

In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

F A I R

Hajj 2002

Media Pack

FORUM AGAINST ISLAMOPHOBIA AND RACISM (FAIR)

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Dear Brother/Sister:

As-Salaamu 'Alaikum. Peace be with you.

This Media Pack has been developed to assist your community to publicise its Hajj and Islam Awareness events and activities. It is designed to provide you with the raw materials with which you can contact the media and, through them, people of other faiths in your area.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE PACK:

1. Read the “Hajj Publicity Campaign Summary and Tips” provided in this pack. The list will give you an idea of what is possible. Also study the “Talking Points” at the bottom of that page. These are the key points you will want to pass on to people of other faiths.
2. Photocopy pages such as “Hajj Q&A” and “Islam in Britain - The Facts.” These pages can be distributed in the materials you send to the media and hand out at open days. The announcement for Hajj and Eid Al Adha will be sent to national and regional media by FAIR, but we also encourage local communities to make contact with local media.
3. Re-type the “Media Advisory” onto your own letterhead. If this is too difficult, you may just fill in the blanks on the originals and send them that way. This is not the best approach, but it is better than nothing.
4. Distribute your announcements to the media no later than **TWO WEEKS** before any event.
5. Make phone calls to follow up with editors, producers, talk show hosts, etc.
6. Call FAIR if you have any questions, or if you do not understand any part of the Resource Pack.
7. Clip news articles and record TV items. Send **originals** of newspaper clips (please include the front page of the paper for our files) and clear video copies to FAIR. Your organisation/centre may appear in FAIR’s future publications.

HAJJ PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN

Summary & Tips

OBJECTIVES

- **Decide what sort of events depending on what exactly you wish to achieve.**
- **What resources do you need?**
- **Set up a timetable or rota and give brothers and sisters specific roles.**
- **Contact mosques and Islamic organisations in your area and encourage them to have an open day.**
- **Publicise events in good time!**

Newspapers and Newsletters

1. Feature article on Muslim community and experiences and thoughts about Hajj - Contact "Feature Editor" and "Religion Editor"
3. List items on open day and Eid prayers - Contact "Events Editor" and "Religion Editor"
4. Letters to the editor about true image of British Muslims - Contact "Letters Editor"
5. Opinion articles about stereotyping of Muslims - Contact "Editorial Page Editor"
6. Photograph of Eid prayers and/or Eid bazaar - Contact "Society Editor" and "Photo Editor"

Television

1. News package (approx. 1.5 minutes in length) about local Muslim community and personal experiences or thoughts about Hajj - Contact "News Assignment Editor"
2. 30 second video item on Eid prayers/open evening/bazaar - Contact "News Assignment Editor"
3. Announcements for the beginning of the Hajj season and Eid Al Adha - Contact "News Assignment Editors".

Radio

1. Talk-show appearances by community leaders discussing Hajj - Contact "Show Producer"
2. Public Announcements (free announcements by radio station) of Hajj and Eid activities - Contact "Programme Director"

NB: Every editor in each of the sections above needs to be contacted individually by phone and fax or mail

Schools

1. Talks/exhibitions open to all faiths during school lunch hours, assemblies and religious studies lessons.
2. Eid treats for co-workers and classmates of Muslim students
3. Muslim students to be allowed to take Eid day off and to adjust homework load.

Libraries

1. Reserve display cases and install display for Hajj, Eid and Islam & Muslims (also reserve for next year). Include Islamic artefacts (Quran, textiles, and cultural items), books, leaflets, handouts, posters on Islam, etc. General Islamic exhibition posters are also available from WAMY on Tel: 020 7636 7010, Fax: 020 7636 7080, Email: wamy@wamy.co.uk, Web: www.wamy.co.uk
2. Children's librarian to display Hajj, Eid and other Islamic children's books during the Hajj season.
3. Submit a Book Purchase Request at your local library for children's books on Islam.

Hospitals

Visit sick Muslims

Other

Produce leaflets publicising events to be handed out at Muslim shops.

“Talking Points”

Messages to be used when communicating with people of other faiths

Be sensitive and considerate when talking to people of other faiths, show respect for their beliefs, whatever they may be and don't expect them to conform to your beliefs and ideas. Remember to speak from your heart and you will Insha'Allah reach the hearts of others.

1. Muslims are a growing segment of British society.
2. Muslims are productive members of the society who contribute much to the general welfare.
3. Islam is a belief system that has much to offer in terms of providing solutions to problems such as crime, drug abuse and family disintegration.
4. Muslims are reaching out to people of other faiths to help them better understand the Islamic community in Britain.
5. Muslims come from all over the world, and do not belong to particular cultural groups, such as 'Arab' or 'Pakistani'. It is a religion for all humanity, and welcomes people from

all cultural backgrounds. British converts are among a great number of people converting to Islam in the West. Examples include Yusuf Islam and Jemima Khan, to name but a couple.

6. Islam is a modern religion – its universal principles adapt to time and space. These principles of social justice, development of the individual and development of the community, are as relevant today as they were 1,400 years ago.

STEPS TO TAKE

1. **ORGANISE** - Form a local committee to handle publicity for Islam Awareness activities. Make sure the committee has representatives from all local groups. Do not waste time and energy setting up a formal structure. Just choose a co-ordinator and include people who are willing to do the work. Decide who will do what, and make sure that you are sticking to realistic targets within the budget of your community.
2. This committee should have a name such as Manchester Hajj Information Committee, etc.
3. **ACTIVITIES** - Decide which activities your community will undertake. The main suggestions are:
 - Moon-sighting event
 - Islam Awareness open day at the Islamic Centre
 - Cultural Eid Bazaar
 - Public lectures on Hajj and Islamic approaches to societal problems
 - Lectures on Muslims in British society.
 - School presentations by students, parents and visitors from local Muslim organisations
 - Eid treats for non-Muslim classmates
4. **PUBLICITY** - To publicise these events, modify the attached materials for your own organisation's use. Use these materials when contacting the people listed in the "objectives" section. To find the phone and fax numbers for these people, just call the media outlet in question and ask. Also refer to the Muslim Directory for further information about national and Muslim news agencies. Use your "Talking Points" whenever communicating with the media.
5. **TIMING** - Call/fax/email the media now! Events editors need at least two weeks lead time to publish an item. Feature editors and others need at least that long to develop and schedule stories. Public announcements also need time to be approved and scheduled. Make initial contact as soon as you can and then follow up with phone calls to the same people a couple of days before each activity. When you make calls close to the day of any event, focus on the television news assignment editors and newspaper society and photo editors.
6. **FEEDBACK** - Give us feedback on what your centre has taken part in, and any additional ideas you may have. Clip copies of any news articles and tape any broadcast reports, and send copies to FAIR.

HAJJ Q&A

Q: What does the Qur'an say about Hajj?

A: In the Qur'an, Islam's revealed text, God says:

“Thus We settled Abraham at the site of the House (the Ka'ba) [saying]: ‘Do not associate anything with Me, and purify My house for those who walk around it, and those who stand there (praying), and those who bow down on their knees in worship. Proclaim the pilgrimage among mankind: they will come to you on foot and on every lean (beast of burden); let them come from every deep ravine, to bear witness to the advantages they have, and to mention God's name on appointed days...”
(Chapter 22, Verses 26-28).

Q: What do Muslims believe they gain from Hajj?

A: The main benefit of Hajj for many people is the sense of repentance and spiritual renewal it instils. After his Hajj, Malcolm X wrote in his autobiography: “..., I have eaten from the same plate, drank from the same glass, and slept in the same bed (or the same rug) –while praying to the same God – with fellow Muslims whose eyes were bluest of the blue, whose hair was blondest of the blond, and whose skin was whitest of the white. And in the words and in the actions and in the deeds of the white Muslims, I felt the same sincerity that I felt among black African Muslims of Nigeria, Sudan and Ghana,In the past I permitted myself to be used to make sweeping indictments of, ..., the entire white race, ..., Because of the spiritual enlightenment which I was blessed to receive as a result of my recent pilgrimage to the Holy City of Mecca, I no longer subscribe to the sweeping indictments of any one race. I am now striving to live the life of a true Muslim.”

Q: Why does Hajj begin on a different day each year?

A: This happens because the Islamic calendar is based on the lunar system (based on the moon revolving around the earth, rather than the earth around the sun). Relative to the solar calendar, lunar calendar dates move back about eleven days each year.

Q: Why do Muslims sacrifice a lamb or other animal during the festival of Eid Al-Adha?

A: The sacrifice commemorates the Prophet Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his son, identified in Islam as Ishmael, at God's command. This is not a blood offering. In the Qur'an, God states: “Neither their meat nor their blood ever reaches God, but heedfulness on your part does reach him.” (Chapter 22, Verse 37). The meat is then distributed to relatives and to the needy.

Q: Is Hajj an obligation on all Muslims?

A: Yes, but only for those who are physically and financially able to make the pilgrimage.

Q: What are the most visually striking aspects of Hajj?

A: All pilgrims must do **tawaf**, or circling of the Ka'ba. This obligation creates a stunning scene as thousands of pilgrims circle the building at all times of the day and night. Also, the standing at Arafah on the 9th day of Dhul-Hijjah presents a scene in which several million people, of all colours and backgrounds, dressed alike regardless of their material position in this world, and with the same intention to worship God, gather on a barren plain.

Q: How can Non-Muslim friends and co-workers interact with someone who is going on Hajj or celebrating at home?

A: Hajj is a high point in a Muslim's life. Questions are welcome and congratulations are in order. Most communities welcome visitors at Eid Al-Adha prayers. Just ask a Muslim friend to act as an escort and guide.

Q&A ABOUT ISLAM AND BRITISH MUSLIMS

Q: What is Islam?

A: Islam is not a new religion. It is the same religion that God revealed to all His Prophets (Adam, Noah, Moses, Jesus, etc.) throughout history. Islam is both a religion and a complete way of life. Muslims follow a religion of mercy, forgiveness and peace. Islam was revealed 1400 years ago through the Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) – its universal principles adapt to time and space. These principles of social justice, development of the individual and development of the community, are as relevant today as they were 1,400 years ago.

Q: Who are Muslims and what do they believe?

A: Muslims believe in One, Unique and Incomparable God; creator of the universe. They believe in the Day of Judgement and individual accountability for actions.

Muslims believe in a chain of prophets beginning with Adam and including Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Moses, David, Solomon and Jesus (peace be on them all). God's eternal message was reaffirmed and finalised by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

One becomes a Muslim by saying, "There is no deity but God, and Muhammad is the messenger of God". By this declaration, the person announces faith in all of God's messengers. There are an estimated 1.2 billion Muslims world-wide. No more than 20 percent of Muslims live in the Arabic-speaking world. The country with the largest Muslim population is Indonesia.

Q: What is the Qur'an?

A: The Qur'an is the record of the exact words revealed by God through the angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad in Arabic. It was memorised by Muhammad and then dictated to his Companions. The text of the Qur'an was cross-checked during the life of the Prophet. The 114 chapters of the Qur'an have remained unchanged through the centuries. Translations of the Quran exist in almost all languages.

Q: What are the 'Five Pillars' of Islam?

A: The five pillars of Islam are as follows:

1. The Declaration of Faith - This consists of the two part declaration described above.
2. Prayer - Muslims perform five obligatory prayers each day. Islamic prayers are a direct link between the worshipper and God. Islam has no hierarchical authority or priesthood. A learned Muslim chosen by each congregation leads the prayers.
3. Fasting - Every year, in the Islamic lunar month of Ramadan, Muslims fast from first light until sunset. The fast is a method of self-purification.
4. Zakat - One of the most important principles of Islam is that all things belong to God and that wealth is held in trust by human beings. Zakat, or charitable giving, also 'purifies' wealth by setting aside a portion for those in need. This payment is usually two and a half percent of one's capital.
5. Pilgrimage - A pilgrimage to Mecca, or Hajj, is an obligation for those who are physically and financially able.

Q: What about the British Muslim community?

A: There are an estimated 2 million Muslims in the UK. The Muslim community in Britain is made up of people from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds and national origins, including many new Muslims and Muslims of European origin. Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in this country and around the world.

Q: What about Muslim women?

A: Under Islamic law, women have always had the right to own property, receive an education and take part in community life. Men and women are to be respected equally. The Islamic rules for modest dress apply to both women and men equally – men also must fulfil minimum requirements in dressing. If a particular society oppresses women, it does so in spite of Islam, not because of it. Islam is in fact against any forms of oppression. Muslim women understand freedom in terms of inner freedom. By covering up more, a Muslim

woman feels that she will not be judged by her external appearance, but her inner qualities and beauty.

Q: What is *Jihad*?

A: ‘Jihad’ does not mean ‘holy war’. Literally, *jihad* means to strive, struggle and exert effort. It is a central and broad Islamic concept that includes struggle against evil inclinations within oneself, struggle to improve the quality of life in society, struggle in self-defence for the protection of oneself or country and fighting against tyranny or oppression. When it refers to war, it is in the context of self-defence when a Muslim is being prevented from practicing their religious freedoms or driven out of their homes. Warfare is only used as a last resort.

Q: Is suicide allowed in Islam?

A: Suicide is a major sin in Islam, and those who commit it take away the beautiful gift of life that God has given to us all. This is also the case in many other religions. Those who commit suicide as ‘jihad’, do so for personal or political reasons, and not for Islam – it contradicts with the Islamic faith.

ISLAM IN BRITAIN – THE FACTS

Fact 1: There are an estimated 2 million Muslims in Britain. The Muslim community in Britain is made up of people from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds and national origins.

Fact 2: The worldwide population of Muslims is estimated at 1.2 billion.

Fact 3: Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in this country and around the world.

Fact 4: Demographers also say that by the year 2025, one in four people on earth will be Muslim.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- Allah** Allah is the Arabic word for ‘God’. It is the same word Arabic-speaking Christians use when referring to God. Allah is not the “Muslim God”, but is the same God worshipped by Christians and Jews. Linguistically, the word ‘Allah’ in Arabic, cannot be pluralized, and hence is preferred by Muslims to express the oneness of God.
- Fundamentalist** Muslims view the label ‘fundamentalist’ as stereotypical and ill founded. Muslims also object to the use of terms such as ‘radical’ and ‘extremist’ in association with their religion. These terms lack definition and are seen as pejorative. A more neutral and objective term is “Islamic activist”. If the person in question is involved in a criminal act, name that act, not the faith of the person who commits the crime. Islam should be judged by what is in the Qur’an and Prophetic sayings, rather than extreme political activists. Being referred to as a ‘moderate’ Muslim is also incorrect, as it implies that there is also an ‘extreme’ version of Islam, where there is no place for extremism within Islam, which defines itself as the middle way.
- Jihad** ‘*Jihad*’ does not mean ‘holy war’. Literally, *jihad* means to strive, struggle and exert effort. It is a central and broad Islamic concept that includes struggle against evil inclinations within oneself, struggle to improve the quality of life in society, struggle in self-defence for the protection of oneself or country and fighting against tyranny or oppression. Another everyday example is the Islamic understanding of fighting ones whims and desires, such as excessive eating, addictions or minor but persistent wrong-doings. Hence *jihad* is more to do with establishing a well balanced and healthy life style. The equivalent of the term ‘holy war’ in Arabic is ‘*harb muqaddasa*’, a term that cannot be found in the Qur’an or the Hadith, the Prophet’s sayings. There is no such thing as “holy war” in Islam, as some careless translators may imply. It is rather a loaded medieval concept that did not arise from within the Muslim community. However, because of this myth’s frequent repetition, most people in the West accept it as if it were a fact.
- Arab/Muslim** Not all Muslims are Arab, just as not all Arabs are Muslim. In fact, Arabs are a minority within the Islamic world. According to modern usage, ‘Arab’ is a linguistic, not an ethnic, designation. An Arab can be Christian or Jewish or of another faith.
- Women’s Rights** Under Islamic law, women have always had the right to own property, receive an education and take part in community life. The Islamic rules for modest dress apply to women and men equally. If a particular society oppresses women, it does so in spite of Islam, not because of it.
- Arabic Names** Compound Muslim names, such as ‘Abd Al-Rahman’, which often refer to attributes of God, should be used in full on second reference.

The shorter second reference, in this case, 'Al-Rahman' (The Beneficent) is objectionable to Muslims, as a person cannot be referred to by a divine attribute of God.

INSERT ORGANISATION NAME

MEDIA ADVISORY – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BRITISH MUSLIMS TO BEGIN PILGRIMAGE SEASON 18,000 Pilgrims expected to travel from the UK.

On February 21st Muslims in Britain and around the world will begin observing activities associated with the annual Hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca. According to visa records at the Embassy of Saudi Arabia, some 17,000 British Muslims took part in the pilgrimage last year.

“The thousands of British Muslims undertaking Hajj this year are taking part in a grand rite of passage. By answering God’s call to come and visit Him, they commit themselves to a process of spiritual transformation which ideally equips them, on their return, to act as living exemplars in their communities and guide others on the path to God.”, said Chairman of FAIR, Dr Jeremy Henzell-Thomas

Hajj is one of the ‘five pillars’ of the Islamic faith. The other ‘pillars’ include the declaration of faith, daily prayers, offering regular charity, and fasting during the month of Ramadan. Hajj activities take place during five days of the Islamic lunar month of Dhul-Hijjah. Pilgrimage is an once-in-a-lifetime obligation for those Muslims who have the physical and financial ability and means to undertake the journey. It is also a form of worship that involves the entire body, mind and soul.

The obligatory and optional activities of Hajj include:

- Entrance into a state of self-control called **ihram**, during which pilgrims are forbidden to harm living creatures or even raise the voice in anger. The state of ihram is signified (for men) by the wearing of two pieces of unsewn white cloth. No specific clothing is prescribed for female pilgrims except that they must leave their faces uncovered.
- Circling of the Ka'ba, the stone building Muslims believe was originally built by Abraham and his son Ishmael. The Ka'ba is viewed as the first sanctuary on earth dedicated to the worship of the One God. It is a symbol of unity for Muslims because all prayer, wherever they are performed, are oriented in the direction of the Ka'ba.
- The Sa'i or “hastening” between two small hills near the Ka'ba, to commemorate Hagar's search for water to offer to her son Ishmael.
- The “Day of Arafah” on the 9th day of Dul-Hijjah. Arafah is the empty plain near Mecca. On this day, the climax for the Hajj season, pilgrims assemble for supplication to God.
- The stoning of three pillars representing Satan's temptation of Abraham. The stoning indicates the pilgrim's rejection of evil deeds.
- Cutting the hair to symbolise the exit from the state of ihram, and the completion of Hajj.
- Sacrificing of an animal to help the poor, and in remembrance of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Ishmael at God's command. The meat is distributed to relatives and to the needy.

When the major portion of the pilgrimage is completed, Muslims worldwide gather for communal prayers on the first day of Eid Al Adha. (eed al adh ha), the second of the two major Muslim holidays.

*Note: The beginning of the Islamic lunar months depend on the actual sighting of the new moon, and therefore, the start date for Hajj and Eid Al-Adha may vary.

INSERT ORGANISATION NAME

MEDIA ADVISORY – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BRITISH MUSLIMS CELEBRATE END OF PILGRIMAGE WITH COMMUNAL PRAYERS

What: On February 22nd 2002, Muslims in Britain will celebrate the end of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, or Hajj, with communal prayers at locations around the country. Over 18,000 British Muslims are expected to have taken part in this year's pilgrimage in Mecca. For those in Mecca, certain Hajj rituals continue for several additional days after the Eid festival.

These prayers and the holiday that follows are called Eid Al- Adha (eed ul adh ha), or "Festival of the Sacrifice". Eid Al-Adha commemorates the Prophet Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Ishmael at God's command. The holiday is celebrated with the prayers, small gifts for children, distribution of meat to the needy and social gatherings. During this holiday, Muslims exchange the greeting of "Eid Mubarak" or "Blessed Eid". Each year, some two million Muslims go on Hajj. There are an estimated 2 million Muslims in Britain and some 1.2 billion worldwide. Demographers say Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in this country and around the world.

When: February 22nd 2002 - the prayers are held in the early morning.

Where: The Eid prayers are held either in local mosques or in public places designed to accommodate large gatherings.

Contact: Call local Muslim organisations for details about Eid prayers and celebrations. If there are no known contacts in your local area, then call FAIR on 020 7531 1516 to obtain telephone numbers.

Photo Opportunity: Muslims usually come to the Eid prayers in colourful national dress. The prayers themselves are quite visual, with worshippers arranged in neat rows and bowing in prayer in unison. Participants exchange embraces at the conclusion of the prayers.

N.B : Because this is a religious service, reporters and photographers of both sexes should dress modestly. That means no shorts for men or short skirts for women. Some communities may ask female reporters and photographers to put a scarf over their hair while in the actual prayer area. Photographers should arrive early to get into position for the best shots. Photographers are also advised not to step directly in front of worshippers and to seek permission for close-up shots. Shots of shoes removed for prayer, and rear-angle shots of prostrating worshippers are considered clichéd and inappropriate.