

Editorial: Another game of musical chairs

Page 2

Dont pretend to follow the Sunnah

Page 3

Why Gaza fought back

Page 6

The Friday Bulletin

The Weekly Muslim News Update



We are not targeting Muslims, says Uhuru

President Uhuru Kenyatta has said that the government is not targeting Muslims or Somalis in the fight against terrorism in the country.

Asked whether the government targeted Kenyan Muslims, the president was quick to dismiss such claims by saying that the government is only after criminal elements that are out to cause terror among peace loving Kenyans.

"We are not targeting anybody, we are targeting criminals and people who are posing a threat. We are after people hiding be it in Eastleigh, Majengo and are plotting or planning evil against Kenyans" said the head of state.

His comments follow growing concerns from the Muslim Community that President Uhuru's government has embarked on a collective condemnation and profiling of the community in the guise of fighting terrorism.

Speaking to a local TV station on Sunday from the United States where he was attending a US-Africa Leaders Summit that kicked off last week, Uhuru reiterated that the Jubilee government has not sidelined Muslims or Somalis adding that the government has not kept them afar but rather engaged them. "Were we, we would not have the number of Muslims, the number of Somalis as we do in our government" added the President.

The president further noted his government is committed to combat the threats of insecurity which have so far been a major concern for many Kenyans and called upon all Kenyans irrespective of their religion to join hands in addressing the insecurity.

In his interview, the President also defended and absolved those in charge of the security docket from blame and asked those criticising them for being utterly incompetent to quit doing so.

The security apparatus has been singled out as one of the agencies which have taken a draconian approach to profiling and victimizing Muslims.

Continued To Page 2



The Airtel CEO Adil El-Youssef receives a present from the Jamia Mosque Committee chairman Muhammad Osman Warfa. The presentation was made when members of the Jamia Mosque Committee paid a courtesy call on the CEO at the Airtel headquarters on Wednesday.

Muslim youth advised to respect scholars

Muslim youth have been called upon to respect and rally behind their scholars to promote mutual understanding and advancement of the Muslim community.

These remarks were made by the Imam of Landhies mosque Nairobi Sheikh Ahmed Uthman who said that it is only through unity and youth support for their leaders that the community will register success.

"Any divided house will never prosper. Let our youth rally behind their scholars if at all they want the community to prosper and move ahead," said Sheikh Ahmad during his Friday sermon at Jamia Mosque, Nairobi last week.

The Imam warned Muslims against disrespecting others saying that Islam advocates for tolerance and respect for others. He explained it is prohibited in Islam for one to malign and unfairly taint the image of others. "Whoever hides the shortcomings of a fellow Muslim, Allah will also hide his shortcomings and whoever reveals the shortcomings of others Allah will reveal their shortcomings," he said while quoting a tradition of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.

Sheikh Ahmad further urged Muslim moth-

Continued To Page 2

Hemed Salim: Another game of musical chairs

Last week, a Mombasa Judge hearing the case of the missing Hemed Salim Hemed ruled that an inquest should be held to unravel the mystery regarding his disappearances.

Justice Edward Mureithi said that while indications suggested that the police could have killed Hemed, he added that an inquest will provide answers to what actually happened to him after he was last seen being held by armed policemen in the aftermath of the February 2 storming of Masjid Musa in Mombasa.

During the hearing, the police were on the spot for providing unconvincing answers and faced accusation of creating myths to cover up some truth with regard to the whereabouts of Hemed.

The five-month-long hearing was expected to unravel the whereabouts of the missing person and the family anticipated that the court will perhaps bring an end to their long agony and suffering in the search for their missing beloved family member, but sadly, this was not to be.

Further, there were expectations that the hearing will also help to provide answers to queries regarding the fate of several people who have disappeared without

trace-the latest being two Mombasa residents Suleiman Salim Swaleh and Abdulhakim Abdallah who were abducted by yet to be known persons two weeks ago and frantic searches by the family are yet to yield fruits.

The extra judicial disappearances and killings of people who are said to be on the list of people suspected by police of having links with terrorism have caused consternation in the Muslim community and the human rights fraternity but nothing much has come from the government's response to address these concerns by instituting credible investigations fueling speculations that it could be the handwork of its security operatives.

Instituting an inquest as ordered by Justice Mureithi will only serve to recreate the same court episode as it will involve summoning the same people who appeared in court. At the end of the day, nothing much will come out of the inquest and like that of Aboud Rogo, it will likely die a natural death.

Concerns have been growing in the Muslim community over the state of affairs where instead of taking suspects to court, extra judicial means have been employed to eliminate them-either through disappear-

ances or murder. The Muslim leadership and human rights groups have consistently called for thorough investigations into these human rights but little has emanated from the government to address the concerns.

While the long arm of the law should speedily catch up with those spreading terror and mischief in the society, law enforcers should not forget that the law has to be observed to the letter during the fight against terror.

The legal maxim that all suspects remain innocent unless there are convicted by the courts still stands and taking rogue measures against people just on the basis of suspicion is itself an act of criminality which should not be tolerated and those behind these criminal actions should not be spared by the law.

Ultimately, the government has to come out clearly and demonstrate its adherence to the law as the current state of affairs remains a worrying phenomenon where the State will be seen to be complicit in breaking the law while criminals will capitalize on this state of affairs to indulge in acts of lawlessness knowing full well it that- after all it will be the State to take the blame.

End wholesale victimization of Muslims-Kingi

Kilifi county governor Amason Kingi has raised his concern over harassment and victimization of Muslims by security personnel in the guise of fighting terrorism.

Kingi faulted the operation and accused the security personnel of arbitrary arrests and detentions of innocent people without due process of law being followed and adhered to.

Speaking in Malindi sub-county recently, Kingi noted that it was the obligation of the government to guarantee security, profiling of individuals because of their religious or ethnic background must cease and that everyone must be treated with due respect and in human manner without violation of his or her fundamental and constitutional rights.

He cited incidents where Muslims are always singled out and targeted on terrorism matters whenever there are swoops despite the fact that most are innocent." Muslims and terrorism are two different things.

Let security personnel not victimize the whole community for few individual wrong doers," he said

In his address at Tawfiq Muslim Academy conference hall, Kingi urged the local residents to participate in the budget-making process and other development programmes to improve on their livelihood

and not relent in their support for the county government in its endeavours of ensuring beneficial development projects are initiated in the county.

He disclosed that the county government of Kilifi will set up modern nursery schools and village polytechnics in all wards to improve on education standards in the county.

Gov't not against Muslims - Uhuru

Continued from Page 1

In April, the government launched the Operation Usalama Watch ostensibly targeting suspected terrorists and illegal immigrants but was overshadowed by allegations of widespread human rights violation such as corruption, torture, rape, arbitrary arrests, unlawful detentions and deportations.

More than 4,000 people many of them ethnic Somalis were held in deplorable conditions in what came to be known as Kasarani concentration camp.

Extra judicial killings and mysterious disappearances of Muslim personalities which have been blamed on the govern-

ment security machinery as well as the continued silence on the pledges by the President and his deputy William Ruto to bring back eight Kenyans who were renditioned to Uganda are among the list of concerns held by Muslims against the Jubilee government.

Stand by your leaders youth urged

Continued from Page 1

ers to ensure that their daughters dress modestly and properly saying that it is through proper dressing that they will earn self respect and preserve their dignity.

He said girls should not demean themselves by wearing tight and revealing clothes which are contrary to the proper Islamic dress code that safeguard their modesty, dignity and honor.

"I urge our daughters to dress decently as ordered by Allah to protect themselves from any lustful gaze or acts that may expose them to temptation or harassment of any kind from their male counterparts", he said.

Sheikh Ahmad called upon the faithful to make dua (supplications) for Muslims across the world who are faced with a lot of difficulties especially in Palestine, Libya and Syria.

Bad manners? don't pretend to follow the Sunnah

Deana Nassar

Good manners endear us to others. A polite answer turns away anger and a kind word uttered in time may save us from many troubles. It is politeness which succeeds while ability fails.

Even a good action will lose its value if the person doing favor utters impolite words. It is on this note that we, as Muslims, should endeavor to learn from the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who summarized the goal of his entire message into the perfection of the best of conduct in the beautiful hadith:

"I have been sent to perfect the best of manners" (Muwatta' Malik, 8) The Quran also describes the Prophet and his ways: "Indeed you stand on an exalted standard of character" (68:4)

Unfortunately many Muslims unintentionally fail to pay attention to the above hadith which is the very essence of the Islamic manners which we should adopt and instead restrict their views of religion merely to the external acts of worship. Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said: "A Muslim with good manners and a good moral disposition gets the same reward as he who fasts every day and spends every night in prayer." (Abu Dawud)

The Prophet Teaching Good Manners

Our teachings put great emphasis on how we deal with people in our daily lives. Rather than focus on how we dress or the apparent status of our worship our manners and dealings should be our criteria. We must be aware of how each one of us interrelates with people in our circles. Our good dealings will not only ensure that we are not violating other people's rights but will also make us be accepted, loved and appreciated by others.

Prophet Muhammad says: "Two qualities are not combined in any Muslim, avarice and bad disposition." He also warned: "A man with bad manners and a bad moral conduct shall not enter Paradise." Also: "No sin is more detestable to Allah than bad manners." (At-Tirmidhi)

I heard once that it takes 15 seconds to make a first impression and the rest of your life to undo it. While it may not be so bad, habits picked up over the years in dealing with people can sometimes be difficult to let go of and to us may not even seem that bad.

Remember that through the process of improving ourselves and promoting good conduct we are rewarded accordingly. Hence we understand that good manners entail we act appropriately in a way that is socially acceptable and courteous, and display respect, care, and consideration for others. Excellent manners can help us to have better relationships with both the people we know, and those we will meet.

Be an Ambassador for Islam

Islam places great emphasis on manners and on the proper way to deal with others, regardless of whether they are Muslim or not. There are countless testimonies regarding the prophet Muhammad and his

manners by famous non-Muslims including Napoleon Bonaparte, Sir George Bernard Shaw, H.G. Wells, and Mahatma Gandhi to name a few. Each testified that Prophet Muhammad treated friends and strangers, the rich and poor, the powerful and weak with equity, and was beloved by the common people for the affability with which he received them, and listened to their complaints.

A well-known story regarding interaction with non-Muslims highlights how we must deal with them; it asserts that one day when a funeral procession passed in front of Prophet Muhammad, he stood up and when he was told that it was the coffin of a Jew, he said: "Is it not a living being's soul?" (Al-Bukhari)

Relations between people are very important in Islam, and maintaining good associations with others should be a main priority of us as practicing Muslims. We are reminded by the Prophet:

"The exercise of religious duty will not atone for the fault of an abusive tongue."

Good manners and noble qualities of the character enjoy a place of crucial importance in the structure of Islamic teachings. Simply by being polite you are an ambassador for this great religion convincing people that Islam advocates manners and reverence for one and all. A believer who possesses good manners and carries out scrupulously the moral duties imposed on him by Allah without being engaged in additional fasts and prayers as mentioned earlier, attains the degree of excellence of the man who stands up in prayer all night and fasts all day long.

It is without doubt that we may fall into the trap and think times have changed, but this is no excuse for society to deteriorate with regards to behavior. Bad habits picked up over the years in dealing with people can sometimes be difficult to let go of and may not even seem that bad. However, we need to strive in changing the undesirable so our families, friends, peers, and others can see the better of us. Allah says: "Verily Allah changes not the condition the people until they change what is in themselves." (13:11) And also "And those who strive hard in us certainly will. We guide them in our ways; and verily Allah is always with those who do good" (29:69)

Since manners and respect are taught at home, it is one of our parenting's great responsibilities to teach these values. We must instill in our children and it's never too early that good manners are about treating everyone we meet with consideration, dignity and kindness. The Quran reads: "And turn not your face away from men with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allah likes not any arrogant boaster." (31:18)

By raising our children well we illustrate that our good dealings not only will ensure that we are not violating other people's rights but will also make us accepted, loved and appreciated by others. 'Manners make

a man' is a true saying and by manners we mean proper and respectful behavior towards all with whom we come in contact.

Luqman, the Wise was a great example on raising his son in these mannerisms where he cited: "O my son: Let your speech be good and your face be smiling; you will be more loved by the people than those who give them provisions." We know that experience shows that life becomes pleasant when we can manage our work and relationships well. Quranic wisdom and the many examples of the prophet's dealings with people should help us steer our relationships and keep them on the right track. In Islam we are taught to cultivate all good, noble moral and social qualities and to avoid everything that is mean, uncalled for or wicked. We are taught that these virtues are important and without which no one can hope to be a good Muslim and a true believer. We are taught in the hadith: "Certainly, patience, truthfulness, clemency and good manners are among the prophets' characteristics. On the Day of Resurrection, nothing better than good manners will be put in one's scales." (At-Tirmidhi)

We are also reminded: That the messenger would busy himself with the remembrance of Allah; he would not talk in vain. He would lengthen his prayers and shorten the speech, and he would not hesitate to help and take care of the needs of a needy, poor or widow.

Kindness to parents, spouses, family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues is discussed in many of the prophet's stories with focus on generosity, honesty, humility and mercy on mankind. One such story relates that an elderly woman who intended to leave Makkah since she did not like the idea of a new religion being preached by a young man named Muhammad didn't realize that he was the one helping her carry her belongings to the outskirts of the city.

Complaining all the way about a new faith being preached, which required giving up old customs and practices, she finally asked the Prophet his name just before parting. On coming to know that this was the man on account of whom she was about to leave Makkah she not only retraced her steps and changed her decision of leaving, but also accepted Islam indicating that good manners not only costs nothing but wins everything lending charm to people enhancing the glamour and beauty of a personality.

Equally important is the manners and relationship we have with our friends as Islam

Continue To Page 4

SATURDAY LECTURE
Undani wa Ndoa
By: Sheikh Juma Amir
16th August 2014
Time: 10AM-12 NOON
Venue: Lindi Mosque Kibera

Maintaining my Shahadah- please don't beg!

Aisha Wangari Kaminjo

My movement around Kenya can best be described as a whirl of activity that slows down from time to time only to connect with a new thought or a new person in my world, then it sparks off on a new fresh and clear direction.

Sometimes people ask me why I am always so engrossed in some activity or project, why I am always so busy. I love to be asked this question because it reminds me of the motivating force in my life. It's like this: If ever you've been on the brink of total destruction — I mean annihilation of the body, mind, and spirit — and if ever you have caught a glimpse of the shadow of Hell and then been recalled and given a second chance at life, wouldn't you be eternally grateful and be constantly propelled to cover the evil of your life with good? Wouldn't you want to give back to the world something of the eternal mercy of Allah that saved you, and spread it among His creatures?

As much as you might see me "good" now, I used to be the opposite. As much as I have a clear aim and direction in my life now, I used to be totally lost. As much as I am happy and vibrant now, I used to wallow in hopelessness and misery. What brought about this change? It was Allah the Almighty Who picked up a lost, broken-down wretch of a human being and showered His mercy and guidance on me and led me to people and events that helped rebuild me from the inside out. In human terms I was a lost cause, but in the sight of Allah anything is possible, and here I am today.

I work with my people because I understand them and they understand me. I know how to reach out to them. I know what to say to touch their hearts, and I recognize the pain in the eyes of many. My work in Kenya is one of finding the good and building it up, of seeing a need and seeking to fulfill it, and of recognizing the pain in someone's eyes and trying to relieve it.

I have met many people who touched and colored my life with a light brush of hope, inner strength, and ability to keep going and persevering when many others would have given up. Their strength and nobility humbles me, and I'm constantly looking for ways to serve my Lord by helping them in some small way, in any way I can.

So it was that one day not so long ago when I was coming out of a masjid in Nairobi that I saw one of my people standing begging. He was a strong, healthy looking young man and he was begging! The sight of him brought sadness to my heart and a thousand words to my tongue.

My people, the Gikuyu, are known as a noble, strong people with dignity. Each community in the world has its own pattern and design woven and handed down generation to generation, and my people are no different. Our forefathers endured the hardships of war, slavery, and colonization, but despite all that and despite the

poverty we witness today, we still have the seeds of strength and nobility. Sometimes all that's needed is a reminder and a helping hand.

I knew this young man. He had become a Muslim some time ago. Why was he begging? I had to know. When I asked him, this is what he told me:

"In the masjid where I go to learn about Islam, I am told to say 'Subhan Allah, al-hamdulillah, Allahu Akbar' one hundred times and many other forms of dhikr. It takes up so much of my time to do all this plus pray and read Qur'an. I find there is little time for anything else!"

"But my brother," I replied, "you can do dhikr while you work! It doesn't have to be done only in the masjid." I asked him, "Don't you have any land?"

"Yes," he answered, "I have a small plot left to me by my father."

I made him an offer.

"What do you say, brother, if I lend you money for some seeds and tools and bring someone with a tractor to plow the land? Will you grow potatoes and stop begging?"

He was very happy and willingly agreed. I went with him to see the farm. It was indeed a very small plot of land and needed a lot of work, but he got started. After some time I saw this young man again and he came running.

"Sister Aisha! Look at this potato!"

He held up a big fresh potato — the beginning of his first harvest. If you understand the long drought Kenya had just gone through, you will know why we were so surprised and happy. The land had not been productive for a very long time. It had been such a long time since anyone in the area had experienced such a rich, plentiful harvest.

He now has a team of people working for him. He sells his "famous" potatoes to shops and restaurants in the area, and after his second harvest he bought a utility van. When he repaid the money that I had lent him in the beginning, he said, "Here you are, Sister Aisha, and how much more do you need? I mean, how much should I give to help someone else?"

I still remember the first time I saw him after he'd had his first harvest. He saw me and came running with one of the huge potatoes in his hand. "Sister Aisha!" he said to me with bright, shining eyes

Pretending to follow the Sunnah

Continued From Page 3

takes friendship to a higher level, referring to Muslims as brothers and sisters, and expects us to treat each other as such. We are expected to wish for others that which we wish for ourselves. This includes giving honest advice to friends and to be there for them and help them whenever possible. This is a beautiful trait we should teach our children setting them the perfect example by actions bearing in mind that well done is better than well said.

While it is easy to discuss the importance of good manners we must not just preach but practice what we want our children to learn. Inspiring them to express gratitude to others and not to show pride and arrogance, or mock others is absolutely important. Resolving differences with people by giving the benefit of doubt and attributing positive motives to others' actions will serve to teach them to be humble and forgiving. Once this is mastered all our worshipping and efforts will see light since these aspects complement each other. The Prophet says: "Do not say that if people do good to us, we will do good to them; and if people oppress us, we will oppress them; but determine that if people do you good, you will do good to them; and if they oppress you, you will not oppress them." (At-Tirmidhi)

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) always led by example and there are no excuses for us as Muslims not to adhere to his teachings regarding manners. After all he was our best example, bringing to mind a beautiful quote I used to read and now fully understand when I was younger:

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The University is located in Thika – Makongeni off Garissa road. The University's ultra modern Campus in Kajiado has been completed and will open its doors in September, 2014 intake. It's serene atmosphere is ideal for learning.

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Hashtag genocide: Why Gaza fought back

Ramzy Baroud

My old family house in the Nuseirat refugee camp in Gaza was recently rebuilt by its new owner, into a beautiful three-story building with large windows adorned by red frames. In Israel's most recent and deadliest war on Gaza, the house sustained significant damage. A large hole caused by Israeli missiles can be seen from afar, in a part of the house where our kitchen once stood.

It seems that the original target was not my house, however, but that of our kindly neighbor, who had spent his entire working-life toiling between manual jobs in Israel, and later in life as a janitor for UN-operated schools in Gaza. The man's whole lifesavings were invested in his house where several families lived. After "warning" rockets blew up part of his house, several missiles pulverized the rest.

My entire neighborhood was also destroyed. I saw photos of the wreckage-filled neighborhood by accident on Facebook. The clearance where we played football as little kids was filled with holes left by missiles and shrapnel. The shop where I used my allowance to buy candy, was blown up. Even the graveyard where our dead were meant to "rest in peace" was anything but peaceful. Signs of war and destruction were everywhere.

My last visit there was about two years ago. I caught up with my neighbors on the latest politics and the news of who was dead and who was still alive underneath the shady wall of my old house. One complained about his latest ailments, telling me that his son Mahmoud had been killed as he had been a freedom fighter with a Palestinian resistance movement.

I couldn't fathom the idea that Mahmoud, the child I remembered as running around half-naked with a runny nose, had become a fierce fighter with an automatic rifle ready to take on the Israeli Army. But that he was, and he was killed on duty.

Time changes everything. Time has changed Gaza. But the Strip was never a passive place of people subsisting on hand-outs or a pervasive sense of victimhood. Being a freedom fighter preceded any rational thinking about life and the many choices it had to offer growing up in a refugee camp, and all the little kids of my generation wanted to join the Fedayeen.

But options for Gazans are becoming much more limited than ever before, even for my generation.

Since Israel besieged Gaza with Egypt's help and coordination, life for Gazans has become largely about mere survival. The Strip has been turned into a massive ground for an Israeli experiment concerned with population control. Gazans were not allowed to venture out, fish, or farm, and

those who got even close to some arbitrary "buffer zone," determined by the Israeli Army within Gaza's own borders, were shot and often killed.

With time the population of the Strip knew that they were alone. The short stint that brought Muhammad Mursi to power in Egypt offered Gaza some hope and a respite, but it soon ended. The siege, after the overthrow of Mursi became tighter than ever before.

The Palestinian leadership in Ramallah did very little to help Gaza. To ensure the demise of Hamas, Mahmoud Abbas' Palestinian Authority carried on with its "security coordination" with Israel, as Gaza suffered a Draconian siege. There was no question, that after all the failed attempts at breaking the siege and the growing isolation of Gaza, Gazans had to find their own way out of the blockade.

When Israel began its bombardment campaign of Gaza on July 6, and a day later with the official launch of the so-called Operation Protective Edge, followed by a ground invasion, it may have seemed that

Israel's so-called Protective Edge is the final proof of Israel's unabashed face, that of genocide. It carried it out, this time paying little attention to the fact that the whole world was watching.

Gaza was ready to surrender.

Political analysts have been advising that Hamas has been at its weakest following the downturn of the Arab Spring, the loss of its Egyptian allies, and the dramatic shift of its fortunes in Syria and, naturally Iran. The "Hamas is ready to fold" theory was advanced by the logic surrounding the unity agreement between Hamas and Fatah; and unity was seen largely as a concession by Hamas to Abbas' Fatah movement, which continued to enjoy western political backing and monetary support. The killing of three Israeli settlers in the occupied West Bank in late June was the opportunity for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to test the misleading theory on Hamas' weakened position. He launched his war that eventually mounted into a genocide, hoping that Hamas and other resistance groups would be forced to disarm or be completely eradicated, as promised by various Israeli officials.

But it didn't. From the very first days of the war it became clear the resistance could not be defeated, at least not as easily as Netanyahu had expected. The more troops he invested in the war on Gaza, the more Israeli Army casualties increased. Netanyahu's response was to increase the price of Palestinian resistance by inflicting as much harm on Palestinian civilians as possible: He killed over 1,900, wounded

nearly 10,000, a vast majority of whom were civilians, and destroyed numerous schools, mosques, hospitals, and thousands of homes, thus sending hundreds of thousands of people on the run. But where does one run when there is nowhere to go?

Israel's usual cautious political discourse was crumbling before Gaza's steadfastness.

Israeli officials and media began to openly call for genocide. Middle East commentator Jeremy Salt explained: "The more extreme of the extreme amongst the Zionists say out loud that the Palestinians have to be wiped out or at the very least driven into Sinai," he wrote, citing Moshe Feiglin, the deputy of the Israeli Knesset, who called for "full military conquest of the Gaza Strip and the expulsion of its inhabitants. They would be held in tent encampments along the Sinai border while their final destination was decided. Those who continued to resist would be exterminated."

From Israeli commentator Yochanan Gordon, who flirted with genocide in "when genocide is permissible," to Ayelet Shaked, who advocated the killing of the mothers of those who resist and are killed by Israel. "They should follow their sons. Nothing would be more just. They should go as should the physical houses in which they raised the snakes. Otherwise more little snakes are raised," he wrote on Facebook.

References to genocide and extermination and other devastatingly violent language are no longer "claims" levied by Israeli critics, but a loud and daily self-indictment made by the Israelis themselves.

The Israelis are losing control of their decades-long hasbara, a propaganda scheme so carefully knitted and implemented, many the world over were fooled by it. Palestinians, those in Gaza in particular, were never blind to Israel's genocidal intentions. They assembled their resistance with the full knowledge that a fight for their very survival awaited.

Israel's so-called Protective Edge is the final proof of Israel's unabashed face, that of genocide. It carried it out, this time paying little attention to the fact that the whole world was watching. Trending Twitter hashtags which began with #GazaUnderAttack, then #GazaResists, quickly morphed to #GazaHolocaust. The latter was used by many that never thought they would dare make such comparisons.

Gaza managed to keep Israel at bay in a battle of historic proportions. Once its children are buried, it will once again rebuild its defenses for the next battle. For Palestinians in Gaza, this is not about mere resistance strategies, but their very survival.

The writer is an internationally-syndicated columnist and founder of PalestineChronicle.com.

Hemed presumed killed by police-Judge

Hemed Salim Hemed was likely killed by police. This was the verdict by Mombasa High Court judge Justice Edward Mureithi on Hemed's disappearance since he was last seen being held by police officers during the February 2 Masjid Musa raid in Mombasa. Justice Mureithi said that evidence suggests that Hemed was killed and accused the police of inventing stories as a cover up to explain his disappearance.

He went on to order a judicial inquest into the disappearance to determine those who were behind his disappearance. "Hemed must be presumed dead...", the Judge said at the culmination of a four month hearing. The verdict did not however, go well with a human rights lobby group Haki Africa which expressed its "disappointment" with the ruling. "HAKI Africa and the family of Hemed have received today's court decision with disappointment. We consider this decision as taking as round in circles as the same evidence and testimony will simply be repeated," said the executive director Hussein Khalid.

He said the organization was considering appealing against the Judge's decision. Mombasa Senator Billow Kerrow on his part said those behind the Hemed's disappearances must face the full force of the law. "Allowing police to kill suspects rather than protect lives as per their mandate is blatant impunity that cannot be tolerated," he said.

Hemed's arrest was captured by reporters and TV cameras but he did not appear in the list of the more than one hundred people who were arrested during the deadly raid which sparked outrage in the Muslim community. Attempts by his family to trace him at police

stations, hospitals or mortuaries did not bear any fruit.

The family and rights activist Okoiti Omtatah and Haki Africa later filed for habeas corpus (order requiring a person under arrest to be brought before a judge or into court after police failed to charge him in court over the raid which led to the killing of eight people at Masjid Musa. The police, without providing convincing evidence claimed that Hemed escaped from police custody while being taken with others suspects to Makupa Police Station.

While ordering the inquest, Justice Mureithi said the police are "suspected of involvement in the disappearance and probable death of the suspect" and should not be involved in the inquiry. The probe, he said, will be conducted by the Chief magistrate and will involve the Criminal Investigation Department as well as the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights.

In his ruling, Justice Mureithi said video evidence showed that Hemed was arrested by gun wielding policemen who accused him of having killed a police officer during the raid on the mosque. He supported assertions by Hemed's family that the officer was killed by his colleagues and the missing person was implicated to cover up the matter. The Judge further dismissed the escape theory describing it as illogical and impractical as the police failed to explain how they un-cuffed a detained person whom they considered a high value suspect thereby giving him an opportunity to allegedly escape. Among those who testified was the Mombasa County Police Commander Robert Kitur, who directed the operations to storm Masjid Musa.

Lamu leaders decry police harassment

Lamu county leaders have raised concerns over the increased harassment of locals by security personnel in the ongoing security operations in the county.

Speaking in Lamu town during the launch of the land survey by Lands Secretary Charity Ngilu, the leaders led by Governor Issa Timamy accused the security personnel of arbitrary arrests of locals while further pointing out that several persons have also disappeared without trace after being arrested by people said to be from the security departments.

The leaders noted that it was unfair for security officers to use the operations to intimidate the local communities, stressing that as citizens their fundamental and constitutional rights ought to be protected and respected.

"People should be arrested when there is evidence. We do not want them to disappear in the hands of security officers," Timamy said.

He stressed that the rule of law must be followed in the event of any wrong doing instead of administering collective punishment and harassment of innocent people.

The Governor said it was wrong for the se-

curity personnel to arrest someone without informing him or her of the reasons behind the detention. "As a lawyer, I condemn the acts by our security officers. If someone is a suspect, you should arrest him, but first, you have to explain to him why the arrest and where you are taking him. Suspects also have a right to be protected," he said.

His comments were echoed by the Lamu West MP Julius Ndegwa who said the government should ensure every suspect is arraigned in court after arrest for justice to prevail.

On her part, the women's representative Shakilla Abdalla lamented that arrested person's families are not being given information about their loved ones while for some their whereabouts remain a mystery as the families have failed to trace them in the various police stations.

The leaders called on the interior cabinet secretary Joseph Ole Lenku and the Inspector General of Police David Kimaiyo to intervene and make sure that the police officers do not engage in blatant human rights violations but resort to fairness and justice to build confidence and trust among the local people.

Baby Ali finally receives govt help

After persistent complaints of double standards, the government has finally come to the aid of the four-year-old Ali Muhammad whose leg was amputated after being shot by what the family asserts by the police.

The boy lost his leg during a July 11 shooting incident in Mombasa where a prominent Mombasa businessman Shahid Butt was killed. On Sunday, the Mombasa County Commissioner Nelson Marwa visited the family home at Port Reitz with a Sh500,000 donation from President Uhuru Kenyatta to assist in the boy's medical expenses. He also promised that the amputated leg will be fitted with a prosthetic limb to help him he walk again.

While assuring the government support for the family, Marwa also promised that the boy's two uncles will be provided with employment. A contrasting parallel had been drawn in the shooting of the kindergarten pupil at Raudhwa Junior Academy and the March 23 shooting of a one-year-old child Satrin Osinya at a Church in Mombasa's Likoni area.

During a parliamentary session, Mvita Member of Parliament Abdulswamad Sharif Nassir accused the government of failing to extend any support to the family and even offer an apology to the family after the horrific incident.

A member of the Jamia Mosque Committee Abdullatif Essajee said while there was extensive attention paid to Osinya by the media and the government which also facilitated his medical air evacuation to Nairobi and surgery at the Kenyatta National Hospital, there was muted silence and support from the government on the plight of the four-year-old boy. "Why the indifference" What is different between Baby Ali and Baby Satrin," he asked during the sermon to mark the last Friday of the month of Ramadhan at Jamia mosque.

The boy's Uncle Fahad Ali who was also injured in the right leg during the shooting incident maintains that it was police who shot at them. "We saw police officers firing everywhere. My nephew and I were shot so we sped off to my brother's house fearing for our lives," he said in an earlier media interview narrating the incident which befell him and his nephew when on their way to fetch water while aboard a Toyota Hilux pick up.

After the unfortunate incident, the police raided the family house where he was arrested together with his four-year-old nephew and another relative. They were later released without any charge.



Ummah programs

Ummah Foundation is non-profit charitable organisation involved in a lot of humanitarian work for the past eight years. Ever since its inception much has been achieved in terms of Education where more than 1200 students have graduated from universities and high schools and are giving meaningful contribution to the society. We are also proud to comment that we are one of the leading Foundations that give a lot of emphasis to promotion of education especially to the disadvantaged and marginalised groups. We aim to alleviate poverty and ignorance from our Ummah by enabling the less fortunate be competitive in the job market.

We have also taken an active role in rehabilitation of prisoners through spiritual and technical trainings. This has empowered the inmates and reduced the number of repeat offenders in our prisons. To make this program successful we appeal to the general public to help us in the provision of the following:

1- Provision of Islamic literature (books) in the prisons throughout the country to enlighten the inmates on the virtues of Islam and the best way of making the best out of it. Any Islamic literature that you feel can benefit these brothers and sisters can be dropped at Ummah Foundation Office or Parklands Mosque which is our collection point.

2- Salah is obligatory on every Muslim and these inmates are in dreadful need of prayer mats. Most of them make their five daily prayers under very unhygienic conditions and corrective measures need to be taken to salvage them from this deplorable situation. Currently they need 100 rolls of mats of 30feet width.

3- Quran both translated in English and Kiswahili. They need 200 copies.

4- They also need Kanzus that they can be wearing during prayer times. 3000 Kanzus will suffice for all the numbers available.

5- Water drums of 210 litres each can be of great assistance in terms of availing water for Wudhu and purification. We are also collecting 2 litre jericans that can help the inmates in ablution. They are in dire need of 20 water drums that will alleviate the water shortage problem and 1000 jericans.

6- During the month of Ramadhan the Inmates need dates to break their fast. 2000 kg will be of great help to the inmates.

7- Sanitary towels and underpants for the Women inmates at Langata and Nakuru prisons.

Soap and Sandals for washing, 3000 pairs of sandals and 30 boxes of bar soap.

Our madrassahs that form the background of our religious knowledge and learning is one area that Ummah Foundation has given a lot of importance and we are currently involved in the running of three madrassahs in Nakuru, Kisumu and Magadi. Our intention is to have more of these Madrassahs set up in most parts of the country. We call upon all willing well wishers to partner with Ummah Foundation and open more learning centres that can train our young children the correct way and living as guided by our Holy Quran and the hadith of our beloved prophet s.a.w. We appreciate the efforts made by our Sister Organisation, Al Muntadah Alislami for the provision of a unified Madrassah syllabus that will help in our Madrassah teaching systems.

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