

MUSLIMS AUSTRALIA - AFIC

President's Message



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious Most Merciful

Once again, I am pleased to bring to you, our members and community, this update on the activities of AFIC. Obviously, the natural disasters have been a big focus for the whole country during this time and I couldn't be any prouder of how the Muslim community has responded to this disaster. It has truly been inspirational and shown the mercy of our religion to all Australians.

I was also privileged to have the opportunity to sit down for a discussion with Dato Dr Anwar Ibrahim in Malaysia and talk about many topics of interest to

the Muslim community. A summary of that discussion is in the newsletter and I would encourage everyone to read it insha'Allah.

The AFIC Halal Authority continues to rebuild its international presence with the signing of a Memorandum of Mutual Recognition with Thai Halal Bodies. It has been a long but successful rebuilding of the AHA brand. Alhamdulillah.

We also continue to advocate on political and policy matters. Our focus since the last update has been very much on the issues of Islamophobia, racism and the situations in India and Palestine.

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Highlights



The Muslim Community responds to support those impacted by natural disasters.

2



Victorian Multicultural Awards for Excellence

3



Cocos Keeling Islands Profile

3



Dato Dr Anwar Ibrahim Interview

4



Victorian Mosque Open Day

5



AFIC Halal Authority signs historic international MOU and engages globally.

6



AFIC Advocacy

8

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AFIC has established a national disaster relief fund which will be used in times of national emergencies such as the one we currently face. All money donated to this fund will be for relief purposes only. AFIC will cover all the costs of administration to ensure that every dollar donated goes directly to the relief efforts. **AFIC is starting this fund with an immediate donation of \$10,000.** We will work with our State & Territory Councils to ensure that the money is donated through the most appropriate.

AFIC State Councils also raise funds for Bushfire Relief



AFIC President Dr Rateb Jneid represented the community at a Bushfire Relief event in Perth with the Hon. Kim Beazley.



For further details refer to the following Facebook pages:

[ICV Prayers for Relief & Fundraiser](#)

&

[ICQ Fundraiser](#)

Victorian Multicultural Awards Recognise Br Vahid Goga



Br Vahid Goga, a past President of the Albanian Australian Islamic Society (AAIS) and a tireless member of the Victorian Muslim community, was recognised in the Victorian Multicultural Awards for his service.

Victoria's Multicultural Awards for Excellence recognise the outstanding achievements of people and organisations who strengthen

multiculturalism and are proudly coordinated by the Victorian Multicultural Commission on behalf of the Victorian Government. We congratulate AAIS on its continued good work and Br Vahid for being recognised for many years of dedication to the community. More information can be found at the link below:

[Click Here](#)



Cocos Keeling Islands – an untapped Muslim destination?



The Cocos Islands Cooperative Society is located in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, an Australian external territory located approximately 2,700kms North West of Perth Western Australia. The Cooperative is owned by Muslims and its entire workforce of around 80 are all Muslims. The majority of the population in the Cocos (Keeling) Islands are Muslims, and it is the only Australian state/territory that has four Muslim public holidays, and whose flag is based upon a Muslim design.



It has a strategic plan called Gateway to Asia, which incorporates Muslim Friendly Tourism, Halal Resources and Halal Logistics. Its Cocos Beach Resort has been certified by SIRIM International, from Malaysia, as complying with Muslim Friendly Hospitality Standards. It has MOUs with University Sains Islam Malaysia, International Islamic University Malaysia, University Putra Malaysia, GPTD, ABIM, WADAH, Selangor Community College, and Polytechnique Metro KL.

It is an example of growing a business from a Kampong (village in Malay) to a Global Village based upon Islamic principles. It may be of interest to other Australian Muslims who are looking for something different for a holiday.

[Click Here for more information](#)

AFIC Meets with Dato Dr Anwar Ibrahim

In December AFIC President, Dr Rateb Jneid, had an opportunity to visit Malaysia during the historic Malaysian Islamic Summit. This was a gathering of global leaders, Political and community, to consider the pressing issues facing Muslims across the world. During that time Dr Jneid was able to meet with Dato Sri Dr Anwar Ibrahim to discuss many important issues.

How can Muslim minority communities, such as in Australia, best deal with the issue of Islamophobia particularly when there is an increase in far-right political representation?

Firstly, minority Muslims have to function as good Australians just as the minority communities in Malaysia should be good Malaysians. Then you can engage with political leaders as Australians. We should not remain in our own cocoons or ghettos. This weakens our position.

Islamophobia is not something new and has its roots in the past. It has its roots in orientalism and colonialist policies. Muslims have to be good practicing Muslims who understand their Deen firstly and the engage western societies through knowledge and understanding.

How can the global Muslim community better respond to increasing oppression of Muslim minorities such as in China, Myanmar etc. What is Malaysia's plan for this?

What is important is to firstly put our own houses in order. We can only stand against oppression by others if we are not oppressing or discriminating ourselves. There must be a morally coherent voice across the Ummah.

Islam has brought morally justifiable principles because they are consistent and this is what da'wa is all about. Justice knows no barriers. We have to lead by example and defend the rights of other minorities in our own countries.

Will the global Muslim community ever get to a point where it will realistically be able to do something about Palestine and in particular what is happening in Gaza?

This tragedy has been going on for nearly a century and we can see the hypocrisy of western foreign policy but also partly the failure of the Muslim world. But its not a Muslim problem or an Arab problem. It's a problem of the denial of basic rules of justice.

There seems to be an emerging block of Muslim countries in counter to the OIC. Is this correct? If so, what is the long-term plan for this group?



AFIC President Dr Rateb Jneid & Dato Dr Anwar

The intention is not to counter but to give a coherent voice of reason. So it mean co-operating with the OIC. The focus is to deal with issues of economic development, poverty and to bring the spirit of unity and future looking.

What opportunities are there to build greater formal connections between the Australian Muslim community and Malaysia?

Australia is an important neighbor with lots of collaboration between the countries and we have had a long relationship with AFIC. We should look for opportunities to enhance that co-operation in terms of investments, education and da'wa.

Malaysia has been seen as a leader in the Islamic world ever since you went into politics, do you see this perception valid today?

This shouldn't be about leading but about but playing a role on issues of concern to the Ummah. We don't try and claim leadership.

(Answers are paraphrased from the discussion and not direct quotes.)

Victorian Mosque Open Day

AFIC is supporting the Islamic Council of Victoria in holding this year's Mosque Open Day on 15 March. On that day many Mosques across Victoria will open their doors to all members of the Australian community to learn about our religion. As it coincides with the sad anniversary of the Christchurch tragedy this year's open day will be more poignant than ever before.

FREE

**SUNDAY,
15TH MARCH
2020**

10AM TO 4PM

**VICTORIAN
mosque
OPEN DAY**

Participating Mosques

- Albanian Australian Islamic Society (AAIS)
- Albanian Islamic Centre of Dandenong
- AMSSA
- Australian Bosnian Islamic Centre
- Australian Islamic Centre (newport Mosque)
- Benevolence Australia
- Bosnia Herzegovina Islamic Society (Noble Park)
- Doncaster Mosque - UMMA Centre
- El Sedeaq Heidelberg Mosque
- Emir Sultan Mosque Dandenong
- Geelong Mosque - Islamic Society of Geelong
- Golden Wattle Mosque
- Hallam Mosque (IEWAD)
- ICMG Meadow Heights Mosque
- IISCA
- Islamic Museum of Australia (IMA)
- IMCV - Masjid Baitul Makmur
- IMCV - Masjid Westall
- Islamic Council of Victoria - City Mosque
- Islamic Society of Victoria - Preston Mosque
- Keysborough Mosque
- Light of Hidayah
- Maidstone Mosque
- Monash Mosque - Islamic Association of Monash
- Omar Farooq Mosque
- Sunshine Mosque
- Virgin Mary Mosque
- Thomastown Mosque

ICV
ISLAMIC COUNCIL OF VICTORIA

MUSLIMS AUSTRALIA
AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF ISLAMIC COUNCILS INC.

**VICTORIAN
multicultural
commission**
strengthening our community

VICTORIA
State
Government

Proudly facilitated by the Islamic Council of Victoria and funded by the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) and Victorian Government (Office of Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion)



AFIC HALAL AUTHORITY SIGNS MRA WITH THAILAND

AFIC Halal Authority continues to drive greater levels of international co-operation. Dr Rateb Jneid, AFIC President, finalized a formal Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) with the Central Islamic Council of Thailand (CICOT), The Halal Standards Institute of Thailand & The Halal Science Centre Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. This historic step will allow a greater level of co-operation between our organisations through the following:

1. By establishing collaboration in Halal affairs including standards, inspection, certification, scientific and research exchanges, education and quality system implementation for Halal products and services performed by each institute.
2. Recognising each other as the reference institution for Halal inspection benchmark.
3. Collaborating to have common or co-recognized Halal standards or guidelines for the mutual benefit of Muslim consumers in both countries.
4. Accepting each other's Halal mark / Halal logo on products certified by both parties for export to their countries.
5. Allowing each other to use their names & logos on the marketing & promotional material and websites as "Strategic Partner".

AHA is pleased to be at the forefront of these new developments and will continue to strive to build these relationships and connections to better serve our community.



Dr Rateb Jneid, AFIC President, attended the 12th Halal Science Industry and Business Symposium in Thailand where the AFIC Halal Authority signed a historic agreement with Thailand.



AFIC ADVOCACY

AFIC continues its efforts on behalf of the community to raise and respond to issues of importance. We do this both publicly and privately with key stakeholders. Below are links to our public statements.

[Responding to the United States announcement re Palestine](#)

[The Turkey Earthquake](#)

[Bushfire Relief](#)

[The Plight of Indian Muslims](#)

[Religious Discrimination Reforms](#)

[The Repeal of the Medivac Legislation](#)

Since our last update we have also met individuals on the above issues and others:

- David Coleman, Minister for Immigration
- Anthony Albanese, Leader of the Opposition
- Mark Dreyfus, Shadow Attorney General

We have also been engaging directly with the Prime Minister's office in relation to the situation in Palestine. We have been assured that the Government still supports a genuine two state solution for resolving the occupation of Palestine. We will continue to advocate on this issue in the hope of getting stronger and clearer public messaging from the Government.

“And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided. And remember the favor of Allah upon you - when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favor, brothers.”(Quran: 3:103)