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An Najm
The Rising Star
Issue 6

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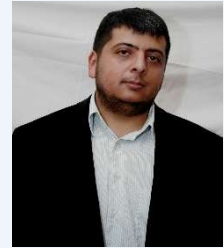
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Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Editorial Team, or Nasserpuria Memon Jamat Canada. Articles have been edited as deemed necessary.

President's Address

Alhamdulillah, All Praise is due to Allah SWT for His Guidance and Blessings on our NMJ Canada as we celebrate our 15th year since the adoption of the constitution. I would like to congratulate all members of the Jamat as we celebrate this milestone since each and every one has played a role in the growth and success of the Jamat. May Allah SWT reward everyone for their service to the Jamat, both in this world and the hereafter, Ameen.



During the past 15 years the Jamat has seen numerous achievements and has also faced challenges. Alhamdulillah, we have come through stronger and with a greater sense of belonging to the Jamat. The Executive Committee has focused on enhancing individual development and familial brotherhood in all of its activities. Over the past year, we have embarked on historic activities by focusing on supporting government sponsored Syrian refugees. In addition, we have gone a step further with the sponsorship of one family. We are truly grateful to everyone's support as we embark on this project. This project has the potential to define the Jamat as an organization providing support not only to its members, but also the greater community in the Toronto area. Further, we have implemented a Kabrastan program designed to provide support to the family members of the deceased at the time of utmost need. We thank Allah SWT for His help in allowing us to achieve what we have in such a short period of time. InshaAllah, we will continue to look for opportunities to better serve our members and provide additional services for their benefit.

This An-Najm publication is the result of tremendous effort and dedication by the Media and Communications sub-committee as well as the Editorial Board. On behalf of the Executive Committee, I would like to sincerely thank all the sub-committees for their hard work and support. At the same time, I implore all members to unite and continue to build the Jamat for the benefit of future generations.

May Allah SWT overlook our shortcomings, bring us together and help us realize the potential of the Jamat. May He also instill in our hearts the desire to serve the Jamat. Ameen.

Mohamed Osman Parpia

President- 2015- present

Editorial

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Indeed, all Praise is for Allah SWT, Lord of the worlds, Most Merciful, Power over all and King of Kings. Peace and Blessings of Allah SWT be upon Muhammad (Salallahu Alahi Wassallam), his family and his followers.

Alhamdhulillah, An Najm 2016 has come to life with the Help and Mercy of Allah SWT. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the President and the Executive Committee for giving us the honor to be a part of An Najm. Like everything, such a task takes time, effort and patience; Alhamdhulillah, the Media and Communication and An Najm teams pulled it out through.

Our heartiest Congratulations to the President, Executive Committee and NMJ Canada members for achieving a milestone of working, playing, laughing and holding each other for the past fifteen years. May Allah SWT always keep the same spirit in us and our generations to come, Aameen.

It has been a pleasure working with the Editorial and An Najm team, the good laughs, some tense moments and of course good food. Our heartiest Thank you to everyone on the Editorial board for their cooperation and hard work. JazakAllah Hamza Varvani and Ebrahim Goralwalla for your patience while working on the front cover and the layout. It would be injustice not to say “Thank you” to Br Zahir Salyani for the photographs without which the An Najm would be gray. “Asante sana” to the Past Presidents, sponsors, writers and our little members for taking time to prepare their articles and amazing cooperation. We wish to thank the past Editorial Committees for setting the bar of An Najm – you have inspired us through your work and we hope that we have followed the excellent path you have created for us and future An Najm Editors. Last, but not least An Najm would not have been possible without our families’ support, patience and encouragement, thank you so much for being there for us.

Editorial Team

Nasreen Kassam Varvani

Shahista Parpia

Nashina Yakub

Past Presidents

Abdulhamid Hathiyan (2001-2005)

Bismillahi rahmani Raheem

Alhamdulillah e rabil aalameen wasalatu wasalaam Allah rasoolil kareem.

All praise to Allah (SWT) for having guided us to celebrate 15 years of existence. Congratulations to the President, Executive Committee and members of the Jamat. We have all played a role in the growth and success.

When we reflect back, there is no doubt that it has been a challenging and arduous task establishing ourselves in a new country. One wonders what our forefathers experienced when they moved to East Africa with stakes being high and challenges colossal. They organized themselves such that we still remain a large extended family with our religion and identity remaining intact. Similarly, if we do not tread cautiously, to survive as an extended family will be an enormous challenge.

As the first President, an important initial task at that time was to formulate the type of Jamat. What vision should we have and how could we direct that into reality. How could we ground ourselves firmly and build a framework that would not only serve our members but the community at large, eventually leading us to a Masjid and a Memon Villa of our own. We needed to build a strong foundation based on Islamic principles of unity, equality, respect and transparency.

I must commend four elders of the Jamat namely Kulsumbai Noorani, Mohamed Bashir Hathiyan, Khaironbai Hathiyan and late Zubeidabai Yakub for their unwavering support. We had to start from scratch with obstacles being imposed in our way. I must commend the committee at the time of Gulamhabib Yakub, Zaheer Salyani, Mohamed Kadernani and Amir Sokwalla, who worked tirelessly during those times. May Allah (SWT) benefit abundantly all those who have helped build this Jamat. Ameen.

To get ourselves registered and recognized as a non-profit and a charitable organization meant working on a constitution. After tireless hours Abdulkader Yakub, Abdulrahim Goralwalla and myself, as the lead presented the constitution which was adopted by the Jamat. This culminated our registration as a not for profit organization. The Jamat was now an official organization!

Alhamdulillah our activities touch all aspects of our lives: encouraging youth by giving scholarships, acquiring burial rights and by our involvement with the Syrian refugees. It is imperative that we lead this momentum and have a concerted, consistent and determined effort to fulfill our vision of acquiring a masjid and a community center. May Allah (SWT) accept all those who have contributed be it their leadership, donation, service or participation and bless them abundantly in both this world and the hereafter. I seek forgiveness from one and all of my shortcomings and most importantly beg Allah (SWT) to forgive me and us all.

Ameen ya rabal Alameen.



Zahir Salyani (2005-2007) (September 2014 – March 2015)

Assalamu Alaikum,

Congratulations to our Jamat on its 15th Anniversary. Mashallah, NMJ Canada has come a long way, with its ups and downs.



In 2005, my goal was to have our own centre and take our Jamat to the next level, as well as be recognised by other communities. Alhamdulillah, through an affiliation, we participated in a walkathon for the homeless in Toronto raising about \$2500. Our Jamat was recognised and was honoured with a plaque. We had a successful year with many events, such as honouring our Hujjajis. At our summer event we had guests from Kenya, England, USA and other parts of Canada. The 3rd edition of An Najm was also launched. New families to Canada were welcomed. All thanks to my committee who worked with me hand in hand to bring up the Jamat.

In 2014, Brothers, Br. Osman Parpia, Br. Ghulam Habib Yakub, Br. Nadeem Salyani, Br Kassam Varvani and I got together to restart the activities of the Jamat.. It was a huge challenge for our team. The Jamat chose us as an interim committee, and I was humbled at the team requesting me to be the Ameer. We were given a mandate of 6 months to come up with an Executive Committee, audit the accounts and retrieve all the Jamat's assets from the past committees. Alhamdulillah, this was all accomplished with cooperation of all past executives. In the same year, the Jamat's past leaders were honored by the City of Toronto for their Services to the community. This was also a huge milestone for our Jamat. During this time, our members who made intention for Hajj were honored at an event.

Alhamdulillah, the Jamat has overcome challenges in these past 15 years but, with the help of Allah SWT, we have achieved a lot. I would request our youth to come forward and take the Jamat to the next level and we can then celebrate 100 years of the Jamat, Inshallah. Alhamdulillah, you have the potential to do a lot for the Jamat. You will take our Jamat's legacy forward. As I always say, don't think WHAT THE JAMAT CAN DO FOR YOU, ALWAYS THINK WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR THE JAMAT

I would like to congratulate the Media and Communication committee in coming up with the 6th Edition of An Najm. Congratulations to the Executive Committee for doing an excellent job. Bravo! To Syrian Support Relief Committee for helping settle the Syrian families in Toronto, Canada. Inshallah, Allah SWT will reward you all for your efforts.

Lastly, I would like to say: NATHO KHAPPE MUKE KOY PAN PAISO, NATHI KHAPPE MUKE KOY PAN JAIDHAT, KHAPPE THI MUKE MUJI JAMAT, JIDA AYE PYAR, JIDA AYE MOHABBAT.

JazakAllah.

Mohamed Bashir Hathiyan (June 2007 – September 2007)

Bismillahi rahmaan e raheem.

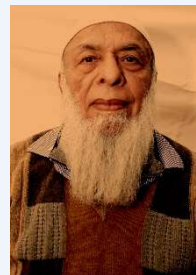
Alhamdulillah rabal aalameen.

My congratulations to the President, the executive, past presidents and their executives, Trustees and members of the NMJ Canada on the occasion of 15th anniversary celebration.

It is very important to have a Jamat like ours as it is like a big family. The family takes care of its children and helps them grow. In a big family there are always ups and downs but the benefits are more. It is important for the elders and leaders to keep the Jamat united, anticipate future problems and address them now so it is easy for us to resolve the issues later on.

We have to instill in the young members the importance of the Jamat as they have not grown in it or seen the benefits from it. The leaders of the Jamat have to create that “maahol” and the environment to attract all, not just a few members. We need to involve them more and give them more responsibilities.

For the leaders I would like to stress that the Jamat is a trust and we have to be careful to treat it like that. Tomorrow we are answerable to Allah SWT for the “Amanah,” the trust and responsibility he has given us. Our leaders should respect our elders and our past leaders who have sacrificed a lot for the Jamat as are our current leaders. When we led the Jamat during the interim period we elders did not say we knew everything. We approached past Presidents and other members and continuously took their advice and help. Allah does not like arrogance. Nobody is perfect and we may not be experts at everything so we should also take advice from those who have experience or knowledge about certain things. Mashallah we have a lot of educated and experienced men and women in our Jamat. The Jamat is a community with different interests and thoughts. As leaders we govern all of them and need to take care of each one's needs. The Jamat is “mai baap” and therefore cannot say it will listen to this child and ignore another child. My advice is to work together collectively as one big family for the betterment of each one of its members and for future generations. “Life is all about give and take. Give more than you take.” May Allah give Jaza-e-khair to all those who have served our Jamat in every capacity official or nonofficial. May Allah bless those who have served in the past, those who are serving and those who will serve the Jamat in the future. Ameen. Once again I would like to congratulate all members of the Jamat at this occasion of fifteen years’ celebration. Mubarakhis to all.



Zulfikar Hathiyan (2007-2009)

Congratulations to the President, the Executive Committee and all members of NMJ Canada on this happy occasion of celebrating 15 years of existence.

Alhamdulillah, there have been many achievements in the past 15 years, every initiative has been a success for us and each year has been memorable.



Having served the Jamat in various capacities, I have a lot to reflect upon and cherish the achievements and the strides we have taken. From the adaptation of the first constitution to skiing on the slopes of mountains in Canada, history speaks of the talent we possess. Reflecting down memory lane gives me a sense of achievement and a realization that we can achieve a lot if we stand united. Looking back, I recall our rising cricket stars when our team was involved in a nail biting finish and our young Nabil Hathiyan was named as the player of the tournament. Only a few weeks later our stars went on to defeat the Cricket Academy led by the famous West Indian Test cricketer, Larry Gomes. Our Youth have always been a force to reckon with and my Executive Committee made “Our Youth our Future” as the focus of our term in office. The youth did not let us down. With the able and creative leadership of Sr. Rizwana Kaderdina, they organized events such as skating and skiing, while also reaching out to the extended community by volunteering to feed the homeless once a month. Meantime, the veterans of our community looked into ways to support and integrate our relationship with other Nasserpuria Memon Jamats’ around the globe. The educational committee launched the first ever “Nasserpuria World Essay Competition” that attracted participation from NMJ Memons throughout the world.

Our Jamat has always had a vision. A vision not only to look at the current situation but also to look out and plan for the future. Recognizing that higher education was key to success, the Executive Committee introduced a scholarship program to encourage all our youth to seek post-secondary education. It was also recognized that in order for us to survive as a Jamat we had to increase our numbers and so an effort was made to having a seminar and communication with our “Jamatilas” to encourage them to migrate to Canada. It has been shown that those who do not have a long term vision stagnate fast. We embarked on a massive Vision 20/20 at that time with the creation of the development committee that comprised of past leaders and experienced members. As a result of their efforts a new constitution was developed and we came very close to establishing a “Memon Villa” of our own. This dream is still alive and I am sure our future successors will build on it, InshAllah. It takes a lot of time and effort to realize our goals and we need to keep working on them. A case in point is the beginning of the funeral and burial services. The thought process and planning had started at that time with the culmination recently of the provision of full funeral and burial services for our members. My congratulations to the current committee for the bold step in making this possible. To ponder and celebrate all our memories for the last 15 years will require a book. It is important that we continue to see ourselves as one family and stay focused to our goals. I pray to Allah (s.w.t) to protect our Jamat for the years to come. The sacrifices made by our elders and all who have served in the Jamat to keep this Jamat functional, need not go to waste and may Allah accept them and reward them both here and in the hereafter. Aameen

Moledina Varvani (2010-2012)

Bi-smil Lahee Rahmani Rahim - In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Assalamualaikum Warahmatul Lahi Wabarakatuhu,

Praise be to Allah, for all His favors and mercy bestowed upon us. I ask Him for his succor, there is no power or might save through Him and I ask Him for His guidance that cannot lead its adherent astray.



It's 5 years since the last edition of An-Najm, when we celebrated the 10th anniversary, and time certainly has flown by. I take the opportunity to extend my heartiest congratulations to the President, managing committee and members at large on this historical occasion. May Allah SWT continue to shower His blessings on this Jamat and we should be ever grateful for all His favors and blessings.

Over the years we have all grown as individuals and as a community, and all this is a result of Allah's mercy. In the past decade and a half, we have interacted, socialized, laughed, and enjoyed the sense of home, of *Villa*, that we as a community have brought to our new home-Canada. The Jamat has lessened the homesickness we all originally felt and made our transition into this new land easier which otherwise would have been overwhelming.

I applaud, what we as a community have managed to build and the *baicharo* we have established with the grace of Allah SWT. Through the efforts of many, we have now reached where we are today and I congratulate all those who have served and those continuing to serve our Jamat. As said by a wise man "The true meaning of life it to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit". It is my *dua* that Allah SWT gives our youth the guidance, wisdom and *kuwat* to take the Jamat to higher grounds in the many years to come.

The Jamat- "extended family"- needs to continuously evolve and mold itself taking into account the needs of its members in this dynamic land that we now call home. Our needs, the needs of the children and the future generations differ to the ones we grew up with and we need to accept, realize and be informed of the changes that we see and envision what's likely to confront us. We are presently living through massive technology changes that have changed the world like never before and we have to learn to embrace and adapt it in the Islamic context. Having said that, we should not lose sight of our rich cultures and traditions, we need to find the balance between the two, to pave the path for the future.

In conclusion, I would like to make dua that Allah SWT guide the current Executive committee and all its respective sub committees in their service to the Jamat and may they all be rewarded immensely for their services in this world and the in hereafter – Ameen.

Wa Salaam.

Shabbir Bagha (2013-2014)

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds and Peace Be upon His Messenger, Muhammad (S.A.W.)



On this occasion I would like to pay a glowing tribute to the founding members and leaders of our community who with their far-sighted vision, commitment and unwavering zeal for the community fought hard to keep our identity intact. The pain, the anguish and the mental stress which they valiantly endured in their efforts to unite our Jamat has today enabled us to celebrate this milestone. Their commitment in terms of body, soul and mind can only be matched to the rigours and the difficulties experienced by our founding fathers in Mombasa when giving our community a base there more than a century ago.

Since inception here in Canada, we have come across several challenges and opportunities. We have, Al-hamdullilah, with the help and blessing of Allah (S.W.T.), exploited the opportunities to our advantage and with our perseverance and resilience we have overcome, the challenges. We may not have achieved the success that other similar organizations, with much larger membership and more resources at their disposal have. Given our modest resources I must say that we have done remarkably well. The acquisition of the burial rights for our members at a much subsidised rate is something that all Nasserpuria Memons should be proud of. The regular gatherings, each with a unique agenda yet with the one purpose of strengthening our familial ties, promote our culture within the parameters of our religion have made us a beacon of pride and sublime in the NMJ circle. In the spirit of Islamic brotherhood our members joined hands and mobilized all the resources at their disposal to help settle our less fortunate Syrian brothers and sisters.

So what next? Are we going to be complacent and rest on these laurels or are we going to forge ahead? We must never forget our history because we must never lose our memory. Collectively, we, as a people, need our memory to remember our past, to live in the present, and not stumble into the future. Therefore, the moment of our greatest determination has arrived. A determination to live as our founding fathers did, as our founding fathers strived and to not rest until we have realised their vision of a truly united, peaceful and prosperous, and a better NMJ.

We have the talent, the ideals and the philosophies that can be translated into concrete and identifiable results that will not only unite and fortify our Jamat, but will also propel us to the next level. Each member is a drop of water. United, we can transform ourselves into an ocean. It is time for each one of us to stand up and be counted if we want to breathe any hope in our community.

Finally, I would like to quote Allama Iqbal the Poet who said:

“Naa samjo ghey tau mit jaaoghey ai Hindustan waalo.

Dastaan tak ki baaki naa rahegi tumari dastaano mei.”

Long live NMJ Canada! Long live Nasserpurians all over the world!

Aameen.

The Elected Members



From left to right: Zulfikar Kasmani – Treasurer, Mohamed Osman Parpia – President, AbdulHamid Hathyani – Senior Advisor, Mohamed Osman Noorani - Secretary



Hon. Auditor – Mohamed Kassam Varvani

Events Since Last AGM

Panji Boli Cutchi Book Launch – Sunday May 3rd 2015

A 2 ½ year project of our elder Haji AbdulRahim Goralwalla culminated in the publishing of an interactive reference/teaching book titled ‘Panji Boli Cutchi.’ NMJ-Canada was honored to launch this unique compilation. Along with the Memon Diaspora launched a few years back, this was another effort Alhamdulillah from members of NMJ-Canada to maintain our language, culture and importantly our Deen. The ceremony featured an interactive session, a keynote speech, and an official book launch presentation, while bringing together NMJ-Canada members as well as members of the wider community.

Annual Ramadan Function – Saturday July 4th 2015

The Annual Ramadan Function brought the community together for Iftar and Dinner. It was a pleasant night wherein we had round table discussions about the challenges we face in Ramadan. These discussions helped us identify some valuable tips on how to deal with these challenges, as the youth and elderly shared their experiences. The Jamat also collected non-perishable food items for the needy, which were donated the Muslim Welfare Centre Food Bank.

Eid-UL-Fitr Function – August 2nd 2015

The Jamat once again organized an event for all members to get together and celebrate Eid-UL-Fitr as a big family with a fun filled evening and catered dinner. Children had a wonderful time with Eid gifts donated by Br. Abdulkader Yaqub and family.

Eid-UL-Adha Lunch at Affy’s – October 11th 2016

It was that time of the year again! The Jamat organized a lunch at Affy’s restaurant to celebrate Eid-UL-Adha. At the lunch, the Jamat also recognized the efforts of Sr. Naseem Mithoowani in fighting against the *niqab* ban at citizenship ceremonies in Canada. It was an exciting evening where everyone enjoyed some delicious food from one of the more recognized Muslim restaurants in Toronto.

Sports Committee Function – January 16th 2016

The NMJ Canada Sports Committee held an evening of fun and relaxation where brothers and sisters came together to engage in competitive (but friendly) activities. The brothers rolled up their sleeves for the Doubles Carom Tournament while the sisters busied themselves with games of Charades and Puzzle Building. The seniors used their wisdom challenging each other in Chess and Checkers. And of course, we can’t forget the dinner...Pizza and Wings!

AGM – February 14th 2016

The AGM was called by the Jamat to review accounts and make some changes to the by Laws. Alhamdulillah after some good discussions the Jamat decided to increase the annual subscription fee to \$50 per member. For the first time in the Jamat’s history, a by Law describing the utilization of the Jamat’s Kabrastan was also incorporated. The NMJ Canada Kabrastan Committee had worked hard on coming up with this by Law, and as next steps, was tasked to look further into creating a more comprehensive document that can be included in the by Law.

Hot Soup Day Volunteering – February 20th 2016

The NMJ Canada Youth Committee organized a volunteer trip to Islamic Foundation to assist at the Hot Soup Day. Our members were involved with the setting up of the hall, cooking, serving, coming up with an inspirational message, as well as assisting with the packing of delivery food for needy families. Alhamdulillah it was a memorable and fulfilling experience.

Syrian Support Relief (SSR) Function – March 19th 2016

With the outset of the Syrian crises, The Canadian government initiated a program to bring Syrian refugee families to Canada. As an effort to help the Syrian families resettle in Toronto, the NMJ Canada Syrian Support Relief (SSR) team was formed. This function was dedicated to raising awareness of the Syrian refugee crisis, learning about Canada's response, and explaining NMJ Canada's role in assisting with the resettlement of the Syrian families. A fundraiser was conducted by Br. Ebrahim Goralwalla, and Alhamdulillah members gave with open hearts as the Jamat collected close to \$15,000 for the SSR initiative. It was an inspiring and historic night that brought our community together to respond to one of the worst crises in the world.

SGM – May 7th 2016

Alhamdulillah the Jamat has collected close to \$30,000 for bringing a Syrian refugee family to Canada. An SGM was called by the Executive Committee to seek the approval of members for moving forward with this initiative. Alhamdulillah there was a positive response from members, and the Jamat was given the go ahead to spend the funds for bringing a Syrian refugee family to Canada. The NMJ Canada Kabrastan Committee had also finished drafting a comprehensive document to be added to the existing Kabrastan by Law. After some discussions, Alhamdulillah the Jamat adopted a newly revised Kabrastan by Law which clearly outlined the utilization of Jamat graves and burial rights for all members. This was a historic moment which concluded by everyone giving each other hugs for an amazing accomplishment!

Soccer with Syrian Team: NMJ Canada Sports Committee – May 21st 2016

An afternoon of outdoor sports for Jamat members and Syrian families was organized to enjoy and have a fun time. A soccer match was organized for brothers, sisters, and children. The Syrian brothers were extremely excited to engage in a soccer match with the NMJ Canada Team. A combination of dazzling skills and timely saves gave our Jamat the victory! Nevertheless, this was a match that increased the brotherly love between the Syrians and the Memons. It was a soccer match that will go down as one of the most memorable experiences in the books of NMJ Canada.

Ramadhan Iftaar Event – June 18th 2016

This year we were joined by Sh. Abdool Hamid, who is a resident scholar at the Islamic Institute of Toronto. He spoke about 'The Unsung Heroes: Muslim Women that Led the Banner of Islam'. This topic focused on women who have played a prominent role in Islam, and shed light on how they overcame challenges and barriers in their path towards becoming Muslim leaders.

Kabrastan Visit – July 1st 2016

NMJ Canada male members visited the site where our Jamat has acquired right for burial spots. Alhamdullilah this was a great reminder of our final destination and to show our kids and youth the importance of this initiative.

NMJ Canada Past Presidents Honoured in Toronto

It is not very often when an organization is honoured for the volunteer work they do for the community. On November 05, 2014 City of Toronto politicians and bureaucrats had gathered at the Mitchell Field Community Center for a dinner reception and an awards gala to honour and appreciate various individuals and organizations for their dedication, contribution and volunteer commitment to the community. NMJ Canada's past presidents, AbdulHamid Hathiyani, Zahir Salyani and Zulfikar Hathiyani were among those who were recognized for their volunteer work in leading and organizing activities and events for the benefit of the community. Their names along with others were artistically printed by the walls around the hall. Absent at the ceremony was Moledina Varvani, one of the past Presidents. It goes without saying that volunteer work has its benefit. As Muslims, we believe that volunteering is extremely important with immense benefits in the hereafter, Inshallah. This grand ceremony where members of our community were honoured reiterated that the efforts of our work can be appreciated sometimes from unexpected areas. The theme at the celebrations was "Volunteers are Gold." It was a fitting occasion where Nasserpuria Memon Jamat Canada was named among the few other organizations where our members give back to the Canadian society at large.



Left to Right - Zulfikar Hathiyani, AbdulHamid Hathiyani, and Zahir Salyani. Missing – Mohammed Moledina Varvani

Panji Boli Cutchi

I thank Allah (swt) for enabling me to write this book, Panji Boli Cutchi. It is a reference/dictionary book.

Cutchi is a spoken language, derived from the Sindhi language. People from Gujarat, India speak the same language. “Panji Boli Cutchi” covers the Cutchi language spoken in East Africa, where Gujarati and Swahili have influenced and added to the Cutchi vocabulary.

The Book is intended to benefit our sons and daughters who have migrated to countries where the youth do not get enough exposure to their original mother tongue.

It is an effort to enable them to understand and converse the language of their forefathers who originated from Sindh before migrating to East Africa. Our youngsters find themselves out of place in company of their grandparents and elders. This book covers basic Cutchi, which I pray will help them communicate with their elders, benefit from increasing their family ties and give them better knowledge of their heritage.

I launched Panji Boli Cutchi, a two-and-a-half-year project, under the banner of Nasserpuria Memon Jamat, Canada on Sunday May 3rd 2015.

I thank Naeema Admani for designing the layout of the book and all her assistance throughout. I also want to thank Abdulkader Yakub for volunteering his time to edit the initial text of the book.

(Haji) Abdulrahim Ebrahim Goralwalla – Toronto



Education is Life

Teacher, Father, Mentor

Haji Abdulrahim Goralwalla

Masha Allah, Elder Abdulrahim Goralwalla has immensely dedicated his life to Education. From achieving Queen's Scout Award, chairing the NMJ Mombasa and NMJ Canada Education Committee, being a Vice Principal at Jamia School, Ajax for six years to serving as an Administrator at Fountain of Youth Education Initiative, Islamic Foundation of Toronto for the past ten years. All along his amazing journey, his greatest support and backbone has been his wife, Elder Halimabai Goralwalla without whom these achievements would not be possible.



Scarborough Urban Hero Award by Metro Media, Toronto received in Education Category.



Alhamdulillah Elder Abdulrahim Goralwalla also received Seniors Award for the immense contribution he has made towards the Seniors Program at Islamic Foundation of Toronto, he is also part of Seniors Committee, NMJ Canada. He also received an award from the Memon Debating Society, NMJ Mombasa for organizing educational activities for their program on 11th August 2015. To wrap it up, he was recognized by NMJ Mombasa for his services in the past.

Media Committee

Assalamu Alaikum,

It is a great pleasure to see the Media & Communication committee having reached so far, Alhamdulillah. I still remember back in 2002, when I was the Secretary of the Jamat, the Executive Committee came up with the Media & Communication committee and the leader chosen unanimously was, Elder Abdulkader Yakub. In the same year, the website: www.nmjcanada.com was launched. Then, the Media & Communication committee, came up with the idea of having our own publication called An Najm (The Rising Star).

In 2003, the committee came up with our own pocket Islamic Calendar, as well as a Wall and pocket, Perpetual Islamic Timetable.

In 2004, the Second Edition of An Najm was launched as well as printed copies of the constitution. In the same year, the Media & Communication Committee came up with another milestone publication. The Memon Diaspora. This publication was compiled by our young Sisters: - Sr. Nargis Yakub, Sr. Shaheena Bagha, Sr. Fatima Noorani, Sr. Shaheena Yakub and Sr. Azba Hathiyan. Mashallah, this publication was appreciated by outside Jamats like Memon Jamat of Canada, World Memon Organization etc.

In 2006, the Third Edition of An Najm was launched under the leadership of Br. Abdulhamid Hathiyan and the committee came up with another publication of the Ramadan Timetable.

In 2008, the committee came up with the Fourth Edition of An Najm, with the Editor in chief being Sr. Nargis Yakub. In 2010, the Media & Communication committee came up with our own Islamic Calendar, with the art work of our children. In the same year the Facebook account was opened. In 2011, the committee came up with Fifth Edition of An Najm, with the Editor in chief being Sr. Mariam Salyani. This was a milestone edition as the Jamat celebrated 10 years to the adoption of the constitution. In 2013, the Media & Communication committee decided to redesign our website and came up with a new look. In the same year, the committee also opened a WhatsApp group chat account, whereby the members were able to receive Jamats information and activities easily. Due to technical issues, the website had to be redesigned and was launched again in March 2016.

Alhamdulillah, the Media & Communication committee has a lot of items on its agenda, which will come in place with the duration of time. My thanks go to our current chairperson of the Media and Communication Committee, Br. Ebrahim Goralwalla, who has very good and sound ideas in moving this committee forward.

On behalf of the Media & Communication committee, my special thanks go to our youth Br. Hamza Varvani for working hard in coming up with an excellent website. My congratulations go to our 3 chief editors, Sr. Nasreen Varvani, Sr. Shahista Parpia & Sr. Nashina Yakub, for compiling and coming up with the Sixth Edition of An Najm.

May Allah SWT bless our Jamat and all our members. Ameen

Wassalam,

Mohammed Zahir Salyani- Member of Media & Communication committee

Jamat Publications



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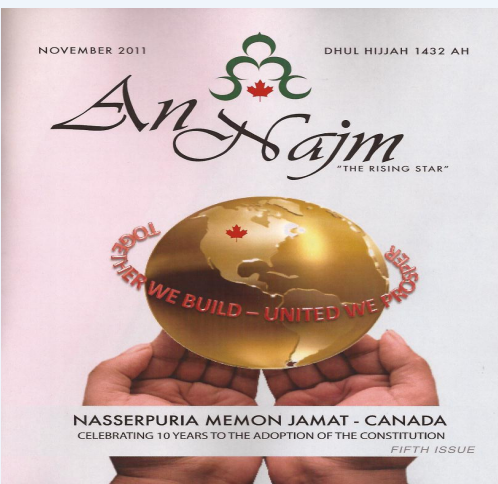
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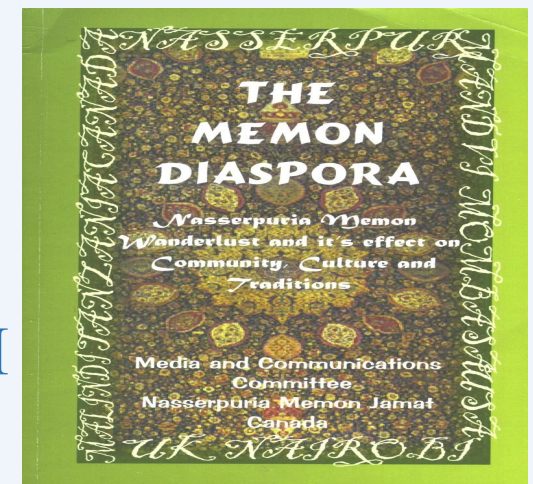
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Media Milestones



Youth Committee

Paanjo Bahuwish (Our Future)

Calling all NMJ Canada youth! Let's come together and serve our Jamat!

First and foremost, I would like to thank our President, Br. Osman Parpia and the Executive Committee for giving me the honor of heading the Youth Committee. The primary goal of the committee was to bring the youth together and integrate them into the Jamat. They are the foundation and future of our Jamat. This is the reason why our parents and elders think to have the Jamat is very crucial because it is important for us as a community to make them understand the importance of our Nasserpurian culture and Cutchi language, and the need to maintain them through generations to come. The youth committee is that bridge that helps to bring them together into the Jamat and allows them the opportunity to work with other members of the Jamat.

A secondary goal of the youth committee was to utilize our health and time to give back to the community at large. Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: "There are two blessings which many people lose: (They are) health and free time for doing good." (Bukhari) We did not want to loose out this opportunity we had in front of us to do good and Alhamdulillah we managed to do this by volunteering in some well established organizations within Toronto.

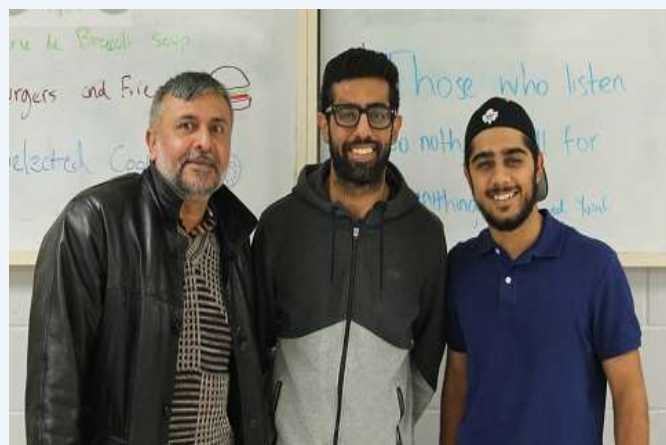
One event that we volunteered in was Hot Soup Saturdays at the Islamic Foundation of Toronto. It is an amazing endeavour by the community to help the less privileged and homeless in our community with a hot meal every Saturday morning. We helped make and serve a four course meal in a restaurant type of setting to our brothers and sisters. After that, we helped pack meals that were to be delivered to others in the community that didn't come out. It was a surreal and humble experience for all of us. Soup kitchen me seva kari bacha hi kamal kyu! Memon com zindabad!

Ramadan Sammich is another organization that does similar work to Hot Soup Saturdays and we were blessed with the opportunity to volunteer there as well. This is an organization that prepares sandwiches from a house of one of their members and delivers to homeless shelters in the community. Alhamdulillah the day we volunteered we prepared 150 sandwiches! The house where the preparation is done, was transformed into a sandwich factory with an assembly line of workers making sandwiches within seconds. This was another humble experience. It is amazing to see the work and effort being done in the community

It is a blessing to volunteer for organizations that are making a difference in the community at large. Alhamdulillah, we have the ability as a Jamat to take such initiatives Insha Allah in the future.

Current Youth Committee - Br. Ahmed Goralwalla (Chairperson), Sr. Tayba Hathiyan, Br. Aadil Nathani, Sr. Hawa Noorani, Sr. Khadija Kasmani, Sr. Shafreen Bagha, and Br. Osman Noorani

Service to Humanity

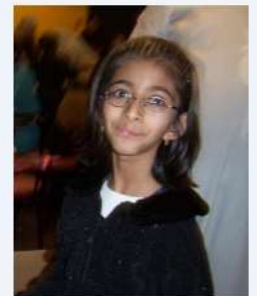


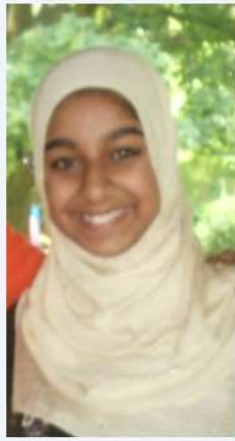
Love for Community



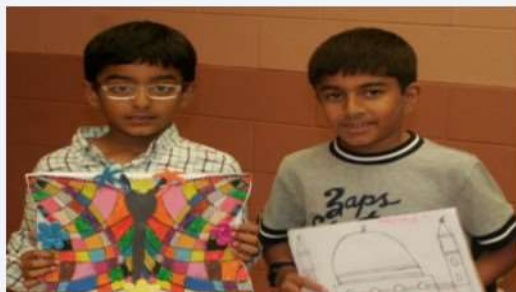


PRIOR





RECENT



Sports Committee

Khel, Rammat Ne Bhaichaaro

We seek Allah's protection from Shaytaan, the accursed. In the name of Allah, Who is most Kind and most Merciful.

Since the inception of Nasserpuria Memon Jamat – Canada in 2001, the Sports Committee has been an integral part in providing a platform for recreation not just through outdoor / indoor sports but through some light-hearted entertaining programs as well.

As already known, Volleyball and Soccer have been the mainstay sports for Nasserpuria Memons worldwide, however, I can bet you that we Memons have a knack for simply being good no matter what sport we set ourselves in, Alhamdulillah.

The Early Years

It was the Executive Committee of 2001 that envisioned a Sports Club of our own and therefore appointed the first Sports Committee comprised of Br. Ghulamhabib Yakub, Br. Zulfikar Hathiyani, and Br. Abubakr Goralwalla.

The goal was simple: Engage the youth and harness their energy through meaningful sporting activities that will help them to become positive role models.

This set the stage for a host of sporting events to be organized in the year 2002.

If you truly are a sports fan, you cannot forget the memorable moments of the FIFA World Cup 2002 such as that when Ronaldinho lobbed his free-kick over David Seaman to give Brazil a 2-1 lead against England in the Quarter Finals. It was to cherish these kind of memories together that the Sports Committee at the time held a “Soccer Night” to get members together to collectively watch the FIFA World Cup 2002 FINALS Match. Those memories reverberating in the minds of those that attended till-date.

This was followed by a Volleyball Match between NMJ Canada and NMJ USA during the 2-day Summer Festival to compete for the Mashallah Trophy donated by the Hathiyani Family. Unlike the typical “Mathey” routine, Traditional Volleyball in the west is more attack oriented - the center-netty therefore being pivotal throughout the game. An entertaining game led to NMJ USA emerging victorious in the Best of 3 game.

Sports within Nasserpuria Memons is never complete without Soccer and Cricket.

For the first time, NMJ Canada submitted a Cricket Team to participate in a Cricket Tournament organized by a local community. We were clearly the underdogs without any practice sessions and more so, any proper gear, but with seasoned players such as Br. Abdulmajid Hathiyani and a mix of young-blood in our team, we dared to dream. Not eventual winners, but a runners-up position proved the fact that cricket will always Run in our veins.

A similar fate followed when we participated in a single winner-takes-it-all Soccer Match against the Islamic Soccer League organization. The spirited and energetic performance however was sufficient to indicate the potential in our Jamat to form a formidable team for the future.

More Recently

A trend of similar activities continued through the years ensuring Jamat Members stayed united and connected through sports. Members of the Soccer Team worked together to raise funds for our very own Soccer Jerseys which became our uniform at every game we played. Today, we proudly stand with at least 16 players on the pitch led by our senior and mentor, Br. Farook Nathani who also generously contributed the Nathani Trophy to be competed for at any Soccer Tournament organized by the Jamat.

To add to the fun side, outdoor Tele-Matches organized primarily during the various Summer Festivals also became quite popular amongst members.

I can honestly admit that the events have been far from high-profile but what mattered most was the atmosphere they created when we were all together.

So where do we go from here ...

They say the sky is the limit but I strongly believe keeping your feet on the ground and simply being able to walk is nevertheless sufficient.

To build anything significant requires dedication, hard work, perseverance and most importantly the will of the Almighty Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala.

We strongly believe that the Nasserpuria Memon Jamat Canada Sports Committee should always have and keep in sight the following goals and vision:

- Ensure all community members have the opportunity to actively participate and take ownership in enhancing their physical, mental and nutritional well-being.
- Provide an environment and atmosphere of kinship within ourselves and the greater Islamic Communities through sports and sporting events.
- Provide an opportunity and platform to our Youth to showcase and be identified and recognized for the amazing talent we have within our community.
- Allow members of our community to develop and enhance their skills in a variety of sports.
- Hold fund-raising sporting events in order to allow the Sports Committee to be self-sufficient and maintain their own finances.

Alhamdulillah the various Sports Committees over the years have done justice to their position by maintaining a constant string of events that have kept members engaged. However, the dream of having our own Sports Club still remains to be realized.

We hope and pray that future committees, beginning with ours, Insha'Allah, will expand our horizon to reach out to the broader Canadian Community not just through organizing events but participating in them as well.

The NMJ Canada Sports Committee has been, is and will always unquestionably be a means to maintain and further build our identity as Nasserpuria Memons in the West.

NMJ Canada-Sports Committee (2015-2017)

Fun Flashbacks



Team Work Builds Brotherhood



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Syrian Support Relief Initiative

Allah (swt), with His infinite grace and mercy, has given us a complete way of life and all we have to do is to submit and follow the Quran and the Sunnah of our beloved Prophet Muhammad SAW. The SSR (Syrian Support Relief) team would like to thank Allah (swt) for His great mercy in making it possible for us to be involved in the SSR program and giving us an opportunity to inform others about it too.

The SSR is a program that we as NMJ Canada have established to help our brothers and sisters from Syria.

Alhamdulillah, we all feel a great sense of pride to be part of NMJ Canada; with the Grace and Mercy of Allah (swt), our Jamat has embarked upon a journey to connect with the Canadian community. As we all know, over 1400 years ago a migration took place from Makkah to Medina where the Sahabas (RA) and their families migrated to Medina to avoid being persecuted due to oppressive conditions and the Ansars welcomed them with open arms into their homes. Alhamdulillah, Allah (swt) has given us a great opportunity to follow the footsteps of the Ansaar and the Sunnah of our beloved Prophet – Rasulullah SAW.

Just like the Muhajeerin, these brothers and sisters from Syria are fleeing from oppressive conditions in their homeland. These families are leaving everything and everyone they know behind and have suffered unimaginable trauma in the process. They are in the process of embarking on this journey, attempting to settle into a new country with absolutely no knowledge of what they are to encounter – not knowing the language, and having no possessions at all.

Being part of the SSR committee our aim is to help these new families settle down in Canada by assisting them with all their start up needs from A-Z. Some of things are; to furnish their house, getting them groceries, bedding and cleaning supplies, showing them the local Walk in clinics, doctors, dentists to start them off. Another key aim is to support them so that they are able to integrate into the Canadian Society, e.g. getting them enrolled onto English classes and the children into schools, which Alhamdulillah was done during the first week of their arrival into the community.

Through the SSR initiative we were able to connect to two Syrian families, both of whom are a family of four, with two children under the age of 5 each. Within a short period of time we were able to gather either by collection or purchase the necessary items required from those listed above.

It was very exciting and all were very ready to work. Like anything else it's never easy. We did face a few challenges, major one being that none of the team members spoke fluent Arabic, and vice versa the Syrians spoke no English.

It was very important for us to always remember that our trial times were nothing compared to theirs and Alhamdulillah we managed to get things done for them.

Just like the first Muslims in Mecca were persecuted for saying 'laa ilaha ill'Allah' – so are our brothers and sisters in Syria. And just like the people of Yathrib - the Ansaar - were there for the Prophet SAW and the Sahabas (RA) when they needed them the most, we pray that we, the Canadian Nasserpurian Memons are able to replicate the incidence.

We all have been the muhajireen at some point in our lives, and looking back you would realize how challenging that time was for us. Alhamdhulillah, Allah (swt) with His Mercy and Compassion looked after us through someone's help and support. Allah (swt) is now giving us the opportunity to do the same for others. Let's all work together to emulate the example of the Ansaar and make our Lord be pleased with us for following His commands and the Sunnah of His Beloved Prophet Muhammad SAW. A hadith of the Prophet (SAW): where he said that "The actions that are most excellent are: to gladden the heart of human beings, to feed the hungry, to help the afflicted, to lighten the sorrow of the sorrowful, and to remove the sufferings of the injured" (Bukhari).

SSR TEAM



SSR Highlights



Kabrastan Project

Aakhir Manzil (Final Destination)

Message from The Kabrastaan Committee - Mohamed Ebrahim Goralwalla – Convener
Peace be to Allah SWT, Lord of the worlds and peace be upon his messenger Muhammad SAW.

On the occasion of The Fifteenth Anniversary of our Jamat's Constitution here in Toronto, Canada, I feel greatly honored and privileged to present a Congratulatory Message and a brief report on behalf of The Kabrastaan Committee to the members of NMJ Canada.

From the beginning a lot of thought process took place in various meetings to acquire the last resting place (cannot forget the one on November 8th 2008 at Coffee Time near Masjid Huzeifah where only 2 members were present), gusal committees were formed and a workshop was held on 31st January 2009 at Pleasant View Community Center which was very beneficial to all the members.

In July 2010, time came to do the shopping for the purchase of graves, The Community Services Committee at that time visited various cemeteries to get quotes with the prices ranging between \$1,800.00 to \$2,200.00 per grave. A meeting consisting of Executive Committee, Trustee Board and Community Services members was held in August 2010 at my place to discuss and finalize the same.

On September 25th 2010, our Jamat finalized the first step by acquiring the burial rites for 20 graves at \$700.00 each, through The Toronto Muslim Cemetery located in Richmond Hill at the intersection of Bethesda Side Road and Leslie Street. Later during the year, ground breaking ceremony of The Toronto Muslim Cemetery was attended by Jamat's Executive Committee and Community Services.

I would like to thank The Executive Committee for giving the present committee (Brothers Abdulhamid Hathiyani, Osman Parpia, Zahir Salyani, Adil Nathani and myself) this opportunity in July 2015 to selflessly serve the community for the period 2015/2016. The committee has been very active and worked hard to bring the functioning of the guidelines into place.

Alhamdhulillah, last Ramadan 2015 we had the opportunity to visit The Toronto Muslim Cemetery. At the AGM of 14th February 2016 an additional purchase of 20 burial rites was approved at \$1,000.00 per grave from The Toronto Muslim Cemetery.

Alhamdullillah at the SGM on May 7th 2016, by the grace of Allah SWT we achieved a milestone where the Jamat now holds the rights to forty graves and is able to provide a full burial service from start to finish for all our members who are in Good Standing. These detailed guidelines and functions of the burial services were prepared by The Kabrastaan Committee and were approved by the general body. A visit to The Toronto Muslim Cemetery was arranged in Ramadan on July 1st 2016 for all male members. It was a great reminder of our final destination and the hereafter.

Finally, I would like to pay a tribute to all founding members, past and present leaders of our community. May Allah SWT safeguard our Jamat to take it to higher levels for the benefit of future generations to come and have love of serving the community, Ameen.



Khalid Yakub – Our Young Huffaz

Alhamdulillah, I have been blessed with the beautiful gift of memorizing the Noble Quran. It was the most humble and beneficial experience and I learnt a lot from it.

It took me a total of five years to complete the memorization. Four of the five years, I studied part-time after school followed by one-year full time. In the initial stages, I found it difficult to memorize everything, but as they say, practice makes perfect! I continued to practice every day, every chance I could get and it definitely became easier. I had to, and still have to, keep on practicing to get to perfection.



I remember on some days, everything was really easy to read and memorize, whereas other days some passages were very difficult to grasp. It took me some time to memorize the tough passages, but Alhamdulillah I managed. It was not an easy process however every struggle was all worth it in the end!

During these years as I grew older, my relationship with the Noble Quran grew stronger. The more I memorized the more I felt the need to continue. I realized that in order to benefit from the book of Allah (SWT) learning the Quran had to be a life-long commitment and memorizing was the first step. Now that I have completed memorization my task is far from over. The greatest challenge will be to retain and improve on what I have memorized and to learn and understand the meanings. Insha Allah.

I would like to encourage everyone who is able, young or old, to memorize and learn at least one Ayah of the Quran every day, and reflect upon what is being told to us from Allah (SWT). I hope and pray that this small exercise will bring you peace and serenity in your day and in your life as well, Insha Allah.

Once again, it has been a huge blessing to memorize the Quran and I pray more people are given this opportunity.

JazakAllah,

Assalamu'alaykum

Junaid Warwani – The Next Entrepreneur

In early 2013, two friends approached me about joining a social venture that they wanted to start.

At the time, I knew very little about suits, start-ups, or social entrepreneurship, but the concept they proposed seemed fascinating, and so we started Suits U. Suits U is a student-run non-profit at the University of Toronto that follows a simple 3-step process:



- 1) We run suit drives in offices across Toronto, where professionals donate their gently-used suits
- 2) The highest quality donated suits are sold to students at very affordable prices
- 3) All proceeds are donated to Unity Charity, which invests in youth in at-risk neighbourhoods across Canada

In just three years of operation, we managed to help more than 260 students dress to impress and raised \$13,500 for charity. Alhamdulillah it has been a tremendous journey through which I have learned many things, but perhaps the most valuable lesson I have learned as a social entrepreneur is that people want to help you make the world a better place. Tell people about your new million-dollar start-up idea, and they will list all the ways it won't work. Tell people about your social venture idea, and they will brainstorm a list of ideas to make it better.

Every time I have told someone about Suits U, they have asked me if we have tried x, or if we have looked into y. These have very often been the source of our best ideas! People want to contribute to making the world better – so if you always tackle impactful problems (whether for profit or non-profit), you will likely have more great ideas than you can reasonably cope with.

My advice to the youth out there who are looking at the job market hoping they can start a rewarding career is to not wait for someone else to open doors for you. Look around you, find ways you can improve the lives of people around you, and build something. It will be hard, it may at times seem impossible, but regardless of whether your idea works or fails, you will gain knowledge and experience that will make you successful no matter where your career takes you.

Questionnaire

Children

We asked our little members of the Jamat.....

1. Do you like to go to the Jamat?
2. What do you like to do at the Jamat?

Naseem Parpia

- 1) Yes, sometimes if they have interesting events organized for the kids.
- 2) Getting gifts and prizes from the competitions.

Umar Farouq Yakub

- 1) Yes, I like to go to the Jamat!
- 2) I like to play with all my friends and play with all the toys that are there. And I like to run around in the open space.

Hamza Parpia

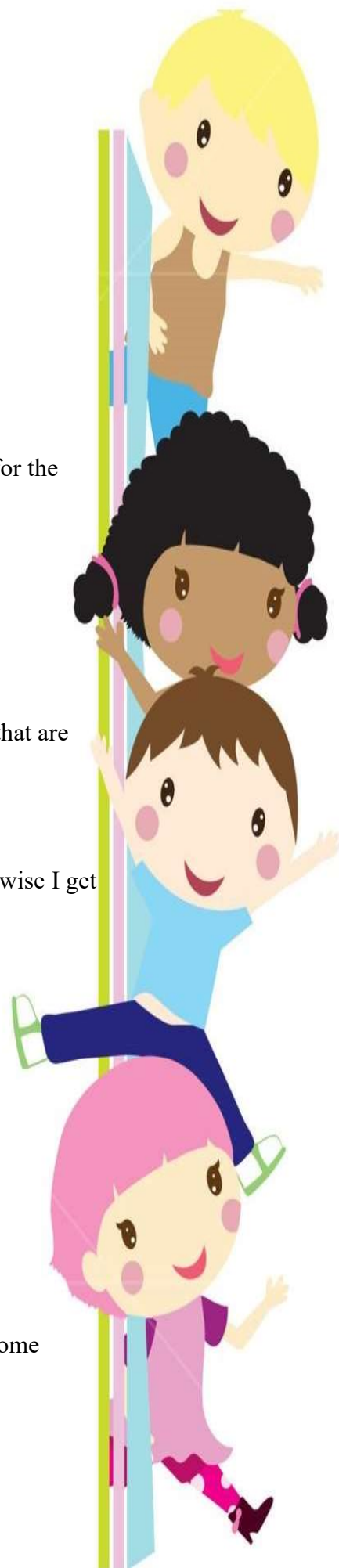
- 1) Yes, yes, yes ...! Only if my Jamat friends come too otherwise I get bored.
- 2) When we get to play games especially sports.

Yunus Goralwalla

- 1) Yes, because its fun and I meet all my friends.
- 2) Play with my friends and spend time with them together.

Asiya Salvani

- 1) Yes, I do because I see all my friends.
- 2) I like to play in the playing room with my friends, make some crafts with them and it's exciting to get Eid gifts!



Youth

For our youth, they had to give their thoughts on.....

1. What does the Jamat mean to you?
2. Where do you see the Jamat in the future?

Ramla Yakub

- 1) The Jamat is a place where I can meet friends and family on special occasions. It is also a concept that ties us together through our roots.
- 2) In the future, I see the Jamat as a larger initiative, with more activities and more involved members of the community

Zainab Yakub

- 1) The Jamat means a place where we can secure our culture and traditions and where we can understand each other in a way that outside the Jamat can not.
- 2) I see that all members of the Jamat and the executives working hand in hand and expanding the Jamat's resources so that it's a secure environment for the generations to come in the western environment.

Zulfa Varvani

- 1) The Jamat means security, a home, and a sense of belonging. The Jamat means strengthening and creating bonds. Everyone says that the Jamat is like an extended family but to me it feels like family because growing up in Canada and having all my cousins back in Africa, the Jamat filled that void.
- 2) I see the Jamat growing in numbers by more Nasserpurian families migrating to Canada, past members coming back to the Jamat and the arrival of new cute little blessings. I see that the youth of our Jamat taking more leadership roles and responsibility to involve the Jamat in the wider Canadian Community. We will Insha Allah have more activities in sports, leisure and community outreach that would bring laughter, jokes and harmony within ourselves.

Joining Members

We then got opinions from two members who came after the constitution was adopted....

1. What was your perception of NMJ Canada before your arrival to Canada?
2. A. Where do you see the Jamat in the next 1-2 years, 2-5 years and long term 10-15 years?
B. What can you do to help the Jamat achieve these goals?

Sameera Salyani

1) Blank. Clean. Fresh. That was my perception of NMJ Canada before I came here. In other words, you can say that I did not have any pre-conceived notion of the Jamat prior to my arrival. All I knew was that although I am leaving behind MY people, I would still be going to MY people. The difference? A distance of about 12000 km

2) A) Every individual member of the Jamat has a vision and a goal of where they want to see the Jamat. So do I. But the question calls for a reality check.

A couple of years or even 5-6 years is not enough to attain a significant change in the structure and development of the Jamat in my opinion. To produce major positive results in any activity, project, organization you need numbers, that is work force and unfortunately that is where we lack at the moment.

Holding the Jamat functions has been great way of securing our culture, preserving our language and promoting kinship between us and I see that continuity down the road for the next 2 years and more.

I also see the Jamat establishing stronger ties and relations with other community members and governmental unions in the next 5 years owing to the effective establishment of the kabrastan project and fruitful efforts channeled into collecting funds to sponsor Syrian families, which gained us some recognition and acknowledgement in other Islamic societies as well as the government.

In the next 10-15 years I see NMJ Canada acquiring its own premises for holding any events and activities, be it Jamat functions, sports related undertakings, weddings, prayer sessions and many more. But to achieve that, it is not only important for our future leaders, that is, the youth to gain that interest and love for the Jamat, but also for us to work in improving our numbers by helping our brethren from other places to settle here. With Allah's grace and will and our prayers we shall see all of us strive in helping us to get there.

B) We all harbor love, affection, passion and desires to do something for the Jamat in our hearts. However, everyone's level and capability of doing something for our community varies. Many of us feel restricted by time and other commitments and I am no exception. I feel the best way I can help the Jamat is to instill that interest and affection for the Jamat in my children's hearts, who are among our future and by trusting the executive committee in place to carry out their job without interfering unnecessarily, criticizing and questioning their actions with doubt. The best way I can help is by providing my suggestions and ideas and thereafter exhibiting patience and understanding when my opinion is not taken into consideration and by listening to other's thought process with an open mind. The best way I can help is by being there.

Parveez Warwani

1) I was actually surprised, pleasantly so, to know about the existence of NMJ Canada and to meet all the Jamat members under one roof. It was like coming home. I remember feeling relieved to know that my children will not lose touch with their roots.

2) The main goal of our Jamat should be to encourage our youth's involvement so that we can continue to grow. It is very positive to see the voluntary work with the Syrian immigrants. Reaching out to other communities that our children are involved with on a daily basis will help build and strengthen our community even more.

Nasmat Noorani

1) Before I arrived in Canada, I was not really aware that there was a Jamat here. I know that a lot of families from our communities used to gather together for dinners, events and celebrations, however I did not know that all of it came under the banner of the Nasserpuria Memon Jamat - Canada. I grew up in Australia, and where in the city lived there was only a two families from our community. So for about 15 years I was never really apart of any jamat. It was a pleasant surprise to come to Canada with so many others that share the same roots as me.

2) I have only been a part of the Canadian Memon Jamat for about a year now, but I have already seen so much progress. This year the Syrian Support Relief initiative was formed, the Kabrastan Committee expanded on their initial work and also we had a lot of fun functions. I think the next 1-2 years will provide many new opportunities for all of our members to be involved in the Jamat more. This means that there will be many fresh ideas as well as talents that will keep the Jamat banner flying high.

For example, the SSR committee, under the name of NMJ Canada, has taken a step to sponsor a family from Syria to come and live in Canada. In the next 1-2 years I see a growth within that committee as well as with the Jamat as a whole, being fully involved in this project.

In the next 2-5 and 5-10 years I hope to see a lot of the youth and the younger generation being more involved in the Jamat. I also hope to see the Jamat being more involved with projects that benefit not only the Jamat, but the external communities that we live in. For example, feeding the hungry, helping the homeless, cleaning up streets/parks, visiting the sick (e.g. hospitals, care homes), volunteering with organizations that help those that are not fully able.

I feel that if we reach out to other organizations that are involved in similar projects, it will flourish our Jamat even more. Most importantly, we will be following the footsteps of our Beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) and gaining the pleasure of our Lord, which is what we were all sent to this world to do.

I can help the Jamat achieve these goals by being involved in the Jamat. By keeping in touch, attending events and taking interest. I can also help by giving in thoughts and ideas of how I feel the Jamat can be more successful.

Pioneers

We then asked the pioneer members of the NMJ Canada.....

1. What was your perception of the Jamat when it first started?
2. What is your most memorable moment of the Jamat?

Zeenat Hathivani

- 1) The Jamat when it started here was an organization set up to care for the social, religious and economic welfare of the needs of its community of Nasserpurian memon and also to unite them in their cultural identity. However, I feel it is extremely important to reach out to other communities and give da'wa through our true mu'min identities. We have had a few outreach programs but the Syrian Support Relief initiative so far has been the most prominent step embarked upon by our Jamat geared in this direction. We as Canadian Muslims have a potential to contribute greatly to the society at large through our Islamic character and values and we can use the Jamat as a vehicle to achieve this common goal of seeking the pleasure of Allah (SWA) through serving humanity. May Allah (SWA) accept our services. Ameen.
- 2) Honestly, I cannot think of only **one** memorable moment, there have been quite a few. I would like to mention three:
 - A. A moment of pride when Nabil at the age of 10 won 1st place and was awarded the floating trophy at the first ever Qur'an Qiraat competition held by NMJ Canada in the month of Ramadhan.
 - B. An accomplishing moment to see my students from the weekend Heritage classes graduate at the 2-day fest and sing a song in perfect Cutchi in celebration.
 - C. An immensely fulfilling and rewarding moment to have volunteered at the Hot Soup Kitchen

Elder Halima Bai Goralwalla

- 1) I was very happy that the Jamat was forming as it would be an opportunity to socialize with the larger family. I was very excited about our kids participating and getting recognized for their work within the Jamat. I am very confident that the Jamat will grow and prosper In shaa Allah.
- 2) There are many pleasant memories to share, I'll keep it simple. The Y2K program was one of the memorable and fun trip, and the launch of Panji Boli Cutchi was another special moment for us and all as a Jamat.

Selflessness.....

A Tribute to Late Sister Asifabanu Yakub

May 15, 1959 – January 3, 2013

Written by: Nashina Yakub



Here I am, trying to write this article which I have been putting away ever since I was requested to do. Every time I pick up a pen and paper with the intention to start, I end up staring at the blank paper, not knowing where to begin. There is so much to say, but at the same time, not very much. This is way harder than I thought, even after three and a half years. The pain from the loss of a loved one never goes away, you just learn to live with it and continue with life.

I remember meeting her for the first time, when I was engaged to Shah-E-Noor. I was so nervous and as she hugged me the jitters went away. I remember her telling my mother, “I have four daughters now” and she never treated me otherwise.

She had an amazing personality, one trait that stood out was that she was passionate about anything and everything she did and always did with perfection. She loved doing things around the house as well as the office. She had an interest in every kind of activity: be it cooking, cleaning, stitching, landscaping, volunteering at her children’s school, masjid or working in the office. Even as she battled Parkinson’s disease, she would never let her spirits fade, nor did it stop her from doing what she wanted in life. I admired her ability to smile through all the pain as she continued to do her day-to-day activities. She was ready to help and spend time with anyone who reached out to her. As she fought until the end, I can comfortably say that she was the strongest and most generous woman I knew.

She was a very active member of the Jamat and was a good support during the early stages and worked hard to help the Jamat establish. Despite the fact that she never held any official position, she would always be seen working behind the scenes offering her support in any way that she could. She promoted the Jamat and encouraged every member to take part in the activities and attend the functions. She always made sure that her own and other children were actively involved and having fun. Through her work with Fiysabilillah Compassionate Aid Organization, she touched the lives of many and ensured that she is available at all times to deliver her support to anyone that could benefit from it.

All in all, she was a strong woman, a high achiever, loving daughter, devoted wife, serving daughter-in-law, affectionate mum, a caring mother-in-law and an adoring grandmother, who never let any challenges show on her face. She was a great server of the family, the Jamat and the broader community. She loved everyone unconditionally. Being her children we have learnt a lot from her and it is these teachings that help us to grow every day, just as she would have wanted us to be.

Our humble thanks to An-Najm for honoring the memory of our beloved mother and for giving me, Nashina Yakub, this opportunity to write about her. She is, and always will be- greatly missed by her family, friends and all those whose hearts she touched.

Legacy of Love

A Tribute to Late Elder Zubeidabai Yakub

February 3, 1941 – January 27, 2016

Written by: Nargis Yakub



When someone we love passes away, everything around us reminds us of them. We tend to forgive and forget their shortcomings, and only their most shining characteristics become their legacy that is treasured in our memories. Zubeidabai Yakub's legacy is that of compassion, patience, bravery, strength, and above all, the legacy of unconditional love.

While writing this article, I could not help reminiscing (and crying a little). I remember Mummy telling me about her life as a child: the times she spent with her parents, her brothers and sisters, particularly her dearest younger sister who was like her baby. Mummy's childhood was not the same as most of ours. She lost her parents during her youth, while some of her siblings were still very young. At an age when most people are out enjoying life, she was raising her younger siblings like a mother, cooking meals for the family, and helping her elder brothers in their family business. She loved her family very deeply and she truly had a compassionate, open heart. Her love was pure and it was in everything she did. The one thing that always saddened her was the fact that she got so little time to serve her parents. Whenever she talked about them, she would always tell me how blessed I am to have the privilege to serve my parents and take care of them.

Mummy loved her siblings like they were a part of her. She did not have to tell me much; because I witnessed how she communicated with her brothers in sign language. It was perhaps the most fascinating bond of love I had ever seen. They would sit together for hours, communicating and understanding each other perfectly well without uttering a word. All I saw was how their eyes sparkled, simply because they were so happy to be together. Just as incredible was her bond with her sisters. They would tell each other everything, and she was always ready to help them whenever they needed her. Her love for her siblings did not just end at them, but flowed through to their children too – her nieces and nephews, whom she loved just like her own children. She considered all of them her own, because they were so close to her. Moreover, when her nieces and nephews had children, Mummy's love just kept growing, and she considered them her grandchildren too!

As a wife and mother, Mummy devoted herself to her home, her husband Abdulkader Yakub, and her children – Mariam, Ghulamhabib and Farheen. She made sure her children received a good education, and was always there to help them through their challenges as they grew up in Nairobi, and later when they moved to Toronto. Like most immigrant families, Mummy and Abhajan faced numerous challenges while trying to settle in Toronto in the late 80's. Nevertheless, she kept a brave heart and a smile on her face, because she strongly believed that they would overcome the challenges by having faith in Allah, and never losing hope. She would have tears of joy in her eyes and her face would light up when she talked about how her children graduated with degrees and diplomas, obtained jobs in their career fields, and then got married to

start lives on their own with their spouses. She loved to see people succeed, especially in education and career, and was very proud of all her children. I can personally vouch for this, because from the time I came to Canada, Mummy wanted me to go to college and then get a job. Without her encouragement and continuous support, I would not have made it through studying while working full time. I will always be grateful to her, because with her blessings and motivation, the education I obtained opened up a multitude of opportunities for me.

They say that a mother is the happiest when she becomes a Grandmother, and I think this is true, because whenever Mummy was with her grandchildren, it seemed like nothing else mattered. She loved to be with her granddaughters – Faiqah, Fadia and Fareeha – who adored their dear “Nanima”. Lately, when Mummy was sick and stayed in her room, Faiqah would bring her school work, sit beside Mummy on her bed, and do her work, while Fadia and Fareeha would play cards on the same bed! When Mummy was feeling a little better, they would all play UNO or “Go Fish” together! I really enjoyed watching this scene - little Fareeha explaining the rules of the game to her Nanima, like she was the adult and Mummy was the child! I know that Mummy treasured these memories the most, because she talked about them for days after, and the happy smile never left her face.

Mummy touched the lives of many who knew her. She had special bonds with several special people, and each of these bonds was unique and incredible. I could probably write a book about all the lives she touched! She practically loved being around people, laughing, joking, sharing meals, and generally just having a good time. Speaking of meals, I must add that Mummy loved to cook – she not only fed us, she spoiled us! Her greatest joy was to cook delightful meals, and she made sure that everyone else ate first, before she took some for herself. Sometimes she would be satisfied simply by seeing her loved ones enjoying the food and having a good time.

One of the places where Mummy loved to share her cooking was in the Jamat. I remember the early years when NMJ-Canada was initially formed, we would enjoy pot-luck meals at the functions, where each family would bring a dish to share. Mummy would look forward to these events, because she loved to cook for a crowd. In fact, there were times when she and the other elderly women of the Jamat would plan the meal for the entire Jamat and cook everything themselves, so the rest of the members could get a break from bringing a dish for pot-luck. This is just one example of how Mummy played an important role in building the foundation of NMJ-Canada. I believe she was also instrumental in starting the tradition of giving gifts to the children on Eid functions. She and Abhajan would personally go out, buy all the gifts, and wrap each one for the kids. Till now, kids look forward to the Jamat’s Eid functions because they know they will receive a surprise gift! Throughout the years, Mummy was a strong pillar of support and motivation for the Jamat, particularly when NMJ-Canada experienced a very turbulent period during the early stages of its formation. Her unwavering confidence, support, sacrifice, patience and commitment contributed tremendously towards the Jamat’s success and continuity. She made a point of not only attending every function, but she always had something to contribute towards the event. Although she was a senior, she never waited for anyone to serve her. In fact, she would sometimes get up and serve others. To Mummy, the Jamat was a natural extension of family, and we all know how devoted she was to her family. Her high level of unconditional love

and dedication to the Jamat has been an inspiration for me, and I hope it will have the same impact on generations to come.

Most people who knew Mummy would be surprised to learn that she battled with breast cancer for 20 years. Throughout this battle, she remained brave, strong and kept her spirits high. She spent her time doing things that she loved the most, which included spending quality time with her family, and taking care of her flower plants, which have always been like part of her family. She strongly believed that her strength came from her faith in Allah. She never missed a prayer, and constantly recited the Quran, even when she was not feeling well. She faced her challenges with unparalleled hope and optimism, which amazed and inspired us. Now I realize that within the tragedy of Mummy's final chapter, she left us a hidden gift – the gift of Inspiration.

We sometimes never know what we have got until it is gone. I knew how good and wonderful Mummy was from the time I met her, but after she left us, I feel that she was a hundred times more wonderful than any of us ever thought. I will miss her for the rest of my life, but she has left me with a beautiful gift: her positive attitude, her passion for life, and her unconditional love. I feel that she has not really left us – she is just not physically present. We pray that Mummy rests in peace in Jannah.

I realized after she passed away that I am so grateful to have spent so much time with her during the last chapter of her life. When she was going through her treatments at the hospital, she and I would spend hours talking about anything and everything. I cherish those times dearly, because that is when she gave me the best advice on how to be the most unconditionally loving daughter, sister, wife and mother.

I am Nargis, the lucky person who had Zubeidabai as a mother-in-law, but she was more to me than that – She was my mother, my friend, my companion, my advisor, my teacher, my mentor...I could probably go on and on about what she was to me! I think about her and miss her a lot. When I say I think of her, I mean every day; and when I say I miss her, I mean always.

We are grateful to An Najm for honouring Late Zubeidabai Yakub. Because of the caring daughter, sister, wife, mother, and grandmother that she was, she will be dearly missed. But greater than the sorrow from her death is the joy that she spread in her life. Her wisdom and love will always continue to guide us throughout our lives. In Shaa Allah.

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