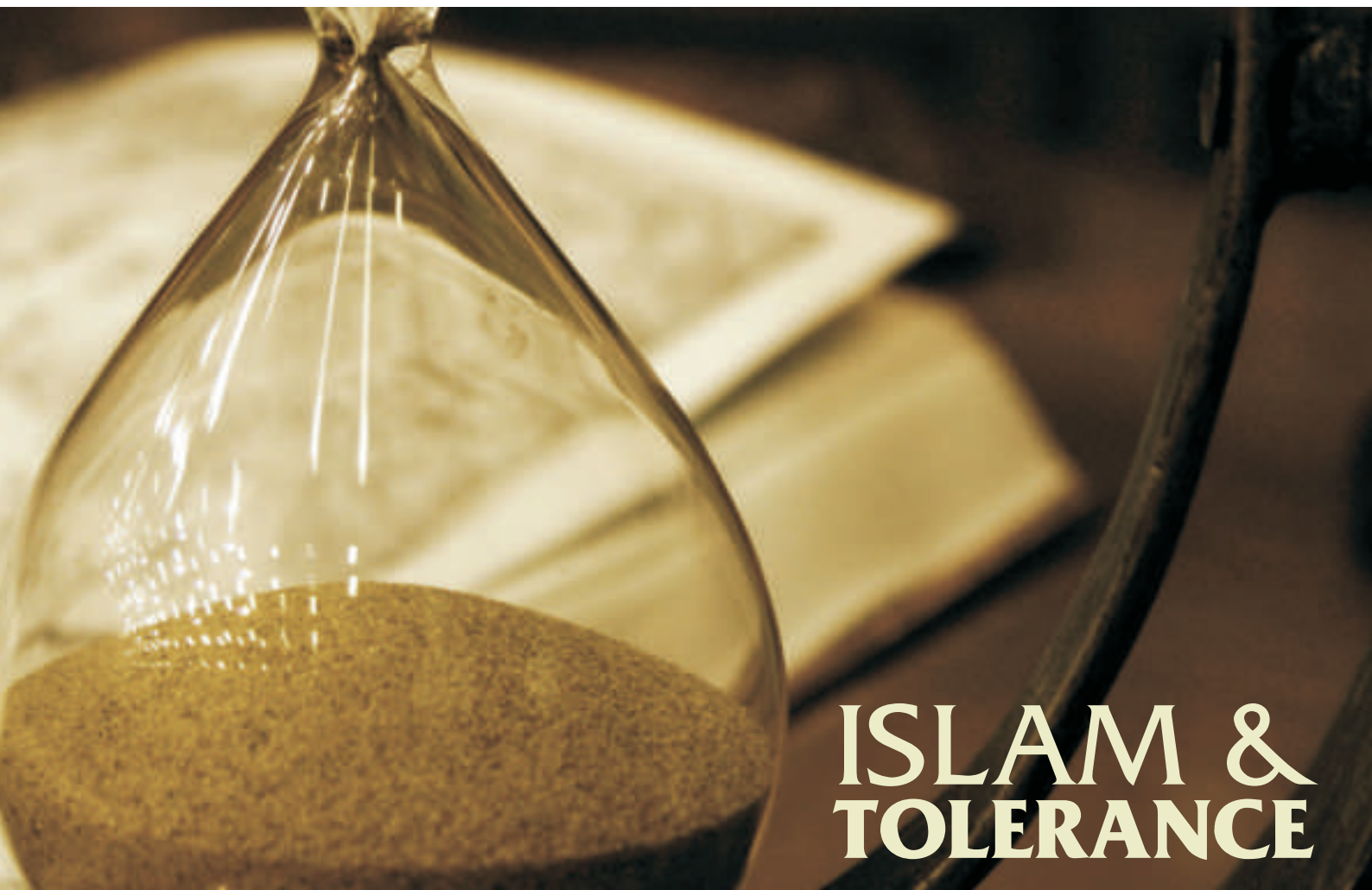


Do you have a favourite Halal eating place?

Eating out is a favourite pass time across Australia. Take a look at any city, inner suburban or for that matter, outer suburban area, and you will notice the number of new restaurants and eating places popping up all over. Many pavements and city alley ways have been transformed into trendy el-fresco dining areas. Your taste buds are tempted with hot and spicy, fresh and organic, home-style, cuisines from places you probably have to google their names, if you not a geography major...

The aroma's will have you salivating while browsing through the street menus...as your little voice nudges, is it Halal? How many times has this happened to you? You scan through a menu, just to find, it all sounds delicious, but unfortunately, it is not Halal.

So, we at Muslims Australia would like to share with our readers your favourite Halal eating place. All you have to do is email the name and address of your favourite Halal eating place to aficmelb@bigpomd.com. Let us know what is so special about the food, the ambiance, share your experiences with us. We welcome recommendations from all across Australia, Tasmania, too. People tend to travel to various parts of Australia and Tasmania, for work or holidays, so your suggestions and feedback is valued.



ISLAM & TOLERANCE

In the media and throughout our cultural institutions, it is common to hear about the intolerance of religious sects. I would like to discuss the tolerance one can find in Islam. The very word tolerance has several meanings in the dictionary.

Toleration¹ is the recognition of the right of private judgement in religious matters, liberty to uphold one's religious opinions and forms of worship or to enjoy all social privileges without regard to religious differences. I would like to discuss how two prominent Islamic leaders in Yogyakarta, Central Java, carry this out in practice.

“O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and female and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other.” (Qur'an. Surah 49:13)

Emha Ainun Nadjib or Cak Nun as he is usually called, holds regular performances and gatherings for hundreds of people in Indonesia to make them more aware of being tolerant and consequently to increase their knowledge of being a human being. He is a Muslim and if the audience is non-Muslim, he usually begins by asking what religion the people follow. He does this so that there can be a basis for communication and a way to understand each other. He believes strongly in mutual respect.

“When I ask them about their religion, the intention is just for putting them in the right social position. I can get to know them this way and give them respect. I can't influence them but I can join them for lunch or dinner and we can work together. It is possible to go to the football together. In fact there are

thousands of subjects we can share without having the wall of our religion. If I don't know what their religion is, it will not be conducive to communication because I do not know the fence or the difference between you and me.”

Cak Nun's target is to get to know the people as the way to work together. Of course knowing the people does not mean everything is then free in the relationship. There are limitations. He says to me; “I know you but that doesn't mean that I can come into your room! Life is always about limitations.”

On the question of tolerance, Cak Nun believes it is all about doing things together. If people learn together and put themselves in the right context socially, politically, religiously and culturally, people are more tolerant to learn from each other.

¹ Fowler and Fowler; The Concise Oxford Dictionary

"I put myself at a certain distance; not too close and not too far away from the other person," says Cak Nun. He believes each case has its own discipline and in that way one can determine just how close or how far away one can distance oneself from the other.

"Like with football, there are limited distances as there are in life. Even with your husband or wife you have limitations and must know the distance so that you are in the rightfully considered position with that person."

Cak Nun believes it is vitally important to be yourself according to your own background and your own culture. People should not run away from who they are and if they are honest, all the better for negotiation! Ideas of tolerance can be expressed in the pluralistic society of Indonesia. But actually the signs of pluralism that exist in Indonesia at present are not right. We look for what is typical. For instance;

- If you speak in Arabic it means you are a Muslim
- If you speak in English it means you are a Christian
- If you wear a peci (Islamic style Indonesian hat) it means you are a Muslim
- If you wear a sarong (Indonesian cloth) it means you are a Muslim
- If you wear trousers it means you are a Christian

This is not the true aspect of the idea of pluralism. In reality many Christians wear the peci. Christians can speak Arabic too and Muslims wear trousers.

"I am a Muslim. I appreciate that you are a Christian. I am Christian and you are a bird. That is fine. You don't have to be a chicken and I don't have to hide who I am. What our aim should be is to remember the good things together. I have no problem performing with my Islamic music troupe in the Vatican. It is important that every one knows each other's positions."

I asked Cak Nun to explain how pluralism can be reflected in the education system in Indonesia. He believes that the education system needs to be developed on a different foundation. At the moment it is seen as a commodity and as a system for making money. This is not a good foundation for educating people, as education is only a secondary factor. The weakness is in the thinking which says- how much money can I make?

"They are making this judgement using only one path to understanding..."

"Some people use a different approach and send their children to non-government schools. I sent my son to a Christian school. There was no problem. This is a way to gain knowledge and tolerance. For people learning in other places such as Christians studying Arabic this is good because they can learn about each other. Muslims can learn about English by studying in Christian countries. If you feel strong enough on your inside there is no problem anywhere."

Cak Nun believes it is a pity if there is only one path to understanding. It leads to closed minds. "For instance people think I am close to Suharto. If I don't visit him they say I am not his friend. They are making this judgement using only one path to understanding. If I am in the east they say I am not in the west. If I go to the north, I don't go to the south. This reasoning is very narrow. It is like setting up one narrow education method. This is wrong because there are so many methods of knowing."

"People should make judgements in many different ways. No matter what the law is, it is always according to your human ideas. If I practise sharia Islam I will not tell the people that it is sharia Islam because the people have a trauma when they hear this word. They have bad impressions. The reality is not that bad. When they try to make it sharia, they will be afraid. When people feel nice about it there is no problem. If I use the word "love" to my wife and I know that it has a traumatic affect on her, it is better that I just do good things to her every day and very slowly I can start to use the word "love". The person, in fact, may say 'I love you' first. You just do good things to them. Then that person will respond. It is better to act than just say it."

Ustad Wijayanto, believes it is important to listen to the other person with a different ideology. "Allah said if you dislike the other person don't be unjust to him. Justice is a part of the foundation of Islam. It is forbidden to be unjust to someone just because you don't like him."

Addressing the question of how all religions can live together in peace, Ustad Wijayanto, claims that all people who embrace religion must know deeply about their religion. If they understand their own religion their activities will improve and they will not be so intolerant of the other religion. If they understand their own religion deeply they will develop a profound compassion with other human beings. Islam is good but sometimes Muslims are not good. Christianity is good but sometimes Christians are not good. To truly know your own religion you will then naturally be tolerant of other religions.

“To you be your Way, and to me mine.”
(*Qur'an. Surah 109:6*)

Consistent with the principles of toleration, Islam does not believe in force or compulsion in religion. Followers of Islam reflect the UNESCO principles of respecting the convictions of others while adhering to their own Islamic values. They accept the diversity of the human condition and do not believe in imposing their will on others. Islam comes to people through their hearts as a strong conviction. Only with such an inner conviction can Muslims practise their demanding faith so there would actually be no point in coercing people to follow Islam. Muhammad believed in equality and justice and was tolerant of all people.

Cak Nun believes religion is a tool for the benefit of humanity. It is the way to read the world. It is not the main thing. It is your efforts in life that are the most important. Religion is best seen as a tool to focus humanity.

“It is your humanity. It's OK whoever you are! My focus is humanity. If you teach me I get more appreciation of humanity. You must be peaceful and enjoy the beauty of your humanity. Our lives on earth could be so rich if we lived together in peace and tolerance. Which one is bigger?” he asked. “Islam or the human aspect? The human of course. Islam is only part of being human.”

Wijayanto says that reading is not enough to understand mankind. “May you acquire your knowledge deeply inside you with your eyes, your nose, your ears and not just your brain. We must act in the world, produce, make a positive influence and benefit others. It is not enough to just ask for benefits, we must use all parts of this world for the benefit of all mankind. A peaceful life is the aim for us all.”

Ideas of tolerance are vitally important in our modern world especially in a world where there is a threat of losing such values. Only by knowing each other intrinsically, by understanding the situation of others and by assessing and deepening our knowledge for the rest of our lives, can we hope to have some semblance of tolerance towards our fellow man.

Irene Ritchie - *Writer*

Endah Suseno - *Translator & Interpreter*
Yogyakarta, Central Java, Indonesia.
January 2008.

Appeal for Religious Articles for Muslim Prisoners

Since the service commenced in 1994, the Islamic Council of Victoria's (ICV), Prison Chaplaincy Services has been visiting and providing effective chaplaincy services to over 220 Muslim prisoners accommodated in 13 prisons across Victoria. Muslim prisoners, while incarcerated, have the opportunity to reflect on life, spirituality and to reconnect with God. Donated items from a stranger in the Muslim community have immense meaning to prisoners trying to keep their faith alive. Items act as a reminder and are a constant source of hope and encouragement. Due to resourcing challenges, the chaplaincy service is dependent on donations from the Muslim community for Islamic religious articles.

There is an urgent need for donations of the following religious articles to be made available for Muslim Prisoners.

- Qur'ans in various languages (Arabic, English, Turkish, Somali, Albanian, etc)
- Prayer mats (sajida)
- Prayer beads no longer than 30cms.
- Friday sermon books, ready to read. Eg. Khutbaatul Ahkaam
- Mainstream literature that promotes the central message of Islam
- Prayer hats (knitted type, one size fits all)
- Islamic posters of holy sites (A4 size).

Important: Presentable second-hand items should be in good condition, with names and personal details removed.

Delivery Options

Attention: Abdul-Aziz Cooper, Prison Chaplaincy Coordinator

- Postal address: The Islamic Council of Victoria, PO Box 14156, Melbourne, Victoria, 8001, Australia
- In person: City Mosque (ICV), 3rd Floor, 66-68 Jeffcott St, West Melbourne.

Questions may be directed to:
aziz.cooper@icv.org.au

On behalf of Muslim prisoners, Jazakullah Khairun for your ongoing support for this important community service.

Abdul-Aziz Cooper
Prison Chaplaincy Coordinator



ISLAMIC COLLEGE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Ph: (08) 8340 7799 Fax: (08) 8340 9988 Email: admin@icosa.sa.edu.au



New Building - The Reception Year 3 students and staff are enjoying the new building. The classrooms are looking great!!!

2007 YEAR 12 RESULTS

The results for the first group of students to complete Year 12 at the Islamic College of South Australia were very pleasing.

All those who set out to achieve the SACE were successful. They also gave the College a 100% pass rate in every subject. One student chose a direct employment pathway and was offered a job immediately she left school. Another chose a trades pathway and is currently studying electrotechnology at TAFE.

The remaining eight all applied to university. Seven of them were offered courses, while one was offered a TAFE course in aged care.

The Uni courses involve degrees in the following areas:

Computer Science, Business (Commercial Law), Business (Commerce), Human Services / Psychological Science, Information Technology, Secondary Teaching (Science) and Visual Communication.

We are thrilled to have achieved such wonderful results in our first year of Year 12 students.



We would like to introduce you to our new reception classes and welcome the students to our school. Even though they have only been at school for a very short time they have settled in very well.

MALEK FAHD ISLAMIC SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (2007)

Assalamu alaykum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakaatuhu.

In 2007, our tenth and the largest Higher School Certificate (HSC) class of seventy-one students qualified for university entrance. Thirty-four students achieved the Universities Admission Index (UAI) of over 90. Ahmad Shah Idil broke the record with a UAI of 99.95. Once again we were placed first in the Bankstown region and moved to 9th position in the State. Four students Ahmad Shah Idil, Azmena Hussain, Raihana Abdul Wahab and Samra Ijaz have received the Premier's Award. We warmly congratulate all our HSC students and wish them all the best. At university, they will be studying various courses such as medicine, dentistry, optometry, pharmacy, engineering, law, commerce, economics, business, teaching and many more. Our School Certificate students performed very well in the exam and their marks were well above the state average.

It was a pleasure to listen to the Jumma Khutba (Friday sermons) of our Year 11 boys who spoke on a wide range of topics such as care and compassion, fair go, honesty and trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, tolerance and many more. The school played a leading role in a cluster of schools to strengthen Values Education. Students know that Australian values and Islamic values are the same. They understand that the most important thing is to always act morally and ethically. Our Values Education programme was reported nationally.

In 2007, we continued to place a lot of emphasis on inter-faith dialogue and democratic life in Australia. We also invited a number of Federal and State members of Parliament to address our students, and the students are advised to play an active role in the democratic processes in Australia. We invited the Hon. Laurie Ferguson, the Federal Member for Reid and Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Settlement Services; Mr Jason Clare, the Federal Member for Blaxland; the Hon. Barbara Perry, Member of the Legislative Assembly, Minister for Juvenile Justice, Minister for Western Sydney, and Minister Assisting the Premier on Citizenship; and the Hon. Tony Stewart, Member of the Legislative Assembly and Member for Bankstown. The school organised a number of functions such as ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day, and Harmony Day.

My advice to the students is to always put into practice the motto of the school "Knowledge is Light and Work is Worship", and to make doa to Allah Subhaan O Taala for help, and they will be successful Inshaa-Allah.

Once again, I would like to thank the parents, the teachers, the School Board and the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils for their guidance and support for the children.

We thank Allah Subhaan O Taala for giving us a successful year and we look forward to another rewarding year in 2008 Inshaa-Allah.

Wassalaam.

Dr Intaj Ali - PRINCIPAL