



Toowoomba Muslim Newsletter

Vol 2, Issue 9, Oct 2021

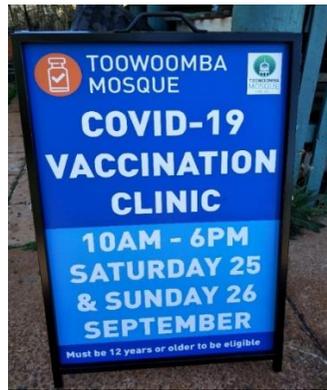


Covid-19 Vaccine Clinic in Toowoomba Mosque

Islamic Society of Toowoomba (IST) in collaboration with the relevant health authorities in Darling Downs and West Morton region organised a Covid-19 Vaccine Clinic in Toowoomba Mosque on Saturday, 25 and Sunday, 26 September. This was a special opportunity for the community to receive Pfizer vaccine from the local Mosque. People of diverse cultural and faith groups came to the Mosque for vaccination during the weekend.

Professor Shahjahan Khan from the Islamic Society of Toowoomba said the pop-up clinic will provide the free Pfizer vaccine to members of Toowoomba's Islamic community but anyone from the culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community of age 12 or over are eligible to attend and receive a vaccination. If you or your family have not had a Covid-19 vaccine yet, you will get it free from the Mosque.

"We encourage everyone to take the opportunity and help protect lives." Professor Khan said all the leading Islamic Scholars in Australia and abroad have asked every Muslim to get the vaccine and encourage others to do the same. "The leaders in the local Mosque, Islamic Council of Queensland and Australian Federation of Islamic Councils have also been continuously advocating the importance of vaccination to keep Australia safe during the pandemic," he said.



Br Mohamed Ali, Secretary of IST, coordinated the event and manage setting up of the Clinic and help the health workers during the vaccination period. President of the IST and Chairman of Toowoomba Mosque Board, Professor Shahjahan Khan welcomed the health workers to the Mosque and thanked

them for the excellent job they had done for the community. He also thanked everyone involved in the process including officials from various departments of Queensland Government.

Meeting with DEST Officials about Employment Avenues

On Thursday, 30 September 2021 officials from the Queensland Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DEST) visited Toowoomba Mosque to meet with the leaders of Islamic Society of Toowoomba to discuss the various pathways to jobs for the members of the community. Mr David Forde from the Department of Multicultural Affairs initiated the meeting with President of Islamic Society of Toowoomba. The idea is to help the people with qualifications to get appropriate employment through linking with right agencies/persons and providing training including apprenticeship for the young people. During the pandemic the international migration is closed, so local people should be hired for the available positions. Often there is a gap between the employees who want to hire staff and the people who are looking for jobs, and DEST is trying to make the connection.



Meeting with DEST Official at Toowoomba Mosque

Second Dose on Saturday, 16 October 2021

The second dose of Pfizer vaccine will be offered from 10am to 6pm on Saturday, 16 October 2021 in the Toowoomba Mosque. Everyone received the first dose on 25 or 26 September should return to the Mosque on Saturday, 16 October to receive the second dose.



Part of the Vaccinating team and people receiving Pfizer vaccine at Toowoomba Mosque



Preparation for Vaccine Clinic

Islamic Society of Toowoomba called for online registration for the vaccine to make sure sufficient number of vaccine were available on the day. Many Muslims and non-Muslims used the online registration platform Eventbrite via the link

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/pop-up-vaccination-clinic-tickets-169812328245?fbclid=IwAR09W7XX5RYNwmZLdp2ZgmXuXzYp1y0Q4DvSyoSqZcWBNOHkFHNPgmXDSE>





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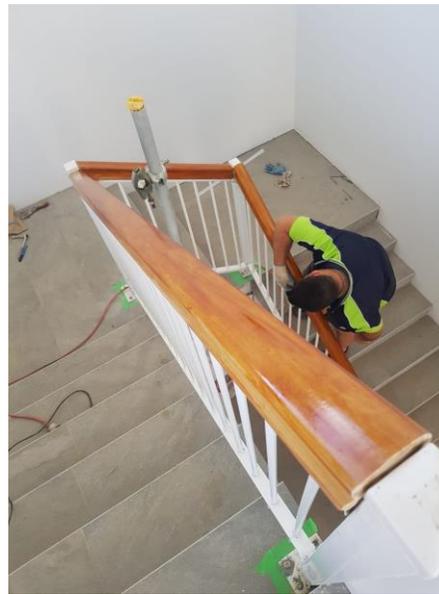
A team of vaccine management people visited Toowoomba Mosque on Tuesday, 21 September 2021 in preparation for the planned Covid-19 Vaccine Clinic on 25 and 26 September.

People who wanted to come to the Mosque for Vaccine were advised to bring their Medicare Card if they have it, or their passport with entry visa with health insurance ID. Everyone was welcome. No prior registration was necessary.

On 9 September 2021 the daily Chronicle of Toowoomba covered the story on Covid-19 Vaccine Clinic at Toowoomba Mosque on 25 and 26 September.

Balustrade Fitted in the Mosque's Staircase

Br Muhidin Hadzich and Br Noor A Rahman has worked hard to finish some of the outstanding internal works of the reconstructed Mosque building. Their newest addition is setting the balustrade in the staircase to the mezzanine level, designated women prayer hall. This is looking great. Earlier they finished the skirting around the building and painted it. Building is almost ready except for electricity connection, setting up external units of ducted aircon and concreting around the building.



Call for Concreting Quotations for Mosque's Carparking

As the reconstruction of Toowoomba Mosque moves to the Final Stage, we are looking for quotations from the interested parties for 42 sealed carparks, two driveways, retaining walls etc. If you are interested in the job or you know anyone who may be interested in submitting quotations, please contact the Project Coordinator, Eng Waqar Butt by emailing on wbut123@gmail.com

IWAA CEO Visits Toowoomba

Respected Sr Galila Abdelsalam , CEO of the Islamic Women Association Australia (IWAA) and her colleagues visited Toowoomba on 16 September 2021. IWAA is doing great job in supporting the community and helping people. In a meeting with the President of Islamic Society of Toowoomba, Professor Shahjahan Khan Sr Galila discussed their plan for opening an office of IWAA in Toowoomba to increase its activities and support services.



Jumma (Friday) Sermon on Covid-19 Vaccination

On Friday, 10 September Dr Omar Alsakit delivered the following sermon on the importance of vaccination in Islam.

Dear brothers in Islam:

The pandemic has changed life rapidly for all of us. Many people have lost their loved ones due to coronavirus and the world is continuing to experience death and devastation due to this virus. We were all affected throughout the pandemic. There are more than 223 000000 coronavirus cases in the world including 4 616 130 deaths. And in Australia, there are 68041 cases including 1066 deaths.

It is certainly difficult for anyone not to feel a sense of fear, anxiety and lack of control over our circumstances during the pandemic. We are being tested in our priorities and our ability to cope in a time of confusion and despair.



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As Muslims we are called to put our trust (Tawakkul) in our Lord, and not to fall into despair or hopelessness. Our faith, Islam, reminds us that tests and tribulations are part of our lives. The Qur'an mentions five tests and trials that we will go through as human beings during our lifetime. The Glorious Qur'an says:

[البقرة:155] الصابرين وبشر بالثمرات والأنفس الأموال من ونقص والجوع الخوف من بشيء ولنبلونكم

And certainly, we shall test you with something of fear, hunger, loss of properties and lives and fruits. Give glad tidings to those who shall remain patient during these tribulations. (Q 2:155)

Tawakkul (reliance on Allah) does not preclude taking the necessary means and adopting measures to relieve oneself and others from a tribulation. Believing in Allah's decree (qadr) whilst using the means which Allah has set out in order to achieve outcomes is part of the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) has famously advised: Tie the camel and trust in Allah. (Tirmidhi).

One of the lessons we learn from this Prophetic statement is that we need to use all resources available to us and make reasonable efforts to achieve what is in our interests, whilst at the same time relying entirely on Allah for the outcome.

Dear Brothers

Since the beginning of this pandemic, efforts have been made across the globe to develop a treatment to save lives. Thankfully, within a short period of time vaccines against covid-19 have emerged. This is a significant achievement.

And before we go further, we must remind ourselves of the concept of healing and taking of medicine in the Qur'an and Sunnah. The Qur'anic concept of healing is that Allah is the Healer, and the doctors and the medicines are the means of healing. In support of this, in the Quran:

يشفين فهو مرضت وإذا

And when I am ill, it is He who heals (cures) me. (Qur'an 26:80)

Whilst Allah is the ultimate Healer, we are encouraged to do our best to preserve the gift of life given to us by Allah, the Most Exalted. The Qur'an commands:

المحسنين يحب الله إن وأحسنوا التهلكة إلى بأيديكم تلقوا ولا

do not throw yourselves into danger and become the best of the best, surely Allah loves those who do good. (Qur'an 2: 195).

Dear brothers

Islamic civilization has contributed significantly in the medical history. Muslims have contributed to preventive medicine throughout history, and Muslims are among the first people to believe in the idea of vaccination. The idea of preventing harm comes from Prophet Muhammad PBUH, who said, if there's any contagious disease in a city, you should not enter that city or leave it. If you contract that sickness, you should not go on to spread it. This is one of the theological foundations for vaccination.

The Prophet PBUH, said "No one will have true faith until he or she has the same love for others as they have for themselves"[Related by Bukhari and Muslim]. A manifestation of care and concern for others is protecting them from disease and sickness and vaccinating oneself not only protects oneself but others as well.

Ibn Umar reported: The Messenger of Allah PBUH said, "Verily, your smile in the face of your brother is charity. Lifting harming things from the road is recorded for you as charity".

Dear brothers

Classic Maqasid al-Shariah (the higher objectives of Islamic law) consider the protection and preservation of life as the cardinal value of Islamic morality. In addition to saving one's own life, Islam emphasises the need to save others' lives too:

(Anyone who saves a single life, it is as though he has saved the whole of humanity. (Qur'an 5: 32).

In line with this, intentionally exposing oneself to a life-threatening disease is like facilitating one's death. The Prophet (peace be upon him) has strongly warned against killing yourself:

(Whoever commits suicide will be punished with the same object in the hellfire. (Bukhari)



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Seeking medical treatment or getting vaccine can be considered as part of belief in the power of Allah. *Abu Darda, a companion of the Prophet Peace Be Upon Him (PBUH), reported: The Messenger of Allah, said, "Verily, Allah sent down the disease and the cure, and for every disease he made a cure. Seek treatment, but do not seek treatment by the unlawful" [Sunan Abī Dāwūd 3874].)

In another hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) has urged that one should "seek out cure". (Bukhari) Accordingly, protecting oneself and others from potentially a life-threatening situation, getting vaccinated can be considered as seeking out cure that has been, ultimately, sent by the Lord Almighty.

By taking the vaccine you are preventing harm to others and can therefore get rewarded by Allah for this noble intention. There's a verse in the Holy Quran [5:32], that "if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind."

With the right intention, by becoming vaccinated, you're likely doing one of the honourable acts of good deeds—which is protecting life. Certainly, Saving Lives is a good deed.

*In addition, by protecting others from potentially contracting COVID-19, we are protecting ourselves. As the Prophet Muhammad PBUH said, "We are one body, and if part of it aches, the rest should respond with sleeplessness and fever" [Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 6011, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2586].

By not taking the vaccine, we are potentially putting the lives of others at risk, in particular those who are at greater risk of catching covid. We all have a responsibility to take care of one another, which is something our religion, Islam, places an enormous emphasis on. The famous prophetic tradition states: "There is no causing harm or reciprocating harm" (Ibn Majah).

By taking the vaccine, we are expressing gratitude towards Allah for creating a readily available treatment which not only prevents the virus from spreading but also enables us to return to our former state of social engagement and communal activities.

Brothers in Islam

One might ask whether the covid-19 vaccines contain haram substances such as gelatine. The Qur'an says, "Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know." (Qur'an 16:43, 21:7) Ask those who are experts in the field of 'halal' and 'haram' the God-conscious 'ulama who have a good understanding of the shari'ah

and care about the greater good of their community. Those will tell you that There are no animal products have been used to produce The Pfizer vaccine (the one we will mention latter).

Brothers in Islam

While individual choice and any qualified difference of opinion amongst scholars and health professionals are respected, the broad consensus amongst experts and Islamic scholars, across the world, is that because vaccines generally help to prevent the spread of a potentially deadly virus, Individuals should take covid-19 vaccine after consulting their medical practitioners.

May Allah Almighty grant humanity relief from covid-19 and make the development of vaccines a source of benefit for all.

I say this and ask Allah for forgiveness for me, you, so invoke Him for forgiveness, for He is the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful

Article on "Winners and Losers in Afghanistan" by Professor Shahjahan Khan Published in Australasian Muslim Times (AMUST)

<https://www.amust.com.au/2021/09/winners-and-losers-in-afghanistan/>

The recent military victory of Taliban (students) against the most powerful army in the world is undoubtedly a remarkable event in the history of mankind. This was the end of the occupation of Afghanistan by foreign forces for twenty years.

The world has witnessed the unceremonious but safe withdrawal of the defeated armies of the US and UK along with their local Afghan Security Forces they had created and trained. As the last act of destruction, the fleeing US soldiers had destroyed huge quantity of military hardware including many aircrafts in the Kabul airport hours before their departure under the watch of Taliban fighters.

While Taliban fighters allowed and helped US soldiers and citizens to leave Afghanistan safely, the US Government froze all the assets of Afghan Government in the USA. However the UN has now called for the release of frozen Afghan assets to avoid total breakdown after UNDP said Afghanistan faces staggering poverty.

Why the USA would freeze the money of another nation whenever the rulers do not obey their orders?



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The Taliban, nonconventional fighting militia, mostly educated in traditional religious institutions in Pakistan, originated in Afghanistan to deal with the failure of the Mujahideen led Government that followed the defeat of the Soviet occupying army in 1989 who invaded Afghanistan in 1979.

Although supported by the US and its allies against the Soviet Union, the Mujahideen failed to bring peace and prosperity in Afghanistan due to infighting.

Can the Taliban achieve what the Mujahideen and West-backed governments in Kabul could not do for the people of Afghanistan? Every Afghan is worried and watching closely with hope and fear if the future will be better than the past.

They are not pro or anti Taliban, they are sick of fighting for no common good in their sight. But they are happy to see that the war is over, and hope that Taliban will be able to deliver the common good to the helpless people of Afghanistan.

They are equally worried about the past of the Taliban, and hope that the new Taliban will take this opportunity to turn their controversial past into an illuminating future by uniting the people and ensuring their wellbeing.

They also know that this is not any easy and quick task, and require support and participation of all Afghans. Taliban believe, "The stage of bloodshed, killing and contempt for people in Afghanistan has ended, and we have paid dearly for this."

The early signs of the new Taliban are not so bad as many people thought and predicted. Apart from some isolated and small incidences the overall security management of Taliban was reasonably good. No mass murder, no sporadic killing, no revenge attacks, no celebrations, and no violent reactions.

Instead, the Taliban have declared general amnesty to their former enemies including those who directly fought against them as Afghan Security Forces. They have asked all public servants, women included, who served under previous Government to join their duties without any fear or reprisal.

They helped with the safe return of US, UK and Australian forces and citizens. They promised to cooperate with everyone and work for a unity government including various sections of Afghan population and international partners.

These are all good signs and indicative of their adherence to their commitments. Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan has asked everyone to work with Taliban to achieve inclusive government and save lives from acute shortage of food, medicine and shelter.

As a traditional society, Afghans have a different way and lifestyle, and they should be left with their choice. Like any other people/nation if they are happy with their cultural heritage and way of life which may be different from mine or yours, we should leave them alone as long as they are not imposing their values to others.

If the Taliban are genuine in introducing Islamic system they must not ignore the rights of different sections of the population granted by Allah in the Qur'an and teachings of His last Prophet Mohammad (s).

This includes equal pay for men and women doing the same job, universal education of women and men, women working outside home including law enforcement and defence force.

The world appears to be divided in recognising the new Taliban government in Afghanistan. Countries like Russia and China are already working with Taliban. On the other hand the USA, UK and their allies are asking Taliban for an inclusive government and respect for human right.

Qatar, Turkey and Pakistan are already helping the Afghan Government, and as a neighbour Iran would continue working with them. Being a best ally of ousted President Ashraf Ghani, India is yet to decide the type relationship they will have with the Taliban.

The Taliban is already working with all parties in Afghanistan including former Presidents and Prime Ministers installed/supported by the USA such as Hamid Karzai, Abdullah Abdullah, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and others to form an inclusive government.

Until, an agreement is reached, the Taliban will rule Afghanistan with an Interim Caretaker Government. Afghanistan will be the biggest loser if it's government engages or tolerates extremism and violence within and outside its borders, and does not work with its neighbours to overcome the crisis.

The main challenge for Taliban Government is to work for the unity of the country by winning the hearts and minds of people, and working with international partners to manage the humanitarian crisis and poverty elimination.

At the same time, in no circumstances, Taliban should allow to grow any radical ideology and violent extremism within and outside Afghanistan. The notion of killing enemies should never be used to kill innocent.

The most powerful countries in the world who attacked and occupied this unconquerable land with the false hope of democracy and development could not simply abandon over 40 million helpless people taking no responsibility other than those few collaborators employed by them.



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The Afghans on average earn only \$2.00 per day even though the USA spent \$2.3 trillion in the war. So, where the \$300 million per day gone? Interestingly bulk of the money did never go out of the USA, just transferred from the government accounts to the US companies that ran the taxpayer funded war.

So, the real winners of the war are the producers, suppliers and dealers of arms, indeed the whole war industry, along with corrupt leaders who have no care and value for human life. Needless to say that the ultimate loser is the American nation who were deceived and misled by their successive Govts that initiated and continued the war with false pretention and claims that they were winning.

The first online meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Pakistan, China, Iran, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan on 8 September 2021 provided some pragmatic observations and recommendations to the new Afghan government and rest of the world to ensure peace, stability and development of Afghanistan.

They asked for national peace and reconciliation; adopt policies to achieve durable peace, security, safety, and long-term prosperity; and respects the fundamental human rights including those of ethnic groups, women and children.

However, some Afghans are sceptical of the role of Pakistan and its confusing past as to if it is genuine to support the people of Afghanistan or working as US proxy along with Qatar. However, Qatar brought the USA and Taliban on the discussion table, and working closely with Taliban led government.

As the home of largest Afghan refugees, Pakistan is already working hard with Afghanistan and other neighbouring nations for regional peace and prosperity.

Given the geopolitical and strategic location of Afghanistan it is only a matter of time when big powers recognise the new Afghan Government. China needs passage through Afghanistan to access European and Asian markets.

Pakistan already being a development partner of China and good friend of Turkey and Iran, will try to consolidate its position in Afghanistan. All the neighbours of Afghanistan are most likely to work together for regional peace and prosperity without undue external influence.

The Taliban can benefit hugely if they learn from the recent socio-economic and technological developments and progress in education and research in the leading Muslim countries and initiate effective collaboration.

If they wish to play a key role for the Ummah, they must be an active part of it, and strengthen their moral and economic position.

The Taliban would only be able to effectively help members of the Ummah, beyond rhetoric, in Palestine, Kashmir, Xinjiang, Myanmar, and other places if they could achieve high moral grounds and champion in human right, and lead in spiritual and material development.

Muslims are thankful to the US for its humanitarian and development support to many Muslim countries over the last several decades. Also, the whole world knows the great educational, scientific and technological contribution of the US in the last several centuries.

Toowoomba Mosque Madrasa and Language Class Timetable

The classes on Islam and Basic Arabic are held from 4:00pm until after Magrib (40 minutes each lesson) every week from Monday to Thursday. For details, please contact Br Abdu Mohamed on 0469026540.

The Arabic Language classes are held from 4:00pm on every Friday and Saturday. For details, please contact Br Omar AlSakit on 0434284241.

Bangla Language classes are held on Saturdays at 11:00am. For details, please contact Br Kabir Ahmad on 0424591316.

Community Services

- Halal Meat Delivery – Contact Br Murad on 04 0669 1749
- Toowoomba Police Contact Officer Tony Rehn 04 1269 7555
- 1800 RESPECT www.1800respect.org.au
Support for people impacted by sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse. Interpreter 13 14 50
- Business advertisement contact: Shahjahan.Khan@usq.edu.au

Communication with Mosque via Technology

Sharing your story: Shahjahan.Khan@usq.edu.au (If you have a story to be included in the Muslim Community Newsletter please contact Prof Shahjahan Khan)

General contact email: admin@toowoombamosque.com.au

Website: www.toowoombamosque.com.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ToowoombaMosque

WhatsApp: Toowoomba Mosque Matters / MSA Toowoomba

Madrasah: via Zoom, Meeting ID: 379 889 2083