

Eid Emerging as a national festival

By Dr. Aslam Abdullah

The 1440 AH Eid was no different than the Eid of 1430 or earlier years. Millions attended special Eid prayers and joined festivities all over the world with their relatives and friends. They celebrated their victory over themselves for following a regimen and discipline that inspired them to control their hunger and thirst from dawn to dusk for the sake of following the guidelines given to them by their creator.

Fasting is obligatory upon every Muslim who physically can endure it, yet it is a voluntary act that most community members do in the month of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic



lunar calendar. Each region of the world has its tradition of observing the Eid.

However, in Europe, the Americas and Australia and New Zealand, the

Muslim community is creating new traditions of Ramadan and Eid celebrations. The Muslim population is about one percent of the total population in the US,

yet Ramadan and Eid's outreach is far ahead of their numbers.

Political parties, local, regional and national

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OUR American MUSLIM Dream **Page. 2**
Victor Begg

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Muslims around the world celebrate Eid al Fitr



By: **Aysha Qamar**

Millions of Muslims all around the globe gathered to celebrate Eid al-Fitr this week, marking the end of the holy month of Ramadan. The name Eid al-Fitr

translates to "Festival of Breaking the Fast."

The date of Eid al-Fitr depends on the lunar calendar, which is why it falls on a different date on the Gregorian calen-

Cont. on page 7.

Who is afraid of the Arabic Numerals?



This article was published in the New York Times Opinion Section, TMO is reposting it to share the quality work and message.

By **Mustafa Akyol**

Mr. Akyol is a regular contributing writer of Op-Eds for The Times.

Should Americans, as part of their school curriculum, learn Arabic numerals?

CivicScience, a Pittsburgh-based research firm, put that question

to some 3,200 Americans recently in a poll seemingly about mathematics, but the outcome was a measure of students' attitudes toward the Arabworld. Some 56 percent of the respondents said, "No." Fifteen percent had no opinion.

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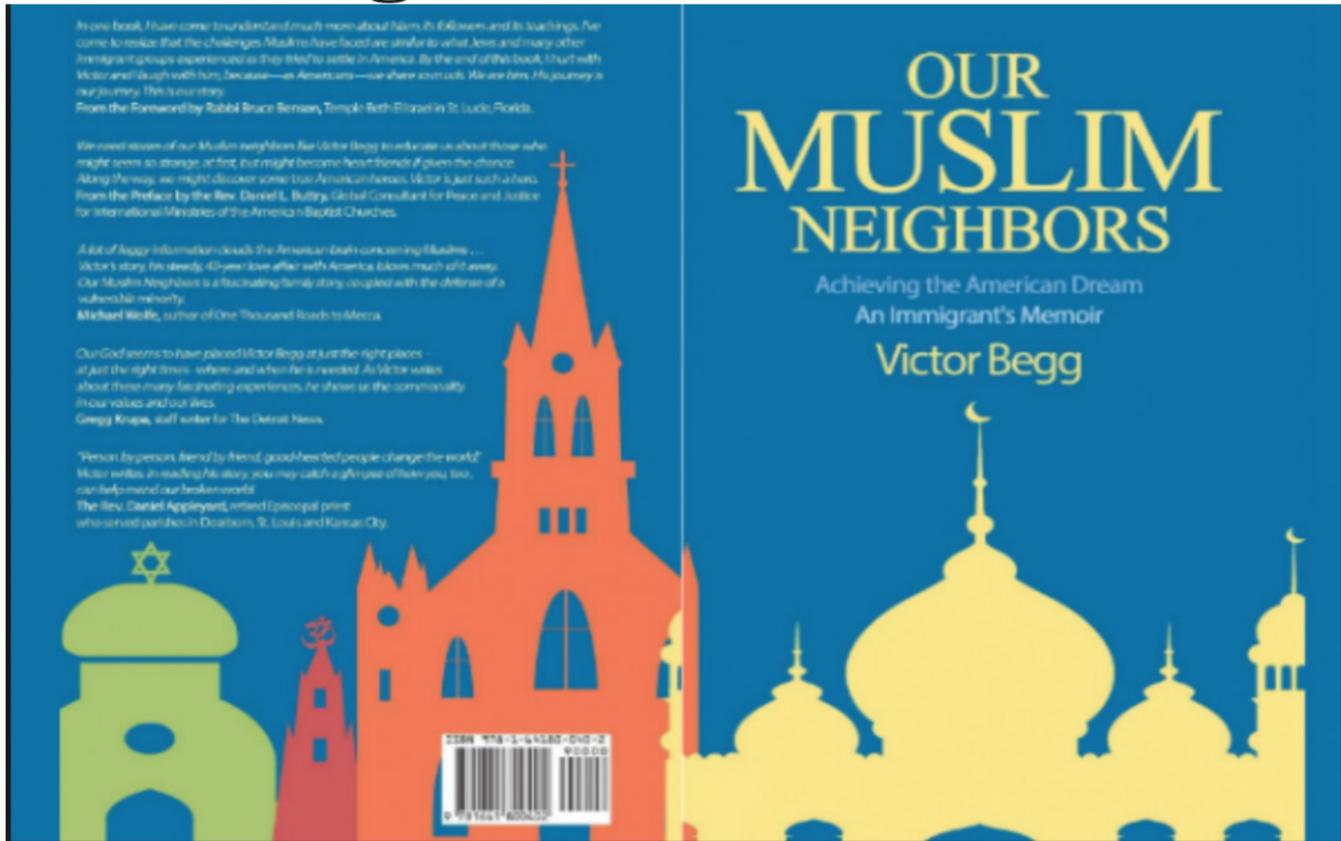
Achieving the American Dream, An Immigrant's Memoir

By Dr. Aslam Abdullah

Is there something magical about the country we call the United States of America? Seemingly there is. Here in this land of the braves, dreams are woven and achieved. Here, in this land of the free, ideas are created and lives are rebuilt around it.

Here, in the country, that offers people opportunities to pursue happiness the way they define it, people liberate them from the chains of traditions and customs that history has imposed upon them. America is not like any other country as it has a built-in mechanism to inspire people to change, change themselves, change their perceptions and change their communities. Thus, the story of every American is a story of change, a story of exploring horizons that elsewhere often stays in dreams.

Victor Begg's (Victor is



the English translation of Urdu word Ghalib) story is the story of yet another American who weaved a dream and then constructed a social reality around it for himself, his family and

the community. People struggle to build their lives. So did Begg. In this struggle, Ghalib known as Victor Begg rediscovered himself, his religious roots and the real purpose in life. He

used this rediscovery as a process of reaffirming to his fellow citizens in his adopted country that America is still a beckon of hope and light for all who come here as students or immigrants.

Victor began his life in America as an alien student, then became a green card holding employee, and then a naturalized citizen running a business that thrived and
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The Zabardust Khutbah



By Nadia B. Ahmad

Ding. Ding. Ding.
Ding.

The text messages on our family chat came in rapid succession.

"Khutbah was zabar10"

"What's zabar10?"

"How do you not know what zabar10 is?"

"Zabardust"

"Oh, then why didn't u just say that?"

"Imam gave amazing khutbah your dad said. He spoke of how he went to visit a prison, and an 18-year-old came up to him and told him that he used to go to the Sunday School, and now he was serving a six-year sentence for drugs and what not. He had said that we shouldn't tell children not to come to the masjid because this is what happens."

"What?! Really?"

By the time, I looked at the messages, I knew to know better, I chimed in, "So what?! That's not going to change anything. I've been saying the same thing for 30 years. Because the imam said it all of a sudden, things will change. No way. They will go back to the way they were in no time flat."

"They want to hire a youth director."

I responded, "That won't make a difference. That's their way of solving all problems is throwing money at them. They don't need a youth director. They need the parents to get involved instead of the dump-the-kids-at-the-masjid-and run. That's not what you did. We didn't have a youth director. We had MYNA [Muslim Youth of North America]. We did it on our own with our parents."

I would never really know what happens in what I refer to as the "bougie desi masjid" except for the third person accounts i.e. hearsay. I only show up a couple of times in Ramadan before I have some encounter that makes me feel unwelcome there. Truth is I am just another mother with unruly children. Last Ramadan, I had someone try to move me while I was in the middle of praying because I was praying near the food line, because the masjid was packed, and there was no place to go. Like they cannot wait 90 seconds for me to finish.

The year before I was scolded for bringing

a double stroller and not putting it in the right spot. Ramadan brings out the best and the worst. If one is the mother of three kids, it will bring out the worst, because I am the one that makes the geriatric center/Islamic center feel less posh when children are running around.

Muslims make up less than one percent of the population in Florida, but consist of ten percent of the prison population. The problem was not isolated. It was systemic. Muslims are overpoliced across the United States and are overrepresented in prison populations similar to other black and brown folks. The khutbah should not have been about one child that ended up in prison, but about the overall failures of the criminal justice system.

But the only person more unwelcome in a mosque than a mother with small kids is a lawyer and social justice activist. Sitting in the masjid and being meek will not do anything. We have to organize, become involved politically, and reach out to communities we have ignored for far too long. Codding our faith in small

corners while ignoring the flames of injustice, ignorance and poverty will not save us.

Meanwhile, two days after that zabardust khutbah, we set out to see the change brought about by the zabardust khutbah. On that evening, a woman pushed my five-year-old daughter to the side in the middle of the prayer right in front of me. We are already in the back of the masjid reserved as the area for those with small kids. Granted my daughter should not be running in the mosque in the middle of prayer. But granted she is five years old. The woman pushed her. Not very hard. But still a push.

Pushing someone else's child never helps anything. I listened to her pathetic apology after the prayer. I did not say anything, because I wanted to hear whatever pathetic excuse she had before I spoke. I let her ramble, "I'm so sorry. My daughter is the same age. I understand. I'm sorry I pushed her."

Then she hugs my daughter, sits her in her lap and rambles on some more, strok-

Cont. on page 15

Don't Hide Your Islam- Engagement in your local community



Don't Hide Your Islam Engage socially, civically, and politically in your local community.

By Quaid Saifee

The Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU) is a non-partisan think tank and research institute that focuses on the challenges and opportunities facing American Muslims. They recently issued a report titled:

American Muslim Poll 2019: Predicting and Preventing Islamophobia

My goal is to briefly summarize their findings and recommendations that are relevant to the Muslim community.

Muslims love to talk about national and international politics and world affairs in general. You can be in a Muslim gathering and you will hear people talk about topics ranging from Trump, the Muslim ban, Imran Khan, etc.. Things we rarely discuss are our present and future here in the United States.

We rarely talk about the effect of Islamophobia on our kids, many of whom suffer from mental health issues and are likely to be discriminated against because of their faith.

ISPU has been polling Americans of all faiths (including Muslims) for the last few years to figure out the status of Islamophobia. They sta-

tistically measure it and refer to it as the Islamophobia Index in which the higher the number, the stronger the Islamophobia. The Islamophobia Index inched up from 24 in 2018 to 28 in 2019.

The Islamophobia Index is based on a level of agreement regarding Muslims living in the USA, and that they:

- Are more prone to violence than others
- Discriminate against women
- Are hostile to the United States
- Are less civilized than other people
- Are partially responsible for acts of violence carried out by other Muslims

ISPU's study concludes that Jews and Hispanics have the most favorable view of Muslims and white Evangelicals have the least.

It also finds that lower Islamophobia is related to knowing a Muslim, knowledge about Islam, political inclination toward the Democratic party, and favorable views of minorities.

The most surprising findings for me are the neutral factors, which make no difference in predicting Islamophobia. They are:

• **Nativity:** Being born outside or within the United States makes no difference on Islamophobia. Being an immigrant does not increase sympathy for American Muslims.

• **Sex and Age:** All other factors being equal, being a woman or being younger in age makes no difference in how Islamophobic someone is. It is often assumed that women and the youth are more sympathetic to minority groups, but that is not the case here.

• **Education:** Having a college education is not linked to a reduction in negative opinions about Muslims.

• **Religiosity:** Spirituality or a frequency of attendance to a house of worship does not affect Islamophobia. Islamophobia is therefore clearly more political and ideological than theological for most Americans.

So, what do we do with all this information? Here are four recommendations from ISPU, along with my two cents:

• **Build Coalitions with Other Impacted Communities:** Islamophobia is just one branch on a far more expansive and deeply rooted tree of bigotry. Muslims need to work with other

like-minded people to address racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, and homophobia both within our community and outside of it. Standing up for justice for all is not only our civic duty, but our Islamic one.

• **Keep Demystifying Islam:** Knowing something about Islam is an even stronger predictor of reduced Islamophobia, more so than knowing a Muslim personally. It is therefore not enough to humanize Muslims as people or to make Muslim friends. We should take every opportunity to educate the public on the Islamic faith.

• **Do More Than "Interfaith":** As Islamophobia is more politically driven in nature, it is important to reach out to diverse groups and communities. We must reach across racial, class, and cultural divides, to people of all faiths and no faith, rather than just those who are typically involved in interfaith engagement who tend to be white and middle class. Also, I have noticed that Muslims are rarely engaged in interfaith dialogue with black churches in and around our community.

• **Work for Greater Good:** When Muslims work together with other communities for a good

cause, we develop bonds of human brotherhood which lends itself to a reduction in the negative perception of our faith. Again, isn't working for the greater good the main message of Islam?

In my own life, I decided to get involved with Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion, an organization that empowers individuals and communities to advance equity and opportunity for all. Through this, I have learned so much about the struggle to make our society more equitable.

It is the responsibility of each of us to get involved in our local community, whether it be volunteering at the local library or participating in City Council meetings, joining the board of a local non-profit or volunteering for the campaign of someone who is committed to bringing about positive change.

We should not expect people to care about our struggles if we cannot find it within ourselves to genuinely care about theirs.

To learn more about Islamophobia Index and ISPU, please visit and support at <https://www.ispu.org/>.

12 Killed in Virginia Beach Shooting

by TMO Staff

Another American shooting leaves citizens shocked as 12 are killed in a shooting at a municipal building in the Virginia Beach Princess Anne area June 2. According to the Mass Shooting Tracker data, it was the 171 mass shooting incident as of this year.

Although many details regarding the shooting emerged the weekend following, not all questions were answered and resolved.

DeWayne Craddock, an engineer for Virginia Beach's municipal government, open fired at a municipal building Friday afternoon killing 12 and injuring 4 others, the Virginia Beach Police reported. The forty-year-old shooter was then fatally wounded in a shootout with the police.

According to the National Post, Police Chief James A. Cervera announced that the inves-



tigation regarding the gunman's motives will still continue.

Reports say that Craddock's professional and personal life do not suggest or even hint towards a reason or motive. "We do not have anything glaring," Cervera said.

Craddock emailed a letter of resignation from his job Friday morning, City Manager Dave

Hansen told the New York Times at a news conference.

Officials later released Craddock's letter that was sent hours before the shooting that killed and injured his colleagues. Yet, the letter, news reports say, gives no clue to what steered him to carry out the shooting.

"I want to officially put

in my (2) weeks' notice to vacant (sic) my position of Engineer III with the City of Virginia Beach," the letter read.

"It has been a pleasure to serve the City, but due to personal reasons I must relieve my position."

Hansen told the New York Times that officials will examine Craddock's relationship with co-

workers further, yet he does not sense concern or misgiving there.

While the identification of the gunman has been confirmed, the question of why the gunman committed the massacre remains as investigations continue. Craddock's family has publically apologized to the victim's and their families and do not condone such violence.

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Hijab Bans Undermine Women's Rights, Not Just Religious Freedom

By *Engy Abdelkader*

This article was originally published on Sojourners.

From Central Asia to Western Europe to East Africa, government officials are restricting women's personal freedoms. What initially began as a solitary ban on conspicuous religious symbols in France — and widely perceived as an attack on the hijab and Muslims — has spread globally. In response, new and innovative legal responses are necessary.

While prohibitions on Muslim women's religious attire are typically viewed as infringing on religious freedom, they also implicate international women's rights.

In 2004, France proposed a law prohibiting headscarves and other conspicuous "religious symbols" showing a student's faith beliefs in public schools. The measure's proponents argued that it was necessary to protect the separation of church and state in public education. France implemented the law that same year. Unsurprisingly, this law disproportionately impacts female Muslim students who observe hijab.

To some, and particularly when viewed in isolation, the French law appears to be an insignificant blip on the human rights radar. In the 15 intervening years since its passage, however, similar measures have infected nations in all corners of the world. In 2015, Belgian officials prohibited headscarves at some public schools. In 2016, a high school in Spain demanded a student remove her headscarf; the decision was later overturned. In 2017, Kazakhstan — a Muslim-majority country in Central Asia — similarly prohibited the headscarf in public education. In January 2019, Kenya's highest court upheld a prohibition on headscarves in schools, permitting each to determine its own dress code. Most recently, in May 2019, Austria approved



a dress code prohibiting headscarves in primary education.

The public, news, and political discourse treat such cases strictly in terms of religion rather than framing such legal controversies as also implicating women's rights.

Interestingly, the international community typically views such restrictive laws, practices, and policies exclusively through the lens of religious freedom. But, each of these legal developments also detrimentally affects a woman's right to education. Recall, the right to education is a fundamental human right recognized in a myriad international documents and treaties. Significantly, the right is set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), an international document that enumerates the basic rights and freedoms inherent to all human beings, irrespective of race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, place of residence, or any other status. In addition, particular gendered protections are located in the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the only international agreement that addresses women's rights in the political, civil, cultural, economic, and social spheres.

To fully realize a wom-

an's right to education, CEDAW requires it to be available, accessible, acceptable, and adaptable. Accessibility requires a prohibition against discrimination and encompasses both a physical and economic component. Acceptability refers to the quality of the curriculum and instruction while adaptability takes into account that education must be responsive to a society's needs. Taken together, these principles are intended to prevent discrimination and promote gender equality in education.

Significantly, official restrictions on Muslim women's dress don't satisfy these basic requirements. From Belgium to Kazakhstan to Kenya, education is unavailable and inaccessible to students who choose attire that the government disfavors. If they are forced to pursue studies in private institutions with sometimes inferior resources, curricula, and instruction, then education is more likely to be unacceptable.

In certain European contexts, this also demonstrates an inability to adapt to an increasingly multicultural society. Essentially, seemingly neutral laws and policies have a discriminatory effect on female students because of the disproportionate impact on Muslim women who wear a headscarf. Civil society

should mount related legal challenges under CEDAW; the offending nations are all state parties.

It is important to note that the United States has adopted a distinct approach from its global counterparts. The case of Nashala Hearn is representative. In 2003, Nashala was an 11-year-old student enrolled in the sixth grade at the Ben Franklin Science Academy in Muskogee, Okla.

On the second anniversary of 9/11, school officials used the dress code to prohibit Nashala's headscarf. She was suspended twice for refusing to remove her hijab and essentially, denied access to education. Her parents then sued, claiming the policy violated her First Amendment right to free speech and free exercise of religion under the U.S. Constitution. Indeed, both claims reflect Nashala's gendered choice. Nashala would not have experienced discrimination but for her status as a woman. The school's actions — at the intersection of religion and gender — undermined Nashala's fundamental human right to an education.

Several months later, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) intervened in the case on Nashala's behalf. In its legal filing, the DOJ alleged unconstitutional religious dis-

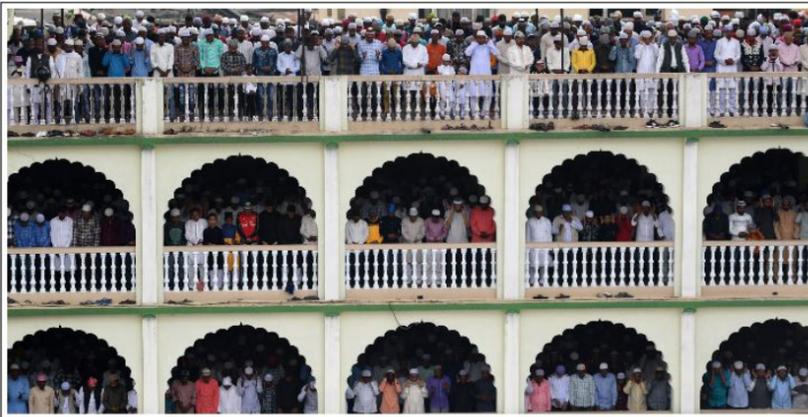
crimination and insisted, "No student should be forced to choose between following her faith and enjoying the benefits of a public education."

Shortly thereafter, the parties settled the matter. Nashala returned to school wearing her headscarf.

The case of Nashala Hearn and others like it diverge from the international community's common understanding of a Muslim woman's right to education. The public, news, and political discourse treat such cases strictly in terms of religion rather than framing such legal controversies as also implicating women's rights. Too many overlook the compelling intersection between religion and gender.

In truth, the restrictive measures impacting Muslim women around the world don't simply threaten religious freedom, they also undermine women's rights.

*Engy Abdelkader is based at Rutgers University and serves as a Public Fellow at the Public Religion Research Institute. This writing was adapted from a longer piece, *The Victimization of Muslim American Women and the Challenges of Imperial Feminism in Comparative Context*.*



Kashmiri Mosque in Kathmandu, Nepal,



Jerusalem's Old City, Palestine



Idlib countryside, Syria



India



Pakistan



USA

Cont from page 1.
Celebrate Eid al Fitr
dar on an annual basis.

Because the timing of Eid al-Fitr is based on the sighting of the moon as per the Islamic lunar calendar, it can be difficult to predict when the festival will happen in any given country. While some Muslims wait to see the moon themselves, many either use the calculated time of the new moon or base it on the declaration made in Saudi Arabia.

This year many celebrated Eid al-Fitr on Tuesday, June 4 while others Wednesday, June 5.

Eid celebrations vary culture to culture, family to family but begin with a special communal prayer. Muslims like to wear their best clothes or special clothes for Eid and enjoy a variety of meals including sweets.

Eid was first celebrated by Prophet Muhammad in 624CE following a victory in battle- to commemorate the holiday Muslims great one

another with the phrase "Eid Mubarak" which can be translated to "have a blessed holiday.

Traditionally, Eid al-Fitr is celebrated for three days and is a national holiday in Muslim coun-

tries. In many countries, Muslims gather outside in open spaces to pray due to a large number of

attendees unable to fit in the mosque.

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Islamophobia is a major obstacle for peace and religious harmony in our world. If it is not countered properly and effectively, it has the potential to create havoc all over the world. Gruesome terrorism in Christchurch, New Zealand, causing 51 murders is a glimpse of the future.



This bogey of Islamophobia is raising its ugly head worldwide. We recently saw the most gruesome terrorist attack on the innocent congregation gathered for Friday prayers in Christchurch, New Zealand.



Islamophobia has its roots in the US and Europe among those who believe in the concepts of supremacy on the basis of race, religion and ethnicity. Only through a long process of dialogue, discussions and education, this menace that is spreading fast can be checked effectively.



We need to invest in our younger generation to be able to counter constant attacks on Islam and Muslims. We want them to be skillful communicators, excellent writers and objective researchers. Only through bringing out facts and demolishing myths and stereotypes, our young journalists can challenge the narratives spread by Islamophobes.

TO ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTIVES:

- (a) **We must prepare** a strong team of our own reporters and communicators that will report objectively.
- (b) **We must support** students willing to do accurate and balanced research on the issues that impact Muslims and other fellow citizens in America.
- (c) **We must fund** Internship with State and Federal Law makers by providing living expense stipends for Muslim students,
- (d) **We must provide** Education on the political process and facilitate Muslim participation in local and federal government.

We need your help in carrying out this strategy that will prepare a strong contingent of our own reporters to effectively convey our message.

We are together in our movement to achieve these objectives. Many of our past interns and writers are now part of the main stream media.

Our interns and writers with the help of researchers have carried out following research projects in the past.

Here are the examples:

- 1) Demographic survey of Michigan Muslims and its political impact on Congressional districts,
- 2) Safeguarding Muslim civil right in America,
- 3) States that have passed Halal laws
- 4) How cities with high Muslim concentration have effectively used their positions to gain access to local councils or other legislative bodies,
- 5) And a Muslim perspective on Obama health care, etc.

We want our next research project to focus on the sources of Islamophobia and hatred incited to pitch communities against each other. We need at least \$50,000 for this project. Please fund this project and donate generously. Your donations are tax deductible.

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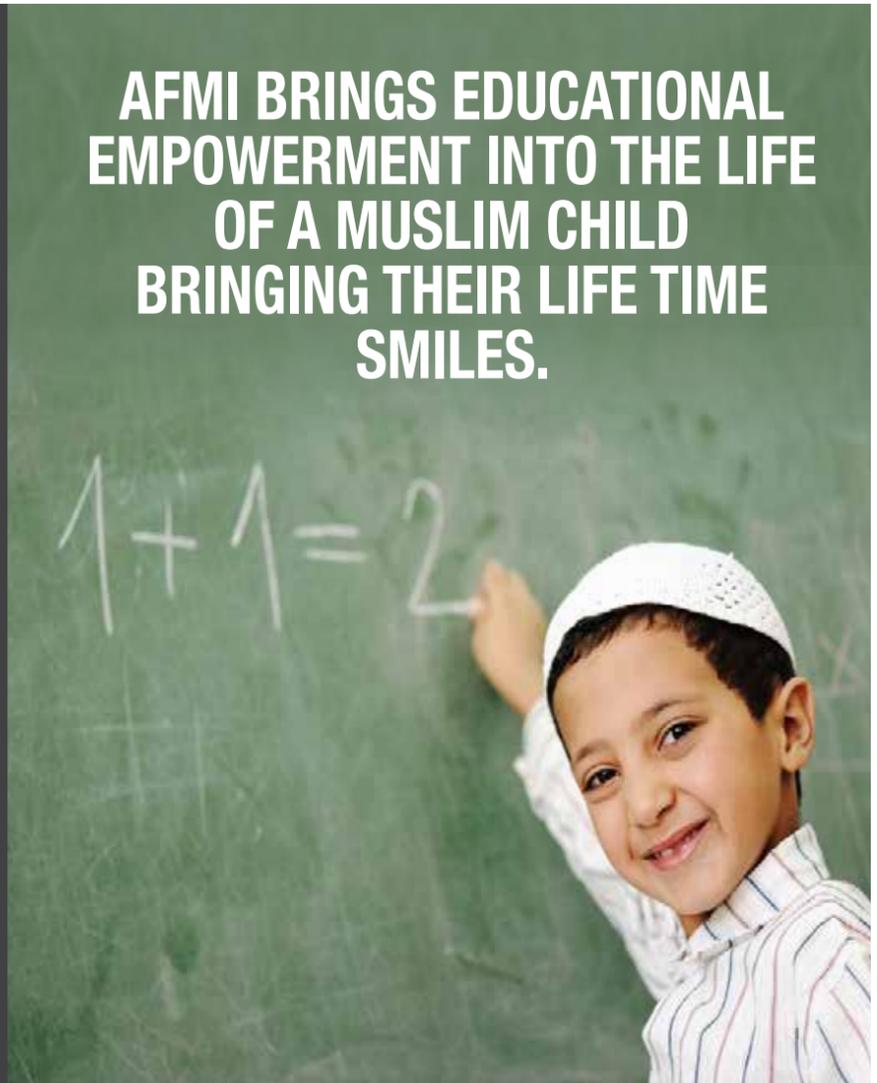


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Homemade Chicken Vegetable Soup Recipe



by Noor H Salem

While spring is around the corner, snowflakes and cold wind chills are still upon us. There is nothing more heart-warming than enjoying a bowl of warm homemade soup, especially if it is loaded with vitamins and nutrients.

While it's easy to drive by a fast-food chain or grab canned soup from the supermarket on a brittle cold day, the vast majority of these soups are loaded with ingredients detrimental to your wellbeing. Both fast-food soup varieties or even canned soup from your favorite supermarket may contain an excessive amount of refined sodium, preservatives, genetically engineered ingredients, and unhealthy fats.

The recent increase in organic food, such as canned or boxed soups, puts one at the face of dichotomy on their journey to better health. While unquestionably, certified organic soup is healthier than the ubiquitous unhealthy options available, they may still be extremely high in sodium, and don't contain the vitamins and minerals of soup you may make with homemade broth. Making your favorite soup at home is not only rather easy but much healthier for both you and your family.

The homemade chicken broth is the star of the

show, as it is loaded with numerous vitamins and minerals. Bone broth is loaded with a myriad of health benefits, including improving digestion, strengthening your immune system, and enhancing your cognitive health.

You can use either chicken or meat to make your broth; both are loaded with vitamins and minerals that will do your health wonders. It is best that you do not purchase any bone broth or stock from supermarkets; the majority are extremely high in sodium (most likely the bleached and highly processed version) and contain genetically modified ingredients.

Not only is homemade bone broth easy to make, but it's also extremely healthy. It prevents and cures simple ailments like the common cold and flu and even aids in healing autoimmune disease. Bone broth is great for leaky gut, cardiovascular health, cognitive health, and yes, even digestive health. It's simply amazing how many benefits it has.

Don't underestimate the broth and don't toss it out! Store it in an airtight container for future use, or turn it into a scrumptious dish like this below.

Try this recipe, and you'll find yourself making homemade broth more often. Adding in vege-

tables, such as carrots, onions, broccoli, celery, and potatoes, boost the nutritional value of this soup, and increase the dietary fiber value as well.

It's important to note that it's recommended you use either cold-pressed avocado oil or organic butter, for caramelizing the onions.

While extra virgin olive oil is one of the healthiest oils and one I cover extensively in my book, *Sunnah Superfoods*, it's best not to cook with it using high heat. Olive oil has a low smoke point, thus its remarkable health benefits are destroyed.

For that, drizzle it on your soup prior to serving to increase the nutritional value, and add flavor.

Enjoy this soup aside your favorite dinner, or on its own as a satisfying and mouthwatering meal!

Ingredients:

- 1 medium red onion, diced
- 3 tablespoons cold-pressed avocado oil

- 2 large carrots, finely chopped
- 1 cup cubed potatoes
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped broccoli
- 6 cups homemade chicken bone broth
- 2 additional cups boiling water
- 2 cups deboned shredded chicken (use from the broth's chicken)
- 1 teaspoon turmeric, ground
- 1 teaspoon Himalayan pink salt
- ½ teaspoon ginger, ground
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1/3 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice

Directions:

1. Place the diced onions and avocado oil in a large pot, and cook on high-heat for about 2 minutes. Add the carrots, celery, potatoes, and broccoli. Stir-fry for approximately 5 minutes, or until the onions are caramelized.
2. Add the chicken, spices, boiling water, and broth. Stir. Cover and cook on medium-high heat for about 15-20 minutes,

or until the vegetables soften up.

3. Remove from heat. Using a hand-blender, blend until it's smooth and creamy.

4. Top with the fresh parsley and lemon juice. Serve warm.

Noor H. Salem is an author, speaker, and Certified Integrative Nutrition Health Coach, from Michigan. Noor works with clients in better understanding their bodies and healing with natural foods through her wellness practice, Holistic Noorritrition. She presents various workshops, school lectures, group coaching classes, and community lectures on the topic of holistic health. Noor recently published her book, *SUNNAH SUPERFOODS*, a culmination of life-changing recipes and remedies, with a foreword by Dr. Waleed Basyouni. Her book consists of prophetic hadith, modern research, and delicious recipes, and is in the process of being translated into other languages.

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**Cont. from page 2.
American Dream**

created jobs for people in his community and state. At every phase of his journey, he not only strengthened his ties with the country and its people but also contributed to the growth of communities and people around him. His book *Our Muslim Neighbors: Achieving the American Dream, An Immigrant's Memoir* is a testimony of devotion to hard work, commitment to progress and dedication to the ideals of justice and liberty.

The book is, in fact, a manual on how to make America stronger. His book proves that the American dream is still alive and bright. Every step he took directed him to a step higher. The greatest lesson he learned from his struggles is that America rewards those who participate in building strong

local communities on the basis of their personal ties with their neighbors.

The book not only gives a glimpse in the life of an immigrant but also creates a positive understanding of the faith he was born with, in India and reborn in the US. He demolishes several myths prevailing around Islam such as Islam is a totalitarian faith or a religion that disregards the notion of equality of the other. The book by narrating examples through the details of his personal and family life proves that Islam is at ease with all even with those who are fearful of it.

It promotes the idea of dialogue, better understand among communities, interacting with neighbors, working with other religious communities and standing for those who are neglected

and marginalized. It encourages an institutionalized response to racism, bigotry, prejudice, and hatred on the basis of religion or ethnicity.

The book explains to its readers that an average Muslim in America is no different than an average Christian or Mormon, Jews or atheist in pursuit of happiness. It documents the moment of an average Muslim American who gets perturbed by acts of violence around him, by statements of bigotry and racism against the other and by the apathy of people to challenge the wrong and injustice.

The book highlights the driving principle in Begg's philosophy that has constantly inspired him to interact with people on one to one basis and through their friendship work to bring about changes in the world.

Begg believes in an open and candid society. He believes that good relations with neighbors would ultimately bring down the walls that separate people and inspire people to be selfless in their work for the community. Begg believes that relations with good neighbors become meaningful when one's family is in harmony with its members. Begg proves that his interfaith marriage with a non-Muslim wife, who joined his faith, a practicing family can be raised. Begg demonstrates his selflessness along with the selfless of others in building communities and institution for a stronger cohesive America.

The book is not just a 50-year story of an immigrant, but a reaffirmation of the values that America was founded and Americans

have encouraged new immigrants to pursue. The book demolishes the myth that America is not suitable for raising a believing and practicing peaceful Muslim family and offers examples from Begg's experience that the country is perhaps the best in raising practicing families.

The book reassures the country that Muslims do not live in isolation or promote seclusion. They are an integral part of the country and their local communities.

The book is a must read for Muslims and non-Muslims. Every Muslim immigrant or native would find a reflection of his/her life reflection in the book and every non-Muslims would be reassured that a Muslim neighbor is as much committed to a just and peaceful society as any other American is.

Quran Series

by Dr. Aslam Abdullah



113. At-Tawbah (Repentance)

Medina

13. At-Tawbah is the ninth Surah in the traditionally arranged Quran. It is the 113th Surah revealed upon the Prophet. It was revealed in Medina and has 129 Ayah and 16 Ruku. It is the only Surah in the Quran that starts without Bismillah hir Rahman ar Rahim, a sentence

that precedes all the other 113 Surah. It talks about the responses that become necessary when treaties are broken and established norms are flouted by those who oppose the divine guidance. It asks believers to respond to such elements with courage and determination. It asks them to confront hostility and hypocrisy with strong faith and face. It also reminds people to guard

the collective interests of people always.

114. An-Nasr (Succor) (110)

Medina

14. An-Nasr is the 114th Surah revealed upon the Prophet. It is the 110th Surah in the traditionally arranged Quran. It was revealed in Medina and it has 3 Ayah in one Ruku. It asks people to glorify the Lord and it tells people to be aware

of the new responsibilities they would be facing after the entrance of many new people to the ranks of believers. It asks them to be constantly in a state of humility seeking protection in the divine guidance to remain committed to the idea of monotheism. It reasserts the divine attribute of accepting all those who understand that human beings may commit wrong and it is

God who forgives and provide protections. Thus the message that began with a call to create a knowledge-based society and community concludes with showing gratitude to God and expressing humility after the success and establishment of the truth within the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad.

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**Cont. from page 1.
Eid Emerging**

government bodies, private businesses and media outlets recognize Eid as an American festival and participate in the festivities by visiting Muslim places of worship.

Before the Eid, each Muslim offers charity to all those members of the community who financially are weak. Islamic centers and mosques distribute millions of dollars to such people. On the Eid day, Muslims in most cities invite non-Muslim leaders to join the festivities. The presence of state officials in Muslim

places of worship on the Eid day has now become regular. The Eid messages issued by the President and state officials or Congress members have also become regular

Even big departmental stores have started catering to the Eid related needs of Muslim. Several stores carry dates on a regular basis. Macy recently introduced gift items specially designed for Eid celebration.

In almost every state in the US, the community now organizes Eid picnics or special program to bring the community together. Eid is emerging as a symbol of Muslim

unity and it is most likely that in the coming years, it would not only symbolize unity among Muslims but also a successful model for national unity. Certainly, this day has the potential to become a day of national solidarity for all.

Eid is not just a religious festival for Muslims. It may have great significance for everyone. It offers an empirical reality about disciplining oneself for promoting good. It proves that humans can organize their lives around concepts that are universal and useful for all. It proves that individuals have been endowed with energy to

regulate their lives on the basis of certain principles they hold dear.

It also proves that in moments of happiness, people should not forget those who are less resourceful. The presence of the interfaith and secular leadership makes the statement that the country is ready to accept Eid as a national festival. Two states, Michigan and New York have already acknowledged the day as a holiday, others may also follow the footsteps.

Perhaps, it is time that Muslims should also start thinking of organizing charity at least at a

city level, initially. Zakat ul Fiter, the charity given before the Eid prayers is a noble act. If Muslims pool this money at a city level during the month of Ramadan and identify families that need to be helped, the disbursement of funds would be more meaningful and useful.

Hopefully, it would also help the community to come together to help the poor and the needy. Above all, it would create among Muslims a sense of responsibility towards those who for some reasons lack resources to join Eid festivities.

**Cont. from page 1.
Who's Afraid**

Those results, which quickly inspired more than 24,000 tweets, might have been sharply different had the pollsters explained what "Arabic numerals" are.

There are 10 of them: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

That fact prompted John Dick, the chief executive of the polling company, to label the finding "the saddest and funniest testament to American bigotry we've ever seen in our data."

Presumably, the Americans who opposed the teaching of Arabic numerals (Republicans in greater proportion than Democrats) lacked the basic knowledge of what they are and also had some aversion to anything described as "Arabic."

Which is indeed sad and funny — and also a reason to pause and ask a simple question: Why is the world's most efficient numerical system, also standard in Western civilization, called "Arabic numerals"?

The answer traces to seventh-century India, where the numerical system, which included the revolutionary formulation of zero, was developed. Some two centuries later, it moved to the Muslim world, whose magnificent capital, Baghdad, was then the world's best city in which to pursue an intellectual career. There, a Persian Muslim scholar named Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi developed a

mathematical discipline called al-jabir, which literally means "reunion of broken parts."

In the early 13th century, an Italian mathematician named Fibonacci, who studied calculation with an Arab master in Muslim North Africa, found the numerals and their decimal system much more practical than the Roman system, and soon popularized them in Europe, where the figures became known as "Arabic numerals."

Meanwhile, the discipline of al-jabir became "algebra," and al-Khwarizmi's name evolved into "algorithm."

Today, many words in English have Arabic roots; a short list would include admiral, alchemy, alcove, alembic, alkali, almanac, lute, mask, muslin, nadir, sugar, syrup, tariff and zenith. Some scholars think that even the word "check," which you get from a bank, comes from the Arabic word sakk, which means "written document." (Its plural, sukuk, is still used in Islamic banking to refer to bonds.)

There is a reason these Western terms have Arabic roots: Between the eighth and 12th centuries, the Muslim world, whose lingua franca was Arabic, was much more creative than Christian Europe, which was then in the late Middle Ages. Muslims were the pioneers in mathematics, geometry, physics, astronomy, biology, medicine, architecture, trade

and, most important, philosophy. To be sure, Muslims had inherited these sciences from other cultures, such as the ancient Greeks, Eastern Christians, Jews and Hindus. Still, they advanced those disciplines with their own innovations and transmitted them to Europe.

Why delve so deep into this much-forgotten history? Because there are lessons for both Muslims and non-Muslims.

Among the latter are Western conservatives, who are passionate about protecting the legacy of Western civilization, which they often define as exclusively "Judeo-Christian." Of course, Western civilization does have a great accomplishment worth preserving: the Enlightenment, which gave us freedom of thought, freedom of religion, the abolition of slavery, equality before the law, and democracy.

Those values should not be sacrificed to the postmodern tribalism called "identity politics." But Western conservatives retreat to tribalism themselves when they deny the wisdom in, and the contributions of, sources that are not Judeo-Christian. The third great Abrahamic religion, Islam, also had a hand in the making of the modern world, and honoring that legacy would help establish a more constructive dialogue with Muslims.

Of course, we Muslims ourselves have a big question to answer: Why

was our civilization once so creative, and why have we lost that golden age?

Some Muslims find a simple answer in piety and the lack thereof, thinking that decline came when Muslims turned "sinful." Others assume that the early majesty can be traced to mighty leaders, whose reincarnations they hope to see again. Some find solace in conspiracy theories that blame enemies outside and "traitors" within.

Here is a more realistic explanation: The early Islamic civilization was creative because it was open-minded. At least some Muslims had the urge to learn from other civilizations. There was some room for free speech, which was extraordinary for its time. That allowed the work of towering Greek philosophers such as Aristotle to be translated and discussed, theologians of different stripes to speak their minds, and scholars to find independent patronage. From the 12th century onward, however, a more uniform and less rational form of Islam was imposed by despotic caliphs and sultans. So Muslim thought turned insular, repetitive and incurious.

By the 17th century, in Muslim India, Ahmad al-Sirhindi, a prominent scholar also known as Imam Rabbani, was marking the dogmatic turn when he condemned all "philosophers" and their "stupid" disciplines. "Among their codified

and systemic sciences is geometry that is totally useless," he wrote. "The sum of three angles in a triangle is two right angles — what benefit does it have?"

Exactly why this tragic closing of the Muslim mind happened, and how it can be overturned, is the biggest question facing Muslims today. We should not lose more time through denials and blame games.

At the same time, however, others should not make the mistake of judging Islamic civilization by looking at its worst products, many of which are now rampant. It is a great civilization that has made significant contributions to humanity, especially the West.

That is why you dial your phone using "Arabic numerals." And that is just the tip of a big iceberg of ideas and values shared between Islam and the West.

—
Mustafa Akyol is a senior fellow on Islam and modernity at the Cato Institute, and the author of "Islam Without Extremes: A Muslim Case for Liberty."

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*Cont. from page 3.
The Khutbah*

ing my daughter's head. I looked at her with disgust, because I was witnessing the classic abuse cycle of a child. Being berated, followed by a deep, meaningless apology. I told myself to be calm. And then I said: "I don't know you. And

this is not what you do to someone who comes to the mosque who you see for the first time. What you did makes me feel unwelcome here. You are not supposed to treat kids like that. I don't know why you would touch someone else's child. You can see her mother is right here. We don't need you to do anything."

My case and point. The zabardust khutbah without any effect. Two days later in two seconds flat, things were back to the way they were.

Earlier that week, I was at the mussalah on the other side of town when a man told my 8.5-year-old son, he was not allowed on the men's side. My son, being the eldest, is actually quiet

and docile. He was going back to his dad and to get his shoes. He came back and said he was not allowed on the men's side by some man.

Love to all the men who think parenting is supposed to only happen on the women's side of the mosque. And love to all the women on the women's side who cannot stand the sight of a child

being a child.

So please reserve those crocodile tears about losing our youth for the 30 minutes of a Friday once a year and forget it about those tears at all other times. I carry a pack of tissues and diaper wipes at all times.



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