

# SERENDIB

The Newsletter of the Sri Lankan Islamic (UK) Association

## President’s Message

Mr Dear Respected Elders, Brothers and Sisters in Islam,  
Assalamu alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh

All praise to the Almighty for the blessing of yet another exciting new SLIA term. It marks a new chapter in the SLIA story in an ever changing world but one where our core values remain the same.

The SLIA is a product of our community; from every volunteer that dedicates their time to help, to every member that follows our success, to every individual that lends their support, whatever shape or form that may be. For me, working for the success of this organisation and continuing its development is not simply a job; it’s a duty, one that we are all responsible of carrying out in whatever way we can.

By the Grace of Allah we have now past our 40 year landmark since creation, where we began a journey in an organisation that focused on improving relations, by having a united voice for the Sri Lankan Muslim community in the United Kingdom. We have made successful progress in upholding this purpose. The SLIA continues to develop, spread, and Insha’Allah offer a better services to its members. Every year we branch into new events and strengthen the message that the organisation has been built upon.

As well as our usual objectives of delivering events within our community, for this term there are 3 key objectives I would like to focus on with the SLIA which have been agreed and ratified by the ExCo team.

**1 – The SLIA being able to give back and leave its legacy in charitable projects that will benefit us in this world and more importantly the hereafter.**

As well as raising money for ourselves to support our community events, we are now coming to a stage where I believe we should also be able to raise money to give back to society. I have chosen two charities, which I personally know and are well established, to be able to get our community involved in some exciting projects Insha’Allah within this term. One is based in Sri Lanka to showcase and remind us of our roots and the other here in the UK to enable us to give back to the society we now live in.

‘Muslim Aid in Sri Lanka’, is the only international Muslim charity with a local operations team based in Sri Lanka. It’s key to maintain our link to our home



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### Special dates of interest

- SLIA Hizb Iftar 27th July. St Vincent de Paul Church
- SLIA Eid-ul-Fitr Dinner 17th August. Paddington Hilton
- SLIA Outdoor Sports Meet Sept - TBC
- SLIA Back to School— 29th Sept - TBC
- SLIA Eid-ul-Adha Dinner. 9th Nov 2013

**Sri Lanka Islamic (UK) Association**  
**(Charity No: 1098114)**  
*Serving the UK community for over 40 years*  
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## The SLIA 2013 ExCo Team

### President

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### Vice President

Haleem Ossman  
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### Secretary

Gazali Hammar  
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### Treasurer

Shifaz Riyaz  
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### Asst Secretary

Shazia Saleem  
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### Asst Treasurer

Sadat Sadiq  
07967 658516

### Committee Members

Ashkaq Macan  
Ayesha Ibrahim  
Amjad Saleem  
Shamique Ismail  
Shiffa Wahab

-----  
The above SLIA  
ExCo team was  
elected at our  
SLIA building on  
Sunday 28th  
April 2013 in  
front of a  
distinguished  
gathering.

country to deliver a unique project that the SLIA will be solely responsible for and one where members of our community can also be involved in when they visit Sri Lanka. The other, the 'National Zakat Foundation' is based in the UK helping Muslim homeless people and building shelters for Muslim sisters across the UK. I believe it's important to recognise where we reside and raise our profile in the UK. We are currently working with both organisations to develop a strategy of delivering Insha'Allah a special (SLIA) project with each of them with your help and Allah's will. Please keep a look out in our future publications or contact me if you have any questions.

### **2 – Raise and integrate the profile of the Sri Lankan Muslims through the SLIA to common mainstream media.**

This has always been a common objective of the SLIA. There are several groups that have played an active part in the past for example COSMOS (the umbrella organisation of Sri Lankan Muslim organisations), Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) and the Union Muslim Organisation (UMO). We will continue to review our participation in these groups and also for my term I believe a great step forward will be to work in partnership with the charity organisation Mosaic. Mosaic, founded by HRH the Prince of Wales in 2007 is championed by Muslims to help in education, with mentoring and coaching to help young people reach their potential in primary and secondary schools. With its high profile amongst the UK society this will aim to bring the SLIA as the first and major representation of Sri Lankan Islamic views along with the Pakistani, Indian and Bengali organisations in this group. This offers a great opportunity for our community to be involved in mentoring and coaching the youth in primary and secondary school.

### **3 – Improve the administration and benefits of membership with our SLIA.**

The membership within the SLIA has always proven to be a difficult ground to administer. The Membership fee would generally be used to pay for the maintenance of our building, newsletters, flyers, administration and hosting events to bring our community together. Issues that have developed over the years has resulted in us receiving less than a third of what we have been making allowances for. This figure is reduced even further referring to those who have paid the increase in family membership of £30 since it was introduced last year. Without this membership we are relying heavily on donations received at events and it is pushing us into severe financial issues to run events. There will be a drive to correct our membership database and ensure we are working off one list which can be easily administered. There maybe some mistakes along the way and we apologise in advance in order to get this right. Please cooperate to your fullest with the team to ensure we continue to deliver to your needs and deliver a variety of events to suit our growing community in the most efficient ways available

It just leaves for me to say a big thank you to my family and my very talented executive committee for their support, dedication and ambition as I embark on this journey to make this another great year with the support of Allah (SWT). Most importantly thank you to each and every member who make up the SLIA; I look forward to serving you over the coming months, with Allah's eternal grace. JazakAllahKhair,

**Mohamed Saleem, President  
Sri Lanka Islamic (UK) Association.**

*"Please subscribe to our text message group on 0752 536 4491 and if you're on facebook please join our Facebook group for up-to-date SLIA news and events"*



*The SLIA ExCoTeam 2013(top left-right): Ashkaq Macan, Shifaz Riyaz, Sadat Sadiq, Shamiqque Ismail, Gazali Hammard, Haleem Ossman, Mohamed Saleem, Amjad Mohamed-Saleem, (bottom left-right) Shazia Saleem, Ayesha Ibrahim, Shiffa Wahab*

## Ramadan - A Chance to Unite in Diversity

### Amjad Saleem

All of us are on a journey. Though our methods of transportation maybe different, we are all travellers on the same path towards spiritual enlightenment and happiness.

The ultimate and most difficult lesson to learn on this journey is to understand our destination. For those of you who have read *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho, the understanding of this destination is very simple: 'Go; travel the world, look for the truth and the secret of life – every road will lead you to this sense of initiation: the secret is hidden in the place from which you set out'.

This is the apparent paradox of spiritual experience whereby the constant effort that we make to purify, to control and liberate our hearts is in the end, reconciliation with the deepest level of our being. That spark that the Creator breathed into our heart (the *fitra*) is the spark of humility, the awareness of fragility, the consciousness of limitation, the shoulder of responsibility.

To develop this state is the very essence of Ramadan, something that is often missed in the superficial celebrations of this most blessed month. At the heart of our consumer society, where materialism and individualism drive our daily lives, this Blessed Month of Ramadan reinforces our personal effort and commit-

ment and invites us towards the deep horizons of introspection and meaning.

A wise man once said, 'Between every stimulus and response there is a space. In that space lies our freedom and power to choose our response. In those choices lie our growth and happiness.'

Such is the meaning of profound spirituality requiring man to acquire a force of being and doing, rather than to undergo despotic relentlessness of a life reduced to mere instinct. Within this space, we marry the purpose of our existence with the purpose of our subsistence. Close to the Quran's light, its words and inspirations, we must comprehend the message: You are indeed what you do with yourself. You are responsible for the actions you take. Hence you ask yourself, 'Am I here by chance?' The response you will get is 'No, I am here for a purpose'. That purpose is to serve humanity, those in need; those without!

That purpose is to awaken our conscience in the proximity of the wounds and the injustices people face! That purpose is to move away from selfishness / greed and waste; to distance ourselves from the darkest dimensions of our being, our violence, our jealousies, our superficialities. That purpose is to face our responsibilities with confidence and assurance.

Thus Ramadan reinforces our sense of purpose and responsibility whilst nurturing the inspiration from the Qur'an that 'God will not change anything for the good if you change nothing'!!

The Blessed Month of Ramadan is not a feast of food as it is now commonly practised but a feast of the faith of fraternal atmosphere that is shared with all brothers and sisters. Unfortunately, over the last couple of years, the concept of a fraternal atmosphere has been denigrated to a single notion within the mindset of the Muslim community, who have gradually entrenched themselves into an ideological box. This ideological comfort zone is an intellectual arrogance leading to an isolationist mentality and cultural ghetto, which world over, Muslim communities; especially those that live under minority situations, place themselves in. This isolationist mentality imbibes an 'us' vs 'them' attitude and has meant that the Muslim community has always been worried about 'us' rather than taking an all encompassing 'we'.

This assumption of singularity is the weapon of sectarian activists who want people to ignore all affiliation and loyalties in support of one specific identity. This is deeply delusive, divisive and is one that leads to social tension and violence for there is a sense of injustice and intolerance that is created from potential misunderstandings and misperceptions.

As the blessed month of Ramadan teaches us, we share the burdens of others (especially those less fortunate than us) and we remember our responsibilities towards them. Identifying with others in different ways is important in our role of living in society. Thus we should remember that we are much more than a label, that our plurality and diversity are not divisive elements but are a cause for celebration but within that celebration is an understanding of common humanity and universal principles. This is the call for unity of the Muslim community and society as a whole that is made during this blessed time.

This call for unity is founded upon a universal humanitarian principle based on the following verse from the Holy Qur'an "...If anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind..." (Q5:32).

Thus responsibility is placed upon the shoulder of the individual to take the lead in becoming a true citizen of the country and of the world, where he / she rise above their narrow confines of individualistic con-

cerns to face the broader concerns of all humanity and to redress the contradiction of society enabling people and their communities to live in dignity, peace and independence with social justice.

This contradiction of society will be redressed when all citizens come together confident in their universal principles; strengthened by their common values; they will be defenders of pluralism in their society and respectful of identities of others; they will take up the challenge of joining forces in a revolution of trust and confidence against the tide of discrimination and intolerance and poverty.

Ramadan should inculcate this feeling that there is a need to create a society where there is a feeling of brotherhood and love of one's neighbours. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said that 'one is not a believer if he goes to bed with full stomach whilst the neighbour is hungry'. Islamic scholars debate that feeding the hungry neighbour is equivalent to feeding the empty stomachs 40 doors to the right and left.

This is the Prophetic vision which demonstrates how we must work, together, with others, with our neighbours. So a world which makes sense, is a world in which we connect with other people, often beyond our immediate communities and experience, and show them compassion and love.

The Prophet Mohammed (Peace Be Upon Him) said "You shall not enter Paradise until you have faith, and you cannot have faith until you love one another. Have compassion on those you can see, and He Whom you cannot see will have compassion on you" Thus we learn our purpose of existence to stand by justice and equity; to portray the humility and compassion of the Prophet (upon whom be peace) towards the downtrodden, the distressed and the oppressed regardless of who they are.

So this Ramadan relearn the universal values of peace, compassion and justice as articulated by Islam, reinforced by Ramadan and binding in the brotherhood of humanity. Develop a greater social policy that empowers people, recognizes their plurality and that searches for commonalities within this pluralism that will lead to greater respect and ultimately greater understanding.

## Some tips for Ramadan

### Amjad Saleem

#### Some tips for Ramadan (Amjad Saleem)

In my humble opinion there are three components to Ramadan. There is the individual (because only Allah knows whether you fast or not); there is the family (specified by the times you spend together); there is the community (specified by when you start and stop Ramadan, tarawih etc). Hence Ramadan is about trying to balance all three. The question is what do you do?

- (can the rest of the money then be provided for charity or even used to feed some other family / person- homeless etc)
- Your budget should be cut because effectively you are cutting it by 2/3rds.
- Can we have a meat free iftar? Healthy and vegetarian? Less oil?

### *“The three components to Ramadan: The individual, the family and the community..”*

The first and foremost thing that needs to be done is a plan. Like anything nowadays, you plan. When you go on holiday, you plan. So for Ramadan, prepare a plan (and the best thing about it is that once you write it down, you seem to follow it)

#### **Individual:**

- Prepare a Ramadan plan – with Qur’an / Qiyam / Tarawih. How many sur’ahs will you read? How many qi yams will you pray and so on.
- Prepare a diet plan – plan not to eat certain foods. Can we eat fair trade?
- What will you read this Ramadan?

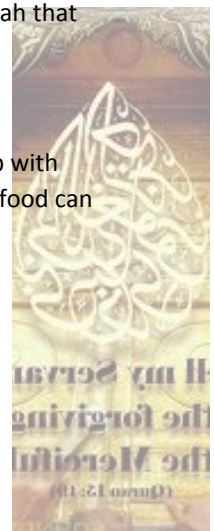
#### **Family:**

- Agree a plan together for Ramadan – what will people do together? Reading Qur’an together / attending Taraweah together? – have a family meeting with a plan and different responsibilities for people to do.
- Is it something that the whole family can pitch in together? Can there be opportunities for all members of the family to do something for iftar?
- Pound jar for the family for when you don’t do anything that you have agreed to do.
- Budget for Ramadan and eid – stick to it and then don’t depart from it. (try and prepare a budget for eid / avoid the summer sales / e bay)
- Ethical eid gifts
- Iftar plan –
- Can we do something for under £5 per head?

- How many iftars can we have not only with family but extended family (again taking into account the cost and health)
- Street iftars / garden iftars (in Sudan they have iftar outside and anyone is free to just come and participate) –
- Flash mob iftars are a great event
- Encouragement of children (especially during the summer holidays) to appreciate Ramadan – through things like the Ramadan calendar and penny box / keeping their attention up and motivation going / games about Ramadan.
- Recycling or eating organically
- Mosque crawl.... go to different mosques for iftar and for tarawih. Breaks up the routine plus you get to appreciate this wonderful diverse ummah that exists in London.

#### **Community:**

- Recycling at the mosque
- Food bank – get restaurants to link up with homeless shelters etc where the left over food can be given out
- Iftar and mosque crawl
- Iftar and tarawih in the park
- Iftar Dhansala
- One dish Eid celebration
- Street iftars



## SLIA NEWS

### **SLIA Building Update:**

Our SLIA building with Allah's grace is well into the process now of being rented as actioned from the last EGM held in 2012.

In Sha Allah all going well we expect there to be some news within the next few weeks as to the eventual outcome of the building.

In the meanwhile we are in the process of clearing up the building readying it to be rented. In the immediate term all contents will be stored in an external storage company. Any queries regarding the move and the contents, and if you can help with any of this please contact Brother Shamiq Ismail on 07946 634444.

### **SLIA Membership:**

Reminder Membership letters with S/O forms have been posted to remind all members that subscriptions for individuals and family members have risen to £15 and £30 respectively. Please update your Standing Order if not done already so to ease the load for all.

## 2013 SLIA Eid-ul-Fitr Event

**Saturday 17th August**

from 18:30 - 23:00

with Special Guest Speakers

— London Hilton Paddington Hotel —

Adult £30 and Child £15

## 2013 SLIA Eid-ul-Adha Event

**Saturday 9th November**

from 18:00

with Special Guest Speakers

— Double Tree by Hilton Hotel - Ealing —

## A Taste of Ramadan Yumna Maryam

Well for those out there for the love of cooking, a little Malaysian dessert I tried out and absolutely loved, and is definitely a soother after those long hours of waiting.

### **Ingredients:**

7g agar-agar

100g sugar

1 egg

3g vanilla sugar

150g coconut cream, boil and leave to cool

800ml water

### **Method:**

Combine coconut cream and egg, stir well and set aside

Combine agar-agar, vanilla sugar, sugar and water. Mix well. Cook into a pot until sugar dissolves completely.

Pour agar-agar mixture into a tray. Then pour mixture from step 1 onto it, refrigerate until it sets, serve.

It's as simple and delicious as it looks, do try it out!

We are happy to inform the members of the SLIA that **Fathima Mariam Ahamed**, daughter of Aslam & Shazida Ahamed and granddaughter of Azahim & Minna Mohamed and Izzeth & Rizivi Ahamed has completed and memorized the Holy Quran in full. She therefore, has received the title of Hafiza.

SubhanaAllah, Mariam is just 13 years old. The parents of Mariam take this opportunity of thanking Moulavi Atha ur Rahaman for his guidance at the beginning of her journey.





# Lanka Travel

## Ramadhan Umrah & Hajj 2013



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### HAJJ OCTOBER 13' PACKAGES

TRAVEL DATES: 5TH OCT - 26TH OCT 2013

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<b>MADINAH ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>4* AL-EIMAN TAIBAH HOTEL</b>	<b>4* AL-EIMAN TAIBAH HOTEL</b>	<b>4* AL-EIMAN TAIBAH HOTEL</b>

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# WORLDWIDE SHIPPING

## The SLIA

We apologise for any mistakes made during publication of this newsletter. Please message any news, updates of address, details to [info@slia.org.uk](mailto:info@slia.org.uk). To keep up-to-date with all events and news for the SLIA please subscribe to our SMS service by sending a message to **0752 536 4491** or joining our 'SLIA' **facebook group** ([www.facebook.com/groups/theslia/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/theslia/)).

SLIA Key Dates for your diary :			
Date	Event	Time	Location
3rd Aug	<b>SLIA Iftar Week 4</b> Hosted by the Shazuliya Thareeqa	19:00	2 Witham Road, Osterley, Isleworth, Middlesex, TX7 4AJ
<b>17th Aug</b>	<b>SLIA Eid ul Fitr Festival with Special Guests</b> <b>* Adult £30 - Child £15 (5-12) *</b> <b>(Contact ExCo members for tickets)</b>	<b>18:30</b>	<b>London Paddington Hilton Hotel, 146 Praed Street, London W2 1EE</b>
September TBC	<b>Sports and Cricket Meet</b> Looking for budding Cricket players to represent SLIA - Contact Shifaz	TBC	TBC
29th Sept	<b>Back to School</b> Discussing and teaching developmental education with our children (Contact Sadat)	TBC	TBC
<b>9th Nov</b>	<b>SLIA Eid-ul-Adha Event</b>	<b>18:00</b>	<b>Double Tree Hilton— Ealing</b>

## SLIA Membership Announcements

### Obituaries:

Inna Lillahi wa Inna Illaihi Rajioon - It is with great sadness we report the passing away of fellow members from our Association. May Allah (swt) grant them Jennathul Firdouse and make it easy for their respective families:

**MTM Hussain** from East Ham. Beloved husband to Fauziya, brother of (late) MTM Zahir, Ishack Thahir, Rizvi and Mysooma Marzook passed away on **12th December 2012** .

**Abdul-Rahim Saleem**. Beloved husband to Zeenia Saleem, father to Mohamed Saleem, Shazia and Shahra (in law), grandfather to Yusuf, Zayd and Ihsaan and brother to (late) Ayne Mohideen, Faiza Hashim, (late) Obaid Saleem and Khadji Thahir who passed away on **16th December 2012**.

**Sister Gerda Shariff** from Wembley. Wife to (late) Aziz Shariff (one of our SLIA founder members) who passed away on **7th April 2013** .

**Mr SM Mawjood** father of Shabinah Ossman and Malik Mawjood, father in law of Iqbal Ossman, brother of Mr Joe Deen and grandfather of Lailah and Sarah who passed away on **4th July 2013**.

### New Births:

The SLIA would like to congratulate our members for the new additions to their family. May Allah (SWT) guide them with the best Imaan and knowledge to succeed in this world and hereafter inshaAllah:

**Zuleikha** and **Sadril Cassim** had a baby boy **Sabr Mohammed Cassim** on **23rd October 2012**.

**Hasna** and **Thabith Naja** (daughter and son-in-law of Dulfiker & Hafsa) had a baby girl 'Hiba Aysha Naja' born on **22nd January 2013**.

**Laila Hussain** and **Nasheeth** (daughter and son-in-law of Jabir and Fathima Sulaiman) had a baby boy 'Hafiz Hussain' on **1st March 2013**.

**Maryam** and **Umar Ehsan** (daughter and son-in-law of (late) Nakeem and Nazneen Jabbar) had a baby boy 'Eesa Siddiqui Ehsan' on **April 11th 2013**.