



New Jersey Gov. Phil Murthy Declares January As Muslim Heritage Month

By: TMO Staff

Making history Saturday, Gov. Phil Murphy signed a proclamation designating January as Muslim Heritage Month in a measure that advocates say will promote appreciation and awareness about Muslim traditions and contributions.

Community and faith leaders, who have rallied for the designation for several years, hailed the signing as a historic moment.

“As a state that has the highest percentage of Muslims in the nation, we are so overjoyed to have a month that celebrates and recognizes our



community in a positive light and hope that this recognition further pushes the engagement of the Muslim community in society,” said Zainab Syed, president of American Muslims for

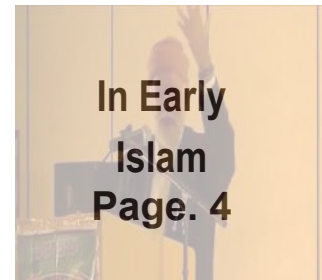
Democracy, one of the groups that advocated for the measure.

Murphy signed the proclamation at Drumthwacket, the governor’s official residence in Princeton, during a

celebration for the Eid al-Fitr holiday, which marks the end of Ramadan, the Muslim holy month of fasting.

“I am proud to designate

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Trump Asks For Mistrial In E. Jean Carroll Rape Lawsuit

By: TMO Staff

In a letter filed early Monday, former President Donald Trump’s lawyers argued for a mistrial in his civil battery and defamation trial, alleging the judge has made “pervasive unfair and prejudicial rulings” against him.

Advice columnist E. Jean Carroll is suing the former president, alleging he raped her in the



1990s and then defamed her when she came forward in 2019. Trump has denied the allegations.

Carroll testified last week that “Donald Trump raped me, and when I wrote about it, he said it didn’t happen.”

In a letter to Judge Lewis

A. Kaplan, Trump’s attorney Joe Tacopina asked that the judge dismiss the lawsuit, or as an alternative, “correct the record for each and every instance in which the Court has mischaracterized the facts of

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Bills Propose State Holidays For Minority Faiths In Michigan, Including Eid

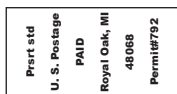


by Niraj Warikoo from the Detroit Free Press

As the religious and cultural diversity of Michigan grows, some are hoping that the faiths of minority groups can be recognized with state holidays.

To that end, a group of state representatives introduced this week four bills that would make holidays celebrated by Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, East Asian Americans and others state holidays.

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Op Ed: Two Neglected Major Issues In Pakistan



*By Munir M Hasan,
PhD*

After listening to a number of commentators and the legal experts in TV programs, I am surprised to note that all of them are neglecting two major Constitutional matters which are quite obvious.

These are:

Holding of general elections, whether national or provincial, are matters which are elaborated in the Constitution of Pakistan quite clearly. So, holding elections is a Constitutional matter which has to be performed with primary importance and without hinderance of any person or authority. The simultaneous holding of national and provincial elections is not a Constitutional requirement as this matter is NOT provided in the Constitution.

However, it is seen that the present government, their law experts and many others, are giving more importance to holding of all elections simultaneously as if no provincial elections can be held if the national elections are not held simultaneously. Giving more importance to a non-Constitutional matter and neglecting a Constitutional matter



is like distorting the Constitution. However, nobody seems serious over this matter.

As stated above, holding of provincial elections is a Constitutional requirement. So, providing money for the provincial elections is a Constitutional requirement, and nobody, or even no authority can stop this amount. This amount has to be provided with-

out any hinderance and without any approval of any authority because it is not a routine government expenditure. Not providing this amount is a violation of the constitution. The person(s) and the authority refusing to provide money are guilty of violating the Constitution. However, this matter is being taken lightly, and the persons violating this Constitu-

tional provision are not being punished.

Looking this matter in a broader way, if this principle is once accepted that any person, authority, or even the Parliament, can stop the money required for holding elections, a Constitutional requirement, it will amount to saying that holding of general elections is not a Constitutional matter, but a

matter under the control of the Parliament, and Parliament can postpone any future general elections indefinitely by refusing to provide the money.

Will the Supreme Court Pakistan take action on these points, or will it accept and legalize the violation of the Constitution?



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Op Ed: Do You Know Your God?



By: Azher Quader President, CBC

Hint # 1 – who do u fear the most?

Hint #2 – what do u love the most?

Those two questions when answered honestly will be more worth our meditating upon than all the loud declarations of faith we so often make without thinking much.

Mankind's greatest fears are from food insecurity and hunger. This is why we are all beholden to our jobs and our employers. We submit ourselves to the most unhappy circumstances at our jobs sometimes, in order to meet the primal need of hunger and food we have.

So, the loss of our job then is what we fear the most. Or if we are retired the loss of income would become our greatest fear. Thus, for millions of us our jobs become our "gods" and the various comforts of our lives that accrue from them are depended upon our uncompromising service (and worship) of our jobs.

When we take a deeper dive into the story of our love, it would again reveal that our true loves are many: our families, our wealth and our possessions. The Quran reminds us of these:

"The love of desires (that come) from women, and of offspring, and heaped-up hordes of gold and silver and well-bred branded horses and cattle and tilth, is made to seem fair to mankind. This is the provision of the life of this

world, while Allah is He with Whom is the good resort."

3:14 Al imran

When we place these undeniable realities of our "loves" and "fears" in our daily lives against our oft parroted claim in verse 4 of Surah Fateha in which we so repeatedly recite:

"Thee alone we worship (serve) and from thee alone do we seek help"

1:4 Al Fateha

We have to wonder what we really mean by "thee alone" when we recite this. Our lives are laced with so many loves and fears, to say "thee alone" becomes questionable. Paying lip service to one, really means nothing, when what we follow are the dictates of our desires.

We all aspire for paradise. But paradise comes at a price. See what the Quran has to say about this too:

"Or did you suppose you would enter Paradise untouched by the suffering which was endured by those before you?"

2:214 Al Baqara

"Such believers, who sit still, not having any injury, are not equal with those who strive in the way of Allah with their wealth and their lives. Allah has raised the strivers with their wealth and lives in rank above those sitting back; and to each (class) Allah has promised good, but He has bestowed a great reward on the strivers above those sitting back."

4:95 Al Nisa

Paradise will remain elusive

as long as we commit to follow our "desires" and our "passions", the Quran reminds us. Moreover for those who are willing to pay the price, the Quran promises success not only in the hereafter but in the here as well.

"Allah has promised those of you who believe and do righteous deeds, that He will certainly appoint them successors in the earth as He appointed successors those before them; and that He will certainly establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that certainly He will, after their fear, give them security in exchange. They will worship Me (alone) and not associate anything with Me;"

24:55 Al Nur

The Quran's idea of servitude (Ibadah) is hardly limited to praying and fasting alone, as we have so regularly been taught to believe. Indeed, there is so much more to this idea of servitude that the Quran refers to it as a "bargain" for life. See what the Quran has to say on this too:

"Verily Allah has bought from the believers their souls and their properties for Paradise to be theirs: they fight in the way of Allah, so they slay and they are slain, (this is) a promise binding on Him in the Torah, and the Evangel and the Qur'an. And who is more faithful to his promise than Allah? Rejoice then in your bargain that you have made; and that is the great success."

9:111 Tauba

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Rival Sudanese Military Factions Cash Killing Hundreds



By *Yousuf Ali*

On Saturday April 15, rival factions within the Sudanese armed forces started fighting. In particular, the Rapid support Forces launched attacks in key parts of Khartoum and other important governmental locations in the country. Since then, more than 185 have been killed with thousands of more being wounded. According to Al Jazeera, “The protagonists in the outbreak of violence are army General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and his deputy and the RSF leader, General Mo-

hamed Hamdan Dagalo, commonly known as Hemedti.

In October 2021, al-Burhan and Dagalo orchestrated a coup, upending a fragile transition to civilian rule that had been started after the 2019 removal of longtime ruler Omar al-Bashir.” Al-Burhan is acting as the de facto ruler of Sudan following the coup against al-Bashir in 2019. Dagalo also helped overthrow al-Bashir despite being a long time ally. In addition to the domestic context, there are connections to foreign powers in the region

and beyond.

There have been a variety of reactions from Sudan’s neighbors and others in the Middle East North Africa Region. Many of Sudan’s neighbors including Ethiopia have also experienced conflict. According to Al Jazeera, “Sudan’s relationship with Ethiopia has been strained over disputed farmland along their border; the conflict in Ethiopia’s Tigray region, which drove tens of thousands of refugees into Sudan; and the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

Regional heavyweights

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, which forged close ties to the RSF when it sent thousands of fighters to support the war in Yemen, have called for both sides to stand down.” There as a brief Humanitarian pause for 3 hours on Sunday. International organizations are also urging both sides to stop fighting for the good of the people.

According to Al Jazeera, “The Red Cross and the World Health Organization called on Sudan’s warring parties to guarantee humanitarian access for those in need.

“We have thousands of volunteers who are ready, able and trained to perform humanitarian services” in the country, said Farid Aiywar, the Sudan head of delegation for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).” Many hospitals are not operating due to the conflict as well making a country that is already in a precarious humanitarian situation even worse in that regard.

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Imam In New Jersey Stabbed During Fajir Prayer



by **Rehan Qamar**

An Imam is in stable condition after being stabbed while conducting fajir prayer on Sunday morning at a mosque in Paterson, New Jersey, local officials reported.

The incident occurred around 5:30 AM at Omar Mosque in south Paterson. Video footage shows

a man jumping up to attack the Imam while others go into sajida.

The suspect, who was unknown to mosque goers prior to Sunday's incident, was praying when he "lunged forward with a knife and stabbed Imam Sayed multiple times – at least twice," mosque spokesperson

Abdul Hamdan told CNN.

After the incident, the suspect attempted to flee from the mosque but congregants "were able to bring him down and apprehend him and hold him" until police arrived and arrested him, he said.

Imam Sayed Elnakib

was taken to the hospital and is recovering from his injuries.

According to Hamdan, more than 200 people were present in the mosque at the time of the stabbing. Instead of falling victim to fear, Hamdan added that the incident seems isolated and "that the mosque is

safe and to practice their faith, it is open."

Mayor Andre Sayegh said he visited Imam Sayed Elnakib in the hospital soon after the incident. The imam is in stable condition at St. Joseph's University Medical Center.

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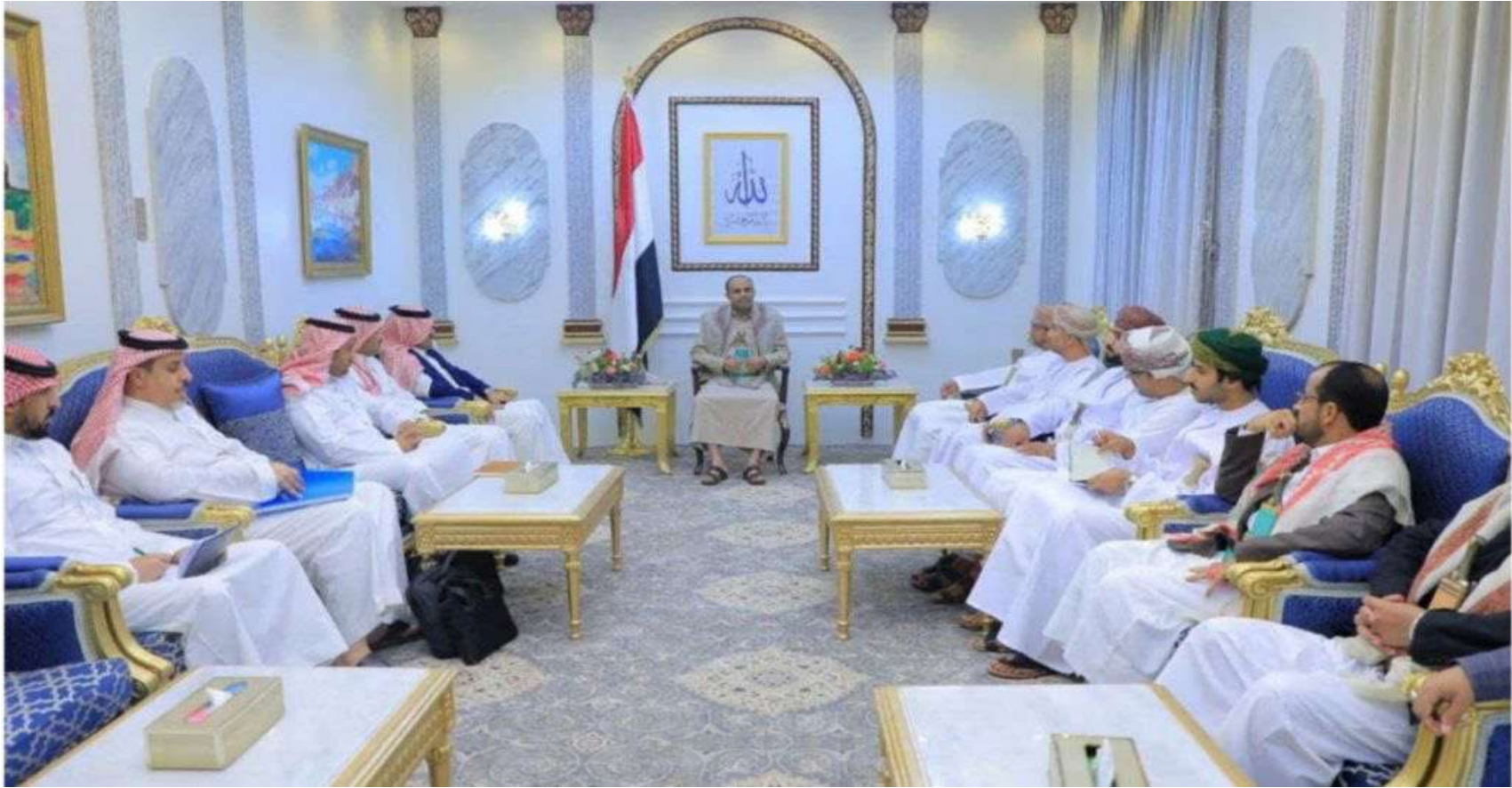
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Saudi Arabia And Oman Join Yemen Peace Talk



By TMO Staff

On Sunday April 9 envoys from Saudi Arabia and Oman joined peace talks between competing factions in Yemen. The war in Yemen began in 2015 after the Houthis took control of large parts of the country prompting Saudi Arabia and its allies in the region to bomb the country leading to a massive humanitarian crisis lasting years.

Meanwhile, Iran backed the Houthis, further antagonizing one of its

main regional rivals: Saudi Arabia. Additionally, other factions loyal to neither the original government or the Houthis got involved such as Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. In recent months, relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran have begun to thaw creating conditions for de-escalating the war in Yemen. The deal itself was brokered by China.

According to Al Jazeera, "The envoys, who landed late on Saturday, met with the head of the Houthi Supreme

Political Council, Mahdi al-Mashat, for talks on ending hostilities and lifting a Saudi-led "blockade" on Yemeni ports, Houthi news agency SABA reported. President Mashat reiterated that his movement seeks an "honourable peace" and that Yemenis want "freedom and independence", SABA said. Mohammed al-Bukaiti, a Houthi leader, said earlier on Twitter that Saudi and Omani officials would discuss "ways to achieve a comprehensive and lasting peace in the

region".

Furthermore, several members of the international community have hailed this as a major development heralding real peace in Yemen.

As of now, the talks are between the Houthis and the Saudis as opposed to their Yemeni opponents directly. Additionally, the conflict has left 80% of the country to be displaced.

According to Al Jazeera, "They have been fighting against a Saudi-led military alliance since

2015 in a conflict that has killed tens of thousands and left 80 percent of Yemen's population dependent on humanitarian aid. A Houthi official said on Saturday that the group had received 13 detainees released by Saudi Arabia in exchange for a Saudi detainee freed earlier, ahead of a wider prisoner exchange agreed to by the warring sides." It is expected that the Houthis will free 887 more prisoners as part of the peace deal.

Islamic Jurisprudence In Early Islam

by Dr. Aslam Abdullah

A review of Dr. Hasanuddin Hashmi's work on Islamic Jurisprudence. The book is available at Islamic Center, Momin Lodge, 1918 Artesia Blvd, Torrance, CA 90504

Dr. Hasanuddin Hashmi, a scholar of the Quran, Hadith, and Fiqh, combines traditional understanding with a balanced and rational approach without compromising any tenets of the faith. His recent publication, "Early Jurisprudence in Islam, is a living testimony of his intense knowledge of his sources.

The book is a primer on Islamic jurisprudence and unfolds the methodology the Prophet and



his companions adopted to face the emerging questions of their time.

Based on his Ph.D. thesis he submitted at UCLA in the early 80s, the work dwells on issues such

as Pre-Islamic Arabia, Marriage, Divorce, Iddat, Claims, Judgment, Penal Law, Inheritance, Hilf, Adoption, Bay, Riba, Ijtihad. It unveils a process of formulating juristic positions to guide the

community.

In the U.S., Dr. Hashmi is the pioneer in organizing Mawlood un Nabi, which has now become an annual Muslim tradition. Thousands of func-

tions focussing on the life of Prophet Muhammad occur all over the country during the month of Rabi ul Awwal.

His intense love for Prophet Muhammad comes from his vast knowledge of traditional and modern resources, and his work asserts that the love of the last messenger is the essence and core of the faith.

Everything he writes is well-documented and referenced. But unfortunately, only a few contemporary scholars have reached his intellect and research level.

Dr. Hashmi comes from an illustrious house of scholars from Punjab

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Biden Hosts Eid Al-Fitr Reception At White House



U.S. President Joe Biden and first lady Jill Biden hosted a reception to celebrate Eid Al Fitr on Monday afternoon in the East Room of the White House. The move brings back a tradition that Trump had halted.

Biden opened the ceremony by quoting the poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, saying: “Your joy is sorrow unmasked. And how else can it be? The deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain.”

Guests included Talib Shareef, president and imam of Masjid Muhammad, the Nation’s Mosque, in Washington; Pakistani vocalist and composer Arooj Aftab; Muslim-American congressman Andre Carson; and Madinah Wilson-Anton, state representative of Delaware and manager of academic affairs at the Biden Institute.

Vice President Kamala Harris, who tested positive for coronavirus last week, was absent, though she had been scheduled to attend with first gentleman Doug Emhoff, who attended the event alone.

Shareef opened with an invocation and then thanked the president for hosting the event.

“Being hosted here is an important statement for our nation and for the world, a statement that Islam is a welcomed part

of our nation, as are all the other faith traditions, and that the highest office in this land is committed to our nation’s foundational values — and laws protecting religious freedom,” he said.

Former president Bill Clinton started the White House tradition of celebrating Eid, though this ended during Donald Trump’s administration.

“Eid Mubarak! Welcome to the White House,” Biden said during the event. “One of the promises that I made when I was running for office was restoring this celebration.”

Biden also jokingly compared fasting during Ramadan to his Catholic faith and observation of Lent, during which he had to “go 40 days” with “no sweets and no ice cream”.

“Through their fast, Muslims demonstrate empathy for the suffering of others, strengthening and renewing their resolve to give generously and make the world a better place,” said Biden.

“Muslims make our nation stronger every single day, even as they still face real challenges and threats in our society, including targeted violence and Islamophobia that exist — I mean, it’s just astounding.”

In addition to restoring the Eid White House tradition, Biden has also been working to follow



through on his campaign promise of building an administration that

values diversity and “looks like America”, nominating two Muslim

Americans to the federal bench.

Op Ed: Trip To Masjid Al-Aqsa (Al-Quds)

By: *Khalid Rizvi*

As I set out on my journey to Al-Quds on November 24th, 2022, via King Hussain bridge to the Israeli border for visa clearance to enter the blessed city. As I stepped into the sacred land of Prophets and barakah, I was filled with excitement. I booked the New Capitol Hotel close to the Masjid Al-Aqsa site on Salah Eddin Street and began my walking tour with a qualified guide alone.

Jerusalem's Old City is divided into four major entry points: Jaffa Gate, Damascus Gate, Dung Gate, and Lions Gate, each with its own distinct quarter- Muslim, Jewish, Christian, and Armenian. I gathered a wealth of information about the significant sites of the largest monotheistic religions, including Islam, Christianity, and Judaism:

1. Masjid Al-Aqsa (Qibli Masjid, Dome of the Rock)
2. Western wall (Weiling wall or Buraq wall)
3. Church of the Holy Sepulchre

Other sites:

1. Bab Al-Rahma cemetery (Old graveyard of Sahabas -(ra))
2. The Mount of Olives (Jabal Al Zaitoon)
3. Masjid Umar bin Khattab (ra)

Masjid Al - Aqsa

While entering the gate of the Al-Aqsa compound, I faced a heavy security presence and Israeli police. Nonetheless, I found the atmosphere inside the Masjid Al-Aqsa compound to be very spiritual, particularly during congregational prayer in Qibili Masjid, especially during the fajr prayer.

Why Masjid Al-Aqsa is a very significant site for Muslims?

(a) The first qibla in Islam was built after 40 years of Masjid Al-Haram in Makkah (Ibn Khaldoon). Further to the fact, there is a difference of opinion among the scholars if Prophet Adam (as) and Prophet Ibrahim (as) built the



Masjid Haram and Masjid Al-Aqsa with the help of angels respectively.

(b) The place where Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) led all other previous prophets in prayer.

(c) The place where Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) ascended to heaven on the night of Isra as revealed in the story of Isra and Meraj (miraculous night) in the Glorious Quran ie: Surah bani Israel verse (1)

“Glory be to the One Who took His servant Muhammad (S.A.W) by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque whose surroundings We have blessed, so that We may show him some of Our signs. Indeed, He (God) alone is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing.”

Misconception: It's not just one Masjid but Multiple Masjids, and Qibli Mosalla is misunderstood at the southernmost corner as Masjid Al-Aqsa whereas :

The Masjid Al-Aqsa complex covers 1/6th of the entire area of the old city of Jerusalem and consists of 16 gates and 144000 square meters of space. The complex also contains six masjids, including Qibli Masjid, Buraq masjid, Nisa masjid, Rehma Masjid, Marwan-e-Masjid, Dome of the Rock, and Old Qibli masjid.

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The Qibli Masjid

It was interesting to learn that the Qibli Mas-



jid has a capacity of 5500 worshipers, while the underground Marwani -e- Masjid can hold up to 11,000 worshipers. The Qibli mosque, named for its proximity to the Qibla, is the main masjid in the compound for five times prayers led by the imam for both men and women. People coming from different countries then split into smaller groups for attending and conducting lectures after the congregational prayer in different places

of the Masjid. Everyone enjoys the spiritual and soothing environment in the Masjid, especially in Fajr time prayer along with nasheed and distribution of a Palestinian food breakfast reflecting their hospitality, strong Muslim brotherhood, and love among people.

In the center of the prayer hall, a Hadith is displayed:

“Maymunah asked Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), ‘O

Messenger of Allah! Tell us about Jerusalem.’ He said: ‘Jerusalem is the Land of the Gathering and Resurrection. Go there and pray in it, for one prayer in it is the equivalent of a thousand prayers in other places.’ Mamunah asked, ‘what if I could not reach it?’ He said: ‘Then you can send a gift of oil to light its lanterns, for he who does this it is as if he traveled to it.’”

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*Cont. from page 8.
Masjid Al-Aqsa.*

The Dome of the Rock (Qubbat Al Sakhra)

The Dome of the Rock (Qubbat Al Sakhra) is likely the most photographed building on the planet and was the first dome ever built in the history of Islam. It is believed that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) began his Miraj or ascension to heaven from the Dome of the Rock. The dome was built by the Umayyad Caliph Abdulmalik Ibn Marwan during the period of 688 and 691 CE. Later, during the period of Ottoman caliph Suleman the Magnificent, the dome of the rock was renovated with gold layers.

Today, the dome is covered by 5000 gold plates donated by the late King Hussain of Jordan costing \$8.2 million. It is common for people to offer nafl prayers and hold religious gatherings here while visiting the downstairs of the Dome of the Rock to get closer to the Rock over which the shrine was built, considered sacred to connect with Sidaratul Muntaha (the highest ascension point of Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) for effective supplications to God.

The Dome of the Rock, with its intricate and mesmerizing layout symbolizes as well:

08 Pillars or Octagonal shapes
08 Angels holding up the throne of Allah (Swt)

12 Columns 12 months in year

04 Piers 04 Seasons in a year

52 Windows 52 Weeks in a year

07 Mehrabs 07 Days of the week

36.5 Meters (Height)
365 days

Bab Al-Rahma cemetery (Old graveyard of Sahabas RA)

Adjacent to the wall of Masjid Al-Aqsa lies the Bab Al-Rahma cemetery, where I went for Ziarah to pay my respects to the tomb of Sahabas (ra). It was a humbling experience to visit the final resting place of Shaddad bin Auos (ra) and Ibada

bin Al Samat (ra), two of the Prophet's (pbuh) closest companions.

The Mount of Olives (Jabal Al Zaitoon)

The Mount of Olives is just ten minute's walk away from Masjid Al-Aqsa. It's a beautiful hilly spot to view Jerusalem's old city and a sacred site for Jewish, Christian, and Muslim faiths. It is believed that Jesus (AS) ascended to heaven from this place and will return on Judgment Day to the same place. Many followers have chosen to be buried here, and to date, approximately 150,000 people have been laid to rest on the slopes.

I also visited the Tomb of Prophets and their followers, which was located downhill and required walking through a dark cave, where a caretaker handed me a candle.

Another Holy place is known as Maqam of Salman Farsi (ra), where I prayed (musalla), which is located on the Mount of olives of Jerusalem. Salaman Farsi (ra) is one of the most famous and close companions of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and a seeker of truth, He belonged to Persia and had the faith of a fire worshipper before embracing Islam.

Western wall (Weiling wall or Buraq wall)

While walking a tour towards the western wall, it is observed that Jewish males and females pray and mourn separately for the destruction of a first and second temple close to the wall.

Further noted from the guide about the western wall is said that the enormous stones of the wall have almost magnetic power drawing close hands and foreheads for a deep and direct connection with God.

The western wall formerly known as the "wailing wall" is the most sacred place for Jews. It is believed that the only surviving structure of the Herodian temple or 2nd temple.

For Muslims, it is known as the Buraq wall with the belief that the other side prophet Muhammad (pbuh) tied the Buraq (riding animal) and rode during the Night of As-

cension (Mi raj).

Quoted Karen Armstrong (A History of Jerusalem – Karen Armstrong, Western Wall)

"Al-Buraq street sign on the western wall prior to Israeli takeover in 1967 as Al-Buraq rd. (wailing wall)".

Church of the Holy sepulcher:

As briefed by the guide while on the walking tour of the Church of the Holy sepulcher, It is the holiest place in the world for many Christians because of its significance in the old testament, and It is believed to be the site of Jesus's crucifixion and burial. As a Muslim, I was reminded of the Quranic verse in Surah Nisa that Prophet Essa (as) neither killed nor crucified but ascended to God. Despite our differences, both Christians and Muslims shared the belief in the second coming of Jesus (as) before the day of judgment.

As I observed a procession of Christians moving towards the Via Dolorosa ("Latin Sorrowful way"), a route through the old city of Jerusalem believed to be the path Jesus walked towards his crucifixion. The route was marked by 14 stations of the cross, with the final five located in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Masjid-e-Umar bin Khat-tab (RA)

Opposite the church is located Masjid-e-Umar bin Khattab (ra), a mosque built as a landmark where the Caliph Umar bin Khatab (ra) performed salah after the conquest of Jerusalem in 638 CE. The treaty displayed outside the mosque was signed by Umar (ra) along with senior sahabas like Abu Ubaida bin Jarrah, Khalid Ibn Al-Waleed (ra), Abdul – Rehman Ibn Awf (ra), other sahabas (ra), and Patriarch Sophronius. It gave assurances for the safety of the people of Jerusalem.

Since then, It is an interesting fact that Christians entrusted two Muslim families (Joudeh and Nuseibeh) for centuries to ensure neutral custodianship of the Church of the Holy sepulcher until



now. (CNN Reports).

Final Thoughts

Overall enjoyed a great experience while putting my foot on the Holy land of Al Quds (the old city of Jerusalem) and realized the highest level of spiritual experience in Masjid Al-Aqsa.

Therefore, In the light

of the aforementioned significance of the Holy site of Masjid Al-Aqsa in particular and overall Al- Quds, Would like to encourage everyone to make their best effort to visit the place of worship which is blessed and sacred for all Muslims.



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Minneapolis Becomes First Major US City To Allow Muslim Calls To Prayer At All Hours

by TMO Staff

The Minneapolis City Council voted to allow broadcasts of the Athan or Muslim call to prayer at all times, becoming the first major American city to do so.

On Thursday, the City Council approved amending the city's noise ordinance in a unanimous vote.

The Muslim call to prayer known as the adhan or azan, is recited five times a day from dawn to the night throughout the year.

While the prayers have been broadcast in Minneapolis before, the ordinance prevented some dawn and evening calls. Dawn can arrive shortly after 5 a.m. in the summer, and sunsets after 9 p.m.

People attend the first Friday prayers of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan outside the Hennepin County Government Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota on April 16, 2021. (Kerem Yucel/AFP via Getty Images, File)

The city allowed prayer broadcasts between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. last year, and first allowed adhan broadcasts five times a day during Ramadan in 2020.

Minneapolis' East African population has boomed since the 1990s, making mosques more common in the City of Lakes.

Observers of the City Council meeting likened the call to prayer to Christian church bells.

Council Member Lisa Goodman noted that the Jewish call to prayer is allowed, though it is not often broadcast.

The amendment is expected to be signed into law by Mayor Jacob Frey next week.



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As Salaam U Alaikum wr Wbr,

Alhamdulillah, the country is returning to its normal activities. Thanks to all those who cooperated in getting the Covid Pandemic under control. Unfortunately, the same can't be said for The Muslim Observer. We are still on life support.

We have been publishing The Muslim Observer for the last 22 years, and we thank you for your support. You have supported us because we offered viewpoints that no other news media would offer. Aware that our community and especially our youth get inspired by seeing the positive news about the community and learning about fresh thinking and accountable leadership.

We don't have billionaires or corporate backers. Advertising revenue falls very short to cover the production cost. We are thankful to our grassroots supporters like you, who subscribe or donate a few bucks at a time to support our work.

Our readers and activists like you are the largest sources of our revenue. We can't do without your support. That is why I am asking you to support us in whatever capacity you can. Even your \$5 monthly donation or even a one-time donation of \$10 will go a long way.

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**Cont. from page 3.
Know Your God**

Iqbal whose interpretation of the Quran is unmatched in the language of poetry, expresses this verse in Urdu, in his beautiful poetic style:

“Yeh Shadath Gahe Ulfat Main Qadam Rakhna Hai Log Asaan Samjhte Hain Musalman Hona”

When one steps into the world of belief (shahada) one enters the realm of selfless love and sacrifice;

People think that, it is easy to become a Muslim!

The lesson for those of us who believe we can purchase our tickets to heaven through our wealth, is a harsh one to know when we read the Quran. Nor can we be certain to seek His pleasure by secluding ourselves within the serene surroundings of our sacred spaces, with shining walls and marbled floors.

Quran's demand is for perpetual action. It is for service above self, for a struggle that has no end, for sacrifice that has no limits.

Iqbal again :

“Amal Se Zindagi Banti Hai Jannat Bhi, Jaha-

num Bhi

Ye Khaki Apni Fitrat Mein Na Noori Hai Na Naari Hai”

By action, life may become both paradise or hell; This creature of dust in its nature is neither of light (destined for heaven) nor of fire (marked for hell).”

At a time when the mounting fervor of Muslim hate and Muslim bashing is at a peak globally, it is more important than ever to recognize that more is needed of us than before.

For starters recognizing the many gods of pride and passion that we have come to worship, while neglecting the God that speaks to us from the Quran.

We cannot have real unity (tauhid) when our ethnic pride is dearer to us than our Muslim pride. When language, culture, money, sectarian obsession and geography, become our passions then we become deaf and blind to the teachings of Quran which came to transcend those boundaries and remove those barriers.

We cannot ignore the God of reason and reflection and embrace

the gods of rituals and medieval mandates in order to find solutions to our problems and to the problems of the societies we live in today. We cannot push the God that came to liberate us from our tribal dysfunctional ways into a closet of our own mistaken beliefs, aided by the preaching's of the priests of secularism, and expect to become a relevant force in the marketplace of our present times where confusion and conflicts abound.

Living in a country with so many alternative realities which excite our sensibilities, invite our submissions and distract us in so many different ways, finding our path to the real God, may not be so easy.

But we have the Book with the timeless Guidance it contains, in which He speaks to us in our most intimate moments, without reserve. See what He says to the Prophet (pbuh) in the Quran:

“When my servants ask you concerning Me, then (say unto them): verily I am nigh. I answer the prayer of every supplicant when he calls on Me; so (they should)

hearken unto My call, and believe in Me, in order that they may be led aright.”

2:186 Al-Baqara

This notion that we seem to have embraced of visiting His house in Mecca once a year or His house in our neighborhoods once a week, to satisfy the demands for His submission, is clearly not enough. If we are to dig ourselves out of the rabbit hole of history, a lot more is required. And it is not simply returning to science and math either, as some would have us believe. As a community that has been lifeless and devoid of “values” that give life, listen once more to the admonition of the Quran:

“O you who have Faith! Answer Allah and the Messenger when he invites you to that which gives you life”

8:24 Al-Anfaal

Without a singular focus on the teachings of the Quran as our first priority, re learning the lesson of life, we will remain a dead community.

Again Iqbal in explaining this verse of the Quran, paints our portrait in his vivid and uncompromising style:

Woh Sufi K Tha Khidmat-E-Haq Mein Mard Mohabbat Mein Yakta, Hamiyyat Mein Fard

The Sufi, once foremost in serving God,

Unmatched in love and ardency of soul,

Ajam Ke Khayalat Mein Kho Gya

Ye Salik Maqamat Mein Kho Gya

Has got lost in the maze of Ajam's ideas:

At half-way stations is this traveller stuck.

Bujhi Ishq Ki Aag, Andhair Hai

Musalman Nahin, Raakh Ka Dhair Hai

Gone out is the fire of love. O how sad!

The Muslim is a heap of ashes, nothing more.

There is no escaping the need and importance of a return to the Quran and its “life giving” message.

If it is such a blessing to simply read or recite it to benefit the dead, imagine how much more of a blessing it could be if we choose to actually comprehend it and follow it to improve our lives.

May Allah inspire us to understand the Quran and follow it.

**Cont. from page 6.
In Early-Islam**

that traces its origin to the Salar Masood Ghazi, referred to in the Indo-Pak-Bangladesh continents as the selfless saint. He has the honor of being the youngest Shaikh ul Hadith in a prestigious Islamic seminary in Pakistan. He also had the privilege of rubbing shoulders with Dr. Hameedullah when he delivered his famous lecture series at the University of Bahawalpur.

His scholarship refreshes one's understanding of Islam and empowers the readers with facts often hidden in emotive explanations.

Islamic law has been enlightening the lives of billions of people for the past fourteenth hundred years. It is considered a preeminent institution in the Islam system. The law of Islam has been a focal point of discussion and research by so many scholars thought the en-

tire history of Islam.

He asserts that the Prophet built the foundation of the Islamic legal system in his lifetime. However, the process of its development continued during later periods also. The question of expansion in the body of law is a continuous operation because evolution in the body of law in every living legal order is a natural process. He provided all the basic principles that helped expand the body of Islamic jurisprudence. These principles were theoretical and practical for every life situation.

During the last ten years of his life, the Prophet established the first Muslim state in Madinah, where he applied those principles in every kind of affair, whether individual or communal. This practice provided the later Muslims with good practical examples of implications, making it easy for them to apply those principles in their useful

life and find the solution to their new problems. The Muslim jurists of all generations considered the Prophet's period the decisive standard for legislation. The subject matter of this study is not the detailed legal injunctions of that time; instead, it is about those sources that provided the raw material for the Islamic legal system.

During the fourteen hundred years of history of Islam law, we find several sources utilized during the legislation. Dr. Hashmi broadly divides them into five categories, Qur'an, Sunnah (examples of the Prophet) Ijma, Ijtihad, and current laws. He divides the history of Islamic law into three periods.

1. Period of the Prophet (from the beginning of his prophethood up to his death in the 11 years of the Hijrah.

2. Period of companions and followers (Tabi'in) (up to the end of the first

century of Hijrah.

3. Development period (from the second century up to this time.)

Dr. Hashmi uses primary sources and references considered authentic during the completion of this work. He also studied the writings of modern authors in English, Arabic, Persian and Urdu.

Every Muslim should get guidance from the life of the Prophet; the Qur'an says: “Certainly you have in the messenger of Allah an excellent example.” (Quran 33.21)

His study proves that there are clear guidelines about the new issues in the life of the Prophet and that Muslims need to follow these guidelines. The Prophet, in his lifetime, along with the divine sources, the Qur'an, used human sources as well. He adopted the customary laws of that period and exercised his ijtihad. This practice of the Prophet provides

an excellent example of dealing with new issues. The Muslims need to practice their ijtihad to find solutions to further questions. The door of ijtihad was always open and will remain open forever. It is up to the people to use it.

In the same way, the Muslims, following the example of the Prophet, have to benefit from the current laws of other nations. They should not consider any good practice of that people a strange thing. Instead, they should realize it as their heritage as the Prophet said, “Every word of wisdom is a lost property of the believer. Anywhere he finds it, he deserves it more than others.” The principle for finding a solution to new issues is not their existence in the Qur'an or Sunnah, but not to be against the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

Cont. from page 1.
Muslim Heritage Month

January of each year as Muslim Heritage Month, as it will shine a light on the rich histories, cultures and shared principles of Muslim Americans," Murphy said. "New Jersey takes great pride in its diversity, and we will continue to recognize and celebrate the positive impact Muslims have made, and continue to make, to the advancement of this state."

The governor's Eid gathering drew Muslim community leaders, clergy and elected officials from across the state. This year, they were jubilant over the news of Muslim

Heritage Month.

"For too long, we've seen damaging and irresponsible depictions of Muslims," said Seladdin Maksut, executive director of the New Jersey chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations. "These narratives have tangible consequences, but now we will be seeing the counter and, hopefully soon, prevailing narrative: one that highlights, celebrates and acknowledges the American Muslim community in New Jersey."

A joint resolution in favor of Muslim Heritage Month got unanimous support from lawmakers before it was sent to

the governor. The state Assembly passed the resolution in March, and the Senate did the same in February. The resolution asks Murphy to issue a proclamation each year calling upon local government agencies and interested organizations to observe the month with ceremonies, activities and educational programs.

In addition to American Muslims for Democracy and CAIR-NJ, the committee that worked to pass the measure included New Jersey Muslims for Progress, the Islamic Center of Morris County, the Council of Imams of New Jersey, NJ Sisterhood, Muslim League of Voters and BAWDI.

Assemblywoman Sadaf Jaffer and Prospect Park Mayor Mohammad Khairullah also served on the committee.

More than 70 organizations, schools and mosques across the state also supported the state resolution.

Supporters hope the measure will promote greater understanding of Muslim heritage, recognize Muslim Americans' contributions and combat Islamophobia. In New Jersey, Muslims make up 3% of the population, or about 300,000 people. They come from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and are involved in politics, education, law enforcement,

business, culture and other aspects of civic life.

New Jersey is a nationwide leader in elected representation among Muslims, with over 40 people serving in political office. Last year, Assemblywomen Sadaf Jaffer and Shama Haidar became the first two Muslims to serve in the New Jersey Legislature.

Muslims have lived in the United States since before the country's founding, arriving as enslaved Africans, who scholars estimate were about 30% Muslim. Globally, around a quarter of the world's population is Muslim, making up the second-largest religion.

Cont. from page 1.
Trump Lawsuit

this case to the Jury" and "allow the Defendant's counsel to have greater latitude to cross-examine Plaintiff and her witnesses."

Tacopina's letter accused Kaplan of having "bolstered" Carroll's testimony by improperly sustaining objections to some of Tacopina's questions of Carroll, and said

a potential upcoming witness should be barred from testifying. He said what Carroll's attorneys and Kaplan deemed as "argumentative" questions were actually in accordance with "well-established and accepted" methods of cross-examination.

Many of the sustained objections arose when Tacopina questioned Carroll about her account of the alleged attack, questioning her

testimony that she did not scream, and expressing doubt about Carroll's testimony that the department store, Bergdorf Goodman, was relatively empty at the time of the attack.

Tacopina also cited a statement made by Carroll during her testimony in which she said that Trump accused her of being "a democratic operative," and asked the judge to conclude that she opened the door to

being questioned about financial support for Carroll's litigation against Trump she previously received from a billionaire entrepreneur who has frequently donated to Democratic causes. Kaplan previously barred Tacopina from bringing up the entrepreneur, Reid Hoffman.

Carroll has alleged that Trump sexually assaulted her in a Bergdorf Goodman store in either 1995 or 1996. The civil

trial stems from a lawsuit filed in November 2022, after New York passed a law that eliminated for one year the statute of limitations for adults who claim they were sexually assaulted. A previous lawsuit filed by Carroll in 2019 is still pending.

"He shattered my reputation," Carroll testified last week.

Cont. from page 1.
Bills Propose, Eid

The package of bills would classify Eid al-Adha, Eid al-Fitr, Diwali, Vaisakhi and Lunar New Year as state-recognized holidays. Another bill introduced this week by State Rep. Helena Scott, D-Detroit, seeks to make Juneteenth a state holiday, though that day was already made an official state holiday last year by the Michigan Civil Service Commission after labor negotiations and by the Michigan Supreme Court.

"Our state's greatest assets are the various ethnic and religious backgrounds and beliefs that make up our communities," House Majority Whip and State Rep. Ranjeev Puri, D-Canton, told the Free Press by phone. "And so, any way that we can uplift those voices, I will be looking to do that."

The bills by themselves would not necessarily lead to creating addi-

tional days off for state employees; that process is done through the Michigan Civil Service Commission or by the Michigan Supreme Court for court employees.

Puri, whose Canton area district includes a sizable population of Indian Americans, is the sponsor of the Diwali and Vaisakhi bills that recognize holidays often celebrated in Hindu and Sikh communities. Another bill, introduced by House Majority Floor Leader and State Rep. Abraham Aiyash, D-Hamtramck, would designate the two Eid holidays Muslims celebrate. Hamtramck has one of the highest percentages of Muslim residents in the U.S. The fourth holiday bill, introduced by State Rep. Sharon MacDonell, D-Troy, would make Lunar New Year a state holiday. About 29% of Troy's residents are Asian American, many of whom celebrate the Lunar New Year and Diwali. There are also many outside the

representatives' districts who celebrate the various holidays.

"By recognizing these holidays, we are not only showing our respect and appreciation for the traditions and beliefs of our fellow Michiganders, but we are also sending a powerful message of inclusion and unity," Puri said in a statement.

Puri said that if the bills were to become law, they would not lead to state offices being shut down on those days or state employees getting the day off. But passing the bills could help get the communities more recognition on a state level, leading to private employers or school districts being more open to allowing workers and students off on those days. Last week, the city of Dearborn, whose population is 47% Arab American, became what officials and advocates say is the first municipality in U.S. history to shut down City Hall offices for Eid al-Fitr, along with its

courts and public libraries. Some school districts in metro Detroit have shut down for minority religious holidays for years, including for Jewish holidays in the spring and fall in the West Bloomfield School District and for Eid in Dearborn Public Schools and Detroit Public Schools.

The bills if passed would help make "our state a little bit more inclusive and getting all these kinds of largely marginalized communities some more recognition at the state level," said Puri, a son of Indian immigrants who is the first Sikh to serve in the state legislature.

There are currently 12 holidays recognized by the state, 13 if you include Election Day on even-numbered years. Two of the state holidays are the Christian holidays of Christmas and Christmas Eve. Jewish holidays are not included and not mentioned in the four bills.

Kurt Weiss, spokesman

for the Michigan Civil Service Commission, explained how the process works to create holidays.

"Holidays for state-employee civil servants are determined by the Michigan Civil Service Commission under its authority under the state constitution to regulate conditions of employment for the state classified civil service," Weiss said in an email Friday to the Free Press.

About two-thirds of employees have their holidays determined through labor negotiations and the remaining third through civil services rules.

"Further changes to state holidays for state civil servants would require similar bargaining and commission action," he said.

State employees currently can take up to two days off for any religious day, or non-religious event, of their choice.



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