

In the name of *Allah*, The Beneficent, The Merciful
..... **The HOPE Bulletin**

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Editor: Akbar Ibn Abdullah

CALIFORNIA JAMA 'AT PROJECT: APPROVED BY THE CENTRAL ANJUMAN, LAHORE

INTRODUCTION

Akbar Ibn Abdullah, Editor

Br Ahmed Saadat is a young member of our *Jama'at* who is now a Caretaker of the Berlin Mosque. We are grateful to him for keeping the Berlin Mosque open daily to visitors and for making the Mosque available for regular prayers, including *Jumu'ah* and various Islamic festivities. *JazakAllah!*

In addition to keeping the Mosque open, Br Ahmed Saadat encourages group visits, especially from educational institutions. He also organizes special days such as "Open House" and the *Jama'at's* convention.

The acting *Imam* maintains close contacts with Central Anjuman, and Br A.S. Abdul Santoe Sahib, Central Anjuman's European Representative, for guidance.

We thank Br Ahmed Saadat for submitting the Berlin Mosque's activities report for February-June, 2012, together with elegant photographs, which follow.



A Brief Report on the Berlin Mosque

February-June 2012

Ahmed Saadat, B.Com.

February 2012

It is for the second time that I have come to the Berlin Mosque to take up responsibilities. My first visit was in 2011 and I worked for almost six months. It is for the second time that I am having another unique and inspiring working experience to serve the Berlin Mosque. It appears that this time my stay will be longer.

I left Pakistan on Monday, 6th February 2012 for Berlin, and after travelling for almost thirty-one hours I reached Berlin on Monday 7th February 2012. During this long flight I had a stop-over for fourteen hours at the Dubai airport. At last I reached the Mosque at 1 p.m.

Mr Zafar Iqbal of Frankfurt, who was on a visit to Berlin, stayed on at the request of Mr. Khalid Iqbal. He received me and we had tea together. His plan was to leave after my arrival so I went to drop him at the main railway station. Before leaving he handed over the charge to me as instructed by Mr. Khalid Iqbal. This time, from the very start I was alone and my last experience helped me a lot in managing the affairs on my own. The weather was very cold, almost around 8 to 12°C, and it was snowing also. It was therefore difficult for me to go out daily as I used to do previously to check my e-mails at the library internet.

From 7th February till 6th March only a few visitors came to the Mosque, as the weather was too cold. But from the end of March till now, which is the month of June, somebody or some group is continuously coming to see the Mosque. May Allah shower His choicest blessings on the soul of the late Hazrat Maulana Sadr-ud-Din for founding the Berlin Mission and building this beautiful oriental-styled, attractive mosque in the heart of Berlin, a historic city of Germany.

On 29th February Dr Jawad Ahmad, a G. P. working in Milton Keynes, UK, specially came to see me, and stayed for four days. He was kind enough to deliver the Friday *Khutbah*, as well. I enjoyed his company visiting some of the places of interest in Berlin. During this time Mr. & Mrs. Durrani from the Rotterdam *Jama'at*, Holland also came to the Mosque, attended the Friday congregation, and stayed on till late in the evening. They were staying in a nearby hotel.

March 2012

On Wednesday 7th March I welcomed a therapist who came along with ten patients to see the Mosque. This was an official appointment made on their request. Quite interesting questions were asked by the therapist and his patients about Islam in general and certain practices of Islam in particular. Being a therapist, his questions were of a different kind and in that respect the discussion was educative for me as well.



On Friday 9th March thirty-one students of the 7th class from a local school visited the Mosque. The same day a doctor, Mr. Annetter Homann, also came around in the afternoon and attended Friday congregational prayers and afterwards had a brief question/answer session.

During the month of March I had appointments on 15th, 19th and 22nd. Even people passing by the Mosque become curious and I don't mind responding to their requests to see the Mosque from the inside.

April 2012

On Tuesday 3rd April, three young students visited the Mosque. Similarly, on April 4th, 7th, 20th, 21st and 25th some small groups of students visited and brief discussions were held. On 26th a group of 20 students of class 8, along with their teacher Mr. Lapschies, visited the Mosque.

From Tuesday 3rd April to Saturday 7th April Mr. Khayyam Zafar, his wife Aroosa Zafar, and their daughter Simra Zafar, of the UK and regular visitors to the meetings at our Wembley Centre in the UK, came and stayed at the Mission House. It was nice to pray the daily prayers in the Mosque with them in

congregation. It was also a good opportunity to visit some of the historic and places of interest in Berlin along with them.



On Sunday 29th April a film director with his team visited the Mosque. They shot a short film of the Mosque. Their object was to show to their viewers that Islam is a religion of peace and tolerance and that this Mosque is open to followers of all faiths and there is an opportunity to have frank discussion about Islam and its various aspects. The Central Anjuman at Lahore is aware of this filming and I hope to pass on to them a DVD copy when it is available.

In the months of March and April I attended some important meetings with (Bezirksamt Charlottenburg Wilmersdorf) integrationsbeauftragter held at 100 Otto

Suhr Alle, Berlin 10585, and in a church.



May 2012

On 9th May at 11 am a group of sixteen police cadets visited the Mosque. A very interesting discussion was held with them, which lasted for more than two hours. On 14th May, again at 11 am, a lady teacher, Ms. Ina Foerster, along with a group of twenty-six students of class 10, visited the Mosque and various aspects of Islam and the Muslim cultural life were discussed. It also lasted for more than two hours.

June 2012

Mr. A. S. Santoe, Coordinator for Europe and Head of the Berlin Mission, came from Rotterdam, Holland and stayed from Monday 28 May to Friday 1st June. He delivered the Friday *khutba* in German and also had several meetings with the builders who are assessing the extent and nature of repairs to be undertaken at the Mosque.

Mr. Hamad Ahmad, his wife Shazia, their two children, Irfaan and Shayaan, and Hamad's mother-in-law, Mrs. Munima Ahmad, all from London, visited the Mosque from 4th to 8th June. I was excited to know that Hamad's elder son, Irfaan, is learning German at school.

It is always a new experience to meet people and discuss the history and fundamental principles and practices of Islam with the visitors.

The outer and inner designing of the Mosque, built some 80 years ago by the small community – the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement – impresses on visitors their love and devotion for Islam. The serenity of the Mosque, its interior designing and Quranic inscriptions create a spiritual halo in the minds of the visitors. Mostly questions are asked about terrorism, religious extremism, the rights of women in Islam and the controversy about wearing the *hijaab*.

So far I have attended to more than twenty appointments from people who visited the Mosque and I had discussion with them or have given them books or booklets and apprised them about the history of the Mosque. Generally people book appointments two to four weeks before, either by phone or e-mail. Other requests for appointments come through Bro. Muhammad Ali, who is in Pakistan these days because his mother is seriously ill. He is very helpful and I get guidance from him. I deliver Friday sermons and lead other congregational prayers at the Mosque. The attendance is quite satisfactory.

This year I am trying to initiate ways and means to introduce and encourage more people to visit the Mosque. Whenever I visit any school or attend any meeting or go to any office I distribute my visiting card. Similarly, when someone or a group visits the Mosque I give each one my visiting card so that they can pass it on to others. We also have printed cards with the photograph of the Mosque. I leave them at shops and other public places so that more and more people may become aware of this old and fascinating Muslim place of worship which presents the true picture of Islam and removes misconceptions about this most misunderstood religion in the West. At the Mosque we make sincere efforts to foster understanding and tolerance between followers of the three great religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam. This is a Muslim centre which welcomes people of all faiths and denominations to its Friday congregations and to other important occasions and welcomes visits by appointments or otherwise.

On a notice board outside the Mosque the time of the Friday congregation is written. There is also information on how to get an appointment to see the Mosque from inside, and an open invitation to ask questions about Islam and its attitude towards other religions. There is no entrance fee and anybody is welcomed at any time once the *Imam* is available, just by pressing the doorbell.

Open Days at the Mosque in September and October 2012

On June 4 I gave formal consent to follow the instructions and keep the Mosque open on the two dates. The Open Days will be observed on 1st September and 4th October 2012. All the churches, synagogues and mosques will observe these two dates as Open Days and keep their places open from 5 pm till late in the evening on 1st September and from 10 am to 5 pm on 3rd October.

All praise be to Allah, I am enjoying this experience and service to the cause of Islam and am thankful to Him for providing me with this unique and educative experience.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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“ISLAM” stands for “I SHALL LOVE ALL MANKIND”