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In the name of Al-lah,  
The-Source-Of-Mercy,  
The-Especially-Merciful.

**THE AIMS OF THE ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ARE:**

- To champion the rights and duties revealed for human beings.
- To promote a new social and international order, based on truth, justice, righteousness and generosity, rather than self-interest.
- To demand virtue and oppose wrongdoing in the exercise of power (from whatever base that power derives - e.g. political, judicial, media, economic, military, personal, etc.).
- To gather information about, and to publicise, atrocities, oppression, discrimination, and other abuses of divinely-granted rights.
- To campaign for redress, and to support the victims of such crimes.
- To campaign to bring the perpetrators and their accomplices to justice.
- To cooperate with other groups and individuals where such cooperation is likely to further the achievement of these aims.

# IF THIS CHILD WAS A TERRORIST, THEN WE ALL ARE



**A child from Ter Hafra village - one of many killed whilst fleeing Israeli bombardment, July 2006**

This front page article – unusually – was begun some two months before publication towards the end of July 2006. The photograph was chosen because it symbolised the death of innocents by the Israeli war machine in its onslaught on Lebanon. The article originally began thus:

“...Faced with the trauma of witnessing events in Gaza and Lebanon, we can only pray that in the intervening weeks till the publication of this newsletter in Ramadan that there will be nothing worse.”

A few days later came the carnage at Qana.

Still the blood of Muslims is cheap – perhaps cheaper even than 10 years ago when a similar massacre at Qana forced an end to the then Israeli offensive on Lebanon.

This time, Qana wasn't enough to halt the bloodshed. In this decade though, and even in this last ceasefire there is much to hope for and much left to fight for. This time, despite the massive casualties, for once, Israeli aggression was checked. This time, the support of the world for those dying en masse came despite biased media reporting and the incessant harping by governments regarding the now thoroughly exposed 'war on terror'. People can see what is wrong whether they are Muslim or not, whether the victims are Muslim or not.

Yet sadly, even with the ceasefire in Lebanon, we know that other offensives continue elsewhere, little heard of and unsung, or demonized beyond recognition. Mass disappearances, murders and rapes in Chechnya continue. The fight-

ing in Ogaden becomes more bloody and the persecutions in Burma and Palestine – always Palestine – remain. What is our duty and what can we do about it?

Islamic perspectives, always focus on hope. Hope despite pain and suffering in realisation of justice as the realisation of the Almighty's will. You do not have to be a Muslim to recognise that justice is the only goal that will unite all peoples and deliver true peace. To this end, IHRC has worked this year to break down even more barriers between communities on projects that help realise this goal. We took the British government to court over its facilitation of munitions flights to help the Israeli military. Our legal team and their subsequent report, sent to assess violations of humanitarian law, was co-sponsored by other NGOs. Our

conference, 'Against Zionism: Jewish Perspectives' brought together academics, rabbis and activists from different Jewish backgrounds to discuss their reasons for opposing Israeli state ideology.

Whilst events in the Middle East have dominated the news, IHRC has sought to highlight different causes, as well as focus on events closer to home. The resurgence of sectarian fighting amongst Muslims, has caused us to reinvigorate the Charter 3:103 Campaign, with notable signatories opposing the descent of Muslim communities into violence and mayhem. The British Muslims' Expectations of the Government project is drawing to a close and its focus this last year has been on hijab, the British legal

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# The Struggle for Hijab

...for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in God's praise -- for them has God prepared forgiveness and great reward. [Quran 33:35]

In the supposed land of freedom, choosing to be more modest has become a sign of absurdity and offence, to the state and its citizens' way of life. Hijab has a long history of discomfort with the West, and now each time it hits the headlines, the topic of the hijab takes a new significance. Katherine Bullock in her book *Rethinking Muslim Women and the Veil* concludes that the veil was a potent obstacle in the completion of the European project to civilise the East, which in truth meant, dominating an old foe and usurping its land and resources for the betterment of the Aryan race.

In March, the House of Lords upheld Denbigh High School's decision to prevent schoolgirl Shabina Begum from wearing the Islamic jilbaab. The decision exposed the level of Islamophobia in British society and institutions-

that a school's denial of a pupil's right to education was upheld by the highest court in the land. Boris Johnson the MP for Henley 'politely' called the jilbab a 'tent', in an article written the day after the ruling. A case, that was only to be between the school and Shabina, was turned into media frenzy and the case was given a political rhetoric.

Governments around the world have increasingly put the issue of hijab at the forefront of controversy and politics. In Norway, the Directorate for Primary and Secondary Education gave the green light for the niqab to be banned in schools, on the grounds that communication becomes impossible between teachers and students. Bans were also implemented in parts of Germany and Belgium, and France continued to deny female students the right to education and work.

In July, the Parliamentary Anti-Discrimination Commission in Bulgaria ruled that a school in Smolyan had the right to forbid two Bulgarian girls from wearing



Sister demonstrating against French hijab ban

the hijab. The ruling will now make it possible for the hijab to be banned from all state schools in Bulgaria.

These cases whip up the sentiments held by many that 'Muslims are not integrated' and will encourage fears that Muslims want to take over the country they reside in, the enemy within. The IHRC has fought and campaigned against the Islamophobic stance of various governments and vocally spoken

out against these discriminatory practices both in the media and printed press. IHRC has also helped support a French student expelled from school for refusing to remove her hijab, complete studies in the UK. It also campaigned for a Moroccan sister in France who was denied residency because she wore hijab.

This year, IHRC also published a book, where a nationwide extensive research was carried out

and the title: *Hijab, Meaning, Identity, Otherization and Politics: British Muslim Women*. The report includes the results of a nationwide survey of Muslims dealing with various issues relating to the hijab. The results noted that that experiences of stereotyping and harassment by wider society, the government and policy makers towards Muslims observing hijab had increased significantly post 9/11. On a more positive note, many respondents saw Hijab as the fulfilment of spiritual satisfaction. Others saw it as a proud expression of identity that in no way conflicted with their sense of Britishness.

IHRC continues to help to victims due to discrimination on Islamic dress including educational institutions preventing their students wearing hijab or jilbab. If you have experienced discrimination because of Hijab or Islamic dress at work or school and need help, please contact IHRC on 020 8904 4222.

Beena Faridi and Ahmed Uddin

## Dealing with UK cases

The August 2006 so-called foiled bomb plot has exposed the phenomena of Muslims being tried by media in its most hideous form. We have seen every move in the witch hunt repertoire. Commentators and journalists pontificating on the compatibility of British values and the views of Muslims, speculation on the number of 'terror cells' in Britain' and calls to monitor the activities of the apolitical Tabligh-i-Jamaat.

What has followed is the inevitable anti-Muslim backlash fuelled by media reporting and politicians portraying Muslims as sinister figures plotting and planning acts of terrorism via fantastical and imaginative means. In the weeks after the so-called foiled bomb plot in August two mosques have been attacked and a family was removed off a London tourist attraction having aroused suspicion by apparently looking foreign and speaking in a different language.

There is predictably less media interest in innocent individuals now stigmatised in their communities: shunned by neighbours they once knew following a midnight raid on their home by Anti Terrorist police; families borrowing money from friends because their accounts have been frozen, often for months on end, while they are investigated for terrorist links; households torn apart as sons are separated from their



Muslim graves were desecrated in Handsworth in November 2005

fathers, husbands from their wives and even mothers from their babies.

This 'innocent until proven Muslim' approach has had a devastating effect on the Muslim community. Under an intense spotlight the Muslim community is told that Islamophobia does not exist or that it is minimal. Yet increasingly the everyday experience of Muslims contradicts this time and time again.

There appears to be no political will to recognise Islamophobia - let alone eradicate it. While physical attacks on Muslims have been reported, the absence of condemnation by politicians and the police is apparent. Perhaps their silence is consent.

Discriminatory policies such as profiling Muslims at airports are now openly discussed by public figures such as the former Police Commissioner John Stevens. Even Ruth Kelly, not content with backing a school which chose to ban a stu-



Graffiti at a Primary School

dent wearing a jilbab, proclaimed that 'extremist' Muslim faith schools will be closed down. As if Muslim primary schools have abandoned teaching arithmetic in favour of teaching 'al Qaida'.

The absence of condemnation is creating a climate of acceptance towards the discrimination of Muslims. Recently a Hassidic Jewish Rabbi was removed off a plane having apparently roused the suspicion of fellow passengers, by praying. The flight attendant had allegedly commented that even though she recognized he was not a Muslim they still had to take this action, implying that had he been a Muslim there would have been no need to apologise. This highlights a stark reality: discrimination is unacceptable except when aimed at Muslims.

IHRC has continued to assist victims of discrimination and injustice. We have assisted in cases of anti-Muslim discrimination in the workplace. Typically this had included Muslim employees not being allowed to pray in the workplace or being refused time off for Friday prayers. Worryingly some Muslims have been suspended or dismissed from work due to their political views or because they are suspected of having links with terrorists.

Increasingly we have reports of Muslims who have endured physical attacks or harassment from preju-

disced neighbours. Other areas of discrimination have included housing, immigration, health care or bullying.

In cases where the IHRC has not been able to help directly it has endeavoured to refer people to other agencies or organisations able to provide the relevant support.

IHRC has continued to log Islamophobic incidents by encour-

aging Muslims to come forward and report their experiences by ringing the office or recording them via the online reporting form on the website. If Muslims experiences are recorded, a true picture of the harassment that the Muslim community faces can be formed.

Do not be a silent Victim! If you have experienced any form of Islamophobia, than please contact the IHRC on 020 8904 4222 or via email at [info@ihrc.org](mailto:info@ihrc.org), or fill in the on-line incident reporting form at: [www.ihrc.org.uk/incidents](http://www.ihrc.org.uk/incidents)

Beena Faridi

**HAVE YOU BEEN THE VICTIM OF ISLAMOPHOBIA? HAVE YOU BEEN ABUSED, DISCRIMINATED AGAINST, VILIFIED OR EVEN ATTACKED BECAUSE YOU ARE MUSLIM?**

Report it in confidence through IHRC's on-line reporting form at: [www.ihrc.org.uk/incidents](http://www.ihrc.org.uk/incidents)

It is important to report these incidents, even if you do not want your identity to be known and you don't want any further action taken. So long as a record is made, we can build up a true picture of the type of hostility that Muslims face today.

**THIS SERVICE IS ENTIRELY CONFIDENTIAL.**

**Islamic Human Rights Commission**

Islamic Human Rights Commission

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## BRITAIN:

# GUILTY EVEN WHEN PROVEN INNOCENT

If there was any doubt whatsoever that the 'war on terror' was anything other than a war on Islam, there can be none now following the statements and actions of the Blair government in the last twelve months. Capitalizing on the 7-7 tragedy, Blair moved to push through draconian proposals which had been mentioned on many occasions prior to the bombings.

The fallacious link suggested between lack of police powers and the attacks was exposed by two reports issued in May 2006 suggesting that a lack of police powers was not the reason behind the bombings. Neither the Report of the Official Account of the Bombings of 7 July 2005 nor the Intelligence and Security Committee Report into the London Terrorist Attacks on 7 July 2005, found that it was due to a lack of anti-terror laws or police powers that the bombings occurred.

This criminalization and targeting of Islam could be clear in statements by both the Prime Minister and the then Home Secretary Charles Clarke equating belief in and striving for shari'ah law and the Caliphate with extremism and terrorism. A joint statement in opposition to the new proposals drew an initial 38 signatures from organizations and grew to over 200 within a month. Despite this, the government proceeded with its plans to draft a new Terrorism Bill.

In August 2005, the then Home Secretary publicized his new list of "unacceptable behaviour" which could lead to deportation or exclusion of foreign nationals, and later he revealed the new Terrorism Bill. IHRC viewed the new proposals as the criminalisation of thought, conscience and belief.

IHRC participated in a number of discussions about the proposed legislation throughout the year. In late September, Raza Kazim participated in a panel discussion held in Birmingham on the government's response to the London bombings and its impact on our civil liberties. In November, Fahad Ansari spoke at a discussion organized by the LSE Comparative Ideologies Societies on whether the proposals were creating a climate of fear. Ansari also spoke in July 2006 at the Right to Survive Conference in Preston regarding the plight of Muslim prisoners and our duty towards them.

In October 2005, Fahad Ansari revisited Britain's anti-terrorism policies with a new report entitled, 'British Anti-Terrorism: A Modern Day Witch-hunt'. From Control Orders, proposals to ban Hizb-ut-Tahrir and other Muslim organisations, new legislation and police powers, this report covered the



Massoud Shadjareh at a OSCE / ODIHR conference in Warsaw talking about Muslim demonisation

gamut of the British government's latest anti-terrorism proposals arguing that the government's anti-terrorist strategy violated basic human rights and curtailed civil liberties, and was also counter-productive. An updated version of the report was released on in July.

October 2005 also saw the launch of a campaign to lobby against the impending terror laws. Despite the best efforts of IHRC and other pressure groups, the Terrorism Act 2006 was passed into law in April. New offences include that of "glorification of terrorism" which it appears, will be used to silence all those who speak up for the right of the oppressed masses in Palestine, Iraq, Chechnya, Kashmir, Sudan and elsewhere to use force in self-defence. To express support for their rights will become a criminal offence, and such a law will be used to silence dissent against repressive dictatorial regimes around the world.

Other new offences include that of disseminating terrorist publications which could potentially include distributing any literature about jihad or political strife within the ummah, and preparation of acts of terrorism.

Although the government was defeated in its attempt to incarcerate individuals for three months without charge, it did succeed in extending the pre-charge detention period from 14 to 28 days, a period more in line with brutal police states rather than liberal democracies.

In a move which the likes of Musharraf and Karimov would be proud, grounds for proscribing organizations were expanded so that non-violent groups could be banned for their political beliefs. Blair has repeatedly threatened to proscribe Hizb-ut-Tahrir and this new power allows him that luxury. For the government to express its intention to ban a non-violent group exposes its agenda to depoliticise Islam. Members of a banned organisation can be jailed for 10 years; wearing clothing or displaying a symbol suggesting support for a banned organisation,

carries a five year jail sentence. In essence, for an individual, with no connection to HT whatsoever, to hold up the khilafah flag may result in his prosecution.

A further 19 Muslim groups from around the world were proscribed this year, 15 in October 2005 and 4 more in July 2006. Amazingly, there was no move to proscribe e.g. Hindu or Zionist terrorist groups even though they may have been banned in the US, and even by the Israeli authorities.

In November 2005, IHRC made a submission to the Home Office in response to the consultation document 'Preventing Extremism Together: Places of Worship' of 6 October 2005 which proposed closing down mosques in which "extremist" activity was suspected. The proposals were ultimately rejected by the Home Secretary after widespread criticism from faith bodies.

In January 2006, IHRC published a briefing 'You ONLY have the Right to Silence' investigating the debate about "extremism" on campus. A nefarious link has been made between the gaining of tertiary education by Muslims, their social and political activism on campus and a threat to homeland security. The resulting security discourse resounds with calls for clampdowns on Muslims students and academic freedom.

IHRC exposed the hypocrisy of the implementation of the anti-terror laws in May 2006 with a briefing on the exceptional treatment by the authorities of the proscribed Iranian terrorist group, the Mojahedin-e-Khalq. The briefing, 'British Anti-Terrorism Policy and the MEK' exposed the fact that despite its proscription, the MEK, has prominent supporters in the UK and are able to publicize their cause with little or no hindrance. The fact that the MEK state that they are attacking political Islam, again indicts the government's security strategy as Islamophobic.

IHRC continued to support the Jean Charles de Menezes campaign and persisted in its calls for an end to the Shoot to Kill policy.

gence turned out to be false – Kahar was an innocent unarmed man whose life has been destroyed. IHRC joined a number of other organizations in rallying against these heavy-handed tactics on a number of occasions.

In August 2006, two tragic developments occurred regarding the criminal justice system and Muslims in Britain. Firstly, "Y", an Algerian who was acquitted in April 2005 in a court of law over possession of the chemical ricin, was deported back to Algeria despite being found guilty of no crime and despite the grave risk of his facing torture on return. Secondly, there is speculation that after being cleared by a court of terrorism charges, an Iraqi asylum seeker Rauf Abdullah Mohammad, was placed under a control order by the Government. Last year, it was guilty until proven innocent. This year it has become Guilty even when Proven Innocent.

Fahad Ansari

## LET'S NAME & SHAME 'EM

### COME TO THE ISLAMOPHOBIA AWARDS 2006, A NIGHT OF COMEDY AND ENTERTAINMENT!

This year's Islamophobia Awards take place on 9th December, 2006 in London.

Please help us fundraise for IHRC.

Please email us at [awards@ihrc.org](mailto:awards@ihrc.org) for more information or call us on 020 8904 4222.



If you would like to nominate an Islamophobe from whatever walk of life, please visit our website: [www.ihrc.org.uk/islamophobia](http://www.ihrc.org.uk/islamophobia)

## IHRC: campaigning for prisoners of faith since 1997

# Why Prisoners of Faith?



Sheikh Omar Abdul-Rahman



Intisaar Saatcioglu



Levant Karagulle



IHRC's Raza Kazim (left) and Massoud Shadjareh (right) with released prisoners of faith, Nureddin Sirin, Mustafa Dirani and Sheikh Obaid.

There are hundreds of thousands of prisoners of faith world-wide. IHRC relaunched its campaign for symbolic Prisoners of Faith – those who have been imprisoned because of their Islamic learning and leanings, or those whose Islamic identity has singled them out as different and dangerous from their colleagues. A prime example of this latter category are Taysir Alouni the Al-Jazeera Journalist and Sami Muhyideen, the Al-Jazeera Cameraman.

In September 2005, Al-Jazeera reporter Taysir Alouni was sentenced to seven years imprisonment. Although acquitted of being a member of al-Qaeda, Taysir was convicted for allegedly collaborating with al-Qaeda. The allegations stem primarily from an interview conducted with Osama bin Laden in October 2001. Taysir was first arrested in September 2003 but released into house arrest due to health problems suffered as a result of extremely harsh conditions of detention.

Taysir is renowned for his excellent journalism in covering both the invasion of Afghanistan and of Iraq. He miraculously survived the US bombing of the Al-Jazeera Baghdad bureau which killed his colleague, Tariq Ayub. Taysir was awarded a peace prize in December 2003 by the Francisca Mateos foundation, a Spanish NGO dedicated to international cooperation social work in Spain. Previous winners of the

award include the Dalai Lama and Burmese democracy campaigner Aung San Suu Kyi. The arrest, detention, and conviction of Taysir are clear signs of the witch-hunt taking place against Muslims today whereby even journalists are punished for simply doing their job.

Sami Muhyideen is a cameraman for Al-Jazeera who has spent over three years in Guantanamo Bay. He was sent on assignment by the station to cover the war in Afghanistan in October 2001. The following month, after the fall of Kabul, Sami left Afghanistan for Pakistan with the rest of his crew.

Still on assignment for Al-Jazeera, in early December the crew were given visas to return to Afghanistan. When he tried to re-enter Afghanistan with the crew Sami was arrested by the Pakistani authorities – at the request of the US. Sami's crew never saw him again – he was imprisoned, handed over to the Americans in January 2002, taken to Bagram, then Kandahar, and finally to Guantanamo in June 2002.

For months, the US did not even suggest charges against Sami, instead demanding that he should become a witness against Al-Jazeera and accuse the television station of links to terror. They wanted him to say that Al-Jazeera has a 'business relationship' with Al-Qaeda, that Al-Qaeda has infiltrated Al-Jazeera, and that some of his colleagues at the station were working for Al-Qaeda. They

offered him release and lifetime protection if he turned informant on his employers.

Sami has refused to do so, insisting consistently that there are no such connections between Al-Jazeera and Al-Qaeda.

### Sheikh Omar Abdul-Rahman

IHRC continues to support and campaign for the release of Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, the elderly Egyptian sheikh imprisoned in the US in 1995 under sedition laws last used during the American civil war. Sheikh Omar is blind, suffers from diabetes and is repeatedly tortured and abused by prison guards. In the post 9-11 world, Sheikh Omar has become a forgotten prisoner.

IHRC has also launched a campaign to free Sheikh Omar's attorney, Lynne Stewart (66), who was convicted in February 2005 on charges of conspiracy, providing material support to terrorists, and defrauding the U.S. government, due to her representation of the Sheikh. Stewart already suffers from breast cancer but the federal probation department is still recommending a 30-year sentence for her, meaning she may well die in prison. By targeting and convicting Lynne Stewart, the US Justice Department hopes to make an example of an attorney with a long history of progressive political beliefs as well as a reputation for vigorously advocating on

behalf of those whose lives have been entrusted to her.

### Imam Yasin Abu Bakr

Imam Yasin Abu Bakr is a 64-year old imam in Trinidad & Tobago and leader of the Jamaat al-Muslimeen. He has been incarcerated since November 2005 on terrorism charges after his Eid khutbah was broadcast on national TV. In the khutbah, Imam Abu Bakr called on all Trinidadian Muslims, wealthy Muslims in particular, to donate zakat. He stressed the example of the importance of zakat by relating how Abu Bakr al-Siddique declared war on those Muslims who refused to pay the zakat. Despite Imam Abu Bakr clarifying his comments in an interview following the khutbah, this was still interpreted as inciting violence and terrorism.

### Sheikh Ali Belhadj

#### Former Deputy-Head of Islamic Salvation Front

In March 2006, IHRC received the uplifting news that by the grace of Allah, Sheikh Ali Belhadj has been released from his detention in Algeria. The Deputy Chief of the Islamic Salvation Front was arrested in July 2005 for praising Iraq's insurgency despite being barred from making public statements. Following his imprisonment, IHRC re-opened the campaign for his release which was originally ini-

tiated in 1997. He was released as part of a general amnesty offered by the Algerian government to almost 3000 Islamist prisoners and under which the Algerian military is cleared of any wrongdoings. Belhadj previously served a 12 year sentence in a military prison for "threatening state security". Sadly, Belhadj's mother died while he was incarcerated.

### Levant Karagulle and Intissar Saatcioglu

Former Turkish prisoner of faith Intisaar Saatcioglu and her husband Levant Karagulle were both detained by Pakistani security services whilst helping with Pakistan earthquake relief work in January 2006. Both were released after extensive campaigning.

IHRC has also campaigned for Sheikh Yahya Hussein al-Dailami in Yemen and has continued to campaign for Imam Jamil al-Amin in the USA.

Other campaigns to be launched in the near future insha Allah include Nosirov Hafizullah (Uzbekistan); prisoners in Morocco and Tunisia; Egyptian prisoners; and Palestinian Ministers.

Prisoner of Faith packs can be downloaded from the Campaigns page on our website [www.ihrc.org.uk](http://www.ihrc.org.uk).

Fahad Ansari

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system, the media and universities.

The latter is a topic that has featured heavily in the attacks upon Muslims in the name of fighting terrorism – a project that various governments have used to silence dissent. They have been able to get away with it as a result of the growing Islamophobia, that makes wider society immune to or even approving of injustices committed against Muslims, and obliv-

ious to the impact such actions have on their own humanity or indeed their own rights in society. It is an important lesson that we must all learn.

Teaching people the tools they need to advocate for themselves was another big theme in our work this year with various 'Know Your Rights' workshops and talks held across the country.

This newsletter as usual, outlines some of our work. However it only glances at the things we

have been involved with in the last year. The types of casework we have supported, the asylum cases we have helped win, the specialist advice on issues relating to Islamic law, concepts of struggle, jihad etc. for so-called terrorist cases before the courts, none of these are really relayed herein due to the confidential nature of the work. Likewise, the referral and networking with organisations to make sure individuals get the best service they need in get-

ting redress for the discrimination and hostility they face. Also omitted are the campaigns against governments' actions for which publicity would be detrimental.

Whether it is campaigning against hijab bans or supporting those who have been imprisoned for their beliefs or harassed for their religious identity, IHRC continues to help those who are forsaken by mainstream communities – including sadly Muslim

communities.

The war against Lebanon showed that people can see through divisions and strive for justice based on a truer understanding of what constitutes oppression. This year we call on all those who read this – of whatever faith (or none), or whichever school of thought, to see the commonality between causes against oppressive regimes and ideologies. This is the hope we cling to. Please join us.

## Campaigns:

# Campaigning at Home

### Babar Ahmed

IHRC continued to stand side-by-side with Babar Ahmed in his struggle to resist extradition to the US on allegations of supporting terrorism. His case highlights the injustices that the British and American governments are willing to commit as part of their "war on terror". It has now been over two years since the arrest of Babar Ahmad in August 2004 and his future still hangs on the line.

IHRC has supported the Free Babar Ahmad campaign launched by his supporters from its inception and was present in the numerous demonstrations held throughout the year.

Ahmad's appeal against extradition began on 11th July 2006 and lasted for three days. The judges could not reach a decision by the end of July and so a decision will be made in early October 2006. There is still a further chance to appeal but if that fails then he will be extradited to the US where he will almost definitely face gross human rights abuses.

IHRC has also fully supported Ahmad's complaints against the brutal torture that was inflicted upon him by Anti-Terrorist Police officers at his London home in December 2003, which led to over 50 injuries including two life threatening ones. On the second anniversary of the assault, IHRC published a critical report by Sarah Waseem on the work of the Independent Police Complaints Commission, established with the aim of creating greater public confidence in the police complaints system. Using the investigation of Babar Ahmad's complaint as a case-study, the report, 'Who Will Guard the Guardians?', concluded that the IPCC could not be expected to be seen as truly independent while it still maintained ties with the police officers.

The final report on the assault was published by The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) in July 2006 and was described as 'scandalous' by the Ahmed family and friends. IHRC is also very disappointed with the report as it failed to bring to account a single officer for the assault on Ahmad. IHRC urges all supporters to continue to campaign for Ahmad and against this unjust extradition treaty. In July 2006, human rights campaigner Talha Ahsan became the third Muslim to be arrested under the Treaty and is now also awaiting extradition to the US.

### MIRZA TAHIR HUSSAIN

Mirza Tahir Hussain is a British Muslim from Leeds who has been on death row in Pakistan for 18 years. Mirza was arrested in Pakistan in December 1988, where he went to visit his family. During a taxi-journey from Rawalpindi sta-

tion to his village, the taxi driver tried to assault Mirza. However, in the altercation the gun went off and the driver was killed. Mirza immediately went to the nearest police station and was subsequently charged, convicted and sentenced to death for the murder of the driver. He was due to be executed in May this year but has been granted one month extensions since then.

IHRC was outraged by the lack of support that the British government has given to a citizen in such dire circumstances. Mirza has now spent half of his life in prison for a crime which he did not commit and the evidence against him is very shady. Both Tony Blair and President Musharraf have failed to intervene on behalf of Mirza in a situation where they could free him immediately.

In May 2006, IHRC launched an emergency campaign to free Mirza urging all supporters to put pressure on their local MP's and the Foreign Secretary to intercede on Mirza's behalf. In the last three months, both the President of the European Parliament and the Foreign Secretary have written to President Musharraf pleading for clemency. IHRC have held meetings with the Prime Minister of Pakistan, the Pakistani High Commissioner and the Foreign Office in their efforts to release Mirza.

The campaign is supported by many human rights groups such as Amnesty International, Fair Trials Abroad, Human Rights Watch, and Reprieve as well as numerous MPs, peers and MEPs, including the Rt Hon Hillary Benn, Greg Mulholland MP, John Battle MP, Lord Nazir Ahmed, and Sajjad Karim MEP.

### NADIR REMLI

On the eve of Ramadan last year, IHRC had great pleasure in informing campaigners that Nadir Remli had been released from prison after seven months in detention in Italy. Remli, a British national, was arrested whilst travelling on holiday with his 12 year old son in Italy and could have faced deportation to Algeria from which he sought and gained asylum in the UK. IHRC launched a campaign to free him following his arrest and Allah bestowed His Mercy upon Nadir and his family just prior to Ramadan.

### KEITH SHILSON

In September 2005, the President of the Student Union at Middlesex University was suspended after refusing to withdraw his invitation to the non-violent Islamic group Hizb ut-Tahrir to participate in a Question & Answer meeting at the university. Shilson had his studentship revoked indefinitely and was escorted from campus by university security. IHRC

began a campaign to reinstate Keith Shilson

The Vice Chancellor's decision to suspend Shilson was a clear sign of the new form of McCarthyism currently at play both on university campuses and in wider British society. In September 2005, Shilson was reinstated as a student.

### ISLAMOPHOBIA & THE MEDIA

It seems that every time a Muslim switches on the TV, picks up a newspaper or turns on the radio, they will always find Islamophobic content. The present day media is a profit making enterprise and insulting Muslims will almost certainly boost their ratings, popularity and profits.

IHRC launched a series of campaigns against recent media bias against Muslims, especially those presented by Channel 4, BBC and ITV.

Martin Bright's "Who Represents Muslims", (Channel Four, July 2006) argued that organizations such as the MCB and MAB represented Islamic terrorism and their links with the government means that the government is appeasing Muslim radicals in the UK and abroad. Furthermore, the documentary suggested that all Muslims who believed in any form of political Islam were on the same line as the 7/7 bombers. Sixteen days later, the BBC aired a Panorama Documentary "Faith, Hate and Charity", where journalist John Ware claimed that the Muslim community in Britain supports political movements such as Hamas which Ware considers to be a terrorist organization. In particular, the documentary alleged that the charity organization "InterPal" gives funds to Hamas.

Furthermore, the media coverage of the Israeli war against Lebanon and Gaza evidenced prejudice regarding Israeli government motives and the deaths of innocent civilians. In an ITN news bulletin, it was stated that Lebanese civilians had 'lost their lives' but that Israeli civilians had been 'killed'. This very cleverly suggests that Israelis died due to the brutality of the Lebanese attacks whereas it was unfortunate that innocent civilians died due to Israeli attacks.

At the end of the day, everyone is entitled to their own opinion but what is dangerous is when such influential organizations like the BBC and ITV allow journalists to present a biased opinion in a documentary show and news bulletins, especially at a time when they know that all attention is focused on Muslims.

Please support the IHRC campaign against Islamophobia. If you want to help monitor the media, please email [mediamonitoring@ihrc.org](mailto:mediamonitoring@ihrc.org).

Fahmida Khanom

## Conference:

# Against Zionism: JEWISH PERSPECTIVES



Rabbis protesting against the offensive on Lebanon

Aside from declaring opponents terrorists, the charge of anti-Semitism is perhaps the greatest deterrent employed by Zionists in order to stifle debate on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is precisely this reason why the Islamic Human Rights Commission and NEDA organised an international conference titled, 'Against Zionism: Jewish Perspectives'.

The Brunei Gallery in the School of African and Oriental Studies on the 2 July 2006 was host to this unprecedented international conference which aimed to provide an opportunity for peoples of various confessional backgrounds and none to listen to and interrogate some of the ideas of academics, activists and religious leaders who have opposed Zionism and who all hail from Jewish backgrounds.

Our distinguished speakers came from all over the world, representing countries such as the USA, Canada, Palestine and the UK; Jeffrey Blankfort (San Francisco), Rabbi Ahron Cohen (Manchester), Dr Uri Davis (Sakhnin), John Rose (London), Roland Rance (London), Professor Yakov Rabkin (Montreal), Michael Warschawski (West Jerusalem), Rabbi Weiss (New York) and Les Levidow (London). The panels were chaired by Alan Hart, Professor Rabkin and Reverend Frank Gelli.

The conference was supported by an array of organisations, both Muslim and Non-Muslim

which included Friends of Al-Aqsa, Islam Channel, The 1990 Trust, Crescent International, Institute of Contemporary Islamic Thought, Innovative Minds, Neturei Karta, Justice for Palestine Committee, Palestine Internationalist and The Muslim Weekly.

The day was split into three panels, each with a question and answer session. The first panel was titled 'The Religious Case against Zionism' and consisted of in depth theological and religious arguments against the existence and practice of the State of Israel by scholars of the Talmudic scripts.

The second panel, 'Subjugation in the name of Self-Determination', undertook a detailed examination of Zionism as political force and philosophy. This panel discussed the implementation of a settler-colonialist policy in Palestine and the adoption of some of its methods by other countries - particularly in the West with regard to anti-terrorism strategy.

The final panel, 'Creating Cultural Polarisation', looked at the role and effect of Zionism in creating a cultural clash in the name of cultural identity both in Palestine and overseas. Mention of how this mentality has become institutionalised in public and foreign policy was followed by looking at ways forward.

The entire proceedings can be heard online at [www.ihrc.org.uk/060702](http://www.ihrc.org.uk/060702)

Musthak Ahmed



Uri Davis (left), Professor Yakov Rabkin and Roland Rance at the conference.

## IHRC's international work:

# ...And so the story of killing continues...



Day One of the Mission



Surveying the damage



Making a record

On 12th July 2006, the Israeli regime, with the backing of the US and British governments, launched yet another set of air strikes on Lebanon. Before the "immediate ceasefire" ever came, almost one thousand innocent civilians were killed and countless others wounded, the entire Lebanese infrastructure damaged, and hundreds of thousands forced to flee their homes.

IHRC continued to campaign to stop Israeli human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law, and was assisted by and supported many organisations in this process. This included working for a boycott of the Israeli Cricket Team in their UK Tour as well as organising and participating in various demonstrations. As usual IHRC helped to organise the Al-Quds Day demonstration at the end of Ramadan, which this year was addressed by Rabbi Ahron Cohen of NKUK and Dr. Azzam Tamimi. Other demonstrations, include of course, the Stop the War Rallies, where IHRC speakers addressed the crowds, as well as other demonstrations and counter-vigils including those with the Lebanese Community (a counter-vigil to a Zionist protest outside the Syrian Embassy) as well as the protest against Colin Powell attending a London Fundraiser for the Jewish National Fund and the annual Demonstration against the Zionist 'Celebration of Israel' in May 2006.

During the Israeli onslaught on Lebanon, IHRC initiated a legal challenge to the Ministry of Defence, the Foreign Office and the Civil Aviation Authority to stop the facilitation of munitions flights from the US to help Israeli military forces. Whilst leave to take this challenge forward was ultimately denied, much information was made public as a result, including numbers of flights and the nature of cargo. Some carriers have also been publicly banned or castigated for breaching rules. More information can be found in the Channel 4 piece about the case: <http://www.ihrc.org.uk/file/2006.08.23.ch4news.ihrc-sues-government-for-supporting-terrorism.wmv>

After the ceasefire IHRC sent a team of observers to Lebanon to catalogue breaches of international humanitarian law. The team, consisting of Alistair Webster QC, barristers Kevin Metzger and Osama Daneshyar and IHRC's Fahad Ansari were supported in this project by other NGOs.

The financial backing that the Israeli regime receives is not limited to the disproportionate 'aid' it receives from the US. Notable companies support the Israeli economy and even its infrastructure. Prominent business people

even propagandize shamelessly on behalf of its murderous policies. Such support comes from e.g. Starbucks and Marks & Spencer. IHRC has fully supported the "Boycott Israel" campaign in a bid to arrest Israeli militarism and its apartheid style policies. IHRC has also launched a campaign against the recent sponsorship deal made between Arsenal FC to promote Israel as a tourist destination. By signing such a deal to promote an apartheid state, Arsenal is going against the very principles of the 'Lets Kick Racism out of Football' campaign. For more information on the Israel boycott, please visit <http://www.inminds.co.uk/boycott-israel.html>.

**DURING THE ISRAELI ONSLAUGHT ... IHRC INITIATED A LEGAL CHALLENGE ... TO STOP THE FACILITATION OF MUNITIONS FLIGHTS**

Other actions in support of Palestine included joining the call with many other organisations, on the EU to reverse its starvation policy, through its implementation of sanctions on the Palestinian Authority. Other actions included a letter writing campaign protesting the appointment of an ex-Israeli authorities adviser as head of the Foreign Office Legal Department, and a campaign to stop the Israeli government digging up Muslim graves in Jerusalem.

And it's not only in Lebanon and Palestine where innocent civilians are dying, but the war in Iraq continues as we speak. However, now the sad reality is that Muslims are killing each other. And when the American Soldiers are killing Muslims, they are doing so illegally under international law. This was highlighted by the Haditha Massacres in June where the deaths of the civilians in Haditha were indeed found to be targeted reprisal killings and the acts of the US marines as war crimes. IHRC has called on all Muslims to stand united against sectarianism in Iraq, and has called for the international community to recognize that there

is clear evidence to suggest that the US forces are committing torture which is violating basic human rights under international law.

The torture of Muslims doesn't just stop in the Middle East but includes Chechnya. 2006 marks the twelfth year of Russia's campaign against Muslims living there. Nearly a quarter of the Chechen Muslim population has been brutally killed and a similar number have been displaced from their homes. IHRC has continued its support for the Chechen people by participation in the 2006 Save Chechnya Campaign which aimed to raise awareness of the situation there and the issues concerned. For more information on this, please visit [www.savechechnya.com](http://www.savechechnya.com).

IHRC has also been involved in a number of campaigns regarding citizenship rights. In October last year, 131 ethnic-Malay Thais fled Thailand seeking refuge in Malaysia due to the continued persecution they were suffering at the hands of the Thai army. However, Malaysia refused to grant refugee status to these individuals claiming that it does not recognize political refugees. IHRC urged all supporters to write to the UN Commission for Refugees on behalf of the individuals.

In Europe, many governments have also acted unjustly against Muslim citizens. Earlier this year, Germany published the Baden-Württemberg naturalization test and the Hesse test which are designed to mark out differences between Muslims and others. IHRC has called upon supporters to campaign to all of the European governments which have acted unjustly against Muslim civilians and for them to work with all Muslim communities rather than alienate them from the society.

IHRC was also involved with the Muslim Action Committee's protests against the Danish cartoons that depicted Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) as a terrorist. In one demonstration alone 40,000 Muslims from around the UK protested in London. It is a testimony to the concern but also the commitment to peaceful change, that Muslims have used the route of boycotting Danish products as a means of castigating Danish authorities for not distancing themselves from these offensive caricatures.

Other countries that IHRC focussed on included Australia and its imposition of more draconian anti-terror laws, as well as the UAE and its treatment of migrant workers.

If you are interested in learning more about IHRC's campaigns, please join our list by sending an email to [subscribe@ihrc.org](mailto:subscribe@ihrc.org).

**Fahad Ansari and Fahmida Khanom**

**Event:**

# You Must Be Joking: EXPOSING THE ISLAMOPHOBES

IHRC held its 3rd Annual Islamophobia Awards in December 2005 at the Islamic Centre of England.

Although the Islamophobia Awards is an evening of laughter and satire, the need for such an event is extremely saddening. As a result this evening of 'fun' carried with it a powerful message – the demonisation of Muslims is a reality, and we must exert every effort to combat these attacks by exposing these hateful individuals and policies.

Thousands of people voted to nominate individuals they believe have been the most virulent in their opposition to Islam, thus deserving of this prestigious and unique award. Nominations saw the return of old favourites George W Bush, Tony Blair, Vladimir Putin, Daniel Pipes and Charles Clarke. There were however new faces itching for a prize, these included people like Colin Bundy, Sophie Panopoulos, and Oprah Winfrey.

The evening began with a delicious three course meal, followed by the recitation of the Holy Qu'ran. With their stomachs full and their minds pondering over the powerful messages depicted by the IHRC display, our guests were given a heartfelt welcome to this unique event.

The spoof awards are the result of ordinary people world-wide nominating and then voting for a list of people by region whom they believe to be the worst perpetrators of Islamophobia in the previous year.

The shortlist from the UK was Charles Clarke (British Home Secretary); Sir Ian Blair (Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service); Professor Colin Bundy (Principal, SOAS); Jon Ware (BBC Panorama reporter). The winner was Sir Ian Blair for his implementation of anti-Muslim policies such as the Shoot-to-kill, Muslim profiling and unprecedented lobbying for the extension of detention without charge.

From the Middle East & Africa the nominated Islamophobes were Natan Sharansky (former Israeli Minister); South African Board of Deputies; Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi; US & British Special Forces in Iraq; Hosni Mubarak (Egyptian President). The award was shared between Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi & US and British Special Forces in Iraq.

In Australasia & Asia the coveted award was sought by Islam Karimov (Uzbek President); Thaksin Shinawatra (Prime Minister, Thailand); Sophie Panopoulos (Liberal MP, Australia); John Howard (Australian Prime Minister). The Australian PM John Howard won for demonisation and marginalisation of the Muslim community by targeting Muslims



**Islamophobe of 2005**

through Anti-terror laws.

Nominations for the most Islamophobic personality in Europe & Russia consisted of Vladimir Putin (Russian President); Nicolas Sarkozy (French Interior Minister); Kaj Vilhelmsen (Danish Radio Commentator); The Northern League (Italian political party). The Russian premier, Vladimir Putin won the award due to his unrelenting campaign of murder and subjugation of the Chechen people.

In the Americas George W Bush was chosen as the biggest Islamophobe for... well everything. His challengers for the award were Oprah Winfrey (Chat Show Host); Front Page Magazine (website); Daniel Pipes (journalist)

The special award for the Islamophobe of the Year went to our very own Tony Blair. Following the events of 9/11 and 7/7 he was able to express his anti-Muslim feelings. His hawkish gaze is now transfixed on 'extremism' which is, in reality, synonymous with ideas with which he disagrees. Unfortunately, the sorry state of affairs this mentality has created has made the Muslims the prime victims of Mr Blair's crusade.

Positive Awards were given in recognition of the individuals who challenged this prejudice in many ways. Four individuals and one organisation were presented with these awards.

Rik Remmery showed tremendous courage when he refused to sack a worker at his factory in Belgium who wore Hijab, despite receiving death threats including bullets in the post, and a notice of a 250,000 Euro bounty on his head.

Maria Vamvakinou MP spoke courageously and prophetically in the Australian parliament against calls for hijab to be banned at school and against the vilification of Muslims by politicians and press, stating that it provoked backlash and could tear the fabric of Australian society.

Keith Shilson is the President of Middlesex University Students' Union and refused to cancel a debate at which Muslim group Hizbut Tahrir were invited to present their case. The University suspended Shilson's students status as a result.

Neturei Karta is an Orthodox Jewish organization which has campaigned tirelessly against Israeli atrocities and Zionism. Rabbis from NKUSA and UK have worked with Muslims on the Palestinian issue and have done much to explode the myth that Muslims – particularly religious Muslims – are inherently anti-Semitic.

Mrs Maryam Hafezji is a resident of North London, who has had to battle against Islamophobic harassment by neighbours for two years, during which time the local police failed to take adequate notice. During this time, Mrs. Hafezji has resisted pressure to be bought out from her home or to relocate as a result of the harassment, and eventually succeeded in spurring the police into action after CCTV footage of the attacks on her home and the threats she received were broadcast on Channel 4 news.

Besides the awards itself the guests were treated to the truly amazing Noor-ul-Mustafa, a renowned Tawasih group, who mesmerized the crowds with their beautiful voices.

Deafening laughter followed every joke delivered by the extremely talented American Egyptian comedian Ahmed Ahmed. Not only is Ahmed Ahmed part of the Comedy Tour in America titled, 'The Axis of Comedy', he was the first ever winner of the Richard Pryor Award for ethnic diversity at the Edinburgh Festival.

Throughout the evening, the main aim of this gathering was never absent from peoples' minds for too long. An auction of items donated by the public, with the aim of raising funds for the IHRC so that the fight against injustice and anti-Muslim sentiment continues, helped provide for some of IHRC's work.

The evening ended with a powerful message from the Chair, Massoud Shadjareh. He implored the people to stand up against the Islamophobes, to recognise their hatred of us, to remember this hatred, and to strive to expose them each and every time. However, we must recognise individuals who are standing shoulder-to-shoulder with us and supporting the community.

We sincerely hope that there will be a time when such events will not be necessary, but unfortunately, this seems a very long way away.

**Musthak Ahmed**

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lifestyle, culture, and success of British Muslims.

# British Muslims' Expectations of the Government: Making a Solid Case for Policy Change

In a time where the Muslim community is under intense scrutiny, British Muslim identity and their loyalties are also being questioned. Little regard is given to their concerns and needs.

Launched in December 2004 at the House of Lords, the British Muslims' Expectations of the Government (BMEG) reports chart areas of concern for Muslims and present recommendations to the government and policy makers. The launch panel included report authors Saied Reza Ameli, Arzu Merali and Manzur Elahi. They were joined on the panel by Baroness Helena Kennedy QC, Baroness Pola Uddin, Professor Paul Kennedy and Professor Scott Lucas.

Following three reports produced last year on dual citizenship, social discrimination and faith schools, the three further reports were published this year. These focused on hijab, law and the media. At the time of writing a report on university is ready to go to press. Due out later this year is a final report discussing British Muslim contribution to society.

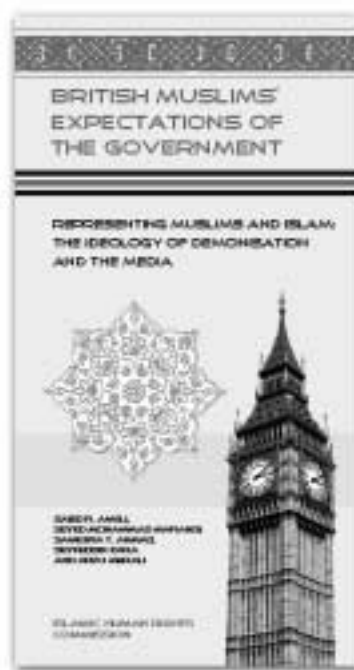
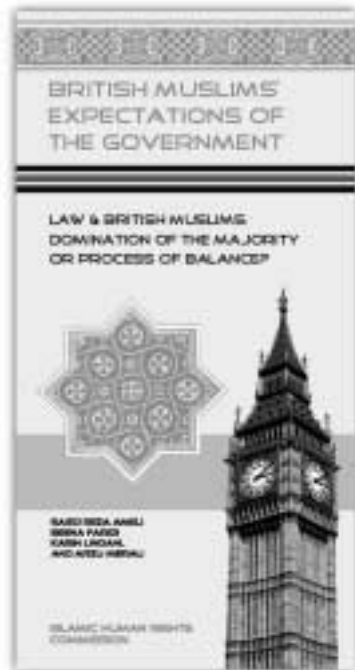
Previous reports have received considerable coverage in journals and in newspapers including the likes of the Times Education Supplement and Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy, a US journal.

## HIJAB

Commonly, women in Hijab are thought to be oppressed and obeying the men in their lives. When in actual fact the case of Shabina Begum has highlighted that Muslim women do wear Hijab out of choice. The report on Hijab revealed that women actually find the Hijab to be liberating and a means of achieving gender equality in an increasingly gender exploitative wider society. Report figures show 81% of those surveyed see the Hijab as important. Findings show increased stereotyping and negative experiences of Muslim women by wider society after 9/11. Many saw Hijab as the fulfillment of spiritual satisfaction, whilst others saw it as a proud expression of identity that in no way conflicted with their sense of Britishness.

## Are changing policies maligning the Muslim community?

Muslims have been called on time and time again to root out extremism and integrate within society. However the latest spate of raids on Muslim homes has created a sense of caution regarding the police and the British legal system. The BMEG report on law found that many of the respondents felt the police to be a great cause of conflict. Findings also show that most respondents believe the law is



unfair and furthermore only a few respondents feel protected by the law.

There was an overwhelming response that the law neither recognised nor protected Muslims and that it was hostile to Muslims as a result of their faith.

The sixth report by IHRC has found that Muslims are maligned and seen as a strange entity. Since the events of 9/11 and 7/7, Muslims have been subjected to a barrage of negative media that has been both extremely hostile and Islamophobic. Representation of Muslims in Hollywood, news media and literature has continually portrayed them as mad Mullahs, naïve followers of a global 'Islamic cult' or taken an orientalist approach.

Respondents acknowledge the media as a platform for inter-faith

and inter-community relations. However, they also concluded that the media abuses this role and widens already existing divisions.

## British Muslim Contribution

Muslims are forever asked 'what exactly have you done for British society?', so a final report on Muslim contributors to British society released later this year aims to highlight the reality of Muslims in Britain.

The BMEG team has been involved in various events and consultations and appeared on various media as a result of this project, including speaking at functions in the UK e.g. for Charter 88, and in Oslo, Norway for IHSG. Interest in the findings of the project extend beyond the UK with policy-makers and academics looking

towards instituting similar projects in different countries.

The team includes:

- **Aisha Abbasi** is the BMEG series co-ordinator and a researcher at IHRC.
- **Sameera T. Ahmed** is a lecturer in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at Manchester Metropolitan University. She is also a Research Associate at Manchester University.
- **Saied Reza Ameli** is Director of the Institute for Northern American and European studies at the University of Tehran and assistant professor of Media and Cultural Studies in the Faculty of Social Sciences. He is also a member of the international committee of Global Studies Association. He is also an Honorary Research

Fellow at the University of Birmingham.

- **Fahad Ansari** is an IHRC researcher and case worker specializing in anti terror legislation.
- **Aliya Azam** is a teacher who has worked in the field of Muslim education for over thirteen years.
- **Manzur Elahi** is a former IHRC researcher and Bangladeshi newspaper reporter. Currently, he is a special correspondent for an Iranian radio station.
- **Beena Faridi** is an IHRC researcher and casework support officer who deals with cases of Islamophobia.
- **Ahmed Seyfeddin Kara** is an IHRC researcher and campaigner and co-author.
- **Karin Lindahl** is an IHRC researcher specializing in law and human rights.
- **Dr. Seyed Mohammad Marandi** is an assistant Professor at the University of Tehran and Head of the North American Studies Department. He is also an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Birmingham.
- **Arzu Merali** is a writer on Islam and human rights, and currently heads the research section at IHRC.
- **Abidah Merchant** is the former volunteer co-ordinator and currently a project manager at IHRC.
- **Humza Qureshi** is the former volunteer coordinator at IHRC.
- **Hiba A. Rahim** is a writer, journalist and the former BMEG series coordinator.
- **Aaliyah Z. Shaikh** is a co author of the BMEG reports and holds an MA in Islamic studies.

Aisha Abbasi

## Empowering the community:

# Bringing civil liberties to wider society



The 'Know Your Rights' Workshop Team in Cardiff

This year also saw the launch of the new 'Know your Rights, Know your Duty' workshops specifically designed to educate the community about their rights under the anti-terror legislation and how to deal with the security services. Supported by Stop Political Terror, these workshops aim to inform the community about the implications of these laws and of the individual's duty to Allah, to their fellow Muslims and to the society they live in.

Workshops took place on campuses, mosques, and community centres throughout the

country including London, Nottingham, Liverpool, Bedford, Harrow, Bolton, and Cardiff, with future workshops scheduled to take place in Manchester, Bradford, Luton, Leeds, Dewsbury, Rochdale and Birmingham. Whilst the majority of attendees were Muslim, many non-Muslims have also shown interest in what is ultimately a universal guide for anyone worried about encroachment on people's rights in the UK – particularly of free speech and association. If you would like a workshop to be organised in your area, please contact the office on 020 8904 4222 or email [info@ihrc.org](mailto:info@ihrc.org).



## Events, Consultations and Talks

IHRC officers were involved in various events across the year. Chair, Massoud Shadjareh participated in a commemoration of Human Rights Day in December 2005, with members of the Guantanamo Human Rights Commission and other activists at St James's Church, Piccadilly. Beena Faridi spoke at the conference 'Islamophobia: Its Impact on Social Cohesion' organised by the Bristol Muslim Cultural Society (BMCS) in partnership with The Asian History Project, in Bristol also in December.

IHRC supported the UK World Chechnya Day Memorial Service in London in February. Massoud Shadjareh was a speaker at the Kalim Siddiqui Memorial Conference 'The Islamic Movement: Between Extremism and Moderation' in April, organised by the Institute of Contemporary Islamic Thought. He also took part in the Rights and Responsibilities roadshow that toured the UK.

Fahad Ansari and Beena Faridi took part on the Institute of Race Relations conference 'Racism, Liberty and War on Terror' in September. Also in September, Karin Lindahl presented findings of the BMEG report on Law to a conference convened by Charter 88 at Clifford Chance in London. Arzu Merali also presented the findings of that report in Oslo, Norway in September to the local Muslim community and Norwegian academics, lawyers and policy makers.

IHRC speakers attended a variety of functions, including educational talks for people of other faiths, women only events, and grassroots speaker meetings. IHRC was invited to consultations with the Foreign Office Human Rights Team, the Power Enquiry, the Minister for Women, the Minister for Human Rights, the Pakistan Prime Minister and various other consultations.

Massoud Shadjareh continued in his position on the Community Panel of the Stop and Search Review Team for the Home Office. Arzu Merali was a member of the BBC Radio 4 Today programme's Citizens' Jury Oversight Panel. Fahad Ansari and Beena Faridi continued to attend consultations with the Independent Police Complaints Commission.

Amirah Ali

## Supporting Just Causes

Ongoing campaigns that IHRC continued to lend moral support to included campaigns for the closure of Guantanamo Bay and also the immediate return of British residents still detained there. IHRC supported Cageprisoners and the Guantanamo Human Rights Commission in this aim.

The shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes still haunts the UK, and IHRC supported and publicised various vigils and events. Additionally IHRC co-organised and supported events post- the Forest Gate arrests and shooting.

IHRC also lent its support to joint demonstrations protesting violations around the world, including Iraq, Chechnya, and Palestine.

Amirah Ali

# DECLARATION OF UNITY: CHARTER 3: 103

Along with the bloody US invasion, the Iraqi people have been suffering from brutal sectarian provocations that have claimed lives of thousands of civilians as well as prominent religious figures. Those who do not wish to see a united Muslim ummah have been trying to implant synthetic disputes and problems into the hearts of the Muslims and cause divergence and conflict within the Muslim ummah for centuries. Thus, they get opportunity of being able to execute their own agenda which is nothing but exploitation of Muslim populations and resources.

It is a scenario played out in recent years in Pakistan, Afghanistan and even places like Nigeria. To fight this cancer, Massoud Shadjareh of IHRC, Maulana Faiz ul-Aqtab Siddiqi, Head of the International Muslims Organization and Principal of the Hijaz University College, and Imam Mohammed Al-Asi of Washington DC, one of the Islamic movement's foremost English-speaking intellectuals, initiated a charter called 'Charter 3:103' in 1997. The aim was to condemn all forms of disunity, including sectarianism, racism and nationalism.

The Charter was inspired by the Quranic verse 3: 103 which strongly emphasizes unity among Muslims: "And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited, and remember the favour of Allah on you when you are enemies, then He united your hearts so by his favour you became brothers; and you were on the brink of a

pit of fire, then He saved you from it, thus does Allah make clear to you His communication that you may follow the right path".

Massoud Shadjareh remarked "Muslims must learn that there is no one way to be Muslim, part of the strength of Islam has always been that it accommodates a wide range of cultures and styles of behaviour provided they are not inconsistent with the broad principles of Islam. But this sort of unity comes from the heart, not from ideology. We must change the way we feel and act, not just what we

say."

A recent wave of sectarian violence in Iraq has proved us that how urgently and desperately the ummah need this kind of effort. Therefore, IHRC stepped up its struggle and focused on the Charter 3:103 with wider attendance and contribution from the other Islamic groups and individuals.

If you would like to sign the Charter, please email us at [charter@ihrc.org](mailto:charter@ihrc.org), and take a stand for unity.

Seyfeddin Kara



Samarra Bombing, Iraq: Charter 3:103 condemns all sectarian violence between sects

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The Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust is a charity registered in the UK (number 1106120) that raises money to fund purely charitable work. This includes e.g. work to raise awareness about human rights or to ensure that existing human rights laws are being properly enforced. It could also provide relief to victims of human rights abuses and their families.

If you wish to donate money that will be used for purely charitable purposes as defined by the Charities Commission you can send donations to the Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust. Please make cheques payable to the Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust or pay by credit or debit card by filling in your details below and send it with the completed form below. UK tax payers are able to utilise Gift Aid when donating to Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust, by ticking the relevant box(es) below. This means for every £1 you donate IHRCT will be able to reclaim a further 28p.

You can also call the office and donate with your credit or debit card on 020 8904 4222. Please make sure you state that you want it to be a GIFT AID donation.

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# WHY SHOULD YOU VOLUNTEER FOR US?

## Islamic Human Rights Commission



There is always something more we can do to fulfil our duty to the world. The most important word in this sentence is duty. The duty of every Muslim is to enjoin good and forbid evil (3:110). This injunction of the Quran is quite specific. This injunction also happens to be the embodiment of all human rights work. All human rights organisations campaign against inhumane, cruel, brutal and often simply sadistic acts inflicted upon our weaker brethren by stronger more powerful and callous sections of the human race, whilst at the same time promoting just practices in whichever theatre maybe their own area of expertise or concern.

This by itself is as a concise an argument as should be required to make every reader of the above paragraph be s/he Muslim or not desire to fulfil her / his duty in some way by contributing to the enjoining of good and forbidding of evil. IHRC is one of many organisations which does tangibly

benefit from those who decide to volunteer for us, but I would say that this duty, a duty which for a Muslim is primarily to Allah (saw) is far beyond a blind request from one specific organisation. This duty should run deep into the very essence of every man, woman and child's life. I'm not saying that to fulfil your duty you must volunteer at IHRC, on the contrary get involved with any work you possibly can. And again this duty is not just fulfilled by "working" specifically for Human Rights groups. Be pro-actively even handed and just to all those around you. How can you hope to have the character traits to contribute meaningfully against the injustices of the Palestine/Israel conflict if you cannot prevent the child who lives across the road from being bullied, beaten and repetitively mugged and intimidated and harassed by the local ruffians?

You see it is actually the very same human traits which cause the local "gangs" to enjoy harassing those who are the weaker that caus-



Join the research team.

es the settlers in Palestine to enjoy harassing Palestinians. It is the very same mentality which made certain whites in apartheid South Africa enjoy the local pastime of bating blacks, and the same mentality if unchallenged that will lead to the type of behaviour by soldiers who perpetrated the crimes in Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad. This is why human rights work is not just about campaigning for the numerous theatres of war where people are suffering due to the arbitrary abuse of power but also to break down prejudices in countries such as the UK and US - the person pulling a hijab off a girl today could tomorrow be a soldier committing war crimes in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Human existence all over the globe is interlinked. No one section is independent of the other. Not many can easily imagine that the breaking down of prejudices is as pivotal and immediately necessary in gaining a sustainable long term solution to the problems faced by Muslims and the rest of the downtrodden. It is the attitudes of the whole world which has to change. Much of IHRC work is to break down prejudices. Your smallest contribution as a volunteer helps - whether its being a volunteer at events and demonstrations, helping out with admin or research at the office, or co-ordinating local groups, there are many ways you can be involved. Here are just a few:

- Become a volunteer coordinator in your local area
- Help in admin
- Join our Research team
- Be a Campaigner
- Help in Media Monitoring
- Distribute our materials
- Help to fundraise
- And much more...

Please email us on [info@ihrc.org](mailto:info@ihrc.org) for more information. Thank you for your continued support.

Humza Qureshi



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## AL-QUDS DAY 2006

## MAKE A STAND FOR JUSTICE



Sunday 22nd of October 2006  
Gather at 12 noon at Marble Arch to march to the American embassy for a rally.  
(Nearest tube Marble Arch)

## GET INVOLVED

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# Fund and Publicise IHRC Today!

**“O you who have attained to faith [or aspire to it]! Let not your worldly goods or your children make you oblivious of the remembrance of God: for if any behave thus it is they, they who are the losers. And spend on others out of what we have provided for you as sustenance, before there comes a time when death approaches one of you and he then says “O my Sustainer! if only You would grant me a delay for a short while so that I can give in charity and be among the righteous!” (Q. 63:9-10)**

Clearly we are commanded by Allah swt to give for the sake of Allah swt in His way. At IHRC our aims are manifold, and our inspiration derives from the

Qur'anic injunctions that command believers to rise up in defence of the oppressed.

From our modest beginnings in 1997 we have come a long way. For all this we have to thank our supporters for their financial and physical support, as well as their du'as.

As you can imagine, for our work to continue, and for IHRC to remain an effective and independent organisation, we rely on the people whom we serve, people like yourselves who are subject to the victimisation and persecution of today's changing world, to support us. Please help us to continue with our work. You can do so financially by setting up a standing order for IHRC (you can use the forms on either page 11 or page 12), by giving your zakah

to IHRC and encouraging others to do the same, by organising a Jumua collection at your local mosque or by donating on-line at our website [www.ihrc.org.uk](http://www.ihrc.org.uk).

For the work of IHRC to be sustainable in the long run, it is essential that more and more people all over the world become aware of and support IHRC, its aims and its work. Please help us to achieve this by arranging talks in your local area, which IHRC volunteers can come and deliver, and by distributing our annual newsletter as widely as you can. There are many ways in which you can help; please find a way that suits you, and make IHRC part of your striving in the way of Allah swt today.

Hajira Qureshi



**The Palestine Internationalist is an on-line journal for activists looking for accessible and detailed information on key issues relating to the Palestinian struggle for liberation.**

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## IHRC Reports, Campaign Packs & Miscellaneous Items Order Form

Please tick the box next to the items you want and fill in your name, address and contact details on the form overleaf and send your payment to: **IHRC, P O Box 598, Wembley, HA9 7XH, United Kingdom.** If you are based outside the UK please contact IHRC before purchasing items as there may be additional postage costs involved.

Please make cheques payable to **'Islamic Human Rights Commission'**. Please allow 28 days for delivery for items other than Eid cards. If you require any of the following before Eid 2006 please specify when you send us the order.

### REPORTS

Please find below a list of our most recent reports. A comprehensive list of our reports since 1997 can be found on our website at [www.ihrc.org](http://www.ihrc.org). Most IHRC reports are available to download from our website without charge, or can be e-mailed to you. If you require a hard copy of any report listed below please send the appropriate payment for each report that you require. To purchase hard copies of any reports not listed below please contact us for a price list.

**British Anti-Terrorism: A Modern Day Witch-hunt** (Revised July 2006) (July 2006) A must read for all those concerned with the British government's war on terror and its implications for its Muslim community. Cost £6

**Who Will Guard the Guardians?** (December 2005) A critical overview of the work of the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) with specific reference to the Babar Ahmad case. Cost £4

**Myanmar's Muslims: The Oppressed of the Oppressed** (October 2005) This report looks at the situation of Muslims in Myanmar (Burma) and discusses their plight within the human rights tragedy of that country. Cost £4

**British Muslim's Expectations of the Government: Dual Citizenship: British, Islamic or Both? — Obligation, Recognition, Respect and Belonging** (November 2004) The first in the British Muslim Expectations of the Government Series, looking at the crunch issues of citizenship and belonging for Muslims in the UK. Cost £8.50

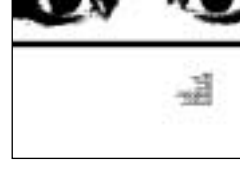
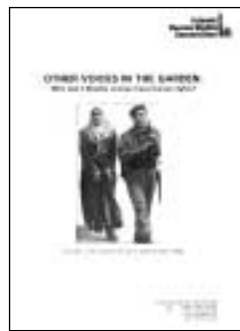
**British Muslim's Expectations of the Government: Social Discrimination: Across the Muslim Divide** (December 2004) The second instalment in the BMEG series dealing with anti muslim prejudice in the current political climate. Cost £8.50

**British Muslim's Expectations of the Government: Secular or Islamic? What Schools do British Muslims want for their Children?** (July 2005) Volume 3 of the BMEG series deals with an important question dealt with by every parent. It analyses the problem facing under achieving muslim children. Cost £8.50

**British Muslim's Expectations of the Government: Hijab, Meaning, Identity, Otherization and Politics: British Muslim Women.** (January 2006) Volume 4 of the BMEG series takes a look at the Hijab — commonly understood as a head-covering for women. Cost £8.50

**British Muslim's Expectations of the Government: Law and British Muslims: Domination of the Majority or Process of the Balance** (May 2006) The fifth report in the BMEG series has been commissioned to highlight how certain laws and the experience of Muslim communities of these laws is discriminatory and Islamophobic. Cost £8.50

**British Muslim's Expectations of the Government: Representing Muslims and Islam:**



**The Ideology of Demonisation and the Media** (available end October 2006) Volume 6 of the BMEG series. Cost £8.50

### IHRC CAMPAIGN PACKS

IHRC campaign packs are also available to download from the website: [www.ihrc.org](http://www.ihrc.org). If you require us to send you hard copies, please send us £1 per item as below to help with postage and packing. The best way to keep abreast of IHRC campaigns is to join our e-mail list. Please e-mail [subscribe@ihrc.org](mailto:subscribe@ihrc.org).

**Boycott Zionism Pocket Sized Card.** This latest card gives details of pro-Israeli companies on the boycott list in a handy pocket size for you to take wherever you go. Per batch of 50. (If you require only a few please call the office: 020 8904 4222)

**Boycott Marks & Spencer/Boycott Zionism Leaflet.** (Sep 2005) Per batch of 50. (If you require only a few copies please call the office: 020 8904 4222)

**Oppressed in the Name of Freedom postcards.** (Oct 2003) Per batch of 25. Specially printed cards regarding the plight of women discriminated against for wearing hijab. Currently being used to campaign for hijab rights in Turkey. Please specify which cards you require.  
 **Recep Tayyep Erdogan,** Turkish Prime Minister  
 **Benita Ferrero-Waldner,** EU Commissioner for external relations.  
You may wish to visit our website for current updates relating to this campaign.

**Charter 3:103.** (Sep 2005) Per batch of 10. (If you require only a few copies please call the office: 020 8904 4222). Charter 3:103 is a document which outlines simply the Qur'anic verse which calls for unity amongst Muslims.

**Prisoner of Faith: Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, USA.** More details on how to campaign for the blind Sheikh imprisoned under laws not used since the American Civil war. With Muslims being arrested daily, there is a danger of Sheikh Omar being forgotten — do not let this happen.

**Prisoner of Faith: Taysir Alouni, Spain.** The Al-Jazeera reporter renowned for his coverage of the brutal Afghanistan and Iraq wars. Having narrowly escaped death in Iraq from a US targeted bombing on Al-Jazeera offices, he returned to Spain for a holiday. The authorities have since arrested him accusing him of belonging to an Al-Qaeda terrorist cell in Spain. He has now been convicted and sentenced for alleged links to Al-Qaeda.

**Babar Ahmed, UK.** Babar Ahmed has been held in Belmarsh prison without charge since Aug 2004 and is facing extradition to the USA for alleged and unsubstantiated terrorist activities. If extradited he could face torture and even the death penalty.

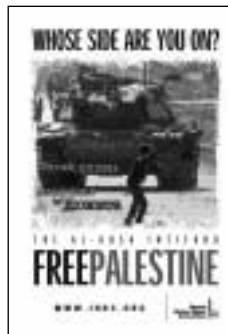
**Guantanamo Bay Detainees, Cuba.** IHRC continues its struggle to ensure that all detainees in Guantanamo Bay are given access to due process and other fundamental human rights or released immediately. The abuses that are taking place have forced the detainees, some of whom were children when imprisoned, into hunger strikes and suicide attempts — so please act now.

### LEAFLETS

**'Know Your Rights'.** New leaflets will be available at the end of October insha Allah. Please contact the office on the numbers / email below, to order free copies.

### VIDEOS, CD's & DVD's

CD: **'I believe I can't fly'** (comedy), Ahmed



Ahmed. £15. Price includes postage and packing.

VIDEO: **The Hidden Victims of September 11.** Conference video featuring Yvonne Ridley, the late Sulayman Abedin and Mudassar Arani, with papers from Sultana Tafadar and Natalie Garcia. £10. Price includes postage and packing.

VIDEO: **Human Rights, Justice and Muslims in the wake of September 11, 2001.** Seminar from October 2001. £10. Price includes postage and packing.

DVD Set: **Absent Justice,** Seven DVDs in the set, recording the Israeli operation "Defensive Shield". A Vision for Art Production. £19.95. PG

### BOOKS

**The Oath by Khassan Baiev** (2003). Hardback, pages 354. Hodder & Stoughton; ISBN: 0-7432-2011-0. A Chechen surgeon recounts his story of immense courage under fire. £20.00 including UK postage and packing.

**Among the Divine Evidences of the 3rd Millennium** by Cehl Fakaemeeah. 109 pages. A&Z Design Consultancy, 2003. Cehl Fakaemeeah was a prisoner of faith. This book looks at some of the issues surrounding Fakaemeeah's imprisonment as well as discourses on the nature of Allah. This book costs £6.50 which includes postage and packing.

**Globalization, Americanization and British Muslim Identity** by Dr Saied Raza Ameli. 340 pages, (1 Aug 2002), Islamic College for Advanced Studies (ICAS); ISBN: 19040630020. This book by one of IHRC's founders, looks at the development of British Muslim identity and the challenges to it from the globalization of Hollywood culture. This book costs £17.00 which includes postage and packing.

### BASEBALL CAP

**IHRC baseball cap.** (White with green logo) £6. Price includes postage and packing.

### T-SHIRTS

**IHRC Demonstration T-Shirt** with the wording 'Whose Side Are You On' (Front), 'The World Stopped Nazism, The World Stopped Apartheid, The World Must Stop Zionism' (Reverse). Size (L) (labelled as 3XL) and (XL) (labelled as 5XL) in either short or long sleeved. Short sleeved costs £6, Long sleeved costs £8. Both prices include postage and packing.

### BANNER

This banner can be displayed as a poster or used at demonstrations and vigils. Printed in colour on canvass with the wording 'The World Stopped Nazism, The World Stopped Apartheid, The World Must Stop Zionism' with a small Zionist flag crossed through. 32" x 47". It costs £7 which includes postage and packing.

This banner reads 'Whose Side Are You On' and pictures boy throwing stone at tank 32" x 47". It costs £7 which includes postage and packing.

### EID CARDS

Please see overleaf for details.

YOU CAN ALSO ORDER ON-LINE AT  
[www.ihrc.org.uk/catalog](http://www.ihrc.org.uk/catalog)

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# Support Justice, Help IHRC

IHRC has grown and developed through the generous donations of its supporters without whom, we could not have survived. Please remember us this year with your du'a and your financial assistance.

Please help us in whatever way you can – a small monthly contribution (see supporters' form below) is as valuable as a generous one-off donation. If you wish to donate solely to IHRC's charitable work, please complete the form on page 9. Otherwise please fill in the appropriate form on this page.

There are many worthy causes, and we request that you remember IHRC's work when donating, in the best way that you can.

**May Allah s.w.t. reward all your efforts in this world and the next. Ameen.**


**EID CARDS QUR'AN SET 1**



**EID CARDS QUR'AN SET 2**



**EID CARDS ARCHITECTURE**



Actual Quran Eid Cards show the ayahs clearly.

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Supporters of IHRC get free copies of IHRC reports (those paying concessionary rates get a selection) and reduced rates on other items. Concessionary supporters are encouraged to donate £5 a month. Without this type of regular support – however small, IHRC would not be able to operate.

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Contacting you by e-mail or fax may save IHRC money. If you would prefer not to be contacted this way please tick here

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Please state amount in words \_\_\_\_\_

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 Sort Code **12-24-81**

Upon receipt of this order and subsequently the same amount on this first day of each month until further notice, debit my / our account.

Signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this form to us at:  
 Islamic Human Rights Commission  
 PO Box 598, Wembley, HA9 7XH,  
 United Kingdom.**

Islamic Human Rights Commission is a not for profit company.

### EID CARD ORDER FORM

Amount of packs required

QUR'AN SET 1 @ £4 / pack \_\_\_\_\_

QUR'AN SET 2 @ £4 / pack \_\_\_\_\_

ARCHITECTURE @ £4 / pack \_\_\_\_\_

Total Payment enclosed: £ \_\_\_\_\_

### VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FORM

I would like more information on how to volunteer

I would like a Media Monitoring Response pack

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Please find enclosed a donation of £ \_\_\_\_\_

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