



# Muslim Planet

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[The Muslim Voice](#) Project offers a platform of technology services for the Muslim Community of North America. It provides the needed infrastructure to transform the community towards [unified positions](#) and integrated action plans. It seeks Muslim representation at local, state, and federal levels. So, please [help](#).

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## Welcome Message

We wish that you and the community are well, and please accept our Greetings for the coming Eid Al-Fitr. We hope you will enjoy this issue of the News Journal, and you will share it with your family and friends. If you have your own eMail list, please forward this News Journal to your list.

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Stay in PEACE



[The Muslim Voice](#)

## Editorial

We all know that US and NATO forces are withdrawing from Afghanistan. They are withdrawing like the USSR had withdrawn in February 1989. USSR was wiser, it decided not to be caught up in a never-ending war, like USA and NATO subsequently did.

USA and NATO are now running out with their tail between their legs. The twenty years during which they killed and pillaged in Afghanistan, they have added up to nothing, other than a humiliating disgrace for them and a destruction of the lifestyle and the living standards of their people.

They suffered humiliation in Vietnam; but did they learn? They were defeated in Iraq by Iran; but did they learn? They have suffered defeat in Afghanistan; but will they learn?

Of course, it needs wisdom to learn. And the EuroAmerican countries have lost all wisdom; they have replaced it with foolish arrogance and false pride. They are being kicked out of Afghanistan only to be beaten up again in an Afghanistan in the making. They have said so already.

Remember how France had made a trail in Vietnam for USA to walk into? They are doing it again. France has made a trail in Mali, Niger, and Chad, as well as Somalia and Mozambique. Mali will be the next Afghanistan, from where France will withdraw and USA will walk in. There is no limit to US foolishness.

It is already happening.

1. [After eight years of Mali campaign, France seeks exit strategy, Issued on: 06/01/2021,](#)
2. [France to meet Sahel leaders as it mulls troop drawdown. Issued on: 13/02/2021](#)
3. [Macron sketches Sahel drawdown plan but no 'immediate' cut, Last updated: 16/02 - 20:20](#)
4. [Nbh](#)
5. [The US Should Send More, Not Fewer, Troops to West Africa, MARCH 3, 2020](#)
6. [Bnh](#)
7. [Defending the U.S. Military Presence in Africa for Reasons beyond Counterterrorism, May 19, 2020](#)
8. [Exclusive: Inside the Secret World of US Commandos in Africa](#)
9. [The Military Doesn't Advertise It, But U.S. Troops Are All Over Africa, April 28, 2018](#)
10. [Where does the U.S. have troops in Africa, and why? BY KATHRYN WATSON, UPDATED ON: OCTOBER 23, 2017](#)

The USA will no doubt be defeated but the region, mostly Muslims, will pay a heavy humanitarian price. The destruction of Mosul will be replicated, the inhumanity of Iraq and Afghanistan and Vietnam will be reinvented.

USA is supposed to be a democracy. Can the Muslims in USA not get a clue and get into the House and Senate as well as State and local governments in order to save the Muslim lives and save their livelihood from being destroyed?

## News in Brief

**Please click the hyperlinks to read more details:**

1. [Switzerland votes in favor of 'burqa ban'](#).
2. [France adopts tougher provisions for controversial Islam bill.](#)
3. [Hamas Commander Warns Israel over Occupied East Jerusalem Attacks \(Al-Jazeera\)](#)
4. [Cartoon Controversy in UK Schools](#)
5. [Kahina Bahloul and the European imamas, pushing for a modern and liberal Islam.](#)
6. [The Dutch right wing's use of social media to spread Anti-Islam rhetoric.](#)
7. [Islamophobia within the British Conservative Party: An Enquiry.](#)
8. [Palestinians Vow to Save Sheikh Jarrah Neighborhood \(Aljazeera\)](#)
9. [Israeli Court Says Sheikh Jarrah Residents Must 'Reach Agreement' with the Settlers Trying to Evict Them \(Mondoweiss\)](#)
10. [Staunch Anti-India Kashmir Politician Dies in Police Custody \(Washington Post\)](#)
11. [The 'Hijab Penalty': Feminist Backlash to Muslim Immigrants in Germany \(Penn Today\)](#)
12. [UN Committee to Examine Palestinian Apartheid Charges Against Israel \(The Jerusalem Post\)](#)
13. [Muslim Scholars Union Urges Chad to Hand Power to Civilians \(Anadolu Agency\)](#)
14. [Yes, Israel Is Obviously an Apartheid State \(The Nation\)](#)
15. [Israeli Security Guard Filmed Beating Palestinian Man in East Jerusalem \(Times of Israel\)](#)
16. [Israel Settlers Set Fire to Palestine Farmland in Nablus \(Middle East Monitor\)](#)
17. [Video Shows Israeli Settler Trying to Take over Palestinian House \(Al-Jazeera\)](#)
18. [Medics: 200 Palestinians hurt in Al-Aqsa clashes with police.](#)
19. [3 killed as police crack down on hardline group in Pakistan.](#)
20. [Pakistan Parliament to consider French envoy's expulsion.](#)
21. [Meet the families using Ramadan as a way to honor those lost to coronavirus.](#)

## Articles for Muslim Community

### Muslim World's 500 Most Influential List

The list is issued yearly since 2009. It is issued from Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University, Washington DC. This year's top figure is Recep Tayyip Erdogan, The President of Turkey. The persons of the year are Bilkis Bano of India who started the Shaheen Bagh Movement, and Ilham Tohti of China who organized a movement for the Uighur Muslims of Xinxiang Province.

You can download the complete document by clicking [here](#).

#### *Woman of the Year*

#### **BILKIS BANO, INDIA**

Eighty-two-year-old Bilkis Bano has managed to mobilize and inspire many to stand up against an ideology that is threatening to destroy India as we know it. Starting a simple Gandhian sit-in protest on a road in her locality of Shaheen Bagh in Delhi, she managed to bring the world's attention to the latest signpost in India's slide into Hindutva, 'majoritarianism', 'Hindu nationalism' or 'fascism, Hindu style'.

Bilkis was joined by thousands of women, initially Muslim, but then of all religions, ages and classes to protest against the government's National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). The NRC targeted people in Assam and asked them to prove citizenship by providing birth certificates. As many of these people are rural and don't possess these documents, they couldn't prove they were citizens and so were moved into detention centers where they would be classified as stateless and not have the same recourse to law as citizens.

To prevent all but Muslims from falling foul of this, the CAA was brought in. It allowed all people (except Muslims) without documentation to apply for citizenship as persecuted refugees from neighboring countries. So, if they don't have papers and are not Muslim, they can apply for Indian nationality; if they don't have papers and are Muslim, they become stateless and get moved into a detention center.

These moves by the BJP-dominated government are another step in the realization of Hindutva by organizations like the Rastriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS). Set up in 1925, the RSS was the alternative voice to Gandhi's vision of India. It was banished from the scene after one of its members assassinated Gandhi, and then the Congress Party kept similar voices at bay until their re-emergence in the 1990s. With Narendra Modi's (a man heavily implicated in the 2002 Gujrat pogroms against Muslims) victory in 2014 and landslide in 2019, changes are being made on many fronts (e.g. Kashmir) which will result in disaster for the minorities of India.

Bilkis, or dadi (grandmother) as she is known, protested for over 100 days against this ideology which would overturn India as we know it. Her protest grew organically to over 12 locations in Delhi itself and then on to other cities, with millions of people getting involved. Where it could have gone from there is unknown as Covid-19 and its restrictions entered the fray and brought everything to a halt. With the pandemic halting the protests for several months and with a supreme court ruling deeming indefinite protests in public places unacceptable, it remains to be seen whether the warning voice of Bilkis and others will be heard so loudly again. She is determined to carry on the fight, but whether she can once again garner this level of support is an open question.

*Man of the Year*

## **ILHAM TOHTI, CHINA**

Ilham Tohti has been imprisoned on separatism-related charges since 2014, with no contact with his family for the past three years. A professor of economics at university, he hosted the Uyghur Online website for two years before it was shut down in 2008. It advocated for the rights of Uyghur culture and questioned the lack of economic opportunities for Uyghurs, all the while seeing a planned increase of Han immigration into the region. After the 2009 ethnic clashes between Uyghurs and Han in the capital, Ürümqi, Tohti was imprisoned but released a month later, mainly due to international pressure. However, he was arrested again in January 2014 and imprisoned after a two-day trial. Since then, events have gone from bad to worse.

The Uyghurs are the world's most heavily surveilled community. Police officers routinely conduct what is known as fanghuiju: intrusive inspections to report on "extremist" behavior, such as not drinking alcohol, fasting during Ramadan, sporting beards or possessing "undesirable" items, such as copies of the Qur'an or prayer mats. If guilty of any of these things, then the person is sent to 're-education' camps. These camps hold over 1 million Uyghurs and use all tactics to erase Uyghur cultural identity. It is a genocide. Prisoners are subject to torture, forced abortions and sterilization, forcibly fed pork or are not permitted to eat until they denounce Islamic teachings or praise the Communist Party. It is estimated that a sixth to a third of young and middle-aged Uyghur men are currently imprisoned, or have been at some point in the past year.

Twenty-two countries mounted the first collective criticism of China's treatment of the Uyghurs on 8th July 2019 in a statement to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. A substantial record of evidence gathered by numerous human rights organizations has shown an oppressive strategy targeting the Uyghur population that is designed to criminalize all forms of religiousness within Xinjiang. However, to counter this, the Chinese government issued a letter of their own, with about a third of the signatories being members of the Organization for Islamic Cooperation. This shows the extent of China's economic power and hold over many of these countries.

How much of this Ilham is aware of is anybody's guess, but since his arrest, his work has been recognized, and he has won numerous awards promoting freedom of expression and resistance to oppression. These include the PEN/Barbara Goldsmith Freedom to Write Award (2014), the Martin Ennals Award (2016), the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize (2019), and in October 2019, he was awarded the 2019 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought by the European Parliament. All of these have been collected by his daughter, Jewher Ilham, who continues the campaign to get justice for her father.

### **Meet the Author: Dr. Muhammad A Hafeez**

Originally from Pakistan, Dr. Muhammad A. Hafeez earned master's degrees in history and chemical technology from the University of Panjab. He then attended City University in London, England, and graduated with a PhD in chemical engineering. Though he migrated to the United States in 1973, he spent over twenty years in Saudi Arabia, where he lived and worked from 1983 to 2004. It was here that his passion for studying the religion of Islam benefitted from invaluable study circles of the Qur'an and various religious scholars to whom he is deeply indebted.

Author of *Human Character and Behavior* and *The Mission and Destiny of Humankind*, Dr. Hafeez now lives in Liverpool, New York, where he continues to faithfully examine Islam within its theological, historical, and cultural perspectives. Please click [here](#) for his books on Amazon. Some of them can be downloaded for free by clicking [here](#).

Note for the future Authors who want to publish their books: Muslim Voice Publishing House will help you Publish your Books. Please click [here](#) to contact us by email or call us at 240-614-6161.

## The Quran, the Bible, and the Torah: Fasting in Abrahamic Traditions

Book by Dr. Ahmed S. Khan  
[dr.a.s.khan@ieee.org](mailto:dr.a.s.khan@ieee.org)

There are a number of common traditions in Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. They all believe in one God, offer daily prayers and weekly congregational prayers, give alms, visit the holy place of Jerusalem, accept Abraham (pbuh) as one of the major Prophets, and keep fasts. Although the form and protocols of fasting vary greatly among Jews, Christians, and Muslims, one thing is common that they all seek spiritual enlightenment by following commandments of God.

### Fasting in Judaism

According to [Jewish Encyclopedia](#) the Day of Atonement is the only fast-day prescribed by the Mosaic Law:

*...In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and you shall not do any work ... For on that day he shall provide atonement for you to cleanse you from all your sins before the L-RD.*  
-Leviticus 16:29-30.

[Yom Kippur](#), like *Shabbat*, is a day when one refrains from work. It is the holiest day of the year, spent praying, repenting, and fasting. Leviticus 23:32 describes Yom Kippur as a *Shabbat Shabbaton* - a Sabbath of complete rest. The other fasts in Jewish calendar were established after the Captivity in commemoration of the various sad events that had befallen on the Jewish nation during that period. These were the fast of the fourth month (*Tammuz*), of the fifth month (*Ab*), of the seventh month (*Tishri*), and of the tenth month (*Ṭebet*). According to some rabbis of the *Talmud*, these fasts were obligatory only when the nation was under oppression, but not in peacetime. In the Book of Esther an additional fast is recorded, which is commonly observed, in commemoration of the fast of *Esther*, on the thirteenth of *Adar*, although some used to fast three days—the first and second Mondays and the Thursday following *Purim*. Over time, many other fasts were incorporated in memory of certain troubles that befell on the Jewish people, but these were not regarded as obligatory, and eventually they found little acceptance among the followers. Besides fixed fast-days, the Synagogue frequently imposed a fast-day upon the community when great calamities threatened the Jewish

people. All Jewish fasts begin at sunrise and end with the appearance of the first stars of the evening, except those of the Day of Atonement and the Ninth of Ab, which last "from even till even."

## Fasting in Christianity

[In Christianity](#), fasting practices have undergone many changes over the centuries, and vary among denominations. The most significant Biblical stories concerning fasting are Prophet Isa's (pbuh, Jesus's) forty day fast in the wilderness, and Prophet Moses's (pbuh) forty day fast atop Mount Sinai. In present day Christian traditions, there are no compulsory or required acts of fasting, however, some Christians voluntarily undergo some form of a forty day fast in order to deepen their faith and feel closer to God.

In the [early years of Christian church](#), there used to be a much stronger emphasis on fasting, Wednesdays and Fridays were considered days of fasting. By the middle ages fasting had assumed major significance. On the Church proclaimed fasting days, priests and nuns used to keep a fast spanning twenty-four hours. In the medieval Christian Church, every Friday was considered a fast day and it commemorated the death of Jesus.

The New Bible Dictionary defines *Fasting* as "generally means going without all food and drink for a period." However, in modern fasting by the Catholic Church, for example, it can refer to abstaining for certain types of food for a period or limiting the number or size of meals over a certain period of time.

Historically, in Judeo-Christian traditions, the only *Fast* explicitly commanded in the Old Testament Law was on the *Day of Atonement*. This is described in Leviticus 16:29-34. The term there indicating a fast is translated as "*humble your souls*" in the New American Standard Bible. The same Hebrew words are used in conjunction with fasting in Psalm 35:13, and the parallelism of the poetry indicates that the phrase conveys the same concept as fasting. (*The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 2, edited by Frank E. Gaebelin; the section on Leviticus written by R. Laird Harris*). After the Exile, four other annual fasts were observed. The Exile would refer to both the Exile of the northern kingdom (Israel) by the Assyrians and the exile of the southern kingdom (Judah) by the Babylonians (See Zechariah 8:19). Esther 9:31 indicates the establishment of an additional fast associated with the feast of Purim which celebrated the deliverance of the Jews from genocide while in exile in Persia.

Some fasts were voluntary and entered into individually (see II Samuel 12:22) or corporately (see Judges 20:26). Fasting was associated with grieving (II Samuel 23:12-13), penitence (I Samuel 7:6), expressing humility and dependence on God (Ezra 8:21), self-punishment (phrase "to afflict the soul" in Psalm 35:13 {King James Version}), appealing for God's provision (II Samuel 12:16-23). Fasting could also be vicarious as in Esther 4:15-17.

Fasting perhaps was misconstrued as a means of manipulating God, so the prophet Isaiah made clear that fasting "without right conduct... was in vain" (*See Isaiah 58 for this very spirited appeal by the prophet for proper fasting*). The Day of Atonement is the only annual fast referred to in the New Testament.

In Jesus' parable in Luke 18:9-14, he refers to a Pharisee who fasted twice a week. It was common for adherents to that sect to fast every Monday and Thursday. Jesus is only recorded to have fasted in his 40 days in the wilderness before his public ministry (Matthew 4:1-4). Moses (Exodus 34:28) and Elijah (I Kings 19:8) both also participated in 40 day fasts. The disciples appear to have only participated in the one obligatory fast and not any voluntary fasts while Jesus was on earth with them (See Luke 5:33-35). In Acts 13:2-3 and 14:23 church leaders fasted before selecting missionaries and elders.

Voluntary fasting in the Old Testament expressed a mournful, urgent seeking of God in distressing circumstances. King David fasted for his dying infant son in II Samuel 12:16-18.

There was fasting by Jews when threatened with genocide in Esther 4:3, 16. The inhabitants of the Assyrian city of Nineveh fasted as an act of repentance in Jonah 3:6-10 (note these were non-Jews). Fasting is what Jehovah asks for as part of the repentance he seeks from the sinful kingdom of Judah in Joel 2:12-13. [\*Jesus' teaching on fasting in the Sermon on the Mount was primarily designed to warn his disciples against the sin of hypocrisy.\*](#) (See Matthew 6:16-18). These seem, along with what is mentioned in Isaiah 58, to be the main teachings on proper fasting in the Judeo-Christian theology. It should be noted that the emphasis is on justice and attitude with very little concern on the details of not eating or dietary restrictions.

Additional examples of fasting involve the Apostle Paul who fasted after his conversion in Acts 9:9, and the Apostle Paul's words in Colossians 2:16-17, emphasizing the voluntary nature of fasting in the Church, treating matters of food and drink as personal matters not to come under the judgment of others in the church.

In the Roman Catholic tradition, "Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of fasting and abstinence for Catholics. In addition, Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence." Moreover, Fasting is encouraged as a preparation for all feast days.

Reflecting on the Christian tradition of fasting, Gene Anderson, a missionary with [Kids Alive International in Taitung, Taiwan](#), makes the following observations:

1. Evangelical churches tend to emphasize the voluntary and private nature of fasting, recognizing it as a valuable spiritual exercise, but placing it lower in importance compared to prayer and Bible study.
2. The Charismatic and Pentecostal portions of the Protestant church put a much greater emphasis on fasting.
3. For Roman Catholics, fasting is not equated with a total lack of food consumption. What passes for fasting is often the consumption of one regular meal and two smaller meals on a given fast day. Sometimes it also refers to refraining from the consumption of meats.
4. I have at least twice given up a meal on Good Friday in order to fast and pray. I have also fasted when praying to God in a matter of great urgency.
5. In some Evangelical churches, the emphasis on fasting includes setting aside the time that would be spent preparing and consuming food and using that time for prayer. Also, the money that is saved by skipping a meal is often made into a charitable offering.

## Fasting in Islam

Fasting (*Siyam* or *Sawm*) is one of the five pillars of faith in Islam. Prophet Mohammed (Pbuh) said:

*(The superstructure) of Islam is raised on five pillars: [Tawhid](#), the oneness of Allah (Monotheism), [Salah](#), the establishment of worship prayers, [Zakat](#), the payment of poor due, *Sawm*, the fast of [Ramadan](#), and [Hajj](#) -the pilgrimage to Makkah ([Sahih Bukhari and Muslim](#)).*

Fasting is an act of obedience and submission to Allah's commandments through the highest degree of commitment, sincerity, and faithfulness. In Islam, fasting is a meaningful practice with a specific purpose. It has its own set of protocols and structure.

**Purpose of Fasting:** The main purpose of fasting is to attain [Taqwa](#) (God consciousness) and evoke Allah's pleasure through self-restraint, self-discipline, and self-purification.



"O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous." ([Al-Qur'an 2:183](#))

[Taqwa](#) is a very comprehensive Qur'anic term implying both love and fear of Allah. It means keeping the believer conscious of his Creator at all times and in all places.

**Types of Fasts:** Muslims keep two types of fasts: 1. the obligatory fasts of the month of Ramadan, (2) Voluntary fasts. The observance of the fast in the month of Ramadan is an obligatory duty on every adult, sane, able, man and woman. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. Obligatory fasting commences with the beginning of the month of Ramadan with sighting of the new moon and ends at the completion of the month. Allah revealed the Qur'an (the book of guidance for mankind) in the month of Ramadan, and commanded Muslims to fast in this month:

*The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for mankind, and clear proofs of the guidance, and the Criterion (of right and wrong). And whosoever of you is present, let him fast the month, and whosoever of you is sick or on a journey, (let him fast the same) number of other days. Allah desires for you ease; He desires not hardship for you; and (He desires) that you should complete the period, and that you should magnify Allah for having guided you, and that peradventure you may be thankful." ([Al-Qur'an 2:185](#))*

**Requirements of Fasting:** There are two major requirements for fasting, (1) *Niyyah* or intention to fast, (2) Methodology of fast. The *Niyyah* can be made before dawn on each day of fasting at the time of the [Suhur](#) (light pre-dawn meal) as follows: *I intend to observe fast for today.* The methodology of fast involves abstinence from three primal physical needs of human beings --food, drink, and sexual relationship --from dawn (approximately one and half hours before sunrise) to sunset ([Iftar](#) time) with the prerequisite intention of fasting. [Iftar](#) is an Arabic term meaning breaking the fast immediately after the sunset. There are, however, no restrictions in fulfilling these physical needs during the night (non-fasting) hours.

**Exemption from Fasting:** People in the following categories are exempted from the obligatory fasting of Ramadan. (1) Children under the age of puberty, (2) Insane or mentally challenged people, (3) The elderly and chronically ill. (4) Women during menstruation, (5) Women during pregnancy and lactation (6) Sick people with recoverable illness. (6) People under stress, and (7) Travelers.

**Voluntary Fasts:** The protocols and methodology of all voluntary fasts involve the same structure and standards as for fasting in Ramadan. Since voluntary fasts are optional (*Nafl*), they can be observed as one wishes.

The practice of fasting influences Muslims in a positive way. Fasting enhances the feeling of inner peace and provides tranquility of mind. It teaches patience and perseverance. Personal hostilities and aggressions are also curbed. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the last of the prophets of Allah, regarded fasting as a blessing for both body and soul, and advised the Muslims to exercise moderation. Many recent scientific studies have revealed that fasting cleanses the body and improves health.

Fasting is a one of many common traditions among the Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In this day and age, where the emphasis is being placed by certain quarters to highlight the differences in faiths in order to force people apart, it has become incumbent on the believers of Abrahamic faiths, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam to strive to use common traditions like fasting to attain spiritual enlightenment, enhance understanding of each other's faiths and traditions, so that people can coexist in peace and harmony.



## **The Great Muslim Nation**

We are the only organization of its kind in North America

eMail : [iCommunity@mail.MuslimPlanet.org](mailto:iCommunity@mail.MuslimPlanet.org)

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