

Head of Australia's pick Muslim body visits Toowoomba to engage with wider community

The Fourth USQ Islamic Centre Open Day organized by the Islamic Society of Toowoomba Inc and USQ Multicultural Centre brings together a host of high profile Muslim and non-Muslim speakers from across Australia. This is the first time the President of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC) is participating in any event in the Darling Downs region. The participation of Engineer Ikebal Patel in the event shows the level of importance that AFIC pays to engage with the regional and rural communities.

The event is a major engagement of Muslims in Toowoomba and the region with fellow Australians after the historical call by the US President Barack Hussain Obama, as part of the global initiative, to bring Muslims and the West closer for the sake of peace, harmony and development. The co-existence of followers of different faiths has become an essence for the stability of the world.

The USQ Chancellor, Ms Bobbie Brazil will open and speak in the event. Dr Mohamed Abdalla, Co-Director, National Centre for Excellence for Islamic Studies, a six million dollar Federal Government project, will be the main speaker on the day. Dr Abdalla is very well known all over Australia as a scholar and prolific speaker.

The composition of the Organising Committee for the event is a good mixture of Muslims and non-Muslims. The Committee has sent out invitation to various religious, educational and community groups to participate in the event. The organizers believe that the event would be a true representation of members of the Toowoomba community.

To facilitate the debate and discussions on various issues faced by the community the Committee has invited reputable scholars, administrators and community leaders. The dignitaries and speakers in this year's event include Mr Garry Page, Executive Director of Multicultural Affairs Queensland, Professor Peter Goodall, Pro-VC Social Justice, USQ, Dr Krzysztof Batorowicz, Director, USQ Multicultural Centre, and Dr Shahjahan Khan, President of Islamic Society of Toowoomba Inc.

The main activities to be held from 10am-3pm on Saturday, 25 July 2009 at the USQ Islamic Centre, located off Baker St, just behind the Steele Rudd College, USQ. In case of bad weather the alternative venue is Room No R113 (in the Library Building).

The program and activities include recitation from the Holy Qur'an, presentation of songs, display of Islamic art, architecture, crafts and books, distribution of brochures, Mosque tour and performance of prayers, posters on Islam, Arabic calligraphy, open questions from guests, women's decoration, children activities etc. Light lunch, tea, coffee etc will be provided.

In the past, the event attracted sizeable crowd from the wider community and received significant media coverage. Apart from the valuable presentations and information materials, mingling with Muslims in the community and open exchange of views have been particularly popular. Women activities were also highly praised by the participants.

For further information, please contact the Chair, Organising Committee, Dr Shahjahan Khan, by email on khans@usq.edu.au or by phone 074631 5532.