



## 2nd-Grader Gives 6K Masks, Caps To Hospital Staff

By Mark Hand, Patch Staff

ASHBURN, VA — A second-grade boy from Ashburn has been spending his time off from school trying to come up with ideas to help front-line health care workers who are taking care of a growing number of patients sick with the new coronavirus, or COVID-19. This week, 7-year-old Zohaib Begg hit the jackpot when he began going to local hotels in the Ashburn area to see if they had any shower caps to donate to hospitals.



Not only did the hotels have shower caps that doctors, nurses and technicians could use as hair covers, they had stocks of gloves and face masks

that the hotels were happy to give to Zohaib. After spending Wednesday and Thursday

traveling to a half-dozen hotels, Zohaib and his mother, Isma Zubair, collected more than 6,000

items that could be used as personal protective equipment for health

*Cont. on page 13*



## We Should Celebrate Muslim Women's Everyday

By: Aysha Qamar

Muslim-Americans continue to face Islamophobia and discrimination based on their religion and appearance. Despite Muslims making strides in their community and working to bridge the gap between identities, stereotypical portrayals of Muslims in the media can often contribute to misconceptions and xenophobic ideology. Studies of FBI hate



crime statistics have found an increase in hate crimes and assaults based on religion since Sept. 11 in 2001. Recently, representation in the media has allowed for stories of Muslim-Americans to be shared. While Muslim women often face more discrimination, narratives by and stories of men are shared more frequently. In 2017, data

from the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding found that Muslim women were more likely than Muslim men to report discrimination. Although more likely to be targeted in bias crimes—especially if they wear hijab—Muslim women were also found less likely to say they feared for their safety

*Cont. on page 12*

## How Prophet Muhammad may have tackled the Coronavirus Crisis?



By: Dr. Aslam Abdullah

Indeed, in the messenger of God (Prophet Muhammad), there is a striking pattern in conduct for anyone who has trust in the divine guidance, who believes in life after death and who continuously focuses on the

path God has shown to humanity. (The Quran, 33:21).

The Quran also describes the Prophet as a mercy to humanity. (21:117)

How the Prophet of mercy whose life is a

*Cont. on page 11*

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# Muslim man running for Congress helped pay the medical debt of a man who sent him Islamophobic tweets

By: TMO Staff

After receiving anti-Muslim tweets from a man in his district, Qasim Rashid, a Muslim candidate running for Congress in Virginia, did something unexpected. He donated to that same man's GoFundMe campaign instead of returning the hate he received. Rashid expressed on Twitter that while the message was "deeply hurtful & a false attack" on his faith, he donated to the man's campaign because his faith has taught him to "serve all humanity." In response to Rashid donating to his medical debt, Oscar Dillon had a change of heart and later apologized to Rashid for his Islamophobic comments. At the time of Rashid's donation, Dillon had only raised around \$1,000 toward his campaign, Rashid's supporters followed his donation and have since donated more



than \$18,000, Insider reported.

Dillon, a supporter of Donald Trump, has previously attacked other Democrats online. According to Insider, in the last month, he has called Jewish California Rep. Adam Schiff a Nazi, in addition to calling Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren a "lying hag." After seeing Rashid's response, Dillon had a change of

heart and sent Rashid an apology, which Rashid said was "thoughtful" and "compassionate." In the apology tweet, Dillon even asked Rashid to meet him resulting in the two meeting up for coffee. "I stared at the screen just reading it over and over and over," Oz told CBS News of his reaction to the donation. "He reached across that gap and took my hand."

Oz's hatred toward

what he calls "radical Islam" developed after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, in which he told NBC News, a lot of his loved ones were in direct danger. Dillon said that Rashid's response to his hateful tweet has opened his eyes and changed his outlook. "This has reopened my eyes to pre-9/11, where I would look at each individual as a person," Dillon told NBC News. "He has showed me that there is good in

all walks of life."

Last week a Conservative constituent sent me deeply hurtful anti-Muslim tweets?

I replied by donating to his GoFundMe to help cover his crushing medical debt

He wrote me a thoughtful & compassionate apology & asked me to visit him

Today I met my new friend Oz?#WinTheHearts pic.twitter.com/LUEp0LSzDf

— Qasim Rashid for Congress (@QasimRashid) March 9, 2020

While Oz is regretful of his actions and has asked Rashid to even put up campaign signs on his yard, he told CBS News that does not mean he plans to vote for him and for Rashid that is not an issue. During an interview with the news outlet, Rashid said his actions weren't about a vote, both he and Oz

Cont. on page 15

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# A U.S. Grand Strategy for the Post Pandemic World



**By: Dr. Muqtedar Khan**

For the United States, the geopolitics of the COVID-19 pandemic will boil down to a contest with China.

COVID-19 pandemic could transform the world. Many geopolitical experts are concerned that this crisis, more than any other this century, has the potential to permanently reconstitute the global order. Some are even arguing that while the United States is abdicating global leadership during the current pandemic, China is using it to reinforce its growing status as the alternate destination for economic aid, medical and scientific support, and leadership for many nations, including Western and developed nations like Italy. Some commentators claim that China is using the crisis to dethrone the United States as a global superpower.

While it is difficult to predict the overall death toll, socio-political disruption, and the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic, a few things are already manifest. The main vehicle of COVID-19's destructive impact will not be through its potentially significant death toll but rather through its economic fallout. There will be a sustained global economic recession that will impact some countries harder than others. All major powers — the United States, China, Europe, and Russia will come out bruised and battered by the pandemic, and in the Middle East, Iran — the only counter-hegemonic player — will be definitely downsized in the economy and state capacity. While the United States' soft power has declined in the age of Trump, the crisis now tarnishes the larger-than-life images of Xi Jinping of China, Narendra Modi of India, and other populist leaders. Even European nations' aura of good governance and exemplary healthcare systems has lost its

shine. The pandemic is proving to be a great leveler.

The Great Disruption is a Great Opportunity

In this context, there are two scenarios for a U.S. grand strategy. The first will compel the United States to invest in itself, and the second may empower it to reshuffle the deck and rebuild a more U.S.-friendly global order.

U.S. grand strategy progressed from coast to coast continental domination under the doctrine of "manifest destiny," to hemispheric domination under the Monroe Doctrine and then to global domination under the doctrine of "containment." After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States shifted from containing communism to combating violent extremism and containing nuclear proliferation and regional challenges to U.S. hegemony. Now, Washington faces the global challenge of the economic and military rise of China. The current grand strategy is still a variant of the containment doctrine — global engagement to contain any threat to U.S. preeminence globally, regionally, militarily, and economically.

Currently, the United States has two real challengers: China and Iran. The challenges posed by Russia and North Korea are limited, geographically speaking. The combination of coronavirus pandemic and U.S. sanctions are ravaging Iran's economy and diminishing the capacity of the Iranian state and its proxies. Iran, henceforth, will remain an irritant but may not be a threat worthy of a grand strategy. This means the epicenter of geopolitical contestation will be confined to a U.S.-China struggle in the Asian theater as well as on the global stage.

U.S.-China Balance of Power and Influence

In 2015, a study by the Council on Foreign Relations concluded

that China would be a long-term competitor to the United States' primacy and called for a more coherent U.S. response to increasing Chinese power. In essence, this study called for an American grand strategy to center on the challenge of China's growing economic and global influence. The study explicitly claims that China's grand strategy aimed to replace the United States as the principal power in Asia, and hence the United States must seek to balance China's rising power rather than assist its ascendance.

The report is Asia-centric and misses the point that China's Belt and Road Initiative is economic power projection beyond Asia. China ultimately seeks not only to assure its hegemony in Asia, but also to replace the United States on the global stage. It also seeks to replace the model of liberal democracy with capitalist authoritarianism as a desired model of governance through its example. Already we are witnessing the global retreat of democracy as more world leaders aspire to the kind of power wielded by Xi, — including U.S. President Donald Trump, who does not conceal his envy for Xi's consolidation of power.

Not everyone subscribes to the inevitability of China's ascendance. Some argue that China may not be able to escape the middle-income trap, while others suggest that the Belt and Road initiative will help China avoid the middle-income trap. I believe it is wiser, in the context of formulating a U.S. grand strategy, to assume that China will escape that trap.

The coronavirus pandemic will certainly alter the balance of economic and soft power for both the United States and China. Either one of two scenarios, discussed in detail below, could occur. In the first, China suffers less than

**Cont. on page 6**

# Tableeghi Jamat and Coronavirus

**By: Dr. Aslam Abdullah**

Tableeghi Jamat is the most influential grassroots religious organization in the World. Some 400 million Muslims, mostly from South Asia, in 190 countries are its foot soldiers who visit from village to village, town to town and country to country urging people to return to practicing religion during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad and his companion. Formed in 1926, by Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhelwi in the northeastern region of Mewat in India at a time when the Hindu Mahasabha had started the campaign to win Muslims back to Hinduism, the organization devoted itself to bring about spiritual reform in the community.

The Tableeghi Jamaat works among Muslims and focuses on "Six Principles" (Kalimah (Declaration of faith), Salah (Prayer), Ilm-o-zikr (Knowledge and remembrance), Ikraam-e-Muslim (Respect of Muslim), Ikhlas-e-Niyyat (Sincerity of intention), Dawat-o-Tableegh (Propagation and invitation to faith). Maulana Ilyas called the movement Tahrike Iman (movement of faith) in the initial stages. Within 15 years of its formation, the organization attracted more than 25,000 people in undivided India for its annual gathering. Five years later, the first mission visited Western Saudi Arabia and Britain.

It introduced itself in France in the 1960s and the U.S. in 1970. In France, it had 100,00 followers in 2006, and in the U.K., it was present in 700 of 1,500 Masajid. In 1991, it focused on Central Asia and had 10,000 or more members in Kyrgyzstan in 2008. In the U.S. the Jamat has some 70,000 members. However, it has a large following in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Indonesia. The largest annual gathering takes place in Bangladesh, followed by Pakistan and India, where one to 3 million people come together for three days. The Tablighi Jamat

encourages its followers to spend three, ten, 120, and 150 days in missions within and outside the country.

During these missions, the members stay in Masajid, conduct a daily tour of the locality, inviting people to an evening gathering after the prayer, and encourage people to spend time preaching and learning the six principles. A few years ago, the Tableeghi Jamat split into two groups. Recently, the organization came into limelight after the coronavirus crisis. On February 27, the organization held an international religious gathering at Sri Petaling Masjid in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Six of the participants tested positive of COVID-19.

Despite the confirmed cases, the organization decided to hold a second international gathering in Gowa Regency near Makassar in Sulawesi, Indonesia. They held two more gatherings in Pakistan and India. In Pakistan, 150,000 more participated while in India, 3,500 joined. In Pakistan, the Jamat canceled the meeting on the third day after the authorities persuaded them to do so, while in India, it concluded on time. The Indian Ijtima took place in Nizamuddin, the central hub of the Jamat. Some of the participants were from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Saudi Arabia, while others from different parts of India, such as Telengana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Assam, Kashmir, and Uttar Pradesh. A large number of them returned to their states, while others could not find transportation due to lockdown in India. The government says that the Tableeghi Jamat violated the lockdown rules while the Jamat maintains that the lockdown began on March 24, and the had concluded the gathering by then.

The Jamat also says that they had requested the Delhi Administration and Police to facilitate transportation to the participant a few days

before the lockdown.

The government of Delhi has filed an FIR against Maulana Saad Kandhelvi, the head of the Nizamuddin faction of the Jamat. There are two major issues involved. 1. The demonization of the Tablighi Jamat as the spreader of Coronavirus in India. 2. Tableeghi Jamat's decision to hold large gatherings during the crisis. In India from January till March 31, the Tableeghi Jamat was not the only religious organization that held large gatherings. Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, and Buddhists, as well as, political organizations held large meetings despite Coronavirus warnings. Neither the state nor central government took a stand against their organizers.

They let the major Hindu temples run their religious program regularly until 20. Yet, the government only blamed the Nizamuddin for opening its door. The action against the Jamat is a diversionary tactic on the part of the present government that failed to provide safe passage to migrant workers who lost their jobs and who got stranded with their families on crowded buses and bus stations. Many attempted to take thousands of miles journey back to their homes, and some died on the way. The sudden lockdown created chaos in the country, and the government was not ready to deal with that. The government wanted a scapegoat, and in the Tableeghi Jamat, it found.

The narrative the government is trying to promote along with Hindu fascist organization, the RSS, is that Muslims are the leading cause of Coronavirus, hence disloyal to the country. However, the second issue is larger than the action of the government.

Why would a religious organization play with the lives of its followers when it had become clear that Coronavirus is contagious and spreads fast?

It had become apparent after the gatherings in Malaysia, Pakistan, and other places. Yet, it did not postpone and did not inform its national and international visitors of the risks involved.

It did not issue any elaborate guidelines to maintain social distancing and other precautionary practices. People suspect that thousands of people who gathered in the Tableeghi meetings carried with them Coronavirus and spread it in their families and local communities. The main argument that the leaders of the organization give is that God is the one who protects the people attending religious gatherings. It is the same logic that Hindus, Christians, Jews, and all other faiths give. Almost in every part of the World in the name of God, the religious organizations held large gatherings of worshippers defying the orders of governments to maintain social distancing.

What they don't realize is they defied divine laws and put their followers

on risk. The divine law is to listen to those who are knowledgeable and experts on issues that affect people's life. On Coronavirus, the experts and people of the knowledge include scientists and doctors. No clergy would treat the victim of such a disease. Doctors and nurses would do. The clergy and religious organizations refused to take that advice seriously and added to the already existing crisis in a fatalistic manner.

They held gatherings with a large number of people and exposed them to the virus. They committed a crime, a crime they would carry on their shoulder, and a crime their followers must hold them accountable. No religion wants its followers to suffer in the name of God. Religions inspire people to take care of their health, their families, and their resources. What these organizations did by holding such gatherings was in defiance of God.

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# Spartan Shifa: Emphasizing Mental Health Brings Students Together at Michigan State University

By Salman Pervez

“Whosoever knows themselves knows their Lord.” About a year ago, I cited this famous quote by Imam Ghazali to begin an MSU Muslim Students’ Association (MSUMSA) event focused on mental health in Muslim communities. The stigma of needing mental health help runs deep in many communities, and the American Muslim community is no exception. Studies have shown that Muslim Americans are twice as likely to reach out to family members and religious leaders for help, rather than visit a mental health professional.

Therefore, as I was planning this mental health forum, I worried that I might make my peers feel uncomfortable. After all, public vulnerability seemed absent in Muslim communal spaces. However, the way students affirmed one another’s struggles and



gathered insights about themselves astounded me. Rather than discomfort, I discovered a sense of relief. They demanded more opportunities to address their mental health needs.

Happy to answer this

calling, I sought the advice of Muslim mental health professionals Dr. Farha Abbasi and Dr. Zain Shamoon to create a group called Spartan Shifa. The name comes from the word shifa in Arabic, meaning healing(????). MSUMSA members Sara

Zeidan and Zainab Saleh became facilitators to help bring about healing by nurturing self-knowledge and destroying taboos.

Over the next year, we organized with a spirit of compassionate curiosity

to realize this vision. We hosted a screening and discussion of *Breaking Silence*, a film that explores the effects of sexual violence in the Muslim community. In a Valentine’s Day session, Dr. Abbasi taught us

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## CONTINUED STORY

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Pandemic World**

the United States and reduces the gap between the two nations' capabilities and influence. In the second scenario, the United States suffers less than China and gains the opportunity to rebuild the global order such that it is more amenable to democracy, respectful of U.S. interests, and supportive of Washington's leadership.

Scenario One: Many economists contend that we are already in a global recession and predict that the United States will see a precipitous fall in GDP growth from 6% up to 24% in the second quarter and 10% subsequently. It could take years to recover from this economic downturn. Given China's manufacturing strength and potentially huge domestic market, it is possible that China would recover faster than the United States, which is more dependent on the service industry. Healthcare at 18% was the biggest component

of U.S. GDP before the coronavirus, and manufacturing was at 11%. This gap will increase. The worst-case scenario is that the U.S. economy will shrink by 24%. In that case, the United States will be forced to be defensive while China recovers faster – there are already indications that Chinese exports are coming back online – and rapidly reduces the existing economic, scientific, and military gap between China and the United States.

The strategic option for Washington, which will be inforced retrenchment mode, is to preserve its soft power sources and rebuild hard power:

- Abstain from expensive adventures abroad, especially in the Middle East.
- Withhold global public goods and force China to foot the bill for the global order from which it benefits, for a change.
- Work more closely with allies in Asia, Europe, and international institutions while simultaneously working hard to put the domestic scene

in order. • Emerge from the debilitating culture of partisanship and focus on nation-building at home on a war footing. This would involve focusing on rebuilding the economy, embracing science once again, instituting immigration reforms to bring in more scientific talent and resources, and strengthen U.S. democracy, which is the key to global legitimacy.

Scenario Two: If the negative forecasts are wrong and the United States emerges from the shadow of the pandemic by the end of summer, Washington will have the advantage. Not only would the damage be limited to the second quarter alone, but the economic measures taken to bail out small and big businesses (expected to exceed \$1 trillion), the infusion of cash into the economy (already at \$4 trillion), and the proposed stimulus package will provide a spurt for more rapid economic recovery. This scenario could see the balance of power shift significantly in the United States' favor.

This would allow Washington to develop a more offensive grand strategy, especially towards China, which at the moment is hurting, with a 13.5% decline in production and employment at a historic high of 6.2%. China's reputation has also taken a hit, and nations are becoming warier of its influence.

If the United States gains a greater relative advantage, it must be prepared to act decisively:

- Ensure that the United States' dependence on Chinese manufacturing is restructured. Diversify the supply chain and spread it more widely to southern hemispheric continents.
- End the preferential treatment extended to China to integrate it into the world system. These tactics have failed.
- Invest more prudently in research and regain the lost advantage in technologies of the future such as green energy, artificial intelligence, and 5G, and counter the "Made in China 2025"

initiative more seriously.

- Be more aggressive with international free-riders, especially if they are collaborating with China in its Belt and Road initiative.
- Support global trade but be a tad more strategic and more mercantilist.
- Reinvest in global governance institutions and do not give emerging powers like China and India a pass on human rights in the misguided hope that in the future they will become friendly and responsible powers.

The coronavirus pandemic is going to be a major disrupter of global order. No matter what the world looks like on the other side of it, U.S. policy thinkers should sharpen their tools to craft an appropriate grand strategy.

*Dr. Muqtedar Khan is a professor at the University of Delaware and a Senior Fellow at the Center for Global Policy. Prof. Khan is the Academic Director of the State Department's American Foreign Policy Institute (SUSI).*

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# AFMI Strongly Condemns the Barbaric attack on the Gurudwara

AFMI Strongly Condemns the Barbaric attack on the Gurudwara:

The American Federation of Muslims of Indian Origin (AFMI) condemns the barbaric attack on the Sikh community in their Gurudwaras in Kabul that resulted in the killing of 25 men, women, and children.

"It is unthinkable that a house of worship full with unarmed and peaceful devotees would come under the attack of

terrorists who reportedly belonged to the previously unknown so-called Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP), said Dr. Abdur Rehman Nakadar, the trustee of the organization. "Sikhs are peaceful people and known throughout the world for their humanitarian work, especially in areas where Muslims have suffered persecution. An attack on them is an attack on humanity," he further explained.

"By attacking the Sikh in Kabul, the terrorists have attacked Islam and hurt the Islamic ideas on the sanctity of life.

The organization offered its condolences to the bereaving families and assured the Sikh community that Muslims and Sikhs are together in their fight against violence and terror.

Afghanistan once had over 50,000 strong Sikh communities in the 1960s. However, during

the last few decades, their number has come down to 3,000 as most have migrated to India and other parts of the world.

AFMI has asked its members to donate to the Sikh community to rehabilitate the families who have lost their loved ones. The organization believes that the ones who committed this heinous crime are not only the enemies of peace but of the faith of Islam

as well. AFMI hopes that the government of Afghanistan and Afghan civil society would reassure the Sikh community of their safety and security. The Afghan government must punish those who are behind the barbarism.

## Cont. from page 1. Coronavirus Crisis?

beautiful pattern in conduct for all of humanity might have handled this pandemic, we call Coronavirus? The Prophet was not a physician. Nor was he a pharmacist. He was a messenger whose primary responsibility was to relay the divine guidance in all aspects of life through words and actions to the community he lived in and to the people who would come after him.

One must find out the patterns in his life to understand his leadership in crisis, like the one we are facing in our times.

### Consultation

The Prophet always followed the divine guidance of consulting his companions on issues of public concerns. "And take counsel with them in all matters of public concern; then, when thou hast decided upon a course of action, place thy trust in God: for, verily, God loves those who place their trust in Him." (3:159)

He would have formed a committee of experts and researchers to look into the pandemic and advise him and the people on precautions needed to deal with the situation. Some actions require common sense and other experts' opinions.

He took some of the actions based on common sense in emergencies during his time. Even though he did not face a pandemic situation, yet he was quick to act in inconvenient conditions.

1. On a rainy day, he advised the people to offer Friday prayers at home.

2. During a plague, he asked people to quarantine them.

3. He told them to maintain social distancing by not visiting or leaving the area.

4. He ensured that during a time of social distancing, the community pool its resources to take care of the basic needs of people

5. He opened the state treasury for that purpose and appealed to the people to donate generously to help those who were in need.

6. He also started a soup kitchen to feed those who were unable to take care of them.

7. He appointed a team of volunteers to ensure that the necessities of life reach the people in time.

8. He admonished traders and merchants not to hoard and not to price gouge during any crisis.

9. He urged people to consult medical experts to treat the disease.

10. He also advised people to follow hygienic rules in their everyday life. He did not limit them to wash their hands five times a day during the ablution but suggested total physical cleanliness.

11. He also advised people not to throw the garbage in public places and dispose of the dirty in safe places.

### Sanctity of life

The Quran demands from believer dignity for human beings. "No, indeed, We have conferred dignity on the children of Adam, and borne them over land and sea, and provided for them sustenance out of the good

things of life, and favored them far above most of Our creation. (17:70)

It means that The sanctity and preservation of life is the primary concern of those who are in a position of leadership. During emergencies, their responsibilities increase manifolds. The prophet relief on the opinions of his companions. He was aware that there is a cure for every disease, and he knew that those who are knowledgeable about human anatomy, herbology, and climatic conditions were the best to find the cure. He encouraged such people to continue researching in this area. There were no labs or hospitals in his time. But there physicians and nurses and pharmacists and he advised people to visit them. He told them to "make use of medical treatment, for Allah has not made a disease without appointing a remedy for it, except for one condition, namely old age.

(Sunan Abu Dawood)

Based on experts' advice, he encouraged people to do regular exercise and focus on taking preventive measures to boost their immune system. He also asked people to follow dietary rules in their everyday life and more in times of medical emergencies.

He also acted on the expert's advice to isolate patients with serious illness to stop the spread of disease, if contagious. In case of the death of the patient, he commanded immediate burial. If the deceased had an infectious disease, he asked the family not to expose the body in places like a mosque or public

squares.

During emergencies such as war, he buried many of the deceased without a proper shroud and washing.

### Remembering Allah

The Quran reminds the people that remembering the creator and his majesty strengthens the resolve to face every situation. "Those who believe, and whose hearts find their rest in the remembrance of God – for, surely, in the listening to God [human] hearts do find their rest." (13:28)

He reminded people that life is a blessing of God for a certain period as everyone would return to the creator one day. "All that lives on earth or in the heavens is bound to pass away" (55:26). He assured them human beings would rise once again on a day when a new world would come into being. Everyone would learn about his or her ultimate destination, and the ones who lived a life based on divine guidance would enter paradise. "We record that (deeds) which they have put forward and their traces (that which they have left behind)." (36:12)

He urged people to focus on three main things while alive. a. raising a responsible family that is a source of continuous good for all; b)contributing to the existing knowledge to benefit humanity; c) leaving a charity behind to help the needy and the poor.

### Confidence in Divine laws

Through his words and actions, the Prophet strengthened the belief

of people in God during the trying times. True piety does not consist in turning your faces towards the east or the west. Truly pious is he who believes in God and the Last Day, and the angels, and revelation, and the prophets. He spends his valuable resources upon his relatives, the orphans, the needy, the wayfarer, the beggars, and for the freeing of human beings from bondage. And he is constant in prayer. And he renders the purifying dues. Truly pious are they who keep their promises whenever they make it and are patient in misfortune and hardship and in time of peril: it is they that have proved themselves pure, and it is they, they who are conscious of God. (2:177)

People need physical, social, and spiritual comfort during times of crisis. They want to know the reality, and they want to have the assurance that they can overcome it. The promise of their success depends on the accuracy and relevance of the guidance and leadership style. The Prophet offered through his life an example in physical, social and spiritual leadership based on common sense and expert's opinion as well as divine guidance.

The Coronavirus is not the first or last pandemic that humans have been facing in their history. There were ten earlier pandemics. Human responded to the challenges every time based on their trust in divine laws and guidance and their resolve to follow facts and not their whims and superstitions.

**Cont. from page 1.  
Muslim Women's**

from racist groups.

Discrimination against Muslim women occurs across the country each day, taking the form of not only physical hate crimes but verbal abuse and bias in everyday activities. In 2016, Amani Al-Khatahtbeh declared Muslim Women's Day on March 27. Al-Khatahtbeh is the founder of Muslim-Girl.com, a platform for Muslim women to share their voice. She launched the day to celebrate and support Muslim women who are often excluded from mainstream media, Women's Day celebrations, and feminist movements. "In the current climate, Muslim women are rarely given the space to be heard above all the noise," Al-Khatahtbeh wrote in a tweet.

Celebrating Muslim women one day a year is not enough, but having a day that brings Muslim women together to celebrate one another on- and offline is inspirational. Muslim Women's day brings the narrative back into our hands—it allows us to amplify our voices and finally be passed the mic. Muslim women are diverse, independent, empowered, and resilient. We should be celebrated. In honor of the fourth annual Muslim Women's Day on Friday, March 27, here's a list of unapologetic Muslim-American women.

**Halima Aden:**

In 2016, then 19-year-old Halima Aden became one of the first Muslim-American women to compete for the title of Miss Minnesota USA while fully covered. Aden made American history as the first-ever contestant in the competition to wear a hijab and burkini. She later made headlines again for being the first Muslim model to pose in a burkini for Sports Illustrated. "Growing up in the United States, I never really felt represented because I never could flip through a magazine and see a girl who was wearing a hijab," Aden said in a video shoot for Sports Illustrated. "Don't be afraid to be the first."

**Ibtihaj Muhammad:**

Ibtihaj Muhammad made history in 2016 as the

first American woman to wear a hijab while competing for the United States. Muhammad, who competed in the 2016 Rio Olympics, won a bronze medal in the women's fencing team's sabre event. She began fencing at just 13 years old after her parents searched for a sport that she could participate in while wearing the hijab. "It's a tough political environment we're in right now. Muslims are under the microscope," Muhammad said during the 2016 U.S. Olympic Committee summit in Los Angeles. "It's all really a big dream—I don't think it's hit me yet. The honor of representing Muslim and black women is one I don't take lightly."

In 2017, Mattel unveiled its first-ever hijab-wearing Barbie doll in honor of Muhammad.

**Noor Tagouri:**

Noor Tagouri is a young, badass, award-winning journalist who made headlines as the first woman to be featured in Playboy Magazine with a hijab. Featured as a rule-breaker, Playboy said Tagouri "makes a surprising bold case for modesty." Tagouri is known nationwide for her unapologetic and strong voice: In 2019 she received a Gracies award for Best Investigative Series for her podcast and documentary series, *Sold in America: Inside Our Nation's Sex Trade*. As an outspoken and strong voice, Tagouri represents the unseen reality of many empowered Muslim women. "I believe in rebellion as a form of honesty," she said during a TEDx Talk. "To be our most authentic self is to be rebellious."

**Rana Abdelhamid:**

Rana Abdelhamid is a community organizer and activist from Queens, New York. Founder of the Women's Initiative for Self-Empowerment (WISE), a self-defense and leadership program for Muslim women, Abdelhamid empowers women to find strength within themselves to combat Islamophobia. Abdelhamid is well known for her work with WISE in addition to her beautiful photography series, "Hijabis of New York," a spinoff of the

popular *Humans of New York* series.

Abdelhamid told PBS News Hour that surviving an attack by a man who tried to remove her hijab inspired her to found WISE. "I remember feeling a tug at the back of my hijab," she said. "I turned around and there was a broad-shouldered man trying to reach again, trying to physically attack me and take off my hijab. I was able to get away from that, but I was left feeling very vulnerable ... Because of that moment, I felt there was something that could be done to bring together Muslim women who are faced with these challenges."

**Dalia Mogahed:**

Dalia Mogahed is a well-known scholar in the Muslim community for her activism, leadership, and engagement work. She currently serves as the Director of Research at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU). Former President Barack Obama appointed Mogahed to the President's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships in 2009. Her 2016 TED Talk on "What it's like to be a Muslim in America" quickly became viral. "What happened after 9/11? Did we go to the mosque or did we play it safe and stay home? Well, we talked it over, and it might seem like a small decision, but to us, it was about what kind of America we wanted to leave for our kids: one that would control us by fear or one where we were practicing our religion freely."

**Amirah Sackett:**

Amirah Sackett is best known for her dance group, "We're Muslim, Don't Panic," that performs hip-hop dances in niqabs. Sackett is an internationally recognized hip-hop dancer, choreographer, and teacher. She created her dance group with the hope of changing stereotypes against Muslim women. "I wanted to educate others and reflect the beauty that I know and love in Muslim women," she said in an interview with *Bust Magazine*. "Yes, there are oppressed women in the Muslim world. Women

are oppressed the world over. These are our mutual struggles."

**Ilhan Omar:**

Born in Somalia, Ilhan Omar immigrated to the U.S. as a Somali refugee when she was 12 years old. With her victory in Minnesota in 2016, she made history as the first Somali-American Muslim woman to be elected to a state legislature. Omar now serves as the U.S. Representative for Minnesota's 5th congressional district. Her outspoken and strong advocacy for immigrant rights and racial justice makes her stand out amongst other members of Congress. Omar, along with other progressives in the House, has been widely attacked by alt-right and Donald Trump supporters since taking office. "It is the land of liberty and justice for all, but we have to work for it," Omar told *HuffPost*. "Our democracy is great, but it's fragile. It's come through a lot of progress, and we need to continue that progress to make it actually 'justice for all.'"

**Rashida Tlaib:**

Ilhan Omar wasn't the only Muslim woman to be elected into the House last year. Rashida Tlaib, a Palestinian-American, shared the title with Omar as the first Muslim woman to be sworn into Congress in 2019. Tlaib serves as the U.S. Representative for Michigan's 13th congressional district. She remains a fierce role model for Muslim women worldwide. Prior to being sworn in, Tlaib shared a sneak peek of her outfit on Instagram, displaying her intention to be sworn into Congress wearing a traditional Palestinian thobe. In an article for *Elle*, Tlaib explained why she decided to wear the traditional attire: "Throughout my career in public service, the residents I have had the privilege of fighting for have embraced who I am, especially my Palestinian roots. This is what I want to bring to the United States Congress, an unapologetic display of the fabric of the people in this country. This is why I decided to wear a thobe when I am sworn into the 116th Congress."

In addition to being

widely known for wearing a thobe, Tlaib made headlines hours after she was sworn in for advocating to impeach Donald Trump.

**Representation matters.**

In 2014, every superhero-loving Muslim girl leaped with joy to hear the announcement of Kamala Khan as the new Ms. Marvel. Created by a team of four, including two Muslim women—G. Willow Wilson and Sana Amanat—Marvel welcomed its first-ever Muslim hero into the Marvel Universe.

"Everywhere I looked, particularly in the media and pop culture, were versions of people that looked nothing like me," Amanat told *Vox*. "What happens is when you see that, you think that you're not worthy enough, or you're not good enough, or you're not normal, really."

This representation allows Muslim youth to not only relate more to Marvel comics, but to feel included. In December, Disney was reportedly looking to cast a Pakistani-American for the role of Kamala Khan. (As a Pakistani-American from New Jersey, I fit the role. If I could act, you know I'd go for it.) Representation in all stages of life matters, and such representation impacts the development of youth.

The excitement continued in 2019 when Muslim-Americans and Muslim youth worldwide freaked out at the sight of Marvel including their first-ever hijabi character in a major film. Muslims make up a large portion of the U.S. population, especially in New York. In 2019, Marvel's *Spider-Man: Far From Home* featured actress Zoha Rahman as a hijabi friend of the iconic character, Peter Parker.

"It's time to hear from a community that's often talked about but rarely given the chance to speak," Al-Khatahtbeh wrote. "Contrary to what people might think, Muslim women talk back. And on Muslim Women's Day, the world will be listening."

***This article was first published on Daily Kos.***

## CONTINUED STORY

**Cont. from page 1.**  
**2nd Grader Gives Mask**  
care workers struggling to find adequate protective gear.

Zohaib plans to donate the protective items to Inova Fairfax Hospital, where he had emergency surgery when he was 4 years old to remove a tumor from his abdomen. For the next three years, Zohaib was under the care of a hematologist to ensure there was no regrowth of the tumor. A year ago, his doctor gave him a clean bill of health. "He's lived there and gotten care there. His hematologist who cared for him was there. He chose to donate locally to that hospital because he's a patient of that hospital. He was motivated to give back there," Zohaib's mother said.

In Virginia, the number of new coronavirus cases has increased dramatically over the past week. As of Thursday, the state had reported 460 positive cases of the coronavirus. Deaths due to COVID-19 are up to 13 statewide, and 65 people are hospitalized.

As the coronavirus pandemic started getting worse, Zohaib and his mother started talking about how they could give back to Inova Fairfax Hospital. They had heard that face masks were in short supply at hospitals. But Zubair said

she doesn't sew, so they had to think of another way to get protective gear to hospitals.

A close friend who works in the Inova Fairfax emergency department told them they had a shortage of caps and that's when Zohaib and his mother came up with the idea of collecting shower caps from local hotels.

The crisis facing health care workers hits close to home for Zohaib. His grandmother works as a primary care physician in Michigan and an uncle works as a physician at Allegheny General Hospital in Pittsburgh. Both are working on the front-lines caring for people during the current pandemic.

"It turns out that not only did the hotels have shower caps to donate, but they had a lot of gloves and face masks," Zohaib's mother said. "Now he has over 6,000 items in PPE."

Because hotels are short-staffed, Zohaib and his mother contacted the hotel managers directly and it was the managers who rounded up the supplies for them.

Isma Zubair also has a 2-year-old daughter who has had her own health problems. She has adrenal insufficiency, which, among other things, means her immune system is compromised.

In order to protect her daughter, Zubair and her son decided it would best if someone from Inova Fairfax could come to their house in the One Loudoun community of Ashburn to collect the items they had collected from hotels.

The hospital is scheduled to pick up all 6,000 items of shower caps, gloves and masks on Friday.

Zohaib attends Guidepost Montessori School in Broadlands, where they provide schooling for elementary-aged children. Zohaib's mother said she wanted to keep this collection effort local, only in the Ashburn area, because Zohaib is so young and they didn't want to place him or his sister at risk by traveling to hotels outside of the area.

Seven-year-old Zohaib Begg visits the SpringHill Suites hotel in Ashburn to pick up protective gear from the hotel manager. (Courtesy of Isma Zubair)

The Marriott hotel in Ashburn told them that the Marriott in Tyson's Corner probably had a large supply of shower caps, gloves and face masks. Zohaib's mother is hoping children in other areas of Northern Virginia will pick up the mantle and contact the hotels in their communities to see if they have any supplies they could donate to local health

care facilities.

"Some hotels said they had a different delivery system and they could order more for the hospitals if we had an official letter," Zubair said.

Zohaib and his mother were able to collect items from six hotels in the Ashburn area: Hilton Garden Inn, Embassy Suites, Aloft, Courtyard Marriott Dulles, SpringHill Suites and Hyatt House.

Zohaib's said she read an article about the National Cathedral in Washington donating 5,000 masks on Wednesday to two Washington hospitals to help doctors, nurses and others to fight the coronavirus outbreak. The National Cathedral had purchased thousands of masks in 2005 or 2006 amid worries about an avian flu outbreak that were found stored in an unfinished burial vault in the cathedral's crypt.

After reading that article, Zubair suggested to Zohaib that they make it their goal to collect and donate more protective items than the 5,000 masks that the National Cathedral had donated. At the end of the day Thursday, the mother and son had met their goal.

Some hotels, like the Lansdowne Resort in Leesburg, said they could not donate any items because Zohaib and his

mother did not have an official letter from Inova Fairfax Hospital indicating that they were collecting these items on behalf of the hospital.

Zubair said she is hoping that Inova Fairfax will now provide them with an official letter that they can provide hotels to let them know that the shower caps, gloves and mask will be used by health care workers. If the hotels could partner with the hospitals, it could help relieve the shortage of these types of PPE, she said.

Seven-year-old Zohaib Begg carries items collected from the Courtyard Marriott Dulles back to his mother's car. (Courtesy of Isma Zubair)

For other families hoping to help workers in hospitals, doctor's offices and other health care facilities through the collection of protective gear, Zubair recommends that they first get the medical facility to draft a letter indicating that the volunteers are collecting the items on behalf of health care workers.

"We want to motivate kids in other areas," she said. "We don't have the capacity to drive all over Northern Virginia."

*Republished from the Ashburn VA, Patch. Permission from Zohaib Begg's family was taken prior to reposting this story.*

**Cont. from page 5.**  
**Spartan Shifa**  
about how toxic relationships can mirror unhealthy dynamics in our households. While practicing the basics of mindfulness meditation, we learned about the role of past trauma in shaping our default thought patterns. Eager to learn from people who best understood the challenges our communities face, we recruited HEART, a nonprofit organization of Muslim clinicians based in Chicago, to train us in responding to survivors. All of these research-based efforts and others built foundations of knowledge about wellness for members, some of whom would go on to access therapy and psychiatric services at our university health center.

Student assessments speak to the transformational impact of Shifa. Ayesha Khan, a freshman majoring in Electrical Engineering, notes, "Spartan Shifa has allowed many, like me, to feel comfortable and become aware of topics that may be considered taboo in the Muslim community." Emotional intelligence stands out as one of these topics. Iraj Ahmad, a freshman majoring in neuroscience and psychology, explains, "Spartan Shifa helped me understand and realize that my emotions and feelings are in fact valid and important, and that I shouldn't push away my feelings towards situations without dealing with them appropriately and in a healthy manner." Besides tackling taboo topics, Shifa

gave students a home. Zainab Fayyaz, a freshman studying neuroscience, clarifies, "Spartan Shifa has initiated the talk about mental health in our community and is a place for students to go to for support and guidance from their classmates. My favorite part about Spartan Shifa is that Salman encourages the students to speak for themselves and their stories and not just listen to what he is speaking about the topic."

Overall, Shifa has changed the culture of MSUMSA. Esraa Ali, a junior studying graphic design, sums it up. "Shifa has been a very great accomplishment for us this year at MSU. It's always a good feeling to see the Muslim community shift towards becoming a more loving and caring

place. Shifa was a great space for Muslims on campus to be able to find solace and companionship amongst their fellow Muslim counterparts and I'm glad it's something to be continued at MSU. I only hope more MSAs and/or other Islamic institutions begin to implement more inclusive spaces such as Shifa!"

Spartan Shifa has helped create a validating environment for Muslims on campus at Michigan State University in Lansing, Michigan, that has reduced the stigma of obtaining mental health help and has given students effective tools to manage emotional difficulties. There are many resources that can be used to help replicate the work done by Spartan Shifa. The Family Youth Institute has developed

workshops and training programs that can be used to create programs in your own community. Their infographics are popular and are based on their research. Other online resources can be found with the Institute of Muslim Mental Health and the Muslim Wellness Foundation.

*Salman Pervez is a Senior at MSU studying public health and neuroscience who is one of the founders of Spartan Shifa, a community-building group that empowers Muslim students by promoting self-knowledge, help-seeking, and the will to combat social issues. Spartan Shifa holds workshops on topics such as healthy relationships, spiritual wellness, and the lasting effects of historical trauma.*



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**Cont. from page 2.  
Islamophobic tweets**

emphasized the importance of the community returning to civility. "If we can do that, then our prayers will be blessed and our actions will be blessed," Qasim said. "And our lives and our children will be blessed," Oz added.

Since Sept. 11, South Asian, Sikh, Muslim, and Arab Americans have been the targets of numerous hate crimes, a study by South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT) found. A 2018 report by the Council of American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the country's largest Muslim civil rights organization, indicated that bias crimes against Muslims rose 83% in the second quarter of 2018 compared to the first quarter. Hate crimes since then have only increased in number, with many going unreported. According to Vox, Jewish and Muslim individuals are the two most common targets in religiously motivated hate crimes.

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