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And let us know what you think!

Although we were enjoying our usual summer only a few weeks ago, at the time of writing, the shorter days and the autumnal weather has made the summer a distant memory. The first school term of the new academic year is approaching half time and soon other seasonal weather and events will dominate the headlines.

Once again the schools in High Wycombe have had outstanding success in the GCSE and 'A' level results with some schools setting new records. Nevertheless, it will not be a surprise that the pupils from the Pakistani and African Caribbean communities and from the 'white' working class will not have done as well as the mainstream.

If further evidence was needed that the lack of educational achievement substantially determines your future life chances then one only has to read the official comprehensive national report on equality by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC); published in early October.

Contact the MPA:

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See what Aneesa has been doing at
Holmer Green School on page 6

This was the first three yearly report produced by EHRC . The report highlights that the earnings of Pakistani and Bangladeshi men are 13% and 21 % below average respectively. Moreover, lack of opportunities, in the professions, available to the Pakistani origin men is reinforced by the fact that one in four Pakistani men in Britain is a taxi driver or similar. On top of this only 47% of Muslim men are in employment and only 24% of the women. The report notes that there is evidence to suggest that discrimination in the recruitment process keeps them out of jobs, but lack of formal educational qualifications may be another factor.

The fact that families from the ethnic minority communities have lower levels of income translates in the fact that according to the report black Caribbean and Pakistani babies are twice as likely to die in their first year than white British babies. *Cont'd on page 3.*

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Cressex on the Move by David Hood, Headteacher

Cressex Community School has had much to celebrate over the summer of 2010. Firstly, and most importantly, our young people have achieved the best set of results in the history of the school so far. Approximately 37% of them achieved 5 good passes at GCSE including English and Maths, with over 50% gaining 5 A*-C grades in any subject. This is certainly a step change. We believe that we can do better still and we are looking to build on these positive results as we move into the future.

It is also worth pointing out that, as in previous years, our most able students gained excellent grades that stand comparison with those of students in grammar schools. Our highest attaining boy got 14 passes at grade B and above, including 10 at A* or A. Our highest attaining girl had 9 A* or A grades out of 13 passes overall.

The second great event was, of course, the move into our spectacular new building. While we have had the inevitable teething problems to contend with, it is true to say that students and staff alike have settled into their new surroundings quickly and well. Especially in the light of the new government's decision to curtail the new schools' building programme, we know how lucky we are and are intent on making the most of the opportunities on offer. The old Cressex school building is well on the way to being demolished. Over the course of the winter and spring the great piles of rubble will make way for a car park, "astroturf" games areas and a landscaped field for sports and recreation.

In the third week of September, we held our open evening and morning for parents and pupils in Year 6 of primary schools. In stark contrast to the modest levels of interest in recent years, we were delighted to welcome some hundreds of visitors into school. Even if, in the end, some parents and their children decide that our school is not for them, we are very pleased at the increased open mindedness with which we are considered. All of us who work there know that Cressex is a very special place and it looks as though our view is becoming more widely shared!

If any reader would like to visit us at school or to find out more, please contact us via email (office@cressex.bucks.sch.uk) or phone (01494 437729).

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Cont'd from page 1...

On a positive note the report states that the Chinese pupils outperform the children from the mainstream and the difference between the performances of Chinese children with or without free school meals is marginal. This is due mainly to the Chinese work ethic because the Chinese culture is all about hard work, standing on your own two feet and taking responsibility for yourself, which the parents instill into the children from an early age. Perhaps the rest of us need to take a leaf out of the Chinese community's attitudes to hard work.

The MPA is also trying to help raise awareness about the importance of education and to this end is seeking the help of young professionals, some of whom, it is hoped, will become mentors and role models for the younger pupils. So if you think you can lend a hand then please get in touch. In particular please let us know if you would like to be invited to a meeting in mid December, when some top professionals are expected to tell us how all of us can help raise standards in education.

The Summer also saw the worst devastation caused by flooding in Pakistan from early August, which affected about 20 million people, with the majority in the affected areas losing their homes, land, infrastructure such as roads, bridges, hospitals and schools) as well as livestock, stores of grain and even members of their families.

It has been heartening to learn that the international community in general and the Pakistani Diaspora in particular have donated generously to a myriad of charitable organisations. I hazard to guess but High Wycombe alone has probably raised a sum between £100,000 and £200,000. Another welcome development has been the setting of 'Wycombe Disaster Relief' with the initiative coming from the African Caribbean and the Muslim Community in High Wycombe in general. WDR will initially raise resources for helping the flood victims in Pakistan, many of whom are only just returning to the areas washed away by the floods. The communities in the remote north of the country will shortly be facing bitter cold and snow from early next month and WDR is shortly to launch an appeal for warm clothing and shoes, which will be delivered free of charge to the charities in Pakistan by PIA.

It is also amazing to note that the incarceration and freeing of 33 Chilean miners after 10 weeks has lifted the spirits of everyone around the world and one hopes that none of the other poor people have to go through the agony. But the fact is that many people around the world have no choice but to work in unsafe working environments so that they can put meagre amounts of food on the table for their families.

It is hoped that this issue of the MPA Newsletter contains some informative articles and trust you will feel free to let us have your usual feedback and even an article for the next issue.

A Wish for a happy and Peaceful EID AL ADHA From THARA

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Highcrest Community School raises £216.00 for Pakistan Flood Relief

On Thursday the 9th September the students at Highcrest Community School raised £216.00 by creating structures with silver and copper coins. Year 8 won the prize for best structure, which represented the rebuilding of Pakistan. The Sixth Form raised the most amount of money by a year group, which was £52.24p.



6th formers who raised the most money



Winning Year 8's

Steve Baker, Wycombe's new MP gives his first term's report

I should like to take this opportunity to say how privileged I feel to be the MP for Wycombe. I recognise the trust placed in me and I will honour this by representing you faithfully in parliament and in the constituency.

There are many challenges facing the country at the moment, and the coalition government is taking many hard decisions to cope with the legacy we have inherited. The most significant challenge ahead is the need to put the public finances on a sustainable footing. This must be done in a way which is both responsible and fair. However, it would be a mistake to believe that this Government is just about sorting out the deficit. I want to work with others to change our country for the better.

Plans have already been announced for long-overdue reform of schools, hospitals, prisons, the police and the welfare system. We want to replace the old top-down system so that public services are accountable to the people and not central government bureaucracy. We want to put power in the hands of individuals, families and communities so they can build the good society in which they want to live.

I am deeply encouraged by the recent progress made at Cressex School. I know the staff, governors and students have worked hard to achieve the progress reported by Ofsted. I was delighted by the launch of the Cressex Co-operative Learning Partnership in June. I think everyone who has seen the new building and facilities will agree they are very good and that they will help to create the right environment for learning. I hope that the partnership between the dedicated staff and governors at Cressex School and other schools and education bodies in the area - such as Dr Challenors, Wycombe Abbey and Buckinghamshire New University - will ensure the opportunities offered to pupils will expand and their learning will be enriched. I wish the school ever greater success.

Lastly, you can always email me at steve.baker.mp@parliament.uk to give me your views on any subject. I am always pleased to receive invitations to any charity or community activity in the area and – if I am free – will be delighted to support you.

Here is how Children's Centres can support parents of young children

Children's Centres are here to support all families with children under the age of five. In discussion with partners, evidence suggests that many Pakistani children, in High Wycombe, begin school at 3 years of age needing to develop their communication and language skills and with little or no experience in pre-school groups. We would like to work with the Pakistani parents so they can continue supporting their children's learning within the home environment. Our Family Support Workers can also come to your home and together you can identify your family's needs and they will help you access services that you are entitled too.

The following are some examples of services we provide:

Stay And Play, Messy Play, Story Time, Organised Walks, Childcare, ESOL, Citizens Advice Bureau, Baby Clinic, Baby Massage, Speech & Language Support, Bedtime routines, Behaviour Management, Choosing Childcare/School, Family Support (at home), Parenting Classes, Job Centre Plus, Childminders and Disability Groups. We even have some services delivered on the weekends to give dads the opportunity to bring their children along, spend some quality time together and be more involved in their children's learning.

We currently also have the ROSPA Scheme (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) running in the High Wycombe area and we are providing free home safety checks and equipment for families. Please contact your nearest children's centre.

We also work in partnership with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) to promote healthy lifestyles. If you have any concerns around either your children or your own health, please contact your local children's centre and ask to speak to a Health Visitor.

We also continue to encourage Pakistani parents to join their local Parents Forum or Advisory Board and be involved in making decisions at their local children's centre, which help us shape our services. We provide you with knowledge; skills & training and value your views and opinions. We look forward to hearing from you or seeing you at our services in the near future.

List of all the Children's Centres in the High Wycombe Area:

- **Wycombe (Abbey) Children's Centre**, Chepping View Primary School, Cressex Road, HP12 4PR.
Centre leader: Charlotte Williams, 01494 475473/475474
- **Wycombe (Castlefield)**, The Centre, Rutland Avenue, Castlefield, HP12 3LL.
Centre leader: Charlotte Williams, 01494 475475
- **Wycombe (Disraeli and Downley)**, Disraeli School The Pastures HP13 5JS.
Centre leader: Jatinda Virk, 01494 445177
- **Wycombe (East)**, Ash Hill Primary School, Herbert Road, HP13 7HT.
Centre leader: Paul Lovell, 01494 446785
- **Wycombe (Hampden Way)**, Star Blocks Community Centre, Hampden Way, HP13 7TJ.
Centre leader: Stephanie Perry, 01494 512138
- **Wycombe (Terriers and Amersham Hill)**, 2 Hamilton Road, HP13 5BW.
Centre leader: Farzana Kausar, 01494 510830
- **Wycombe (West)**, Millbrook Combined School, Mill End Road, HP12 4BA.
Centre leader: Farzana Kausar, 01494 447110

Disclaimer: This article is written to help raise awareness about 'Children's Centres' amongst the Pakistani community in High Wycombe. However, we are an inclusive organisation and work with all groups within the community

Buckinghamshire Young Person of the Year Awards – Tuesday 12th October 2010.

Sixth Form students from Holmer Green Senior School were proud to organise, manage and present the **Buckinghamshire Young Person of the Year Awards** at Pinewood Studios on Tuesday 12th October 2010.

The school was approached by Tony Gearing, the founder of this prestigious award ceremony and celebrated across all counties in England, to ensure that this celebration of remarkable endeavour and acts of charity was run by young people, for young people.

I was so proud and delighted to be asked to be a co-presenter for the evening and along with my friends and fellow Sixth Formers, Ross, Dafe and Mel, had to give an address about the nominees to a specially invited audience of local dignitaries. We had to use auto cue which was a bit of a shock but makes you look and feel so professional addressing the packed audience. We also had to interview the nominees after our introductions to allow them to say a few words about how their achievements have helped them develop personal skills and confidence. My nominees included Arsalan Raza an eighteen year old from Burnham Grammar school who has done an amazing job raising money for charities through volunteering work.

As the evening approached the nerves really kicked in but once I got up on stage I had an adrenaline rush and overcame them. It was great fun and a tremendous experience. There were over twenty Holmer Green Sixth Formers involved with roles ranging from managing the guests to running the technical equipment as well as interviewing nominees and dignitaries.

I'm in the process of applying to university and really want to go to Royal Holloway to study Psychology. I am thrilled to have had this experience to take a leading role in such an important event – and to go to Pinewood Studios. It will certainly look good on my UCAS application. Just a pity we didn't get to meet Johnny Depp!

Aneesa Hussain Year 13 Holmer Green Senior School

Why not tell us what is going on in your school?

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Become more involved with the MPA?

If you wish to write about something then please e-mail your contribution as soon as possible. Articles should be or about 500 words; however, if there is something of a more serious nature then please still limit it to one page of this Newsletter and e-mail it as soon as possible.

Making Connections

'Making Connections' is an intergenerational oral history project run by Wycombe Museum and funded through 'Wycombe One Community'. There is a management committee for the project on which John Bajina and Rafiq Raja of MPA sit. The aim of the project has been to bring together young people aged 14-19 with older residents of Wycombe, to record oral memories. The recorded memories will be acquired into the Museum's collection for current and future generations to use. Excerpts from some of the recordings will also be available on new Museum web pages. These pages will launch at the end of October 2010 and will be added to over the coming months, as the number of recordings increase.

The Museum does not have very much in its collection that reflects the diversity of culture in Wycombe today. We hope that 'Making Connections' will help us to collect stories and objects of residents who have moved here since the 1960s. The project has started by specifically working with Asian and African-Caribbean residents, though as it develops we hope to work with many other residents too.

Eighteen young people are currently involved in 'Making Connections', they gave their time freely over their summer holidays to attend some training on Oral History recording. Many have already started to record interviews. The young people are also involved in the selection of the excerpts for the web pages and transcribing the interviews. This part of the process is particularly time consuming and requires a great deal of concentration. We have been very impressed by the students involved in the project, who have all shown enthusiasm, commitment and an understanding of what we are trying to achieve.

Can You Help Us?

We are looking for people for the young interviewers to record. Interviews last about 30 minutes and can take place here at the Museum or at a mutually agreeable venue. Many people feel that they have nothing interesting to tell, however our experience is that everyone has something that will interest others. We are looking for memories that will tell what it was like to settle in Wycombe, as well as memories that say something about everyday life – going to school, leisure and sport activities, raising a family, practising religion or work life. These memories can be from anytime and may be about raising a family in Wycombe today or moving here 50 years ago, all contributions are welcome.

Launch Evening – 28 October 2010 6.30-9pm at Wycombe Museum

We are holding a launch evening for 'Making Connections' on 28 October. At the evening there will be an opportunity to hear some of the recordings that have already been made, many of the participants and people interviewed will also be there. If you are interested in supporting the work this would be an ideal opportunity to come along and find out some more about it and perhaps put your name forward to be interviewed. The Museum will be open for you to have a look around and refreshments provided.

To find out more or to let us know you can attend the launch evening please contact Zara Luxford at Wycombe Museum on 01494 421895 or zara_luxford@wycombe.gov.uk



Hajj this year will take place in the Middle of November and many people from High Wycombe will shortly be flying out, some for the first time. Here a sister gives some useful tips for the first part of the Hajj. May the pilgrims travel in safety and enjoy the experience of a lifetime.

Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam and its performance can be achieved only once a year on the 9th of Zulhijj (the last month of Islamic calendar), whereas the Umrah (Umrah is called a mini Hajj) and can be undertaken at any time and any day of the year. Before beginning your journey bear in mind that your intentions are to perform the Hajj or Umrah and that one should be in a state of patience and peace and be able to help those who are weaker and elderly around you, this is a good deed. Be selfish in earning the good deeds.

Due to the high volume of air traffic during the time of Hajj your flight may experience some delays. Some people manage to completely read more than one, two or sometime three Qur'ans from the time of departure for Hajj and return.

If your flight is direct to Jeddah then you must make your ***niah*** (intentions for Hajj) by offering two raka's in the state of Ihram before departure. If you land in Jeddah without the state of Ihram you must go outside the ***Miqat*** (boundary) the nearest being close to Madina and still have to do Fidyah (in other words to slaughter an animal goat or lamb for the sake of Allah to compensate for the mistake by entering in the Miqat without having an Ihram on). Then and only then you may enter Makkah in the state of Ihram. However, if your flight stops anywhere in the Middle East before Jeddah, then you can change into Ihram at the transit airport. An announcement (in the airplane) is made at least half an hour before the boundary of ***Miqat*** to allow you to change into your Ihram. Whilst in flight upon entering the ***Miqat*** say; ***I answer your call with Hajj***, and then start reciting ***The Talbiyah***: (translated)

***Here I am at Your service O Lord, here I am. Here I am. There is no partner to You. Here I am.
Truly, the praise and favour is Yours, and the dominion. There is no partner to You.***

The above is recited as many times as possible and upon every new journey you make that takes you closer to Al Haram (The Ka'baa) and the ritual journeys of Hajj.

On arrival at Jeddah airport expect delays for the legal process of coming for Hajj. This process can take several hours, so be patient and recite the Qur'an, keep reminding yourselves the reason of your journey. May Allah give you patience.

Some useful Suggestions

Upon arrival at your hotel in Makkah rest and be refreshed before heading to perform your Umrah. My suggestion is, if possible, that you enter the Al-Haram through the gate Assalaam though Sunnah of Prophet Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam is to enter through Assalaam gate or you may enter through any gate you easily can and keep your eyes lowered as you get closer to the Ka'baa, (the cube like structure towards which all Muslims face at the time of prayer) then raise your eyes to glance at the Ka'baa for the first time. The feelings cannot be put into words but you need to experience the aura of the mighty, beautiful and powerful square in the middle, there you will feel in the state of nakedness of your past and you will ask for forgiveness in a way you have never asked before. (May Allah accept your Dua's). Offer two rakas as salutation in ***Al-Haram shareef***.

The Hajj is an exciting experience and it needs to be enjoyed. The Hajj is not difficult; the difficult part is the reason of Hajj upon return.

The **Umrah** started by taking yourself with the flow of other pilgrims doing the **Tawaf** (*going around the Ka'baa seven times*) and reach the point where the green light is visual. This point marks the corner of the Ka'baa of the Black Stone (**Hajar-e-Aswad**) throughout the al-Haram shareef.

Upon reaching the green mark, for this is the starting point, make praise by reciting "**Bismillah, Allahu Akbar wa Lillahil hamd**" and raising your hands towards the corner of the Black stone" and begin your first **tawaaf** around the Ka'baa in an anti-clockwise manner. Do this seven times and finish at the green mark, then offer two rakas nafl prayers.

Now proceed towards the mount of **Safa** (In reality it is raised ground and not a mountain) by the steps and begin your **Sa'ee** (*walking from Safa to Marwa*) by heading towards the mount of **Marwa** at each point praising Allah Ta'alaa. N.B. **Safa to Marwa** is one journey and **Marwa to Safa** is two journeys and so on until seven journeys are completed. You must begin your journey at **SAFA** and **NOT MARWA**. Whilst walking between **Safa & Marwa and Marwa & Safa** you will enter a short length marked with green lights, during which the men must hasten their walk (gentle running) until the next green light, ensuring not to offend anyone in the process. The **Sa'ee** commemorates the hardship Hazrat Hajarah/Hager the mother of Hazrat Ismail went through in search of water, where Allah blessed her cries and produced the well of Zamzam by the holy heals of Hazrat Ismail.

Having completed the **Tawaaf and Sa'ee**, cut your hair, for men either shave your head with blade or with machine or at least men must cut one quarter of their head's hair which is compulsory, for men under no circumstances less than one quarter is allowed (except illness) and an inch long lock of hair for women. You are now relieved from the state of Ihram, remove the Ihram, take a shower, and get changed. You are now free to do, as you like; visit sites, go to sacred sites.

STATE OF THE IHRAM

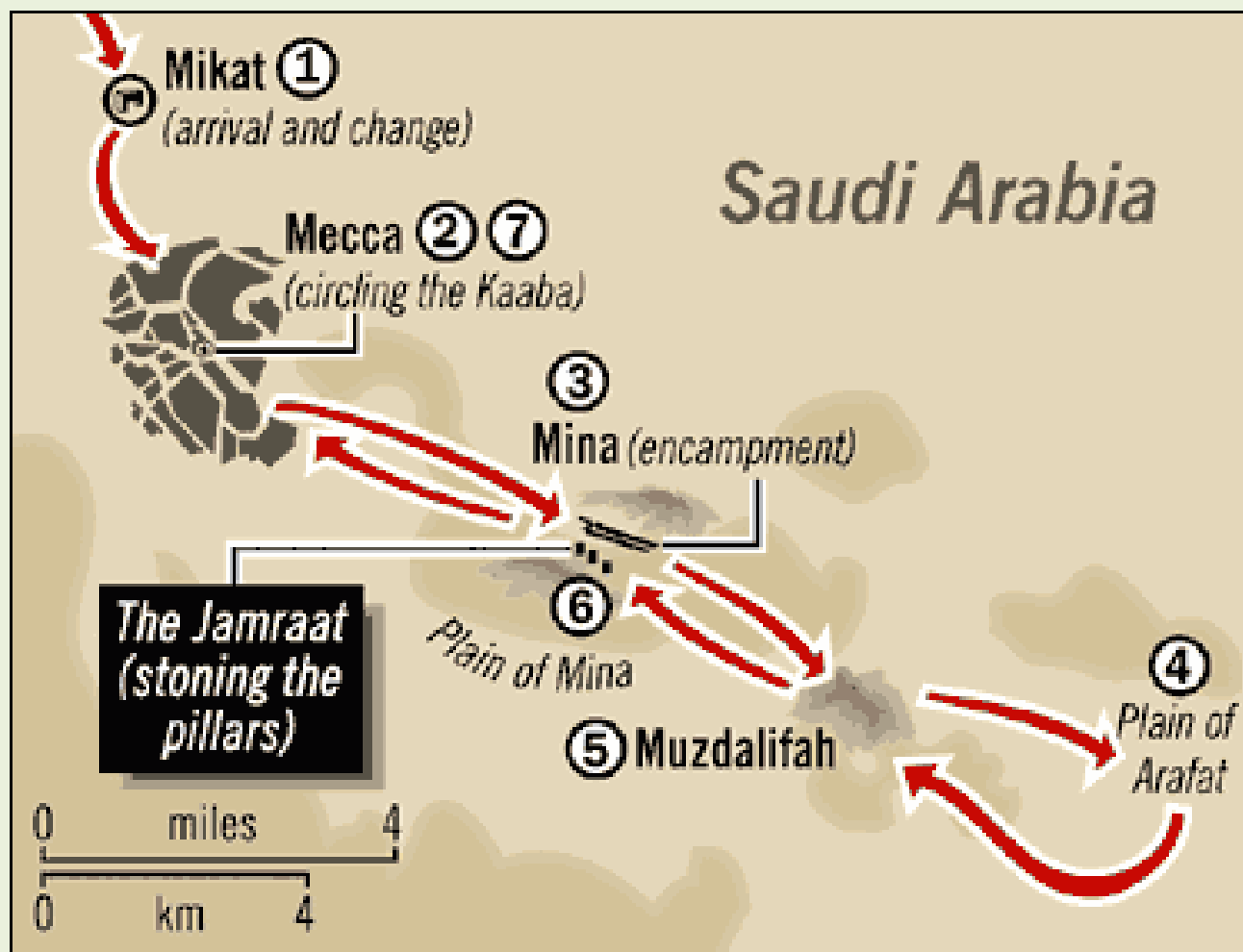
During the state of Ihram the following are obligatory:

1. Make five daily prayers, read some Qur'an
2. Avoid obscenities, committing sins and quarrelling.
3. Guard against harming others by action or by word of mouth.
4. Do not cut your nails, or pluck out your hair, (no harm if fallen naturally)
5. Do not use scent or perfume on clothes or body. (Buy unscented soap from Boots called Simple)
6. Do not kill or frighten any living things in state of Ihram.
7. Sexual intercourse, love play and fondling are strictly prohibited.
8. A man may not cover his head, with a cap or the end of the Ihram. (take note with an umbrella)
9. A woman must not cover her hands or face

If any of the above rites of Umrah are deliberately broken then there is a penalty (Fidya). Slaughter of an animal.

It is permissible to wear flip flops or like, a ring, pair of glasses, hearing aid, wristwatch, belt or a girdle that protects one's money or documents.

The Hajj also requires the pilgrims to travel to the plain of Arafat on the day of the Hajj and other necessary and detailed steps for Hajj and you should consult specialist texts for this.



New/extra Umrahs

If you desire to perform extra Umrahs then you must go to Masjid Hazrat Aisha at Makkah boundary to make the intention of Umrah in the state of Ihram and perform two raka nafl then heading for the Ka'baa to do **tawaaf & Sa'ee** as described above.

There are ample transportation facilities available. However, there are some private cars that charge heavily for small journeys haggle for best price.

The **tawaaf** can be performed around the Ka'baa or in Al-Haram on the ground floor, or on the first floor and even on the top floor; these levels are also available for **Sa'ee (Safa & Marwa)**. It is advisable for the elderly or sick or injured to take advantage of these facilities though longer but less stressful. For disabled people there is a special track for wheel chairs. Wheel chairs can be rented for **tawaaf** and for **Sa'ee**. You may however use your own wheel chair.

Once you finish the Umrah your next journey will be to the Holy City of Madinah to visit the Holy Grave of our Beloved Prophet Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam and the Holy Mosque of our Beloved Prophet Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam. Beloved Prophet Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Sallam said **"Man Zara Qabree wajabat lahu shafa'atee"**, "whoever visit my Holy Grave my intercession is obligatory upon them. May Allah Ta'alaa give all Muslims the opportunity to do Hajj and Umrah again and again. Aamin.

THE COUNCIL FOR CHRISTIAN MUSLIM RELATIONS HOLDS A SEMINAR IN HIGH WYCOMBE - By Chaudhry M Shafique (Chairman CCMR)

The Council For Christian Muslim Relations hosted a topical seminar on the 15th of September 2010 at Bucks New University. The main theme on this occasion was to explore whether 'Islam Needs PR' given that in the post- 9/11 and 7/7 atmosphere a certain amount of negativity towards Muslims and Islam seems to have taken root amongst non-Muslim people everywhere including Great Britain.

Miss Remona Aly, who is Director of Campaigns at an organisation called Exploring Islam Foundation (EIF) in London, facilitated the seminar. She is a British born Muslim professional who is anxious to promote Islam in it's true light so that many of the misperceptions and prejudices which have built up in the last few years in particular can be mitigated.

The background to her presentation was a recent YouGov poll commissioned by EIF to find out the attitudes of ordinary people in this country towards Muslims and Islam. The findings were such that the press and the media ran the story as 'Britons link Islam with extremism, says a survey'. The YouGov poll found 58% of those questioned linked Islam with extremism while 69% believed it encouraged the repression of women. The survey polled 2152 adults during May 2010 and clearly paints a worryingly negative picture of British attitudes towards Islam. Asked if Muslims had a positive impact on British society the poll found as many as 40% disagreed with the statement. Half linked Islam with terrorism, just 13% thought it was based on peace and only 6% associated it with justice.

Miss Remona Aly also talked about the poster campaign which was launched by EIF following the survey findings on London Transport to combat negative perceptions of Muslims. The poster campaign was called 'Inspired by Muhammad' with the aim and hope that it can help non-Muslims to better understand the faith that inspires and guides their Muslim friends, neighbours and colleagues. In addition the initiative would also help British Muslims to reclaim the Prophet (PBUH) as a time-honoured guide for peace, compassion and social justice from those who seek to twist his teachings.

During the course of the seminar a powerful message was read out on behalf of a large number of local priests and vicars. The message had been prepared by Anne Bowker and Rebecca Hickman of Sharing of Faiths Group to show solidarity with the muslim community in the context of the American Pastor Terry Jones threats to burn the Holy Quran on the 9th anniversary of 9/11. The message read as follows;

'We deeply regret that the words and actions of a small church in America are causing you hurt and anguish, particularly at this holy time in the Islamic calendar. We stand in solidarity with you in deploring the deeply offensive views preached by Pastor Terry Jones in Florida, and give you our heartfelt assurance that his beliefs do not represent a christian position as we understand and practice our faith.

It is beyond our comprehension that a pastor should abuse his role as leader of a church community by stirring up hatred. We too feel pain and distress at his actions.

We value what we as chritions share with you- values of love, peace and mutual respect. And we welcome the long tradition of positive engagement between muslim and christian communities in High Wycombe. We state again our wish to be an active part of ongoing efforts to build understanding across different faith traditions locally, through dialogue and friendship.'

The seminar was well attended by both the muslim and christian communities in High Wycombe including Imams, priests and prominent lay leaders.

The seminar was chaired by Chauhdry Shafique who is the Chairman of the Council for Christian Muslim Relations with Rev. David Picken of All Saints Church who is Vice-Chaiman. www.ccmr-wycombe.co.uk

We are pleased to announce that our website is now up and running.
It can be viewed at www.mpawycombe.co.uk



The Aim of the Website is an organic progression as to why the Muslim Parents Association was first created:

- 1 Increasing levels of achievement by Muslim pupils of Pakistani origin in Bucks schools, thereby increasing their access to training, employment, further and higher education.**
- 2 Providing relevant training and building confidence of Muslim men and women to equip them with the necessary tools to help their children and at the same time improve their employment prospects and thereby improving the economic wellbeing of a 'disadvantaged' community.**
- 3 Addressing the issue of community Cohesion.**

The MPA website is planned to be widely read and highly influential and is designed to be a local general education forum/ journal, updated frequently online and providing immediate online access to all its original research articles.

The MPA website and Newsletters will contain authoritative editorials, premier research articles, topical debates plus news, reviews and snippets of information gleaned from the education authorities in High Wycombe and Surrounding areas.

In our quest to bring "education" to the forefront and to get as many education people and parents involved in the upbringing of their children, and quite frankly the future, The MPA would like to invite anyone living or working in High Wycombe, whatever their background, experience, ethnicity or religion to consider becoming an associate member of the MPA (a modest membership fee of £10 per annum is involved to cover admin and printing costs). You would be welcome to join us at our regular meetings and other events and also to offer any articles for the website or newsletter.

From information about Education Policy in the UK to news about what has been happening at your school or education centre, we hope that the MPA website will be used as a vehicle to transport information around the local community. It also holds an opportunity for local businesses to advertise their services on the website.

We hope you like the new website and look forward to any feedback.

To advertise or submit any relevant articles please contact Rafiq Raja via email : rafiqraja@hotmail.co.uk.

The Royal Grammar School organises Proud of My Roots Event

By Lucy Sowah

During the first week of October the hallways of RGS were filled with students proudly wearing traditional clothing, national costumes and sporting colours. The rhythm of drums, the aroma of Asian foods and conversation in many languages flowed through the corridors. This was part of a whole-school event – Proud of My Roots – a week-long celebration of the diversity and heritage of our school.



A Year Eleven student on the drum, leading others in a Indian musical celebration

Around the school international films were shown. They ranged from short films from New Zealand and Germany, to movies from China, to television series from Brazil and Japan.

In 'The Space' information stalls provided a backdrop to a range of cuisine: chaat, fried plantain, samosas, jolloff rice, hot pepper, shortbread and pakora. Students played instruments and an impromptu bollywood dance-off entertained the crowds.



A Sixth Form student collecting votes for charity contributions



Member of staff representing Ghana with information and Ghanaian fayre

Each day students hosted assemblies. They covered; The history of the MacClean Clan and their role in the battles between the English and the Scots; the effect of stereotyping on the Muslim community and the peaceful message of Islam; the evolution of the Buckinghamshire accent; the role of Indians in Great Britain and an introduction to Sikhism.

On Wednesday all students and staff were invited to come to school in international mufti. We saw people in kilts, salwar kameez, rugby tops, berets and myriad cultural symbols. Everyone paid a pound to charity and an impressive total of £1,213 was raised. The money was divided by vote: £643 to UNICEF, £400 to Red Cross/Red Crescent and £170 to Amnesty international.

This was a fantastic event for the whole school. Staff and students worked together and enjoyed an important feature of the Royal Grammar School – a strong sense of community and respect for every individual.

The Creative Arts go from Strength to Strength at Sir William Ramsay!

Over the course of the last academic year the creative arts departments at Sir William Ramsay have been involved in some exciting and innovative projects both in and around the school site and also involving the wider community.

Students from the Art Dept at SWR have re-designed the logo for Alde House retirement home in Penn, worked in collaboration with students from Bucks University to re-design areas of the school, created murals for the school site, exhibited at the London Mall galleries and embarked on a cement casting project creating a sculpture trail for the school grounds. Our fantastic artist in residence programme has seen SWR support a number of Primary schools and also provide extra drawing workshops resulting in large scale self portrait drawings for our GCSE students and a fantastic Summer Exhibition showcasing the student's flair and creativity.

This academic year has already seen this creative adventure continue in the form of a collaborative project with Penn Special School and the Royal Albert Hall to re-design a contemporary version of a mosaic freeze to help celebrate 140yrs since the Hall was built. The Art Dept has also been successful with a number of competitions most notably the School Artists True Colours competition has resulting in 25 students short listed to be published in their catalogue. We also wait in anticipation the result of the Saatchi Schools Competition and Bucks Young Artist results.

The Performing Arts Department are once again involved in a number of exciting projects and activities this term.

On 13 October 30 of our students performed in the National Shakespeare Schools Festival at Norden Farm Centre for the Arts, Maidenhead, when one of Shakespeare's most famous tragedies was presented, and using the medium of physical theatre our cast delivered an innovative take on the 'Scottish Play'! Our Macbeth definitely has all the ingredients necessary to have the audience on the edge of their seats: greed, guilt, murder & betrayal!

The Music department are also busy this term with the choir rehearsing for the December concert and trips planned to the Albert hall & the Swan Theatre.

Hoping to repeat their success in such events as 'Rock Challenge' & 'Dance For Life' the dance department is already planning our entries for next year's national competitions.

Other exciting new Media initiatives include an animation project for KS3 enabling students to create short stop motion films and a Film club for all years which encourages students to watch & review films from a variety of cultures & traditions.

Sir William Ramsay will this year continue to provide exciting ventures in the creative arts for all our students, partner schools and the wider community.

Does your child need help with his or her School work?

If YES, Are you willing to get him or her some help with not just the school subjects but about Study/learning techniques. If YES again, then please email the Child's details to Rafiq Raja (rafiqraja@hotmail.co.uk).

Mosque students have a wonderful time visiting the Science Museum in London **- By Riaz Ahmed**

The MPA is proud to assist with English classes at the Totteridge Road Mosque of the Wycombe Islamic Mission. A Science Museum trip, initiated by class teacher Riaz Ahmed and headed by Imam Sultan Mahmood, took about 90 students and 9 adults to London on the sunny Sunday morning of 27 June 2010.

The main aim of the trip was to allow the pupils to self manage themselves, in small groups, in an external environment, to independently organise their own learning of the "1001 Inventions". This exhibition is touring the world and was being hosted by the Science Museum in London till the end of June. It highlighted the contribution of Muslim Heritage in Our World and traced the forgotten story of a thousand years of scientific work in the Muslim world, from the 7th century onwards. It looked at the social, scientific and technological achievements that are credited to the Muslim world, whilst celebrating the shared scientific heritage of other cultures. Featuring a diverse range of exhibits, interactive displays and dramatisation, the exhibition showed how many modern inventions, spanning fields such as engineering, medicine and design, can trace their roots back to Muslim civilisation.



Initially only one coach was booked but due to over whelming demand, two more minibuses were booked; the Wycombe Islamic Mission Trust making a generous donation to cover the extra costs.

All the children enjoyed the trip and free food and drinks throughout the hot day.

Hashim enjoyed playing with the magic gum, water wells and simulator rides. Adeeba enjoyed learning about the first Muslim university and being part of the show demonstrating Isaac Newton's three laws of motion. Boys spent most of their time in space and air travel while the girls enjoyed Medicine and Home galleries. For some children it was their first visit to London and the excitement of the whole trip was a wonderful experience.

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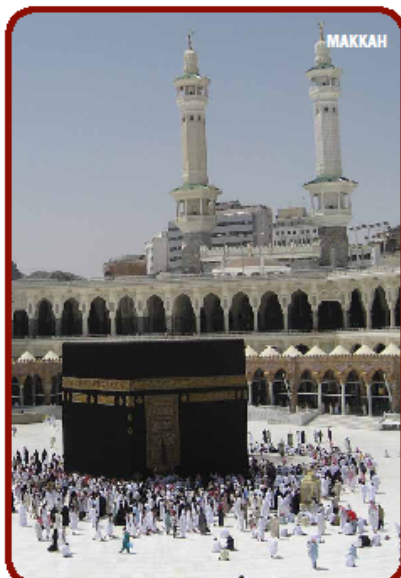
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