



دائرة الشؤون الإسلامية
والعمل الخيري
ISLAMIC AFFAIRS & CHARITABLE
ACTIVITIES DEPARTMENT
حكومة دبي
GOVERNMENT OF DUBAI

DUBAISun

An Islamic Periodical Magazine - Issue No 9 January 2008



Editor In Chief

Dr. Hamad Ahmed Al Shaybani

Executive Editor

Saeed K. Al Rahoomi

Co-Executive Editor

**Adel Juma Matar
Fatma Arbabi**

Editorial staff

**Mohammad Tawfiq
Helal Al Fili
Baha AL Sanhour
Ashraf Shebl**

Design & Layouting

**Jamal Halloum
Kamel Haddad**

Production & Distribution

**Yousif Al Bu Smaif
Ahmed Al Amin**

Photographer

Khadem Husain

Our Message

Invite to the way
of your Lord with
wisdom and fair
preaching

Our Vision

The Department
must be the
pioneer in the fields
of religious and
charitable guidance

Tel 00971 4 6087777

00971 4 6087643

Fax 00971 4 2960550

P.O.Box 3135 DUBAI-UAE

www.dicd.gov.ae

farbabi@dicd.ae



EDITORIAL

ISLAM CHAMPIONS ALL HUMAN CAUSES

Adopting a methodology of openness to the outer world at all levels since its inception, Islam has always been providing us with the momentum to launch channels of dialogue with other peoples and civilizations. No sooner had great Muslim Caliph Al Mamoun taken over, than he established the House of Wisdom Bookstore, where thousands of books were translated into many languages, sending scores of students in scholarships abroad to keep abreast of the scientific and

technological advances that were rapidly taking place in Europe at the time.

Islam, therefore, has never been a roadblock impeding the drive for openness, but rather a driving force that has effectively and tirelessly been contributing to attempts to benefit from the inexhaustible wells of knowledge in every nook and cranny of the world, as preached by Prophet Muhammed (PBUH).

Out of this universal, timeless approach, Islam has always been ready to champion all noble human causes, regardless of any earthly considerations that have any thing to do with religious doctrines, races or sexes, for it is, in essence, a religion for all peoples and rather for the best of all peoples.

Dr. Ahmed bin AL Sheikh Ahmed Al Shaibani

CONTENTS



P12

Measuring
Beauty
in **Art**



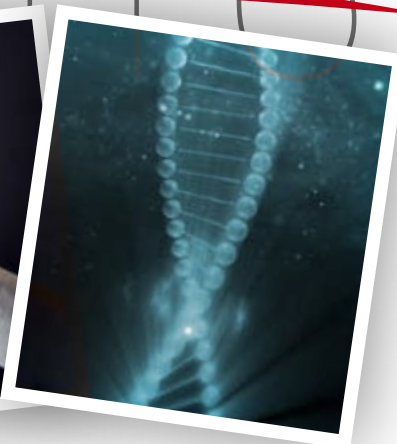
P18

The
Hoopoe
Birds in the
Quran



P24

Smoking
is a coastly
affair



P32

Science
can never
dispense
with
religion

P40

Sheikha Amina Al Tayer:
Volunteerism
is the culmination of
creativity &
wisdom

P50

1.5b Muslims share
a single aspiration:
to **complete**
the spiritual
journey of **Hajj**

P62

UAE People are
philanthropic
by **nature:**
DCA Secretary General



P34

UAE women
are securing jumbo leaps: *Sheikha Fatma*

H.H Sheikha Fatma Bint Mubarak, Supreme Chairperson of Family Development Foundation, Chairperson of UAE Women's Federation and Chairperson of Arab Woman Organization, accentuated that the UAE is quite bent on inculcating the role of women in the decision making process for the common good of the homeland.

Honey

the Antibiotic
of the Future

By Nora Belfedal

T

hrough the ages bees have played a significant role in Muslim and Arab culture. In fact, the value of bees was so great that before an important battle Abu

Bakr As-Sidiq told his general, Yazid

Ibn Abi Sufian, "Do not burn bees and do not scatter them." Surah 16, "The Bee", in the Qur'an also speaks of the importance of bees in Islam. In Sura 16, verse 69 states: "from their bellies come a drink of various colors, wherein is healing for mankind." Many people interpret this "drink" to mean honey, however, bees also produce another healing drink in their bodies - Bee Venom (BV).

Bee Venom is a complex mixture used by the bees to protect their hives against predators. Bee Venom Therapy (BVT), also known as apitherapy, is a popular healing method that uses this venom. BVT consists of using bee stings to treat symptoms of certain diseases. BVT





can be performed by a doctor, a therapist, a beekeeper or a patient who is taught how to properly use the bees (Rothfeld). Some physicians use BVT by taking sterilized venom and injecting it under the skin, imitating a bee sting. Other doctors claim that venom loses part of its effectiveness when tampered with and they insist on having their patients stung in the traditional manner. However, apitherapists all over the world agree that taking injections is easier than handling the bees themselves

and that injections produce almost the same noticeable results.

Apitherapy was practiced as far back as the age of Hippocrates, who called it "a strange and mysterious medicine." However, although Bee Venom Therapy has a long history, it remains as much of a mystery today as it was in the time of Hippocrates.

In an effort to uncover this mystery, Georgetown University in Washington D.C. has begun a study of Bee Venom Therapy (CNN). The Georgetown University study notes that many reports of BVT successes include people being cured of AIDS, arthritis, high blood pressure, cataracts, heart disease, depression, eczema, epilepsy, hair loss, stress, PMT, and male impotence (Manukahoneyusa). In fact, many studies cite Bee Venom as a valuable cure.

Additional studies show that Bee Venom can cure almost anything from osteoarthritis to cancer. In each disease, Bee Venom produces a unique reaction that assists the body in healing itself.

In cases of osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis, BVT has been known to reduce pain and swelling. While no conclusive treatment has been discovered for rheumatoid arthritis, Bee Venom has been very effective in treating the affliction, according to a study on animals. On humans, Dr. Bodog Beck, in 1935, already recorded a remarkable number of case improved by BVT. A hospital has also used Bee Venom therapy and reported real improvement in 66% of cases treated. Some substances contained in Bee Venom stimulate the production of cortisol by the adrenal gland. Cortisol is one of the most effective anti-inflammatory agents. Another

“

**In fact, many studies
cite Bee Venom as a
valuable cure**

”





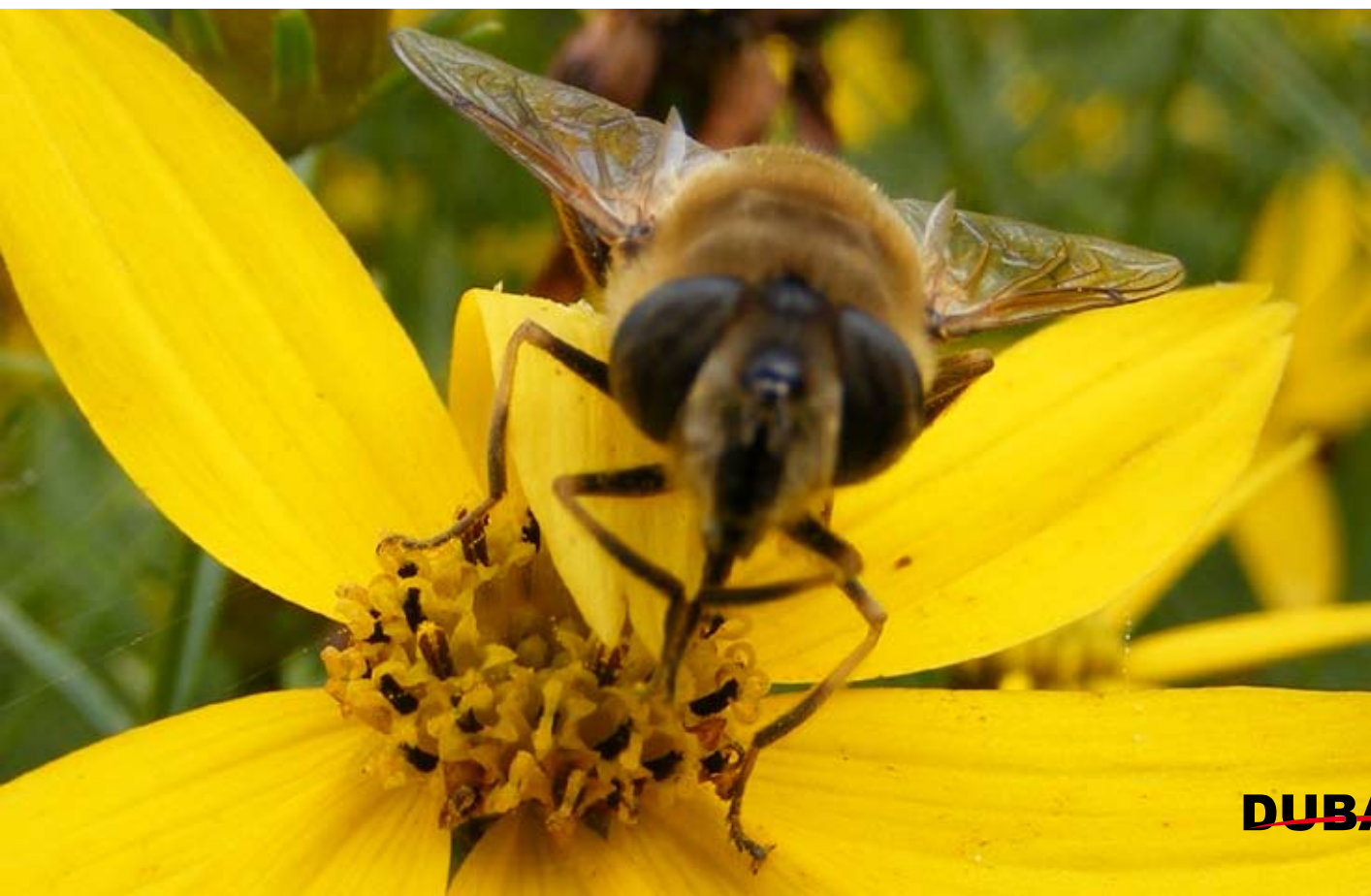
peptide found in BV is known to have anti-inflammatory effects a hundred times stronger than any drugs (Manukahoneyusa).

Bee Venom has also helped in curing diseases like scleroderma, asthma, and ulcerative colitis through a stimulation of endogenous cortisol. Bee Venom Therapy has also shown its effectiveness on injuries - both acute and chronic - such as tendonitis, neck and back pain aches. In those cases, the effects are probably due to an anti-inflammatory action involving the humeral and cellular immune response to foreign proteins (Primushost.com).



In fact, one of the greatest successes of BVT is that it can cure many kinds of chronic pain which cannot be cured by any drugs. Dr. Leo Roy reports that he treated a woman who had suffered from migraines headaches for 15 to 18 years until she had been treated with Bee Venom: "I injected her ten to twelve times... her case is truly an example" he says (Beelief.com).

However, Bee Venom does not just numb pain. It seems to have positive effects



on individual organs as well. Scientists from all over the world have found that bee products can significantly ameliorate Liver Cirrhosis (LC). LC is a disease by where normal liver tissues die and the organ becomes filled with more fibrous ones, greatly affecting its ability to function normally. The most common cause of this disease is alcohol abuse, but it can also be caused by malnutrition or iron stock.

"A Romanian study showed that up to 50% of persons suffering of liver cirrhosis have been cured by bee products, for they stimulate, nourish and regulate the functioning of the healthy liver cells and inhibit the non-healthy ones" (Santigu).

BVT has also been found useful in curing cases of Multiple Scleroses (MS). MS is a deficiency of the neurological and

immunological systems, often due to a nerve infection, viruses or depression. BVT has already improved the state of many MS patients. However, in order to use BVT on MS it requires a certain amount of skill on the part of the practitioner. Bee

“
A Romanian study showed that up to 50% of persons suffering of liver cirrhosis have been cured by bee products”



Venom helps the body to increase immune responses, nourish cellular membranes, clean intestines from toxins, promote healthier blood and provide more energy, as it is a water-soluble blend of proteins (Beelief.com).





Finally, BVT has been used in cases of cancers that are caused by "non-sufficient healthy blood". Scientists have shown that Bee Venom contains different substances that improve the blood flow in the afflicted organism. Thus, BVT is used to help heal scar tissues by softening and breaking them down (CNN).

To make use of these wonderful cures, many people call the nearest beekeeper. However, some people prefer to administer injections themselves. BV injections were developed by Ketschy in 1928 (Santigu). Recently BVT has even replaced some synthetic drugs because of its almost non-existent side effects. BVT is so effective, in fact, that the U.S Army has also studied its qualities (Rothfeld). Studies done by the U.S Army found that Bee Venom contains at least 63 components that have pharmaceutical properties including:

- 1- Melitin: one of the strongest anti-inflammatory substances known.
- 2- Adolapin: which has anti-inflammatory and analgesic activities.
- 3- Apamin: which improves nerves

transmissions (Beekeeping.com).

However promising it may sound, Bee Venom Therapy is not completely without risk. The first reactions to a bee sting are redness, swelling, pain and itching, which are not usually life threatening but are very uncomfortable. However, as some people have severe reactions to bee stings, a sting-test is often necessary before embarking on any bee therapy program. A person's reaction to bees must be monitored by a professional because, "Many people who have had severe local reaction to bee sting, which an apitherapist would consider a positive effect, are incorrectly considered to have allergies to bees," says Dr. Rothfeld.

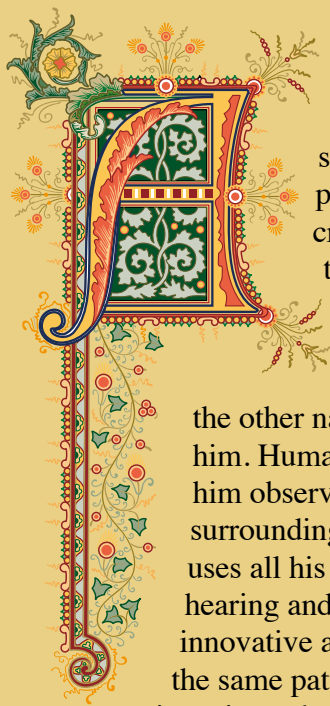
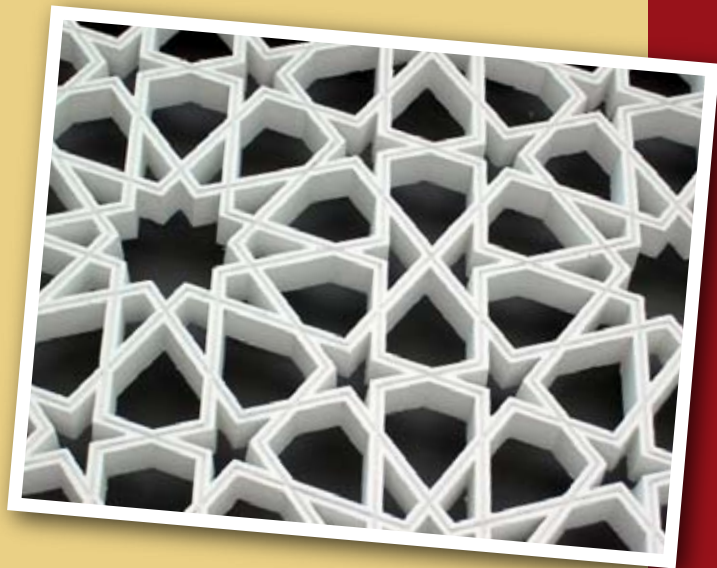
From the above examples we can understand better what the Prophet Mohammad (saws) meant when he said, "I prohibit killing four creatures in this earth: ants, bees, hoopoes and sparrow-hawks." Bees are one of the miracles of Allah, the Almighty (Sunan Abu Dawud).

As further proof of the value of bees: beekeepers tend to live longer than the rest of the population.

SOURCE BY ISLAMONLINE.net

MEASURING Beauty in Art

By Hayam Al-Sayyed



s humanity is a natural phenomenon on the universe created by the Almighty to inhabit and build the Earth, his means and tools of expression have been derived from

the other natural phenomena around him. Humankind's curiosity makes him observe the natural phenomena surrounding him, and in doing so, he uses all his senses, particularly sight, hearing and touch. This way, every innovative activity of humans follows the same pattern that nature follows in its universal system.

Definition of beauty:

- Beauty, good and right are one truth.
- Work is the thing that is described as good.
- Shape is the thing that is described as beautiful.

While people agree on the love of beauty, they differ on its definition. For instance, Plato says, "Beauty, good and

right are one truth. What is based on wrong is not beautiful." Some people object to Plato's opinion and say that good is useful, but beauty is not necessarily useful. Besides, right is based on proof, and beauty needs no proof.

Aristotle differentiates between work and shape. In his opinion, work is what is described as good, but shape is what is described as beautiful.

The elements of aesthetic enjoyment:
"Art is the way to knowledge. A work of art is a special system that is useful to man just like philosophy and science. In fact, we do not start to appreciate the importance of art in the history of mankind until we see art very clearly

As a way to knowledge, art is equal to the other means by which man can understand what is around him." Harriet Reid, Art and Society.

It is obvious that humankind responds to the natural shapes that are encountered by his senses in terms of their general shape, and then their surfaces and colors.



Harmony occurs as a result of the integration between these elements. This harmony leads to a sense of satisfaction, which we may describe as a “sense of beauty.” On the other hand, if this harmony in the

relations between parts does not exist, we feel the opposite

- a sense of dissatisfaction that we call “a sense of ugliness.”

Therefore, we can say that a sense of beauty is the natural response to harmonious and balanced relations between the components that make up the things we see.

As our feeling and memories are intermingled and interrelated in that manner, the colors that we see in a work of art may have psychological effects on us through these interrelations that we can barely sense.

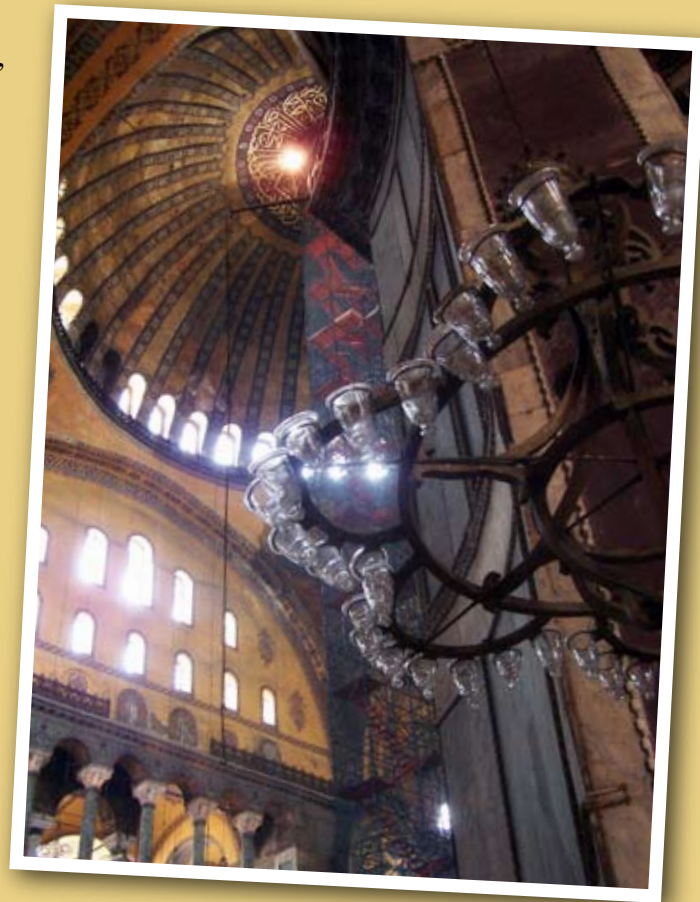
“Color as seen by the eye and the illusion it creates are both necessary things in terms of their aesthetic effect.” Erwin Edman, Arts and Man.

The following are direct and essential elements in aesthetic enjoyment:

- vertical lines in Gothic art;
- horizontal lines that dominate the art of architecture in the Renaissance;
- vertical and horizontal lines in the drawings on Ancient Egyptian tombs;
- dancing lines in Greek decorative pottery;
- zigzag lines in Arabesque designs;
- and hard, solid lines in old portraits.

Spontaneous beauty:

The ability to look at nature and appreciate its aesthetic value is extremely important, not only in forming a general taste for beauty, but also because this ability contributes to developing an understanding of the laws that govern



nature and that give nature its spontaneous beauty.

The language of plastic arts is derived from nature. Line, color, shade, light, texture, size and space are all things that we learn from our analytical study of nature. These elements have become the letters and words of plastic arts, just like the words used in poetry and literature, or the sounds of birds, wind and running water that make the basic elements on which we build music. The examples are many.

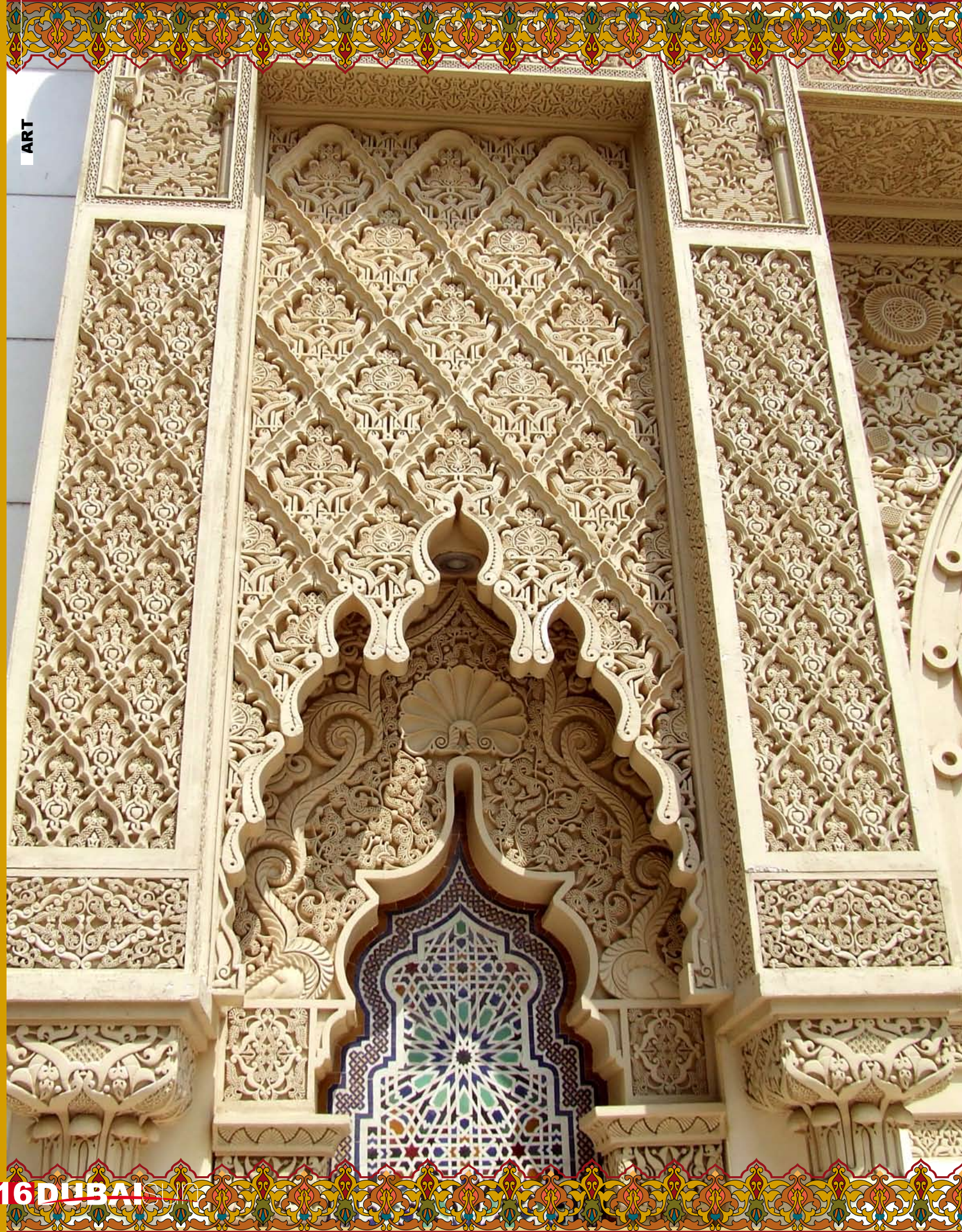
The word “line” has far-reaching implications. A line can be the edge, i.e. the place at which spaces are connected. It can also be the perimeter that surrounds a whole shape to define it, or it can be sculptural if it gives a sense of mass. It can also be used to beautify a surface.

The line asserts itself to achieve a spontaneous purpose of movement or affirm a certain element. The character of the line depends, in part, on the tool with which the line is made, be it a brush, a piece of chalk or any other kind of instrument. In buildings, the line depends on the artist’s character. Lines have a strong effect, and they contribute to the achievement of balance and harmony between the parts that comprise a picture. A smoothly curved line and a completely straight line equally contribute to our aesthetic enjoyment. There is no doubt that different lines, i.e. curved, straight, broken, thick, thin etc, have the same aesthetic effects of high and low tones.

Light and shade:

The technique of using light and shade is one of the best criteria in judging the





quality and character of a work of art.

There are several terms in describing this element. Sometimes it is called “tone” which is a term used essentially in music. It is also called “value.” It represents the area between black and white, which comprises innumerable degrees of shade.

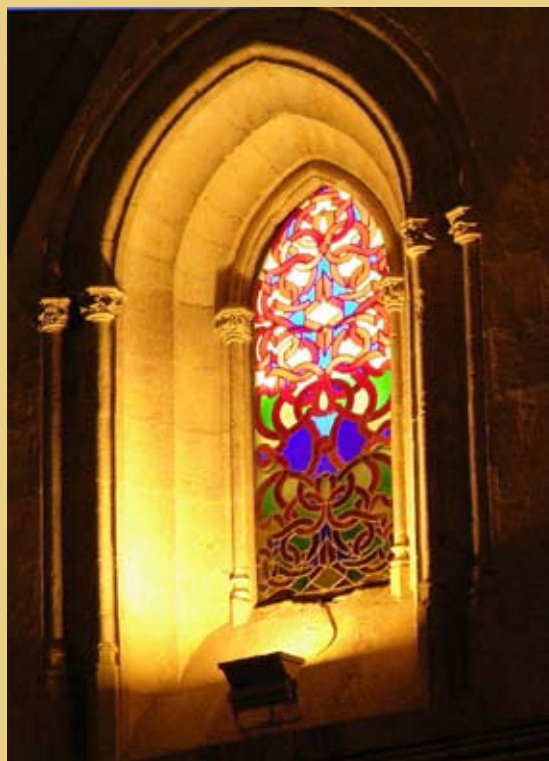
Light is a constantly changing phenomenon; it always varies in density and angle. This makes it difficult to represent it with something fixed like a line. That is why the process of shading was introduced, so that light graduates from stark white to pitch black. Therefore, when we use color, we can only represent light in such a realistic way so that it gives it complete clarity if we use degrees of black to create a contrast. However, this depends on the artist’s sensitivity in combining color.

Color:

It is one of the most exciting elements. It is a scientific element inasmuch as it is an organizational element. People’s sensitivity to color differs to a great extent. Some people can see only black and white and what is in between, while others may fail to see a particular color. Color enhances the process of sight, giving it strength, vitality and depth. When the eye sees an object, it gathers the components of it and assembles them through the moulds and shapes formulated by lines. Besides, bright, somber and complex colors have unique effects on the nervous system.

Texture:

Each material has a constructive genius that determines the quality of its surface. This genius is realized by color. It is interesting that the eye contributes to



the appreciation of this genius, because rough surfaces create light and shade while smooth surfaces mean there is an absence of shades. Moreover, the reflection of light on certain fabrics, such as silk, gives an indication of their true feel when one is just looking at them. Color differs according to the surface on which it lies.

Surfaces differ greatly. There are many kinds of surfaces, including the hard, soft, rough, smooth, warm, cold, grained etc.

Area, mass and size:

All these elements are affiliated to the element of geometry. Naturally, areas have two dimensions and their most common forms are the square, the circle and the rectangle. A mass is a three-dimensional form. These forms can be very small at times. By using light and dark lines and colors, an artist can create areas with which he can manipulate his design at will.


SOURCE BY ISLAMONLINE.net



The Hoopoe

Birds in the
Quran

By Ibrahim B. Syed



T

he word bird is mentioned in the Glorious Quran 5 times and the word birds occurs in the Noble Quran 13 times. Among the birds, the hoopoe (**hud-hud in Arabic**) has been specifically mentioned twice in Surah #27, An-Naml, in the following manner:

“And he sought among the birds and said: How is it that I see not the hoopoe, or is he among the absent?”
Surah 27:20 (Verse)

“But the hoopoe tarried not far: he compassed (territory) which thou has not compassed and I have come to thee from Saba with tidings true.” *Surah 27:22 (Verse)*

The Hoopoe: A Bird of Elegance

The hoopoe (hud-hud) is an elegant bird, which is related to the hornbill. It gets its unusual name from its shrill call of “hoops”, which rings clear and far and is repeated two or three times. Often the cry is cut off very short. This may be caused by the bird's bill sharply striking the ground at the end of the note. It is one of the Old World's non-passerine birds. Its scientific name is “*Upupa epops*” (family Upupidae, of the roller order, Coraciiformes). King-fishers, bee-eaters, rollers, hoopoes and hornbills are collectively referred to as roller-like birds. There are about seven species of hoopoe. It is a widely distributed bird located in the British Isles, Europe, Asia, and Northern Africa. It exists in the temperate and tropical regions of the Old World. This is a small bird about 12 inches long, the size of a large thrush or mynah, and has short legs with heavy feet and powerful claws. It has a handsome



erect semicircular crest (large crown of feathers tipped with black that constantly opens and closes on the head). This crest of black-tipped feathers on the head is the most striking feature of the hoopoe. It is fawn or cinnamon in color with black and white stripes on the back, wings and tail. It is long and fan shaped with feathers that increase in length from front to back. When feeding, the crest is closed. When alarmed or excited, the crest is unfurled and opens out like a fan.

The upper part of its body is a pale brown, with wings of black striped with white. The under-parts are buff, streaked with black. The black tail has one broad stripe of white. These bands are clearly

seen when the bird is in flight. Its short legs are well adapted for walking. The tail is not very long, and is black with a white central bar. The beak is long, slender and slightly down-curved. The hoopoe's call is soft and musical, repeated every couple of seconds. Because of this sound it makes, the bird got its name in many languages. For example in English it is 'hoopoe', in Persian and Urdu it is "hud".

Hoopoes are usually found in open areas far away from patches of vegetation or habitation. They can most often be seen singly but are sometimes found in pairs. The hoopoe walks and runs with ease, as it feeds almost entirely on the ground. It walks with quick steps, bobbing its head

in time with the steps and pausing to probe with its long bill in the ground and in crevices, in search of large arthropods and small vertebrates. Its flight is strong and direct. When perched, it may quietly flash its long crest open and shut. Lawns, paths and manure heaps are favorite spots as they provide ample food for this bird. It feeds mainly on insects and other small invertebrates found around decaying organic matter. It also feeds on insect larvae, spiders, centipedes and earthworms. The long pointed beak acts like a pair of forceps, fishing prey out of cracks and fissures. As it dashes along, it snatches up insects and worms in its long bill. Before the insect is eaten, it is beaten on the ground to remove the hard covering and appendages like legs and wings. The bird then tosses up its prey and skillfully catches it in its open beak.

The bird can soar quite high to escape birds of prey. But by and large it prefers to fly just above the ground. The hoopoe prefers the ground to the sky, and does not build its nest in trees. It does, however, utilize dark holes in trees or cavities in walls, roofs, soil banks or cliffs as nests. An untidy collection of grass, straw, hair and leaves deposited on the floor of the holes makes up the nest. Most of the nests can be found in April and May in Asia. Six to nine eggs are laid on the debris by the female who alone incubates them for 16-19 days. During this period she does not leave the nest and is fed by the male. After the chicks hatch, the mother continues to keep them warm for another eight days. The nestlings remain in the nest for 2-26 days.

When threatened by a bird of

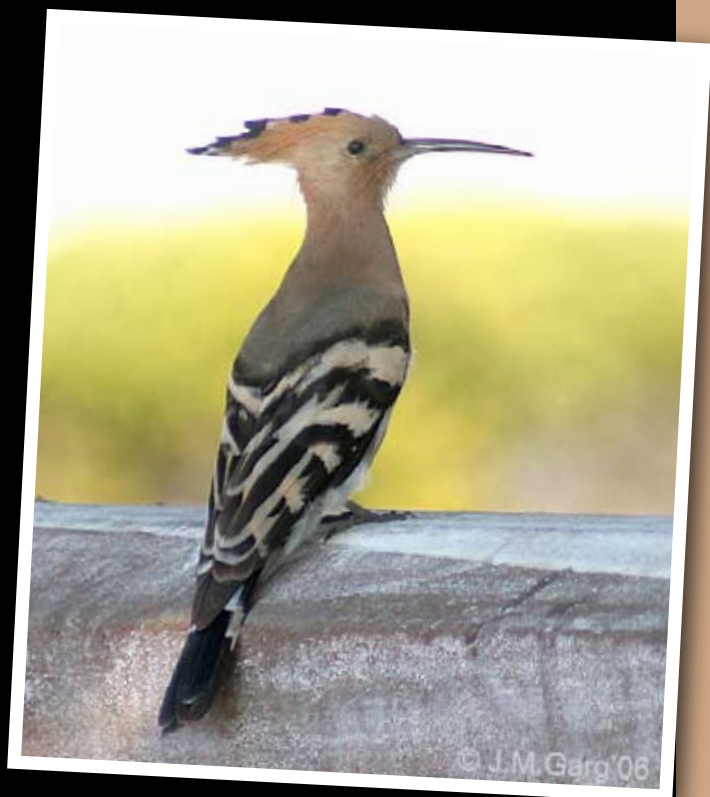
prey, the hoopoe flattens itself against the ground and spreads its tail and wings. The head is thrown back and the bill points straight up. Whatever this indicates, it does seem to discourage potential enemies.

Hoopoes are found in almost all parts of Asia, even in cities and towns where there are few open spaces left.

Messenger of Prophets

Prophet Solomon was a king and the ruler of Syria and Palestine whose armies consisted of troops made of men, Jinn and birds. It is possible that the birds were employed for communicating the messages, hunting and for other suitable services.

In the Quran (27:20) we read that Prophet Solomon reviewed his birds and found the hoopoe (hud-hud) missing. His most mobile arm was





the birds, which were light on the wing and flew and saw everything like efficient scouts. Prophet Solomon expressed his anger and his desire to punish the hoopoe severely if it did not present itself before him with a reasonable excuse. Within a short while the hoopoe returned saying,

“I have obtained knowledge of things which you have no knowledge. I have brought sure information about Saba

(Sheba, a well-known rich people of southern Arabia, now the present day Yemen. Their capitol city was Ma'rib which lay about 55 miles to the northeast of Sana, the present capitol of Yemen). There I have seen a woman ruling over her people: she has been given all sorts of provisions, and she has a splendid throne. I saw that she and her people prostrate themselves before the sun, instead of Allah!”

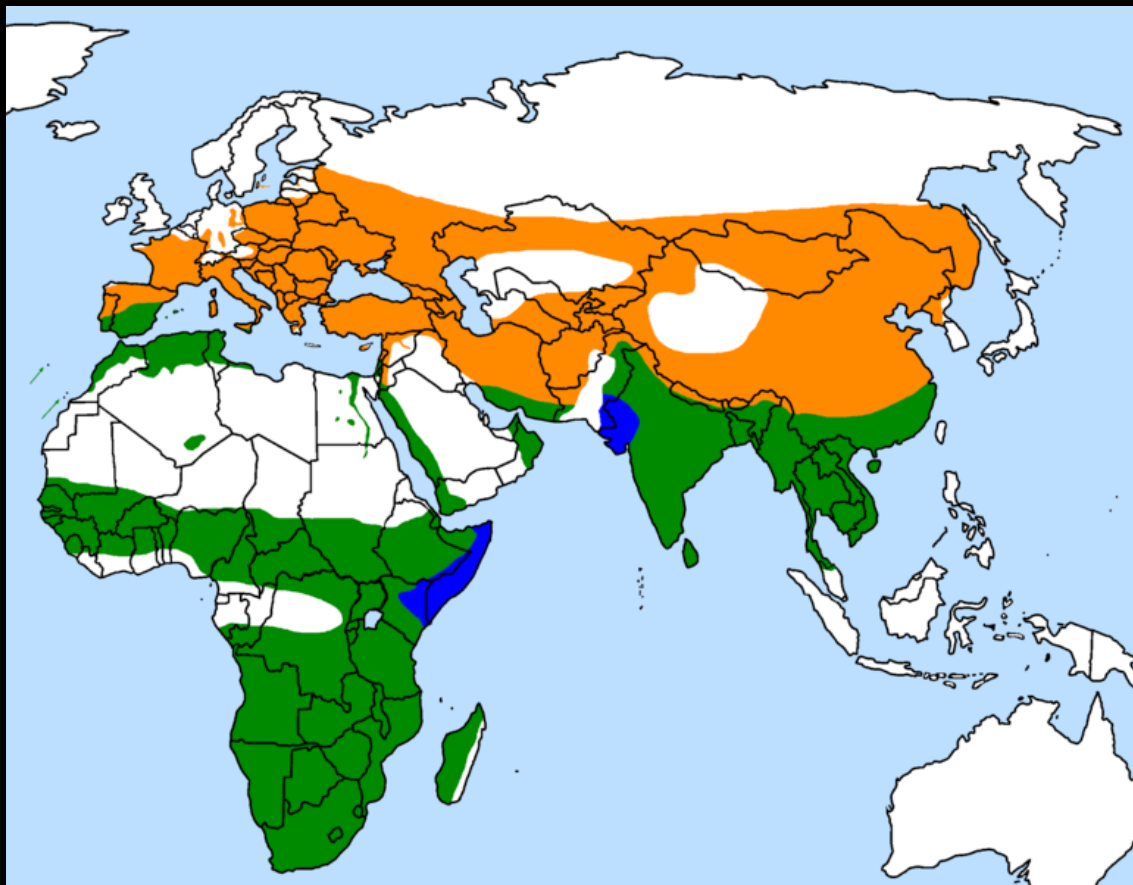
Prophet Solomon said, **“We shall just now see whether what you say is true, or that you are a liar. Take this letter of mine and cast it before them; then get aside and see what reaction they show.”** *Qur'an, 27: 27-28.*

Here ends the role of the hoopoe. Some people have interpreted that hoopoe (hud-bud) was the name of a man and not a bird, because a bird could not possibly be endowed with such powers of



observation, discrimination and expression that it should pass over a country and should come to know that it is the land of Saba, it has such and such a system of government, it is ruled by a certain woman (Bilquis), its religion is sun-worship, that it should have worshipped One God instead of having gone astray, and then on its return to Prophet Solomon it should so clearly make a report of all its observations before him. The counter-argument is that inspite of great advances in science and technology, man cannot tell with absolute certainty what powers and abilities the different species of animals and their different individuals possess? Man has not so far been able to know through any certain means what different animals know and what they see and hear; what they feel, think and understand; or

how the mind of each one of them works. Yet, whatever little observation has been made of the life of the different species of animals, it has revealed some of their wonderful abilities. Now, when Allah, Who is the Creator of these animals, tells us that He had taught the speech of the birds to one of His Prophets and blessed him with the ability to speak to them, and the Prophet's taming and training had so enabled a hoopoe (hud-hud) that it could make certain observations about foreign lands and could report them to the Prophet, then the above said interpreters should be prepared to revise their little knowledge about the animals in the light of Allah's statement. Books such as "When Elephants Weep" and other books on dogs, cats and ants throw light on animal intelligence, thinking and behavior.



Approximate range: orange - nesting, blue - wintering, green - resident (all year)

SOURCE BY ISLAMONLINE.net

Smoking is a costly affair

By Dr. Wael M. Zakeer

S

moking is a lethal global phenomenon. It might, therefore, represent folly and foolhardiness, but its intangible qualities still encourage millions to smoke. As the dramatist Oscar Wilde wrote:

"A cigarette is the perfect type of a perfect pleasure. It is exquisite and it leaves one unsatisfied. What more can one want?"

Tobacco started growing in the Americas in 6000 BC. And in its original state, Tobacco is native only to the Americas. In 1000 BC, people started using the leaves of the tobacco plant for smoking and chewing. How and why tobacco was first used in the Americas, no one knows. The first users are thought to have been the Mayan civilisations of



Central America. Its use was gradually adopted throughout the nations of Central and most of North and South America. In 1493 AD Rodrigo de Jerez became the first European smoker in history. One of Christopher Columbus's fellow explorers, he took his first puff of the New World's version of the cigar in Cuba. When he returned home, he made the mistake of lighting up in public and was thrown into prison for three years by the Spanish Inquisition - becoming the world's first victim of the anti-smoking lobby.

One of the main dangers of smoking is due to Nicotine. Nicotine is found naturally in tobacco. It has no odor and no color. It is, however, both physically and psychologically addictive, and it causes those who use it to want to smoke one cigarette after another.



Nicotine enters the body as tiny droplets resting on particles of tar in cigarette smoke. Inhaled into the lungs, the drug passes quickly into the bloodstream, reaching the brain within about 10 seconds. In another 5 to 10 seconds the nicotine has spread to all parts of the body.

The nicotine raises both the heart rate and blood pressure. The smoker quickly feels more alert and relaxed. In less than 30 minutes, however, about half of the nicotine has left the bloodstream, and the smoker starts feeling less alert, more edgy.

So he or she reaches for another cigarette to get a new "hit" of nicotine. Over time, the smoker starts needing more cigarettes throughout the day to satisfy the craving.

There are other dangers of smoking as



well. The tar from tobacco smoke starts to accumulate on the bronchial tubes leading to the lungs. The hot smoke burns the tiny hairlike projections (called cilia) that trap harmful particles before they enter the lungs.

One more of the dangers of smoking are Carbon monoxide. Smoking also increases the level of carbon monoxide in the lungs. This poisonous gas is quickly absorbed into the blood, reducing its capacity to carry oxygen.

As a result, the smoker has to exert more physical effort to attain a given task than does a nonsmoker. The heart in particular must work harder, particularly during rigorous exercise. Increased levels





of carbon monoxide in the blood can impair vision, perception of time, and coordination

Smoking is one of the main cause of death every year. Smoking causes a number of smoke- related diseases such as lung cancer, respiratory problems and heart ailments and these dangers of smoking are increasing yearly.

Over the years a smoker will be more likely to develop respiratory ailments, thickening of the arteries, blood clots, cancer of the lung, cervix, larynx, mouth, esophagus, bladder, pancreas, and kidney, and emphysema, as well as exhibit symptoms such as reduced stamina, poor athletic performance, wheezing, coughing, dizziness, and nausea.

In time, a smoker suffers increased

resistance to the flow of air into the lungs and reduced lung capacity. Besides these serious problems, prolonged tobacco use leads to stained teeth and fingers and bad breath. Even a smoker's clothes and living quarters tend to smell of tobacco.

Smoking is a costly affair. An ordinary smoker invites enormous cost to maintain this unhealthy lifestyle and the costs do not affect him alone. The most apparent cost of smoking is the daily, weekly and monthly expenditure of an ordinary smoker.

The average cost of a pack of Cigarettes is \$4.00. Imagine a smoker burning a pack per day, \$4.00 per day. Annually the money spent on smoking would be around \$1500. This money could have spent on some thing good like a decent out-of-town vacation.



Medical expenditures will also have to be addressed as most, if not all, smoke-related diseases require treatment, services and medication. Health care services do not always come free.

At the same time, due to illness, the smoker has to refrain from work and be hospitalized. This leads to reduce in income level and there after, instead of bringing in more money to the household, the money had to be taken out.

In nutshell, smoking is hazardous and the dangers of smoking are serious. A

smoker inhales a substance containing 43 cancer-causing (carcinogenic) compounds besides four hundred other toxins including nicotine and tar. Nicotine leads to a smoking addiction. Tar clogs the lungs and inhibits the body's capacity to breathe; it causes lung and throat cancer, heart disease, emphysema, bronchial and lung disorders. Through passive smoking, even non-smokers (particularly children) are at risk of getting these illnesses. A pregnant woman who smokes increases the chance of her baby dying from SIDS, being underweight, and having behavioral problems. A recent report has shown that smoking tobacco and nicotine is the world's leading cause of death and disability -- more than HIV, AIDS, or famine. The report also estimates that smoking-related illnesses cause 30 million deaths per year.

The dangers of smoking are evident. Why risk the perils to yourself and your loved ones in order to satisfy a habit?


While quitting is far from easy, many products can help.

For centuries, a major factor in setting public policy regarding tobacco products was the economic importance of the tobacco industry. Therefore, despite occasional efforts to prohibit the production of tobacco products, the main impetus of tobacco regulation throughout the world was to ensure the continued viability of the tobacco trade and to collect taxes on its products. The specific regulatory framework varied from country to country, but the result was essentially the same everywhere: tobacco was exempt from the ordinary controls to which other products were subject. In the United States, for example, tobacco products, which fell under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, were exempt from the most basic safety

and health standards required of other consumer products.

This state of affairs began to change in the early 1960s, when the United Kingdom's Royal College of Physicians (in 1962) and the U.S. surgeon general (in 1964) concluded that cigarette smoking caused lung cancer and other diseases. These reports were based largely on the rapidly mounting evidence from laboratory studies of smoke toxins and from population studies of disease risk in cigarette smokers in the 1950s. The reports paved the way for scientifically based health considerations to emerge as significant factors in the creation of tobacco public policy. Initial efforts were often aimed at specific issues, such as how tar and nicotine in cigarettes should be measured and advertised, health warnings on cigarette packaging, and smoking-





prevention programs for young people. These limited efforts were generally thwarted or weakened by tobacco interests. Nonetheless, smoking by adults began to subside in the 1970s and 1980s in many developed countries, particularly in the United States, Canada, Sweden, and Australia. At the same time, the prevalence of smoking was rapidly increasing in many less-developed countries, particularly in Asia and Africa. By the 1990s the toll in death and disease in these countries was mounting rapidly, and youth smoking began to shoot upward in some of the countries, including the United States and Canada, that had shown great strides in the reduction of smoking in the 1970s and 1980s.

In the 1990s several currents converged to foster major smoking-control policy initiatives around the world. The leading current was an extensive body of scientific research that proved the deadly and addictive effects of tobacco beyond the ability of even the tobacco industry to deny. This included evidence that environmental smoke was more than an annoyance—it was lethal for thousands of nonsmokers and a cause of respiratory disease in children. A second current was the sheer magnitude of the economic losses projected to be caused by tobacco use, as measured by the diversion of health care funds for the treatment of tobacco-related illnesses and by the loss of worker productivity. A third current was litigation brought against the tobacco industry by governments and individuals. These lawsuits brought to light millions of secret documents showing that the tobacco industry had long known its products were highly addictive and deadly. Finally, the growing recognition that environmental

tobacco smoke was deadly even for nonsmokers led to efforts to restrain and contain smoking. These efforts further decreased smoking rates, making it possible for even stronger regulatory actions to be taken.

By the end of the 20th century, therefore, organized campaigns had led to the implementation of a wide spectrum of tobacco-related measures, including increases in the price of cigarettes and restrictions on their availability, restrictions in advertising, disclosure of information on the health consequences of tobacco use, protection of nonsmokers from environmental tobacco smoke, and regulation of manufacturing standards for tobacco companies. In the many countries that implemented such measures, per capita cigarette consumption was much reduced from earlier decades. However, in many developing countries and in the

world as a whole, cigarette consumption continued to increase. In response to this increase, the World Health Organization (WHO) and other health organizations sought to step up coordinated international efforts to regulate tobacco products in the late 1990s. In 2003 WHO adopted a tobacco-control treaty designed to serve as an international framework for tobacco regulation. It imposed controls over tobacco-industry marketing, required health-warning labels on tobacco products, and sought to reduce the exposure of users and nonusers alike to tobacco toxins. The treaty was ratified at a rapid pace by many countries, and it entered into force in early 2005. Although some major countries, including the United States and China, had not ratified it by that time, more than one-third of the signatory countries had done so, including Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, and many developing countries.



Science **can** **never** dispense **with** religion

Genetic revolution has its merits and demerits, says Dr Abdul Hadi Mesbah, a specialist in immunity and medical analyses at the American Academy of Immunity in Washington D.C. Interviewed by "Dubai Sun", the famous scholar warns against using science for materialistic gains, calling for adhering to the broad teachings of Islam in conducting scientific research.

- **There is much argument on the necessity of genetic applications be governed by moral restrictions and considerations. Isn't this a call for limiting our creativity and mental faculties especially that we are ordained by God to continuously seek knowledge?**

Of course it is not meant to hamper our mental efforts and creativity. There is an axiom purporting that "there are two people who can never reach a state of satiety: a knowledge-seeker and a money monger." In this respect, namely in the

genetic revolution and genetic print, we are addressing the mystery of universe. We are not dealing with the genetic print of one human being only, but rather with the genes of one whole generation to come. Therefore we must be extremely cautious while dealing with genes. What we already know of genetics is far much less than what we are ignorant of. Our research and applications must be based on the religious principle of avoiding any possible harm that may be inflicted on any party. At the same time, we can never ignore the essential role of science. Islam never underestimates the role of scientists and researchers. God's Messenger (PBUH) says "O God's slaves: cure yourselves, for God never creates a disease without providing its medicine." Hence, we are supporting the genetic revolution when it leads us to new medications and helps us avoid epidemics and plagues. But when others come to play up with genes and alter the basic nature of man and try to provide

By Dr Khaleefa Elradi

one person with traits and qualities that he or she intrinsically and hereditarily doesn't have, such as ingenuity, beauty, boldness, etc, the whole affair turns to be playing with fire that may ultimately bring in future catastrophes from which many generations would suffer.

- **All scientific research often start with a good intention, does this apply to current genetic research?**

Any scientific research must be oriented toward the common good of man, not only seeking materialistic gains. Once a scientist concentrates on his personal glory only, rather than serving the universe, he might cause catastrophes. We must realize that every scientific research has its pros and cons. It may be used for the common good of man and to the detriment of the whole universe all the same. A fork can be used in cutting meat and in killing a person. An atom can be used in curing some diseases and in annihilating a whole city. The faster scientific research goes, the lesser would be the restrictions that could govern their usage. We may take the cloning of Dolly, the sheep, as an example in this respect. The cloning of Dolly was first meant to improve the hereditary qualities in sheep, namely to better their meat and milk. But scientists have used the techniques previously employed in cloning Dolly and are now trying to apply them to clone a human being. Should this happen, it would be a sheer catastrophe. Another example: scientists have managed to identify the masculine chromosome in man's siemens, which means that they can help man to choose the sex of his/her offspring. Scientists have got euphoric at this breakthrough specially that there are some diseases that are transferred from the mother to male babies only and hence if

it becomes clear that a woman has one of these diseases, she can choose not to give birth to a boy in order to spare her offspring a fatal disease. This was the goal when scientists started their efforts in this field. But now the whole affair has lost its noble meaning, with test- tube baby centres now being the only beneficiary by devilishly using people's whimsies and desires to give birth to female or male babies. This may create a dangerous imbalance, as the majority of people in many countries want male babies. I feel very uneasy about the widespread availability of sexing children - even if it does not involve the selective destruction of rejected embryos. Even if it only involves separating sperm in the laboratory so only the right sex genes are used to fertilise, one can never trust society to make sure there is a proper balance between the sexes. In many countries the result could be more boys than girls being born.





UAE **women** are
securing
jumbo
leaps

Sheikha Fatma Bint Mubarak



H

Sheikha Fatma Bint Mubarak, Supreme Chairperson of Family Development Foundation, Chairperson of UAE Women's Federation and Chairperson of Arab Woman Organization, accentuated that the UAE is quite bent on inculcating the role of women in the decision making process for the common good of the homeland.

This came at the inauguration of the 2nd Regional Conference for Women Parliamentarians and Decision Makers of the GCC States, which was organized in cooperation with the International Parliamentary Union in Abu Dhabi recently. The conference was held under the patronage of HH Sheikha Fatma, better known as the Mother of the Emirates, with HE Abdul Aziz Abdullah Al Ghurair, the Head of the Federal National Council attending. Also Anders Johnson, IPU Secretary General and Nour Eddin Boshkouj, the Arab Parliamentary Union Secretary General, along with delegations representing GCC states plus Yemen, a country that held the capacity of supervisor at the conference, and a galaxy of UAE Federal National Council members, international experts and statesmen participated in the gathering.

“

Female students outnumber their male counterparts in some stages.

”

H Sheikha Fatma Bint Mubarak, Supreme Chairperson of Family Development Foundation, Chairperson of UAE Women's Federation and Chairperson of Arab Woman Organization, accentuated that the UAE is quite bent on inculcating the role of women in the decision making process for the common good of the homeland.

This came at the inauguration of the 2nd Regional Conference for Women Parliamentarians and Decision Makers of the GCC States, which was organized in cooperation with the International Parliamentary Union in Abu Dhabi recently. The conference was held under the patronage of HH Sheikha Fatma, better known as the Mother of the Emirates, with HE Abdul Aziz Abdullah Al Ghurair, the Head of the Federal National Council attending. Also Anders Johnson, IPU Secretary General and Nour Eddin Boshkouj, the Arab Parliamentary Union Secretary General, along with delegations representing GCC states plus Yemen, a country that held the capacity of supervisor at the conference, and a

galaxy of UAE Federal National Council members, international experts and statesmen participated in the gathering.

HH Sheikha Fatma, in the speech delivered on her behalf by HE Sheikh Nuhayan bin Mubarak, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, added the conferences opens enough rooms for further channels of dialogue on a wide spectrum of issues of interest to female parliamentarians in the GCC states. She



voiced hope for the conference to be a step forward on the way for reaching “all our goals and ambitions.”

“We, in the UAE, are witnessing great progress achieved by women in the civil society, a fact verified by the increasing numbers of young women enrolled in different educational stages. They in many cases outnumber their male counterparts. More than one quarter of the FNC members are women, the highest such

percentage all over the world. All this reflects UAE President HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed’s commitment to deepening the role of women in the development of the UAE society as was the case with his late father, the UAE founder, HH Sheikh Zayed, God bless his soul.”

“It is not only at the FNC, as women also represent 59% of the UAE workforce and occupy 30% of top ranking positions in the country and have 60% of specialized





jobs in different domains in additions to their effective contribution to the financial and business domains, with the UAE Businesswomen Council consisting of 12,000 women who handle investments put at more than AED 25 billion.”

The government is quite keen to buoy up women’s participation in the political life, being an important means of serving the homeland, she noted, adding that “we all know that achieving the desired success entails acquiring the needed know-how and implementing the necessary training.”

“Any fair assessment of the present conditions in the Gulf region drives home the fact that women enjoy the full support of all GCC leaders. Such support translates into a set of rules and legislations that empower women and enable them to attain their rights.”

She noted that strengthening the role of women’s associations in the Gulf region is one key step toward empowering women and enhancing their participation in different areas of life and attaining their political rights in the right way.

She expressed hope that the conference would yield the desired dividends and come up with an ambitious strategy that goes in compliance with the moderate teachings of Islam and the traditions of our region and Arab societies.

On his part HE Abdul Aziz Abdullah Al Ghurair said Gulf women have achieved remarkable progress in different fields to the extent that “we are now not talking about women’s rights but rather about how to empower women to get their constitutional and legal rights in a proper way.”

“Enabling Gulf women to face up to the challenges that may impede their drive and role in the development of the society requires first and foremost that our women believe in their capabilities and realize that they virtually can change their societies for the better. Women still deal with the issue of women’s empowerment in a shy way. Our Islamic Shari’a preceded all current and international laws in respecting the role of women and empowering them to get their rights in a clear-cut way.”

“But empowerment of women can never be realized in the way we all witness in the Western society. We have our own traditions and values that are a far cry from the Western way of life. Our traditions follow our religious teachings and the norms prevailing in our societies,” he said.

There are crystal-clear evidence on how UAE women have become on the right path to perform their role in different domains, he noted, citing in this regard the “constructive initiatives launched by HH President Sheikh Khlif bin Zayed that constitute the cornerstone for empowering women and raising their status in the society.”

He lauded the government-led initiatives and strategies supervised by HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister, Ruler of Dubai, that are all centered on completing the elements of sustained development in the society, most important among which is women’s empowerment

Anders Johnson, the IPU Secretary General, said the conference comes at a juncture, with the whole world witnessing

“Women’s empowerment is part and parcel of the society’s development plans”

the increasing importance of women’s parliamentary role, referring to the fact that women now account for 17.4% of world parliamentarians, a percentage which he said is still below the aspired level.

He added that the Arab region has achieved tangible progress in this respect, with Arab women now constituting 9% of Arab parliamentarians compared to 4% six years ago. He however underscored the importance of upgrading women’s participation in the parliamentary and political life in the Arab world, singling out in this respect the great strides made by the UAE in raising the level of women’s participation in the FNC.

Dr Amal Abdullah Al Qbeisi, FNC member and the head of the UAE delegation to the conference, voiced the UAE people’s feeling of gratitude to HH Late President Sheikh Zayed “whose prudent policies have been the mainspring behind the social, political and economic boom witness by UAE women at present.”



Sheikha Amina Al Tayer:

Volunteerism is the culmination of creativity & wisdom

H Amina Al Tayer, the chairperson of the Dubai Women's Association has underscored the paramount importance of voluntary work, referring to UAE as a model to be copied in areas of philanthropic activities.

Interviewed by Dubai Sun, Al Tayer said Islam is the source of inspiration for all goodness seekers, noting that her Association is always looking for creative cadres to chip in its multifarious, rich activities.

- How do you view the concept of voluntary work as applied by the

Dubai Women's Association?

Over three decades, the Association has been inculcating the concept of voluntary work among women in the Emirate, given that the UAE society in general is characterized by a spirit of mutual cooperation that binds all its segments who all are working for the common good of the homeland. It goes without saying that HH President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahayan and HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Dubai Ruler, along with their brothers, the members of the UAE Supreme Council- are all sparing no effort to support all voluntary work and initiatives launched by the different

associations working in this field in the country, especially that volunteerism has become a key pillar in the development of the society. This concept itself is deeply rooted in the human history and is inseparably associated with all goodness-related values. The concept, however, differs from one society to another and from one epoch to another. In times of peace, stability and richness, voluntary work declines in volume, while it prospers in times of woes and wars. It could be physical, material, professional or spiritual in its kind and nature. It could be done by individuals and by government in form of social, education or developmental activities.

- **What about the strategy adopted by the Dubai Women's Association in promotion of voluntary work in the Emirate?**

Our methodology in this respect is based on five key axes:

- 1-Inculcation of Islamic values that call for spreading volunteerism and rewarding the persons who devote themselves for the sake of their homeland and the common good of their people.
- 2- Investing and making use of leisurely times in the service of Allah Who in the Noble Qura'n swears by Al Asr in recognition of the value of time in our life. Therefore, the Association seeks to recruit the largest possible number of women to work voluntarily at its administrative, academic, organizational, religious, medical and social sections and departments.
- 3- Accentuating the role played by UAE families in those areas that require creative capabilities and deepening the role of women in the development of

the society.

- 4- Inventing new roles for women in social and human activities.
- 5- Upgrading UAE women's capabilities and skills and empowering them to perform voluntary tasks in the best possible way.

- **What are the key means you employ to attract voluntary personnel to your Association?**

We are doing the following:-

- Intensifying lectures and workshops that underscore the importance of voluntary work.
- Orienting our voluntary staff toward the suitable domains where they can excel themselves.
- Coordinating the efforts of our staff and best utilizing their skills and talents.
- Provision of all possible moral and material incentives.
- Exchange of expertise among charity associations working in areas of voluntary work.
- Conduction of field studies and research on voluntary work.
- Deepening ecological awareness and enhancing sustainable development-



”

**Do
not
kill yourselves,**
for verily Allah has been to you most
Merciful
Euthanasia flies in the face of all religious codes

By Dr Abdul Haq Hamish

“

**Take not life which
Allah made sacred
otherwise than in the
course of justice**

”

T

he sanctity of human life is a basic value as decreed by God even before the times of Musa (Moses), Isa (Jesus) (alayum salam) and Muhammad (PBUH). Commenting on the killing of

Habel (Abel) by his brother Qabil (Caine) (the two sons of Adam), Allah says in the

Qur'an:

"On that account We ordained for the children of Israel that if anyone slay a person - unless it be for murder or spreading mischief in the land- it would be as if he slew the whole people. And if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people" [5:32] .

The Qur'an also says:

"Take not life which Allah made sacred otherwise than in the course of justice" [6:151 and 17:33].

The Shari'ah went into great detail in defining the conditions where taking life is permissible whether in war or in peace (as an item of the criminal law), with rigorous prerequisites and precautions to minimize

that event.

The question that erupts in this respect is: Is there a right to suicide?

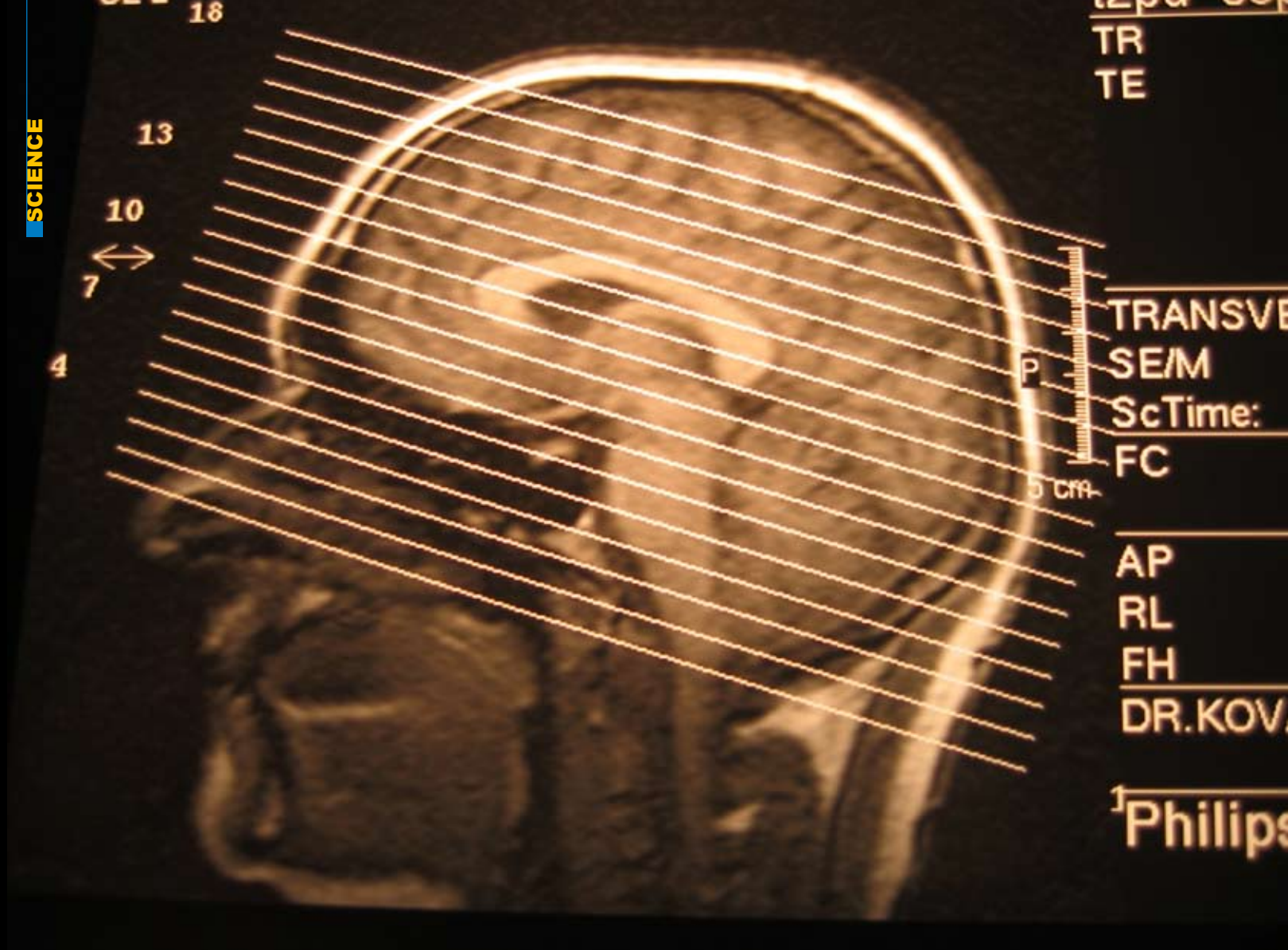
Not in Islam. Since we did not create ourselves we do not own our bodies. We are entrusted with them for care, nurture and safe keeping. God is the owner and giver of life and His rights in giving and in taking are not to be violated. Attempting to kill oneself is a crime in Islam as well as a grave sin. The Qur'an says:

"Do not kill (or destroy) yourselves, for verily Allah has been to you most Merciful" [surah an-Nisa; 4:29].

To warn against suicide prophet Muhammad (salAllahu alayhi wasalam)said:

"Whoever kills himself with an iron instrument will be carrying it forever in hell. Whoever takes poison and kills himself will forever keep sipping that poison in hell. Whoever jumps off a mountain and kills himself will forever keep falling down in the depths of hell." [Hadith]

The Shari'a (Islamic Law) listed and specified the indications for taking life (i.e.



“
**Upon this God said:
 My subject hastened
 his end, I deny him
 paradise**”

the exceptions to the general rule of sanctity of human life), and they do not include mercy killing or make allowance for it.

Human life is a value to be respected unconditionally, irrespective of other

circumstances. The concept of a life not worthy of living does not exist in Islam. Justification of taking life to escape suffering is not acceptable in Islam.

Prophet Muhammad (salAllahu alayhi wasalam) taught: "There was a man in older times who had an inflection that taxed his patience, so he took a knife, cut his wrist and bled to death. Upon this God said: My subject hastened his end, I deny him paradise." [Sahih al-Bukhari 8:603]

During one of the military campaigns one of the Muslims was killed and the companions of the prophet (salAllahu alayhi wasalam) kept praising his gallantry and efficiency in fighting, but, to their

surprise, the Prophet commented, "His lot is hell." Upon inquiry, the companions (radiAllahu anhum) found out that the man had been seriously injured so he supported the handle of his sword on the ground and plunged his chest onto its tip, committing suicide.

The Islamic Code of Medical Ethics endorsed by the First International Conference on Islamic Medicine (Islamic Organization of Medical Sciences, Kuwait, 1981, p.65) includes: "Mercy killing, like suicide, finds no support except in the atheistic way of thinking that believes that our life on this earth is followed by void. The claim of killing for painful hopeless illness is also refuted, for there is no human pain that cannot be largely conquered by medication or by suitable neurosurgery..."

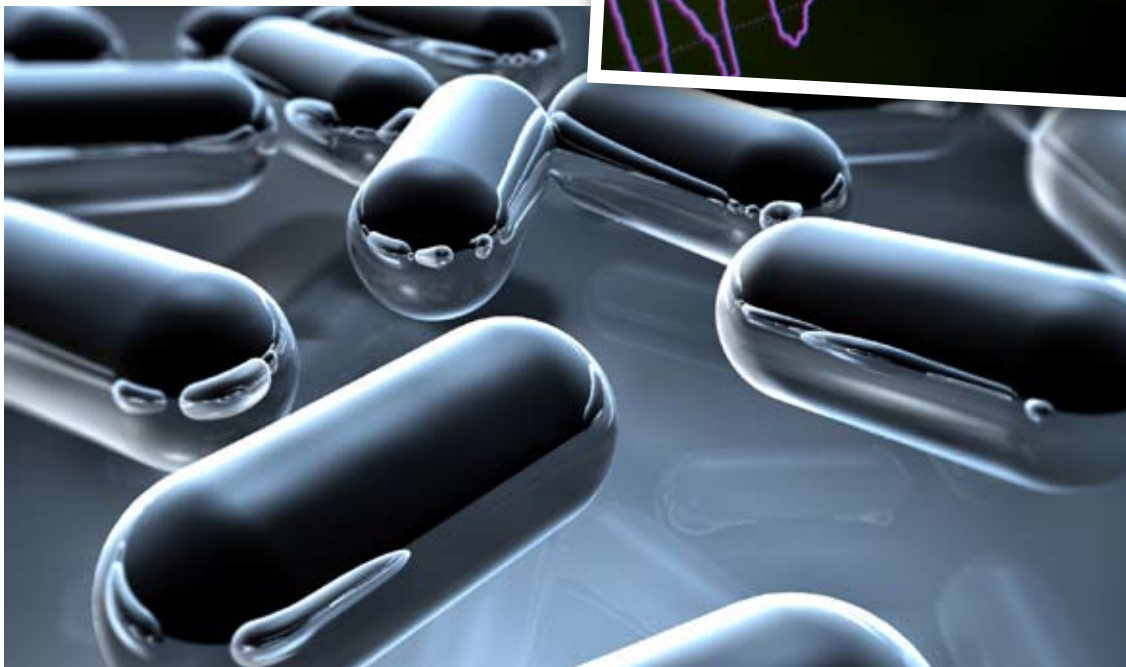
There is still another dimension to the question of pain and suffering. Patience and endurance are highly regarded and highly rewarded values in Islam.

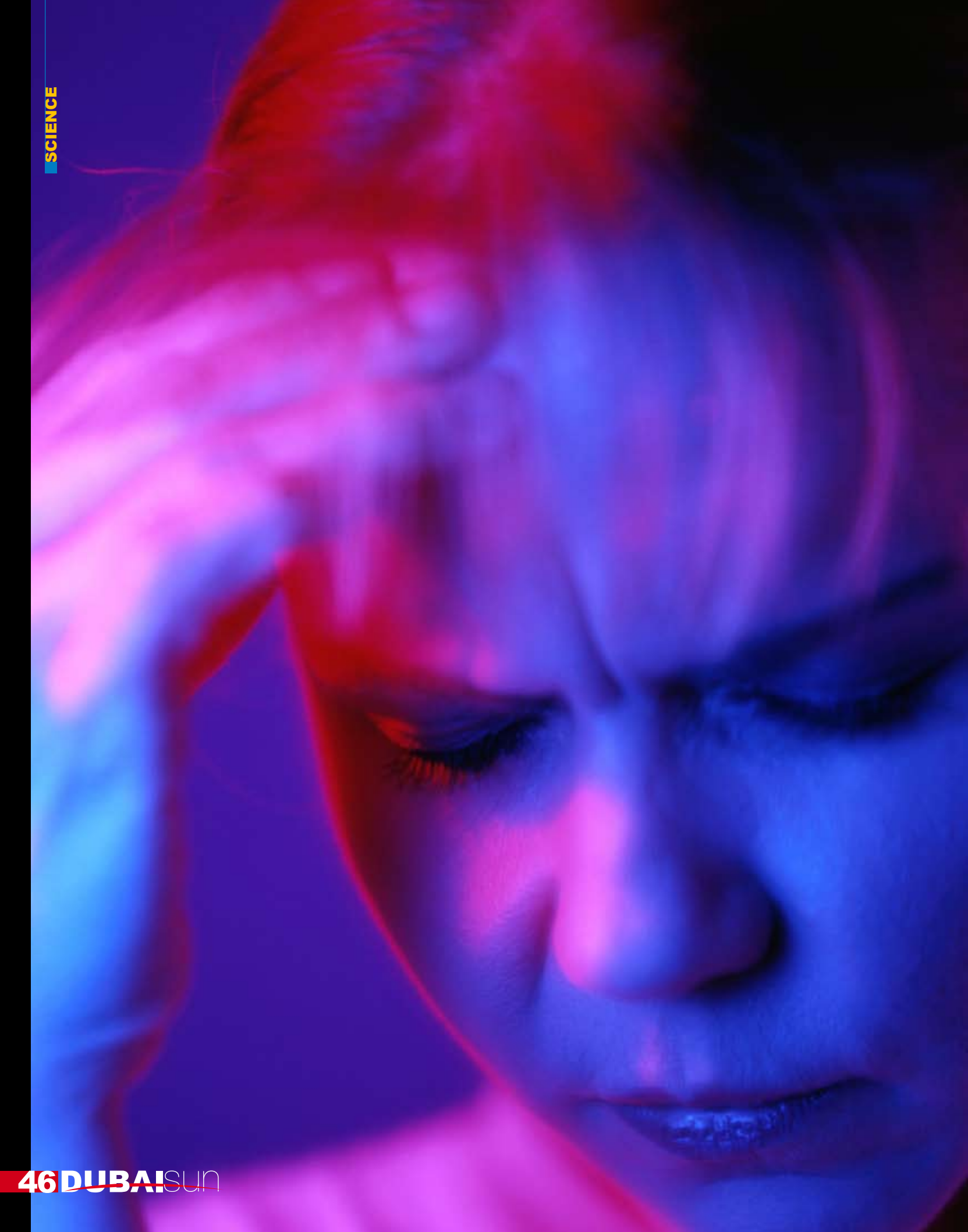
"Those who patiently preserve will truly

receive a reward without measure" [39:10].

"And bear in patience whatever (ill) maybe fall you: this, behold, is something to set one's heart upon" [31:17].

Prophet Muhammad taught "When the believer is afflicted with pain, even that of a prick of a thorn or more, God forgives his sins, and his wrongdoings are





discarded as a tree sheds off its leaves."
[Sahih al-Bukari]

When means of preventing or alleviating pain fall short, this spiritual dimension can be very effectively called upon to support the patient who believes that accepting and standing unavoidable pain will be to his/her credit in the hereafter, the real and enduring life. To a person who does not believe in a

hereafter this might sound like nonsense, but to one who does, euthanasia is certainly nonsense.

Then comes the money factor. There is no disagreement that the financial cost of maintaining the incurably ill and the senile is a growing concern, so much so that some groups have gone beyond the concept of the "right to die" to that of the "duty to die". They claim that when the human machine has outlived its productive span its maintenance is an unacceptable burden on the productive stratum of society, and it should be disposed of, and rather abruptly than allowing it to deteriorate gradually.

This logic is completely alien to Islam. Values take priority over prices. The care for the weak, old and helpless is a value in itself for which people are willing to sacrifice time, effort and money, and this starts, naturally with one's own parents

"Your Lord decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to your parents. Whether one or both of them attain

“
**Your Lord decreed
that you worship
none but Him, and
that you be kind to
your parents**
”





old age in your life, say not to them a word of contempt but address them in terms of honor. And lower to them the wing of humility out of compassion, and say: my Lord, bestow on them Your mercy even as they cherished me in childhood" [17: 25-25].

Because such caring is a virtue ordained and rewarded by Allah in this world and in the hereafter, the believers don't take it as a debit but as an investment. In a materialistic dollar-centric community this logic is meaningless, but not so in the value-oriented God heeding community of the faithful.

When individual means cannot cover the needed care, it becomes, according to Islam, the collective responsibility

of society, and financial priorities are reshuffled so that values take priority over pleasures, and people derive more pleasure from heeding values than from pursuing other pleasantries. A prerequisite of course is a complete moral and spiritual re-orientation of a society that does not hold to these premises.

In an Islamic setting, the question of euthanasia usually does not arise, and if it does, it is dismissed as religiously unlawful. The patient should receive every possible psychological support and compassion from family and friends, including the patient's spiritual (religious) resources. The doctor also participates in this, as well, and provides the therapeutic measures for the relief of pain. A dilemma arises when the dose of the pain killer necessary to alleviate



Sins that do not full fill the criteria of a legal crime are beyond the domain of the judge but remain answerable to Allah

The Islamic Code of Medical Ethics [1981 p.67], states:
 "In his/her defense of life, however, the Doctor is well advised to realize his limit and not transgress it. If it is scientifically certain that life cannot be restored, then it is futile to diligently keep the patient in a vegetative state by heroic means or to preserve the patient by deep freezing or other artificial methods. It is the process of life that the doctor aims to maintain and not the process of dying. In any case, the doctor shall not take a positive measure to terminate the patient's life".

The seeking of medical treatment from illness is mandatory in Islam, according to two sayings of the prophet (salAllahu alayhi wasalam):

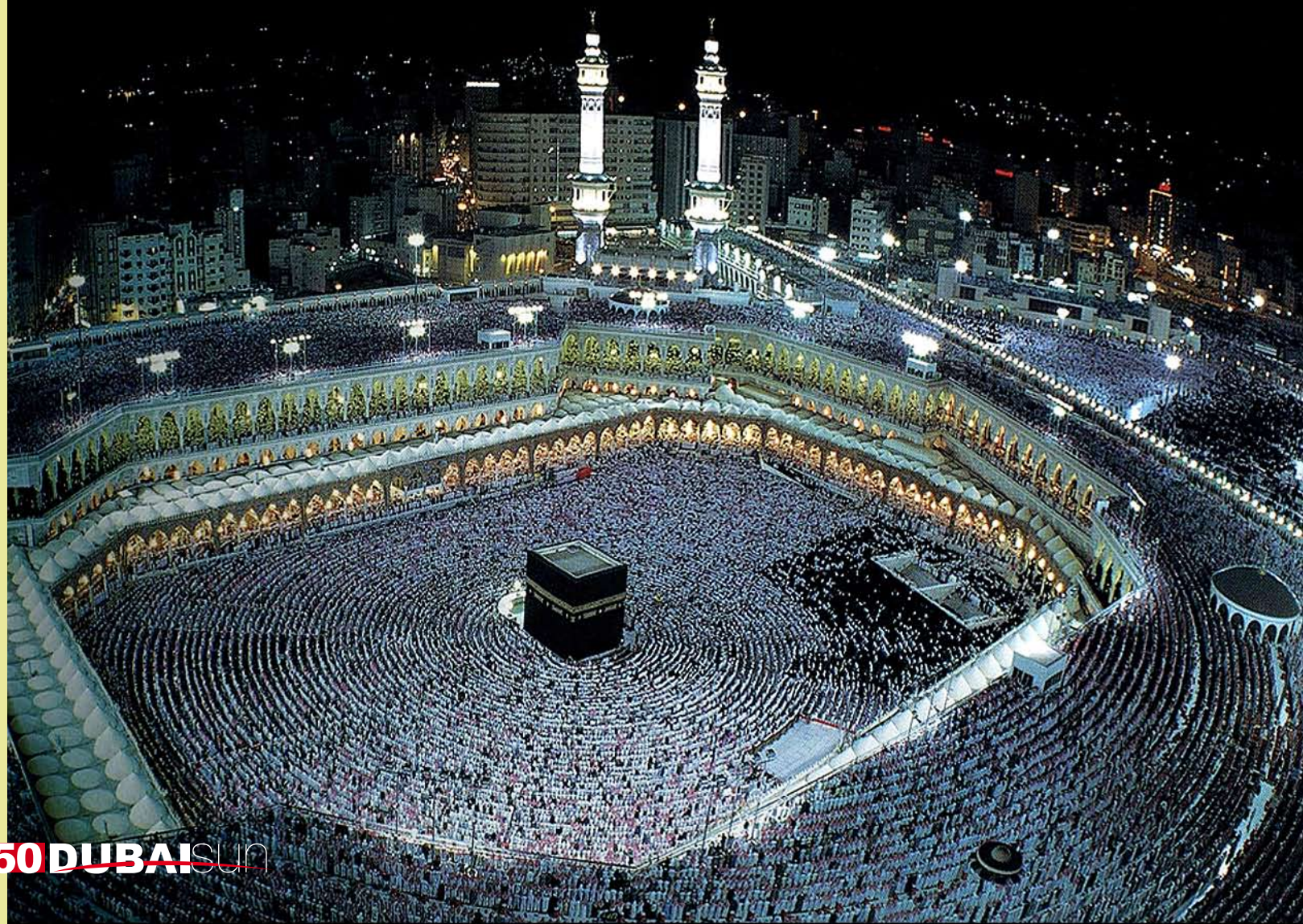
"Seek treatment/cure, subjects of God, for to every illness God has made a cure", and "Your body has a right on you."

pain approximates or overlaps with the lethal dose that might bring about the patient's death.

Ingenuity on the part of the doctor is called upon to avoid this situation, but from a religious point of view the critical issue is the doctor's intention: is it to kill or to alleviate? Intention is beyond verification by the law but according to Islam it cannot escape the ever watchful eye of God Who according to the Qur'an "knows the treachery of the eyes, and all that hearts conceal" [40:19].

But when the treatment holds no promise it ceases to be mandatory. This applies both to surgical and/or pharmaceutical measures, and, according to a majority of scholars, to artificial animation equipment. Ordinary life needs which are the right of every living person and which are not categorized as "treatment" are regarded differently. These include food and drink and ordinary nursing care, and they are not to be withheld as long as the patient lives.

1.5 billion Muslims share a single aspiration to complete the spiritual journey of Hajj



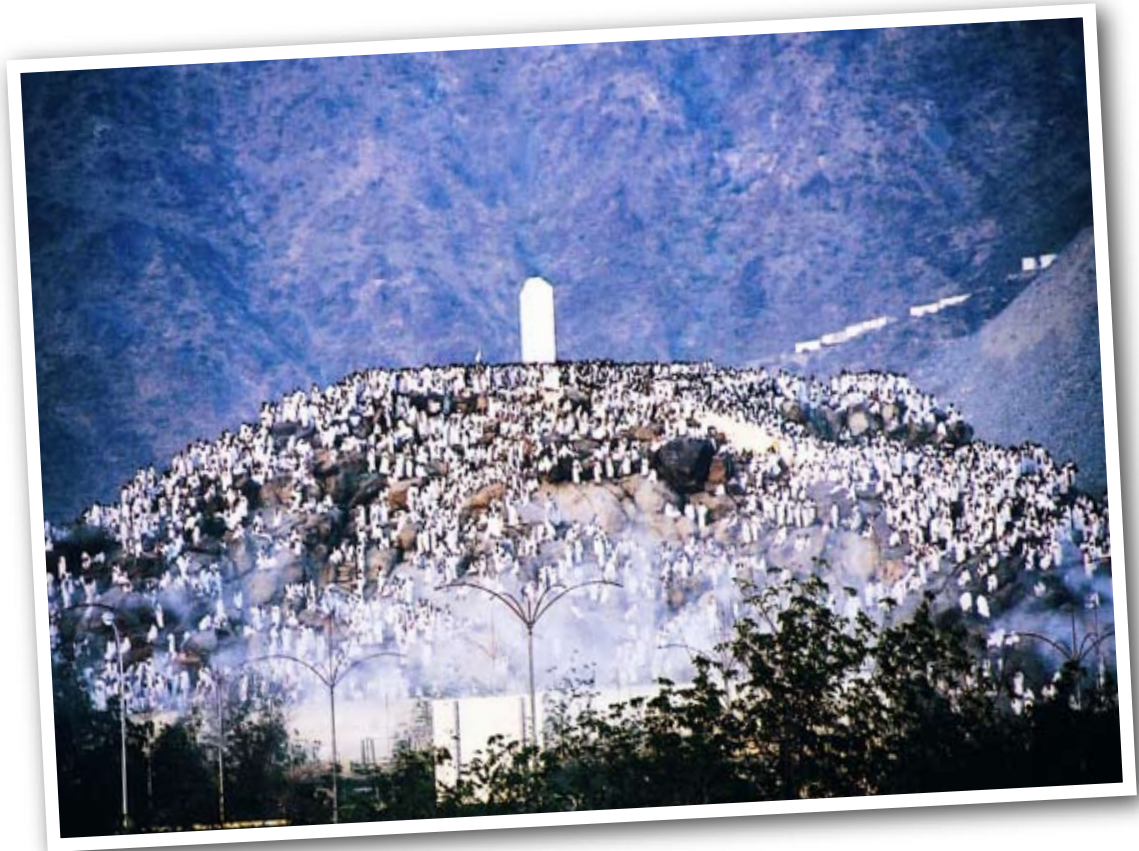
E

Every year, millions of Muslims make the journey of their lifetime. They come from all over the world for the sole purpose of fulfilling one of Allaah's greatest commandments to mankind – the Hajj. Abu Hurayrah narrated that "The Prophet was asked, 'Which is the best deed?' He (PBUH) said: 'To believe in Allaah and His Messenger.' He was then asked, 'Which is the next (good deed)?' He (PBUH) said: 'To participate in Jihaad in Allaah's cause.' He was then asked, 'Which is the next?' He (PBUH) said: 'To perform an accepted Hajj.'" [Al-Bukhaari] For over 1400 years, believers have been making Hajj to the House of Allaah in Makkah. It is an obligation for each and every Muslim to perform Hajj at least once in his/her lifetime



if he is physically and financially able.

Due to the importance of Hajj, preparations for it should not be taken lightly. Besides planning the actual logistics of the trip, the Muslim needs to prepare Islamically, physically, mentally, and~ financially for this great act of worship. Islamically, one of the most important preparations for this journey is acquiring the necessary knowledge for performing the rituals of Hajj and 'Umrah correctly and in accordance to the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH). This means studying and learning about Islam, acquiring a high degree of Eemaan (faith) in order to deal with the emotional and physical demands of Hajj, and learning



correctly the actual religious rituals and requirements from the beginning to the end of Hajj and ‘Umrah. Studying and learning about the Hajj can be accomplished in a variety of fashions, from reading books on the subject or using computer programs which utilize a multimedia format, to actually taking classes offered by Islamic centers on the rituals of Hajj and ‘Umrah. Furthermore, many travel groups that specialize in Hajj and ‘Umrah trips offer Hajj preparation classes as well as scholars and students of knowledge that help those going for Hajj perform the rituals of Hajj and ‘Umrah correctly.

In addition, it is important to mention that spiritually preparing for Hajj and ‘Umrah is also a lesson on how to follow the footsteps of the Prophet (PBUH) who taught the Companions— a lesson that can be transformed into other acts of

worship. Preparing for Hajj is a spiritual experience with a period of self-reflection and a lesson in piety and humility. The pilgrim must focus on his sole intention of performing Hajj. That it is solely for the pleasure of Allaah and in accordance to His Commandment regarding this act of worship. The believer also needs to resolve any conflicts or differences between him and others and seek forgiveness for any acts of transgression. This stage of preparation should take place long before the actual departure for Hajj.

Other preparations that should be planned long before the actual trip are financial in nature. Simply, going to Hajj costs money. Furthermore the pilgrim must pay off any old debts (this includes any type of loans), household bills, and leave enough money to pay any living expenses likely that other members of his family not making

Hajj might need. Finally it is important to complete one's will (wasiyyah) before departing on Hajj.

Another important step in preparing for Hajj is the need to prepare physically for the event. Not only is Hajj a spiritual event, it also requires a lot of physical stamina from the participant. Hajj is not a picnic! Completing the rites of Hajj includes a lot of walking, mixing with many people, living in high temperatures (during summer), and exerting a great deal of effort. Another important step in preparing physically for Hajj is to make sure you are medically fit for the trip. Individuals with chronic health issues need to see their primary care physician in order to discuss any medical risks that need to be addressed prior to their Hajj experience.

Another recommendation is that these individuals also travel with a healthy caretaker in case any problems might arise during the actual Hajj. In addition, pilgrims must have the necessary vaccinations required by the Saudi Government for cholera and meningococcal meningitis. Because of these issues, it is also important to emphasize that one should complete Hajj and 'Umrah as soon as one is able to both physically and financially. Some people wait until they are old to go for Hajj. This is wrong and makes Hajj more difficult than necessary for the participant and in many cases for his traveling companions. Performing Hajj as soon as possible corresponds to the Hadeeth narrated by Abdullaah Ibn Abbaas (PBUH) who said: "The Prophet (PBUH) said: 'He who intended to perform Hajj should hasten to do so.'" [Abu Daawood]

The last pre-logistic preparation centers on preparing mentally for Hajj. This includes learning and accepting that the

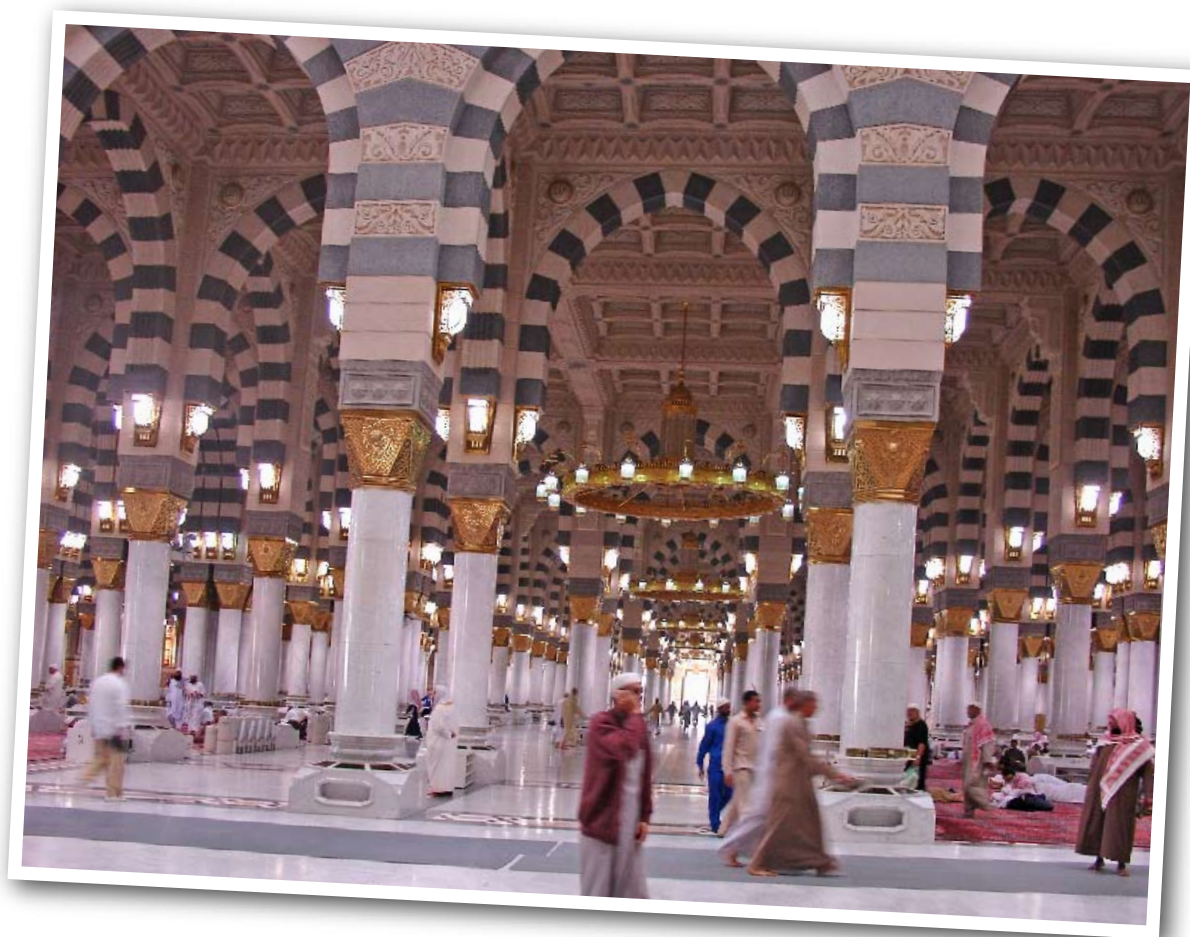
Hajj experience includes frustration, intense desert heat (during summer), and various differences in culture and food. The pilgrim can expect to stand in long lines, be shoved and pushed by others while completing the necessary rituals, and be in an uncomfortable close proximity to members of the opposite sex.

One purpose of Hajj is for the individual to be tested. The individual will be tested on physical, emotional, and spiritual levels.

After preparing oneself internally and financially for one of the most important events in the life of a Muslim, the pilgrim must plan and make actual logistic decisions regarding his/her journey. While one can always make the trip by himself or with a small group of individuals close to him, in this modern day this is not always the best choice. It is not uncommon for hotels to be fully booked for at least one year in advance. Furthermore, unless one starts searching very early, it is also hard to find airline reservations and available flights to Saudi Arabia during the Hajj season and during Ramadhaan for 'Umrah. Because of these challenges in planning, many individuals opt to join a travel group that specializes in Hajj and 'Umrah tours. Since not all tour groups are equal and provide the same quality service, there are a number of items to look for in choosing the right tour group.

The first thing to look for in a group is the price of the trip. Most groups offer a variety of price packages that depend on a variety of factors. These factors include the type of hotel, number of people per room, use of private transportation, and whether or not food is included within the package. Hajj is not the time to go cheap. Since Muslims within the West are generally accustomed to a certain degree of comfort,





some Western Muslims would find less expensive accommodations unacceptable and uncomfortable. For example, during Hajj some hotels accommodate up to 15 people per room sharing a single communal bathroom. Furthermore, many Western Muslims are used to a certain degree of cleanness in their hotel rooms and eating establishments that is not found in all hotels and restaurants. Another factor to consider is the distance of the hotel accommodations from the Haram (the Sacred Area). As a rule of thumb, if the price is too cheap, so is probably the quality of the package. In other words, the cheaper in price of the package, the higher the probability of encountering problems during your Hajj, which in turn, can make for a more difficult Hajj experience.

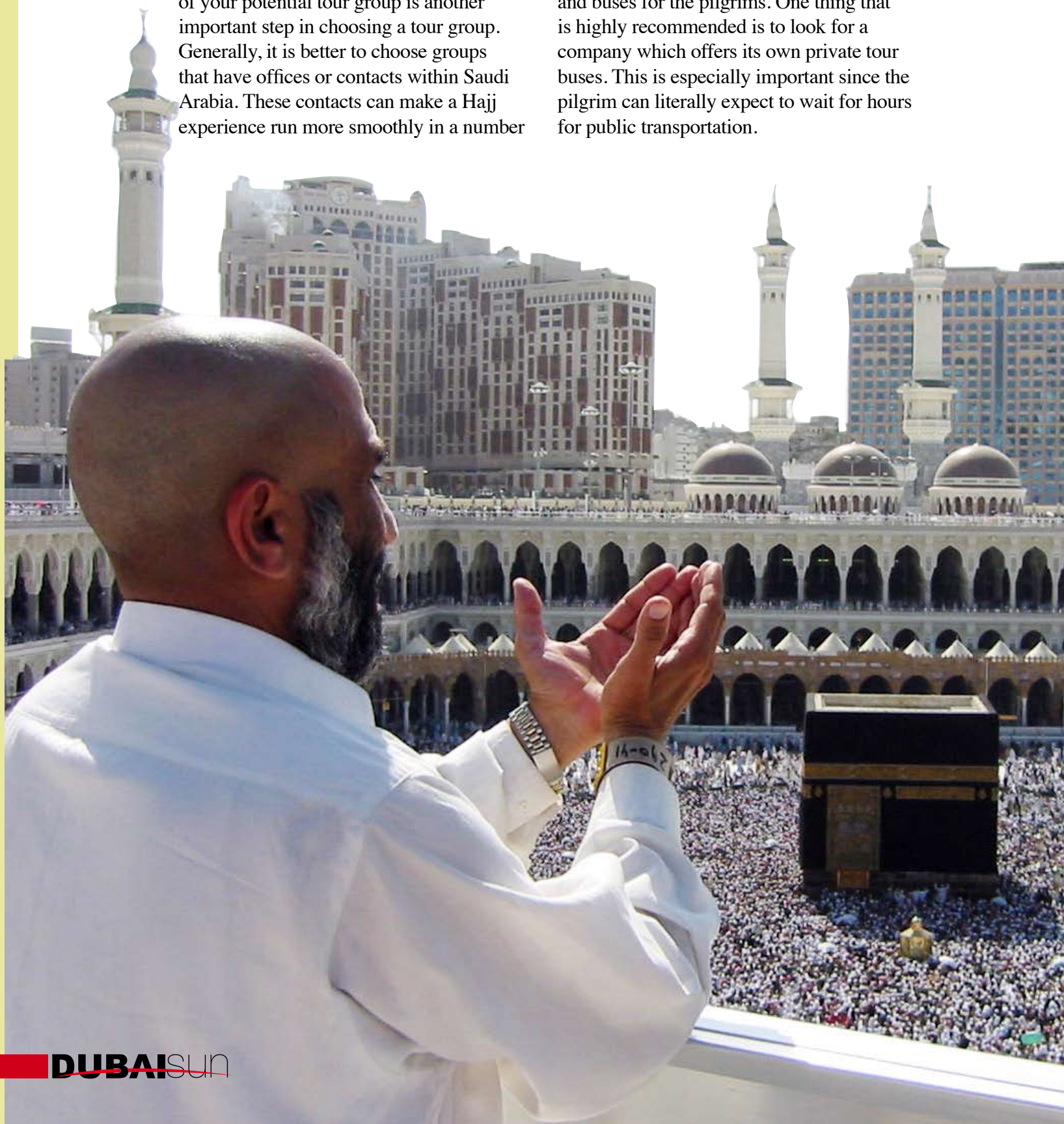
Another thing to look for is the number

of years of experience of the tour operator. Generally, experienced operators are the best since they are able to handle any problems that can and will probably occur during Hajj or 'Umrah. Also it is important to make sure that an experienced leader from the tour group accompanies the group for Hajj, since it is not uncommon to lose members of your group sometimes for hours or even days. Other problems that often occur include lost or stolen belongings and money, illnesses that require medical attention, and the death of a group member. It is important for the pilgrim to understand that their Hajj will not be problem free. Problems arise frequently and an experienced tour operator is needed to handle the situation. When looking for a tour operator, it is important to ask how they handle problems. If the potential tour

operator tells you that you will have a problem free Hajj, continue searching for a better program.

Researching the business strength of your potential tour group is another important step in choosing a tour group. Generally, it is better to choose groups that have offices or contacts within Saudi Arabia. These contacts can make a Hajj experience run more smoothly in a number

of areas which include helping facilitate and streamline the customs process in Jeddah (which can take between 8 to 20 hours) to providing private ground transportation and buses for the pilgrims. One thing that is highly recommended is to look for a company which offers its own private tour buses. This is especially important since the pilgrim can literally expect to wait for hours for public transportation.



Another important quality of the travel agent is the degree they are versed in the rules and regulations of the Hajj process. This includes helping the pilgrims with the VISA process from the Saudi Arabian Embassy or Consulate to understanding the Hajj and 'Umrah rites from an Islamic standpoint. For example, in order for a pilgrim to enter Saudi Arabia, there are certain requirements that need to be met from the Saudi Arabian government. These requirements include the necessary vaccinations; if the person has a non-Muslim name, a letter from a Mosque stating he is Muslim is needed. Women must have proof of being

accompanied by a Mahram (non-marriageable relative). In addition, there are fees that need to be paid in advance for use of the public transportation system and use of the tents in Mina along with the necessary forms that need to be completed in full and approved prior to the trip. It is also best to use a travel agent that utilizes scholars as religious guides for the trip. Besides helping to keep the travel group focused on the worship of Allaah, rather than on worldly distractions such as chatting, playing cards, etc., he is also available to ensure that group members are correctly performing the rituals.

Making Hajj and 'Umrah can be one of the most important events in a Muslim's life. However, one should not make the decision to go on Hajj or 'Umrah at the last minute. The planning of this trip takes time and is a process within itself.

Besides the financial aspects of the trip, one needs to be ready for the trip from an Islamic standpoint. This includes studying Islam, knowing what is obligatory and what is non-obligatory in the rites of 'Umrah and Hajj, and the development of a strong Eemaan (faith). While both the process and task of Hajj can be difficult for some, the rewards of Hajj can be underestimated. In a Hadeeth narrated by Abu Hurayrah the Prophet (PBUH) said: "Whoever performs Hajj for Allaah's pleasure and does not have sexual relations with his wife and does not do evil or sins then he will return [after Hajj free from all sins] as if he were born anew." [Al-Bukhaari]

The pilgrimage takes place each year between the eighth and the 13th days of Dhu al-Hijjah, the 12th month of the Muslim lunar calendar. Its first rite is the





donning of the ihram.

The ihram is a symbol of purity and of the renunciation of evil and mundane matters. It also indicates the equality of all people in the eyes of God. When the pilgrim wears his white apparel, he or she enters into a state of purity that prohibits quarreling, committing violence to man or animal and having conjugal relations. Once he puts on his hajj clothes the pilgrim cannot shave, cut his nails or wear any jewelry, and he will keep his unsown garment on till he completes the pilgrimage.

A pilgrim who is already in Makkah

starts his hajj from the moment he puts on the ihram. Some pilgrims coming from a distance may have entered Makkah earlier with their ihram on and may still be wearing it. The donning of the ihram is accompanied by the primary invocation of the hajj, the talbiyah:

Here I am, O God, at Thy Command!
Here I am at Thy Command! Thou art without associate; Here I am at Thy Command! Thine are praise and grace and dominion! Thou art without associate.

The thunderous, melodious chants of the talbiyah ring out not only in Makkah but also at other nearby sacred locations connected with the hajj.

On the first day of the hajj, pilgrims sweep out of Makkah toward Mina, a small uninhabited village east of the city. As their throngs spread through Mina, the pilgrims generally spend their time meditating and praying, as the Prophet did on his pilgrimage.

During the second day, the 9th of Dhu al-Hijjah, pilgrims leave Mina for the plain of 'Arafat for the wuqf, "the standing," the central rite of the hajj. As they congregate there, the pilgrims' stance and gathering reminds them of the Day of Judgment. Some of them gather at the Mount of Mercy, where the Prophet delivered his unforgettable Farewell Sermon, enunciating far-reaching religious, economic, social and political reforms. These are emotionally charged hours, which the pilgrims spend in worship and supplication. Many shed tears as they ask God to forgive them. On this sacred spot, they reach the culmination of their religious lives as they feel the presence and closeness of a merciful God.

The Prophet is reported to have asked God to pardon the sins of pilgrims who "stood" at 'Arafat, and was granted his

wish. Thus, the hopeful pilgrims prepare to leave this plain joyfully, feeling reborn without sin and intending to turn over a new leaf.

Just after sunset, the mass of pilgrims proceeds to Muzdalifah, an open plain about halfway between 'Arafat and Mina. There they first pray and then collect a fixed number of chickpea-sized pebbles to use on the following days.

Before daybreak on the third day, pilgrims move en masse from Muzdalifah to Mina. There they cast at white pillars the pebbles they have previously collected. According to some traditions, this practice is associated with the Prophet Abraham. As pilgrims throw seven pebbles at each of these pillars, they remember the story of Satan's attempt to persuade Abraham to disregard God's command to sacrifice his son.

Throwing the pebbles is symbolic of humans' attempt to cast away evil and vice, not once but seven times - the number seven symbolizing infinity.

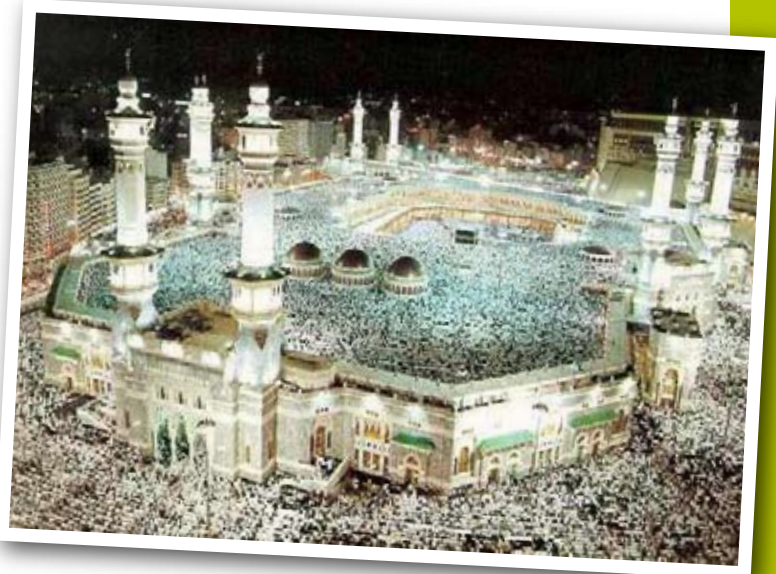
Following the casting of the pebbles, most pilgrims sacrifice a goat, sheep or some other animal. They give the meat to the poor after, in some cases, keeping a small portion for themselves.

This rite is associated with Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his son in accordance with God's wish. It symbolizes the Muslim's willingness to part with what is precious to him, and reminds us of the spirit of Islam, in which submission to God's will plays a leading role. This act also reminds the pilgrim to share worldly goods with those who are less fortunate, and serves as an offer of thanksgiving to God.

As the pilgrims have, at this stage, finished a major part of the hajj, they are now allowed to shed their ihram and put on everyday clothes. On this day Muslims around the world share the happiness the pilgrims feel and join them by performing identical, individual sacrifices in a worldwide celebration of 'Id al-Adha, "the Festival of Sacrifice." Men either shave their heads or clip their hair, and women cut off a symbolic lock, to mark their partial deconsecration. This is done as a symbol of humility. All proscriptions, save the one of conjugal relations, are now lifted.

Still sojourning in Mina, pilgrims visit Makkah to perform another essential rite of the hajj: the tawaf, the seven-fold circling of the Ka'bah, with a prayer recited during each circuit. Their circumambulation of the Ka'bah, the symbol of God's oneness, implies that all human activity must have God at its center. It also symbolizes the unity of God and man.

While making their circuits pilgrims may kiss or touch the Black Stone. This oval stone, first mounted in a silver frame late in the seventh century, has a special place in the hearts of Muslims as, according to some traditions, it is the sole remnant



of the original structure built by Abraham and Ishmael. But perhaps the single most important reason for kissing the stone is that the Prophet did so.

No devotional significance whatsoever is attached to the stone, for it is not, nor has ever been, an object of worship. The second caliph, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, made this crystal clear when, on kissing the stone himself in emulation of the Prophet, he proclaimed: "I know that you are but a stone, incapable of doing good or harm. Had I not seen the Messenger of God kiss you - may God's blessing and peace be upon him - I would not kiss you."

After completing the tawaf, pilgrims pray, preferably at the Station of Abraham, the site where Abraham stood while he built the Ka'bah. Then they drink of the water of Zamzam.



Another, and sometimes final, rite is the sa'y, or "the running." This is a reenactment of a memorable episode in the life of Hagar, who was taken into what the Qur'an calls the "uncultivable valley" of Makkah, with her infant son Ishmael, to settle there.

The sa'y commemorates Hagar's frantic search for water to quench Ishmael's thirst. She ran back and forth seven times between two rocky hillocks, al-Safa and al-Marwah, until she found the sacred water known as Zamzam. This water, which sprang forth miraculously under Ishmael's tiny feet, is now enclosed in a marble chamber the Ka'bah.

These rites performed, the pilgrims are completely deconsecrated: They may resume all normal activities. According to the social customs of some countries, pilgrims can henceforth proudly claim the title of al-Hajj or Hajji.

They now return to Mina, where they stay up to the 12th or 13th day of Dhu al-Hijjah. There they throw their remaining pebbles at each of the pillars in the manner either practiced or approved by the Prophet. They then take leave of the friends they have made during the Hajj. Before leaving Makkah, however, pilgrims usually make a final tawaf round the Ka'bah to bid farewell to the Holy City.

Usually pilgrims either precede or follow the hajj, "the greater pilgrimage," with the 'umrah, "the lesser pilgrimage," which is sanctioned by the Qur'an and was performed by the Prophet. The 'umrah, unlike the hajj, takes place only in Makkah itself and can be performed at any time of the year. The ihram, talbiyah and the restrictions required by the



state of consecration are equally essential in the 'umrah, which also shares three other rituals with the hajj: the tawaf, sa'y and shaving or clipping the hair. The observance of the 'umrah by pilgrims and visitors symbolizes veneration for the unique sanctity of Makkah.

Before or after going to Makkah, pilgrims also avail themselves of the opportunity provided by the hajj or the 'umrah to visit the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah, the second holiest city in Islam. Here, the Prophet lies buried in a simple grave under the green dome of the mosque. The visit to Madinah is not obligatory, as it is not part of the hajj or 'umrah, but the city - which welcomed Muhammad when he migrated there from Makkah - is rich in moving memories and historical sites that are evocative of him as a prophet and statesman.

In this city, loved by Muslims for centuries, people still feel the presence of the Prophet's spirit. Muhammad Asad, an Austrian Jew who converted to Islam in 1926 and made five pilgrimages between 1927 and 1932, comments on this aspect of the city: "Even after thirteen centuries [the Prophet's] spiritual presence is almost as alive here as it was then. It was only because of him that the scattered group of villages once called Yathrib became a city and has been loved by all Muslims down to this day as no city anywhere else in the world has ever been loved. It has not even a name of its own: for more than thirteen hundred years it has been called Madinat an-Nabi, 'the City of the Prophet.' For more than thirteen hundred years, so much love has converged here that all shapes and movements have acquired a kind of family resemblance, and all differences of appearance find a tonal transition into a common harmony.



UAE

Helping the needy and the have-nots is one typical aspect of UAE people's nature, accentuates Mr. Ahmed Mesmar, the Secretary General of the Dubai Charity Association (DCA). Mesmar, interviewed by Dubai Sun, said the UAE people owe a great deal to HH Late President Sheikh Zayed bin Maktoum who sowed the seeds of benevolence and latitudinarianism in the UAE society. He elaborated on the multi-faceted activities undertaken by the DCA inside and outside the Emirate.

People are philanthropic by nature:

DCA Secretary General

- Can you elaborate on the establishment of Dubai Charity Association?

-Dubai Charity Association (DCA) has started its endeavor for charitable and humanitarian activities since 1994 after being incorporated in Dubai under the Ministerial Decision No. 85/1994 issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

- What about the DCA's local and international activities?

- We are implementing a wide scope of projects inside and outside the UAE, including the construction of mosques, maintenance and furnishing of the Holy Quran recitation centres, sponsoring orphans, execution of Ramadan projects, sacrifices projects, Eid clothing projects, provide school bags for poor students, providing hiring facility for wedding



dressess and jewellery, providing cash and in kind assistance to those who are in need, and provision of water coolers for mosques and residential complexes. Also there are the following activities:

Distribution of Penance, Meat of Aqa'iq, Sadaqat and Foodstuff,

Sending Pilgrims (Al Hajjij) for Pilgrimage (Hajj) at its expense, and

Execution of Substitutes Pilgrimage Projects (Hajj Badal Project).

Outside the UAE we also undertake a variety of projects including the establishment of charitable centres such as mosques, schools, medical centres, drilling of water wells, sponsoring of orphans, participating in Ramadhan projects, Adhahi projects, Eid Clothing Projects and providing urgent relief assistance .

- How do you evaluate the aid programmes offered by charity associations in Dubai?

-Humanitarian and charity associations in the UAE in general and Dubai in particular are now playing a key role not only on the local level but also on the international one. All these associations are working for the common good of the needy and the have-nots. Such a charitable tendency is typical of the UAE citizen who is benevolent and latitudinarian by nature. It was Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nuhayan who sowed the seeds of mercifulness and charity in the souls of our citizens. His good deeds and altruistic nature are evident everywhere. HH Sheikh Khalifa and HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid also follow suit and set examples to be copied by all charity lovers and urge our citizens to follow in the same footsteps. Charity associations in Dubai play great roles in this respect, with some of them working outside the Emirate and vie for the common good of the needy and have-nots.

- How do you view charity as part and parcel of Islam?



-Islam is a well-integrated, all-embracing religion that urges its followers to be kind-hearted and do-good throughout their whole life. We are ordained by God and His Apostle (PBUH) to help the needy and the have-nots. Islam never distinguishes between the haves and the have-nots in this respect, urging both parties to be beneficent, big-hearted and altruistic. Any good deeds and charitable works undertaken by Muslims are considered an act of Ibada, he or she perform for God's sake in order to win the Paradise in the Hereafter.