

## EDITORIAL

As millions of Muslims all over the world prepare for this year's once in a life time journey to the House of Allah (SWT) , in answer to the call of Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and fulfil the obligations of Ha jj, we are happy to present this issue's feature article on Hajj.

While we congratulate those that would witness this year's congregation, and also wish them a successful journey as well as performing an acceptable Hajj, we should not forget the significance of and the lessons to to be learnt from this act of worship. The significance and some of the lessons to be learnt are effectively tackled in the feature article.

Also in this issue, we have been able to lay our hands on and bring to our brothers and sisters a short but brilliant article written by late Brother Khurram Murad, about the choice a Muslim leaving in the West, especially here in Britain, has to make - either to allow himself to be assimilated and absorbed in the secular culture, or face genocide and extermination, or to bring Islam to the West.

We pray to Allah (SWT) to grant us the wisdom and ability to read, understand, and practice the lessons in these articles, and bless our writers with Jannatul Firdous, ameen.

## HAJJ AND OUR JOURNEY TOWARDS AN ISLAMIC WAY OF LIFE

### (Significance and lessons for the Islamic Movement)

*And proclaim the Pilgrimage among men: they will come to thee on foot and (mounted) on every camel, lean(on account of journeys) through deep and distant highways; That they may witness the benefits(provided) for them, and celebrate the name of Allah, through the days appointed, over cattle which He has provided for them(for sacrifice): then eat ye thereof and feed the distressed ones in want. Then let them complete the rites prescribed for them, fulfil their vows, and(again) circumambulate the ancient House. (Al Hajj 27-29)*

### Introduction

This was the order given to Ibrahim(as) to call people towards the Hajj: a call to which millions answer every year, and will continue to answer till the time Allah(swt) wishes. Various reasons have been mentioned in the verses for the call, but at the foremost, significantly, is 'that they may witness benefits(provided) for them'. These benefits have not been specified nor limited. Thus, they can be spiritual and mundane, for the individual and the group, and could be of varying degrees and nature to different persons or groups. We learn from Hajj issues relating to Aqeedah and Ibadaat, Politics and Economics, morality and social responsibilities..etc. For example, all

the fundamentals of Aqeedah are reaffirmed: Tauhid, belief in the Angels, in the Books and the Prophets, and in Qadr and the Last day. We are taught the essence of Ibadah and its reward. Our hearts are purified with remembrance of Allah, remembrance of the death, the rejection of the devil, and the revival of emotions and memories of old! We also learn patience and perseverance, sacrifice and mercy, humbleness and piety. In the social sphere, we see unity and brotherhood, equality and human relations, group attitudes and understanding. Politically, the Hajj season is the only time a representative group of the Muslim Ummah comes practically under a common leadership, thus reminding us of the khilafah. We also meet to discuss our problems and take common stands in matters that affect us. We also learn of Muslim

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*Letters to the Editor: 72 King Street, Loughborough, LE11 1SD.*

problems which we report back to our 'constituencies'! It is the greatest single medium and opportunity for the dissemination of information, and also the single greatest opportunity for the Muslims to 'be known' by the world. Besides, it is a journey of peace, to the Land of peace in the months of peace.. so peaceful that not even the plants or insects should be hurt! The Hajj season is, undoubtedly, that occasion where the greatest economic transactions take place: big enough to bail out many of the poor Muslim masses if properly managed. Imagine how much is exchanged in terms of currencies, and how much is exchanged in goods (from food to Ihram dresses to animals of sacrifice etc) and services (from airlifting to accommodation etc). But, unfortunately, it is the non Muslims who benefit most from this. These are some of the benefits. They are too many to discuss. As such we will concentrate on some which may be of greatest significance to the Islamic movement, the group of people who realise the situation the Ummah is, and who also realise the responsibilities that are on them of bringing it back on the path of revival towards an Islamic way of life in all spheres.

### Significance

The significance of the Hajj to the Islamic movement lies in many things. Some of these will be mentioned:

i) **As an obligation:** Allah (swt) said, meaning,

*Pilgrimage thereto (the House) is a duty Men owe to Allah, - Those who can afford the journey; [Q3:97]*

And the Prophet (saw) said,

*Islam is built on five pillars... performing pilgrimage to the House of Allah, for those who can afford the journey. [AlBukhari and Muslim]*

The Islamic movement that strives to establish the system of Allah (swt) on

earth has to take special significance in any of the fundamental pillars of the deen.

ii) **The call of Ibrahim(as):** The fact that the Hajj is the call of Ibrahim(as), and a reconstruction of his life and struggle, is of great significance. Ibrahim(as) is rightly the father of the Islamic movement. He is the father of the Prophets, who led the movement through times. He was one whose whole life was sacrificed for the struggle to eliminate false deities and establish true worship of Allah. He called his father and admonished his offspring; he admonished leader and the led; he left his home and family for the sake of Allah; he was always on the move through most of the civilised world of his time - from Iraq to Egypt to Syria to the Arabian Peninsula; he fought evil with his heart, tongue and hand and eventually established the symbol of Allah's worship on earth; he faced all odds and suffered all tribulations; he was indeed a model:

*Ibrahim was indeed a model, devoutly obedient to Allah, (and) true in faith, and he joined not gods with Allah. (An Nahl, Q16:120)*

iii) **A Jihad:** Hajj is a form of jihad in itself. The Prophet (saw) has categorically mentioned this in many hadiths, among which are:

*What a good jihad Hajj is!* [Al Bukhari]

*The best jihad (for women) is an accepted Hajj.* [Al Bukhari and An Nasa'i]

*Hajj is the jihad of every weak person.* [Ibnu Majah]

In other places he (saw) made many parallels between Hajj and jihad: he used to make loud dhikr during both; he used to thank Allah (swt) and say, *Allah has fulfilled His promise, and helped His servant, and defeated the allies alone* when he returned from any of them; and in the treatment of the shaheed and the one who dies performing Hajj, there is a parallel.

But the most striking connection between the two is in the Qur'an, where the mention of the duties of Hajj always comes before or after the mention of jihad (fighting or da'wah) [see AlBaqarah, 2:154-158 & 189-203 and AlHajj, 22:26-41]. In fact, one of the verses that commands the formation of the Islamic movement comes a few verses after, but closely related to, the verse that comes with the obligation of Hajj in surat Al Imran [verses 96-110]! The link between Hajj and jihad can easily be seen: both require material and human sacrifice; both require discipline and patience; both have been described as 'fi sabilillah' by the Prophet (saw):

*Verily, the Hajj and umrah are 'fisabilillah'; - [Al Hakim]*

and in Hajj are rehearsed all the pre-requisites of a successful jihad, both in its form and in its history, as we will see, in sha Allah.

iv) **A turning point:** The Hajj season marks an important turning point in the history of the first Islamic movement of this Ummah. It was during Hajj that the famous allegiance of al-aqabah (bay'at al-aqabah) that led to the establishment of the first Islamic state was made; then there was the 'manifest victory' of Hudaibiya; then the famous declaration of immunity (bara'ah) which marked the final state of relationship between the Islamic state and the disbelievers; then the final declaration that the deen of Allah has come to stay, a declaration which the Jews said they would have celebrated if it was revealed to them. Not to forget that the Hajj season has been the most fruitful for the da'wah throughout the Makkan period!

v) **A confluence and a symbol:** Hajj is a confluence, a meeting point. It is a meeting point of the mundane and the spiritual, of the dunya and aakhirah, of various cultures and personalities, of varying colours and languages; something that distinguishes Islam from any other

religion or ideology. It is also a symbol of the established deen, that is to be made dominant over all other systems. These are things the Islamic movement is struggling to establish on the earth as a whole. Besides, Hajj is a meeting point of the Islamic movement in time and space. When and where the pilgrims rub and step on the same soil, and kiss the same stone, that was stepped and kissed by Ibrahim and Isma'el(as), and all the generations up to Muhammad(saw) with that group of the chosen companions, the vanguard who made that 'unique generation.' Then Islamic workers meet and see all others who are on the same path with them throughout this 'tiny' world!

### Lessons

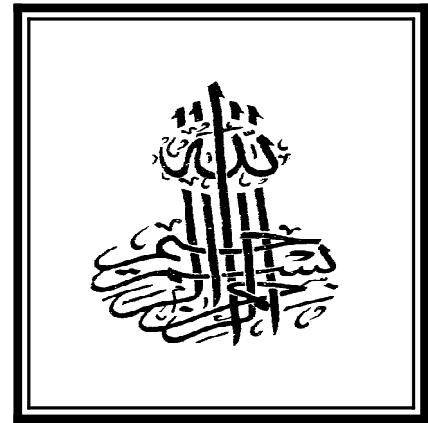
The Islamic worker, looking at the Hajj as a form of Jihad, relates whatever preparations, sacrifice, effort, mental and spiritual preparation he made or he achieved, with what he is expected to do in his life-long struggle. From this angle we can enumerate lessons as: the need for effective planning with clear goals and vision; unity of purpose and direction; brotherhood; allegiance and immunity(al wala' and al bara'); role of women and children; division of labour; da'wah with affection for the called; da'wah as a full time activity; patience and perseverance; firmness and determination; stock taking and self appraisal; meeting place for exchange of ideas and putting together strategies; co-operation and co-ordination between various groups; resoluteness; need for economic base for da'wah; appreciation of the enormous nature of da'wah; consolation and encouragement; need to be careful with financial sponsorships from someone external to the movement; effective time management e.t.c. e.t.c.... But let us look at three which seem to run through the whole activities and history of Hajj:

#### i) Importance of effective

**tarbiyah(training):** A careful look at the Hajj reveals a significant amount of tarbiyah that is needed, and also achieved. In the spiritual domain, the Hajj is dominated with dhikr in nearly every rite and place. So is the constant reminder of the hereafter-in fact it looks like a rehearsal to that imminent journey -the farewell (death), the journey (grave), the ihram (shroud and grave), the standing at arafah (resurrection and judgement) etc.. . Then the witnessing of the 'clear signs' of Allah's greatness that abound in the 'First House' as the Qur'an has told us. Then the memories, when the heavens and the earth meet; the dunya and the akhirah meet, and the first and the last meet! It is so much of a spiritual experience that the pilgrim returns home 'like the day his mother gave birth to him.' [hadith] Since before one starts the journey, the mental preparation starts. Struggling to learn the rites-to many, more than they learn about salat-, then the guidelines about the unique journey, then the great exposure that one gets. Allah(swt) said, meaning,

*Do they not travel through the land, so that their hearts(and minds) may thus learn wisdom and their ears may thus learn to hear? Truly it is not the eyes that are blind, but the hearts which are in their breasts. (Al Hajj:46)*

Could there be a travel more momentous than the Hajj? In the physical sphere, we are first reminded of the conditions of 'ability' to perform Hajj, which includes that of the body. In Hajj the body is forced to 'live up to the circumstances.' New environment, different type of food, harsh weather, congestion, new and unusual type of dress, different accommodation etc.. all one has to live up to, and get used to. Is this not the essence of physical training for the life long Jihad? In summary, the Hajj teaches us that an effective training program for Islamic workers in all three spheres is a must for a success!



ii) **Absolute submission and surrender to Allah (swt):** Many scholars have observed that the Hajj is unique among the other forms of Ibadaat. Not only because it involves money and the body, but because many of its rites are not within the domain of human reasoning. We kiss the black stone, knowing well that it is a stone. We go round a House, the Owner of which we believe is beyond and above His creation; Most acts of worship are not tied to any individual's remembrance, or to a place, except Hajj; We are asked to hit the shaytan with pebbles even though we know it is a pillar of concrete; Moreover, one cannot even hit 'to hurt' the devil, as some will prefer. And, why seven rounds of tawaf or sa'y? etc... All these do not simply appear to the human intellect as Salat, Zakat or Siyam appear. Omar(ra) was quoted as saying to the black stone..

*if not that the Prophet(saw) has kissed you I will not have kissed you.*

The scholars say the wisdom most apparent is that it is a test of our unquestionable submission and surrender to the orders of Allah(swt), just in tune with the life of Ibrahim(as). He was ordered to do da'wah, he did; he was ordered to leave home, father and relatives, he did; he was asked to take his family-including a little child- from a 'blessed land' to a barren one, he did; and he was asked to slaughter that only son ..and he did submit, without an iota of contemplation. And this is what Hajj is set to remind

and teach us. As long as we are Allah's servants and property, and we have voluntarily sold ourselves to Him, we have to behave like that. We have to realise that no movement can succeed without absolute commitment to the cause, and absolute submission to the commands of Allah(swt) and the Prophet(saw). Any slight deviation can be very costly. The lesson of Uhud is there in surat Al Imran we read always. That is why the greatest fear of the Sahabah(ra) when they go out for an expedition was not in the enemy but in the presence of somebody disobeying Allah(swt) and His Messenger(saw) in their midst.

iii) **The Sunnah of Allah with regards to victory:** This is another important lesson we should always remember when we perform or reflect upon Hajj. And it is an issue that many workers fail to understand, a thing that leads them to losing hope and end up in one of two extremes. We start with Hajar, the wife of Ibrahim, who struggled and roamed the barren mountains of Makkah for water to give her child-an episode we reconstruct during Sa'y. She was full of confidence and trust in Allah(swt)'s aid, but was not ready to give up her struggle, until Allah(swt) brought forth a spring that continues to flow to the day this earth is folded up. That was her victory! Then the struggle of Ibrahim. He spent all his life in it; travelled nearly the whole civilised world of his time calling his people. All this period he didn't establish a state, nor did he get many followers! At least we are not told; nor are we told of what happened to his detractors. And he never slackened! Didn't he get a victory then? "We gave him his reward in this dunya, and in the hereafter he is among the righteous." "We left for him a remembrance in those to follow." etc.. are Allah's testification. Ibrahim could easily be said to be the most victorious of all Prophets (ass) before Muhammad (saw). The foundation he raised is

now the symbol of Allah's worship on earth to the day of judgement! He is remembered everyday by all those who pray among the Muslims many times till the day of judgement. That is the real victory; a befitting reward for a hard work well blessed. It may be coincidental that it was during the Hajj season that two significant successes were recorded during the life of the Prophet(saw); they may as well be the most important breakthroughs in the history of the da'wah. If not because Allah(swt) has categorically stated that they were victories many of those who do not understand the yardstick will have disagreed!

*If ye help him not(the Prophet), (it is no matter): for Allah did indeed help him, when the unbelievers drove him out.. (At Taubah,40)*

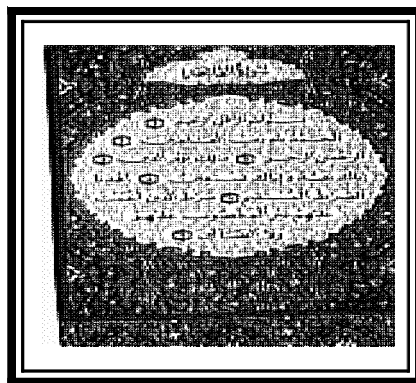
referring to the Hijrah, the agreement for which was concluded at al Aqabah, during the Hajj; and,

*Verily We have granted thee a manifest victory: (Al Fath, 1)*

referring to the treaty of Hudaibiyah, which also was concluded on the way to Hajj! This teaches us that victory is not in the establishment of a state-by hook or by crook- but in the level of our effort and its acceptance by Allah(swt), Who then makes it effective in the minds of people even after us.

May Allah (swt) accept our works and give us the ability to reap the benefits He has put in Hajj..

**Muhammad Ashiru Sani**



## **YOUR CHOICE!**

Our world today stands at the threshold of events likely to change the course of history. The old world order is dying and the new world order must be born if human being and the world at large are to live peace and justice.

You must know, and be grateful for your Creator, that you are blessed to be Muslims, and, at such momentous times in world history, you have been placed in the West, here in Britain. A bright future awaits you, full of great promises and openings. You have the unique opportunity of becoming partners in the making of history, indeed of being standard bearers, at this crucial hour. For this you have to recognise that Islam is the message that the hearts and minds of mankind have been waiting for. You only have to do your duty as Muslims to usher in the new era.

The old order is dying because it has failed to give peace to hearts and minds, to bring justice and mercy to mankind, to give meaning, purpose and direction to the individual and society. It has failed to put unity and brotherhood hearts of men. Such meaning and direction in life can come only by making the Creator the centre and goal of life. Unity, brotherhood, respect for human dignity, can materialise only to a unity rooted in hearts and minds not in flesh, race, colour, language or geographical barriers so rampant in our times that seem almost impossible to pull down. But this can be done through faith, and only then can violence to self, to persons, to peoples, and to environments, be eliminated. Such direction to life, such unity, only Islam can give because it means living in total surrender to the Creator, Allah, in accordance with the guidance given by Messengers.

The treasures of Islam -its message and its way of life - are in your

hands. You are either their trustees. For the last time they were given to humanity through the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and you are his heirs, his ambassadors, his apostles, to all mankind until the end of the world.

It is no accident of history that you and the millions of Muslims reside here in the West, from Istanbul to Los Angeles. For no such accidents take place in a history directed by the All-Wise and All-Knowing God. You may have come for money, education or a better material life, but He has placed you here for a purpose: to be ambassadors of Prophet Muhammad to the West, the present day world leader. You are therefore, on trial, and the choice is yours; whether to fail or to succeed.

Muslims were in Spain for eight hundred years with all the splendours of civilisation. They made a great impact on the West, but did not succeed in making its homes and hearths an abode of Islam. Then, they were in Eastern Europe with all the Might of arms, but again, did not succeed in conquering hearts. Now, for the third time, you are here, but with neither splendours nor arms. But perhaps, now, with the might of Iman and the splendour of life fashioned by one who was a 'Mercy unto all the worlds', you can succeed where others have failed. The potential is there, the choice is yours.

Indeed you have only three possible futures. First, to be assimilated and absorbed in the secular culture here, receiving in return, a niche where you can practice your private customs and festivals. Second, to face genocide, or extermination, like the Muslims in Spain and Bosnia, and the Jews in Germany. And third, to bring Islam to the West and West to Islam.

Being Muslims, desiring to live as Muslims, do you really have a choice? Certainly not. There is only one choice for you and it is quite obvious. Therefore, arise brothers

and sisters, old and young, high and low and make a resolve today, for tomorrow never comes - to cry out and carry on the message of the Prophet (SAW), from every home and market square to every man, woman and child, so that they may live in true submission, to your only Lord, and the only centre and goal of life, following and obeying all of His messengers, Adam, Abraham, Moses Jesus and Muhammad (SAW). Only that will bring unity, integrity to your personal lives, peace and love to your hearts, and justice and mercy to human kind. With unflinching commitment, undivided loyalty, unbounded love and enthusiasm, and unceasing yearning, Allah will crown your efforts with success. The day will then come when Britain will give up all 'isms' and established religions, and submit to the will of the Creator. That day Britain will become Islamic. Let that be your goal.

This piece was written by late Brother Khurram Murad, The Vice President, Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, a Trustee and a former Director General of the Islamic Foundation Leicester, and editor of Tarjuman al-Qur'an, Lahore, Pakistan, and the quarterly Muslim World Book Review, Leicester, UK, who died on Thursday, 9th Sha'ban 1417 H (19th December, 1996), after a brief illness

Khurram Murad's whole life, from early boyhood to his last moment, was dedicated to the service of the Islamic movement. He was initiated in the Jamaat-e-Islami, Bhopal, as a student and joined Islami Jamiat-e-Talaba, Pakistan, immediately after his arrival in Karachi in November 1948. In the Jamiat he served as the President of the Karachi unit (1949-50) and as its Nazim-e-A'la (All Pakistan President) during 1951-1952. After the conclusion of his student career, he joined the Jamaat-e-Islami, Pakistan and served as its Amir at the important cities of Dhaka (1963-71), and Lahore (1987-89), as a member of Central Shura (working



Committee) and 'Amila (Executive Committee) (1963-1996) and as its Naib Amir (Vice-President) (1987-1996). In 1992, he was appointed editor of the monthly Tarjumanal Qur'an, Lahore, the journal founded by Mawlana Abul A'la Mawdudi in 1932 and which has been the chief pace-setter for the Islamic movement in the Indo-Pak subcontinent.

Khurram Murad occupies a place of distinction in the intellectual firmament of contemporary Islam. A thinker, an orator and a prolific writer, he has been one of the architects of current Islamic resurgence. While his da'wah activities began in Pakistan, he has been involved in the promotion of the Islamic movement in Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas. As a teacher and a da'iy his speeches and thoughtful orations have inspired thousands of young men and women all over the world. As chief of the training departments of the Jamiat, the Jamaat and as an active resource-person in training programmes in the UK and America, he played a key role in the character-building of the youth in the Islamic Movement.

An author of over thirty works in Urdu and English, his thoughts have influenced two generations of Muslims all the world over.

Brother Khurram Murad would surely be remembered by all, especially the members of NMF (UK) for his immense contributions in the formation of the Forum.

May Allah (SWT) in His Infinite Mercy forgive him, have mercy on him, and accept all his deeds and forgive all his shortcomings. May He (SWT) grant his family the fortitude to bear the loss, ameen.

As was reported in the first issue of the Newsletter, this year's Winter Camp was held at Didsbury Mosque, Manchester. Several papers were presented and group discussions were held at the well attended gathering.

The communique and a summary of the of proceedings of the gathering were produced and would soon be circulated to members insha'Allah.

Also, the Executive Committee members of the Forum met on 22nd February, 1997 at the London Central Mosque, to discuss, among other things, this year's Spring Camp, the details of which is in the third column of this page.

The London Branch of the Forum, organised an Eid-ul-Fitr Celebration for its members and their families. The gathering was well attended and activities at the gathering include lectures, discussions as well as fairs for children.

The Manchester Branch of the Forum organised several Iftar dinners for its members and their families, as well as other members of the Muslims Community. Activities held include lectures, ta'alims and general discussions about Islam and the Muslims.

We highly encourage other branches to follow suite, by organising such activities.

**TA'ALIM SESSIONS**

Brothers and sisters are reminded of the importance of holding weekly Ta'alim Sessions in areas where there are atleast two members of the Forum. This would help immensely in bringing them together and also (most importantly), give the the ability to remember their Creator - Allah (SWT).

May Allah (SWT) grant all of us the ability to be among those who constantly remember HIM, ameen.

**A R R I V A L S**

**Dr Muhammad Isa Adamu** arrived from Ministry of Health, Damaturu, Yobe State for a Masters programme in Public Health at University of Leeds, Leeds.

**Brother Sammani Abdullahi** arrived from Bayero University, Kano for a Ph.D. programme in Computer Science at University of Leeds, Leeds.

**Dr Falalu Dahiru Danwata** arrived from ABU Teaching Hospital for a Postgraduate Training in Clinical Oncology (Radiotherapy) at Christie Hospital and Holt Radium Institute, Manchester.

**Sister Fatimah Adamu** arrived from Kebbi State, Nigeria for a Ph.D. programme in Social Science at Bradford University, Bradford.

**GRADUATION/DEPARTURES**

**Brother Kabir Ahmed Rufai** has returned to Kaduna State Water Board, after successfully completing his Master programme at WEDC, Loughborough University, Loughborough.

**D E A T H S**

**Brother Awwal Ibrahim** of Reading lost his father, who died recently after a brief illness. May Allah (SWT) forgive him and have mercy on him, and grant the family the fortitude to bear the loss, ameen.

**Brother Haruna Ginsau** of the Nigerian High Commission office in London lost his father, who died recently after a brief illness. May Allah (SWT) forgive him and have mercy on him, and grant the family the fortitude to bear the loss, ameen.

**Brother Bello Buhari** of Middlesex lost his father, who died recently after a brief illness. May Allah (SWT) forgive him and have mercy on him, and grant the family the fortitude to bear the loss, ameen.

**THE SPRING CAMP**

This year's Spring Camp is scheduled to take place at the Muslim Association of Nigeria (UK)'s building, London from 29th to 30th March, 1997. The Theme of the gathering is **"TOWARDS A BETTER HAJJ OPERATION IN NIGERIA"**

Speakers at the gathering include Professor Ali AbdulHamid, a one time lecturer at Bayero University, Kano, Professor Dawud Noibi, Dr Azzam Tamimi and Mustapha Ibrahim.

There would be lectures, workshops and discussion sessions on various topics insha'Allah.

It is in the light of this that we highly encourage both brothers and sisters to try and attend this gathering. Full details and formal invitation letters and directions would be sent to all members shortly, insha'Allah.

We look forward to seeing you at London.

**A P P E A L**

The Publication Committee welcomes from members things like (i) Information about any member regarding birth, marriage, arrival, graduation and departure, (ii) Information on branch activities such as lectures, ta'alim sessions and fund raising drives, (iii) General comments, observations, or objective criticisms regarding the Newsletter. We should all keep in mind that the Newsletter is ours and should strive to make our contributions towards its prompt publication.

