



In the Name of Allah The Gracious The Merciful

LOVE FOR ALL HATRED FOR NONE

**26th National Annual *Ijtema* (Gathering) - 2009
Nasirat-ul Ahmadiyya & Lajna Imaillah, Australia
(Young Girls & Women's Auxiliaries, Australia)**

The 26th National Annual Gathering (*Ijtema*) of Lajna Imaillah (Women's Auxiliary) Australia was held on 25th, 26th, and 27th of September 2009 at the 'Bait ul Huda' Mosque in Sydney. By the grace of God, members from all over Australia attended this event with immense enthusiasm and zeal. This year we saw 65 ladies and young girls attend this event from interstate branches.

This is an event held every year, and it is aimed at educating and increasing the knowledge of Lajna and Nasirat about Islam in an enjoyable manner. The purpose of this annual gathering is achieved through a competition-based program whereby all members have a chance to perform in front of an audience, to the best of their ability. Not only does it benefit individuals by gaining knowledge but it also encourages and teaches them techniques for public speaking, proper language/writing proficiencies, and social skills.

Friday, 25th September 2009.

The day started promptly at 2.30pm, with the recitation of the Holy Quran by Sister Abida Zahid, followed by the Lajna Imaillah pledge, and a traditional poem (Nazm) presented by Sister Rehana Khan.

The competitions commenced immediately, and both Lajna and Nasirat (young girls) proceeded to their respective areas. The competitions for young girls aged 7-15 were held separately in the upstairs hall of the mosque, whilst the bottom hall catered for the Lajna who were split into two main groups for competitions; one consisting of women aged 25 and above (Level 1) and the other of women aged 16-25 (Level 2).

The first competition of the day was the Tilawat competition (recitation of the Holy Quran) for level 1 Lajna. There were approximately 9 participants and the competition was of a very high standard. The placeholders of this competition were as follows:

Tilawat Competition - Level 1

- 1st Place – Sister Fazilat Mehmood
- 2nd Place – Sister Attiya Ahmad (NSW)
- 3rd Place – Sister Nudrat Ashfaq (NSW)

The next competition held was the Nazm Competition for Level 1 Lajna. It was a tough competition with nine participants, all of whom had prepared so well. As is the case however, winners had to be selected and the prizes were distributed as follows:

Nazm Competition - Level 1

- 1st Place – Sister Fazilat Mehmood
2nd Place – Sister Amatul Mateen (NSW)
3rd Place – Sister Anjum Khan (NSW)

The Speech competitions for Level 1, in both the Urdu and English language were presented next. There were seven participants for the Urdu Speech Competition and approximately four participants in the English Speech Competition. All participants presented astounding speeches which was true testament to their hard work and talent. After the difficult task of judging these high quality speeches, the following positions were allocated.

Urdu Speech Competition - Level 1

- 1st Place: Sister Shereen Taseer (NSW)
2nd Place: Sister Sadia Muneeb (NSW)
3rd Place: Sister Attiya Ahmad (NSW)

English Speech Competition - Level 1

- 1st Place: Sister Farhat Khurram (NSW)
2nd Place: Sister Embreen Khan (NSW)
3rd Place: Sister Rozia Sharif (NSW)

After the competitions for Day 1, the prize distribution for the NSW Sports Day (August) was held, followed by dinner and evening prayers.

The next event to take place was perhaps the most anticipated event of the day. Back by popular demand the Musha'irah (poetry contest) was held in which 12 Lajna and 1 Nasirat took part.

In order to create the atmosphere and ambience of a traditional Musha'irah the decoration of the stage played a vital role. The stage team worked wonders and prepared an outstanding stage that set the scene impeccably. They created the perfect backdrop to a wonderful event.

The President of the Brisbane Lajna Branch, Sister Abida Mubashar was the hostess of the Musha'irah with Sister Shereen Taseer as the Chairperson. The program started in the usual manner with a recitation from the Holy Quran followed by a Nazm. Sister Abida then commenced the program with a brief introduction of the event and recited a bit of her own poetry, after which participants from all over Australia shared their own literary talent in the Punjabi, Urdu and English languages.



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The poetry presented was very diverse with some poems making the audience laugh out loud while others brought a tear to ones eye. All the participants recited their written poetry with such a passion bringing about many emotions in the audience and was a true testament to the talent held by Lajna Imaillah Australia.

The event and day thus came to a close at approximately 9.30pm with the final words from the Chairperson followed by a silent prayer.

Saturday, 26th September 2009

Session One

At 10:00am, the religious phase of the Ijtema started in the traditional manner with a recitation of the Holy Quran followed by a beautifully presented Nazm. The morning was a bit cold in the hall but due to the excitement and anticipation of the day's proceedings, no one seemed to notice.

The National President of Lajna Imaillah Australia, Mrs Tamseela Saleh, provided a brief introduction of the chairperson of this session, Respected Mrs. Mahmooda Rasheed, who has been serving as the Regional President of Lajna Imaillah of Andhra Pradesh.

Sadr Sahiba then presented her welcoming address in which she read the message sent for this occasion from the Fifth Caliph and current Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Worldwide, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba). Huzoor (aba) instructed that the focus on this occasion should reside on educational and moral issues as we are the representatives of the Jama'at and it is our great responsibility to raise the next generation who shall be the examples for tomorrow's generation.

Sadr Sahiba highlighted that in the time of social and moral chaos, allegiance and submission to Allah and his commands sent by the Prophet are the only way to light and restore peace and harmony, not just within the society, but rather within ourselves. She emphasized that we are truly fortunate as the spiritual leadership in the form of Khilafat is there to save us from adverse turmoil. She further clarified that the meaning of "Lajna Imaillah" is Maids of Allah, and hence our character and personality should reflect this title.

She ended her address with the saying of the Promised Messiah (as) "I have also been reminding Ahmadi women all over the world to maintain good chaste lives and observe Purdah in the manner taught to us by the Holy Quran and the practices of the female companions during the time of the Holy Prophet (saw). This will preserve a healthy society and be the identity of a good Ahmadi".

Following Sadr Sahiba's address, the competitions were underway, with the first competition of the day being the Tilawat competition for Lajna Level 2, consisting of 9 participants. The girls had prepared very well for this competition by putting emphasis on their pronunciations and tone of the Tilawat. By the end of the Tilawat competition, all girls did very well and it made it difficult for the judges to decide who will be the winners.

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The next competition held was the Nazm Competition for Level 2 Lajna. From the very start of this competition everyone was mesmerized by the melodious voices of our young Lajna. It was indeed a very tough competition.

The Urdu and English Speech competitions were next for Lajna Level 2. All speeches were presented in an impeccable manner, clearly depicting the time and effort participants had put in. The confidence and the enthusiastic attitude of the speakers made this event a very enjoyable one.

The last program in this session was a prize distribution ceremony for the competitions that had taken place during the session. Prizes were distributed as follows:

Tilawat Competition - Level 2

- 1st Place: Rana Nouman (NSW)
- 2nd Place: Najm-ul-Sehar (NSW)
- 3rd Place: Nida Sarfraz (NSW)

Nazm Competition - Level 2

- 1st Place: Muneeba Ahmad (NSW)
- 2nd Place: Shazia Waseem
- 3rd Place: Nida Sarfraz (NSW)

Urdu Speech Competition - Level 2

- 1st Place: Uzma Zafar
- 2nd Place: Najma Usman & Hadiqa Rizwan (NSW)
- 3rd Place: Misha Munir (NSW)

English Speech Competition - Level 2

- 1st Place: Farah Khan (NSW)
- 2nd Place: Muneeba Ahmad & Rafia Ahmedi (NSW)
- 3rd Place: Mehreen Khalid

The first session for Saturday 26th of September, 2009 thus came to an end followed by afternoon prayers and lunch.

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Session Two

The second session started at 3pm in the traditional manner with a recitation of the Holy Quran and a beautiful Nazm.

The final competition for the day was the Lajna Quiz Competition. This was quite an exciting highlight and all teams seemed to have put in a lot of effort. Each branch had nominated two representatives to answer the questions that were posed to them and overall the participants had prepared extremely well for this competition.

Quiz Competition

1st Place: Branch Maryiam Sadiqa & Al-Fatima (NSW)

2nd Place: Branch Al-Mubarika (NSW)

3rd Place: Branch Al-Amina (NSW)

Before this session was concluded, the Respected chairperson Mrs. Mahmooda Rasheed addressed Lajna in which she praised the work of Lajna Imaillah. She stated that Lajna Imaillah Australia shall spread an even brighter light if they continued to strive in such a manner and she prayed that may this brightening light soon reach those left in the darkness in this era.

The National Annual Majlis-e-Shura 2009 was then held, in which a number of important issues were brought to light and discussed.

Sunday, 27th September 2009.

Session One

The final day of Ijtema started very early in the morning for some Lajna taking part in the Inter Majalis sports competitions. It was a very cold and crisp morning, but participants put that behind them and showed immense strength by going to the sports field and playing for their respective branches.

At 10:00 the main session started inside the mosque in the usual manner again of a recitation of the Holy Quran and Nazm. The next competition was highly entertaining being the Extempore Speech Competition for both Level 1 and Level 2 Lajna. This event was really interesting because both participants' knowledge and confidence was tested. A number of contestants did get confused and forgot what they wanted to say, but their courage must be applauded.

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Extempore Speech Competition (Level 1)

- 1st Place: Anjum Khan (NSW)
2nd Place: Abida Zahid (NSW)
3rd Place: Amatul Shakoor (QLD) & Faiza Muzaffar (NSW)

Extempore Speech Competition (Level 2)

- 1st Place: Najm-ul-Sehar & Kanwal Mahmood (NSW)
2nd Place: Farah Khan (NSW)
3rd Place: Shabneez Khan (NSW)

The Lajna Bait Bazi (Urdu Poetry) competition was next. The competition was very tough this year with all participants being so well prepared and none being ready to give up.

Bait Bazi Competition

- 1st Place: Khalida Nuzhat
2nd Place: Asifa Ahmed Mansoor (NSW)
3rd Place: Munazzah Hina (NSW)

To close the first session, the gathering was then addressed by the respected Missionary of Brisbane Mr Shahid Masood and the President and Missionary in-charge (Ameer) of Australia Mr Mahmood Ahmed.

The respected Missionary of Brisbane was first to address the Lajna, he stated that he will address the members very briefly upon three points; Prayer, Quran, and Being in good company. These points seem simple, but if one adheres to them then success will be reached. Speaking on Prayer first, Maulana Sahib recited few verses from the Holy Quran emphasizing the importance of prayer, and stated that the Holy Prophet (saw) also stressed upon this as it is the sole purpose of creation to worship the creator, and hence it is the most crucial responsibility and obligation that we must carry out, and train our children to observe also. On the topic of Quran, Maulana Sahib stated the Hadith with outlines that the best among believers is one who learns and then teaches the Quran. He advised that children should be encouraged to read at least one verse every day. In regards to the final point, Maulana Sahib stated that being in good company is important for the spiritual development of not just children but of adults too.

Ameer Sahib then addressed the Lajna and started by commenting on the wonderful session. Respected Ameer Sahib said that with the grace of God the Jama'at is increasing rapidly, however this also means that there are vast type of personalities and characters and hence certain problems are arising which should be addressed. He said that first we have to confess that there does reside problems, as ignoring situations or problems and facts does not do any good. He instructed that in times of sensitivity, the blame game should



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not be played, as at times great lies are told about one another, and in that case even the Jama'at system is sometimes used as a game. Ameer Sahib reminded the gathering that one should have the fear of Allah in their heart and mind at all times and in sensitive and problematic situations one should always turn to God with prayer.

Ameer Sahib concluded with the prayer that may Allah guide all the members and ease the difficulties that are being faced by the community, and urged the members to also pray. The session then ended, and a break was provided for afternoon prayer and lunch.

Session Two – Concluding Session

After lunch, session two started as usual in the traditional manner. The National General Secretary of the Women's Organisation, Mrs Farhat Khurram, then presented the Annual report of the Women's Auxiliary of Australia. This gave everyone an overview of the work and progress of each department over the year (2008-2009).

The much awaited prize distribution ceremony was next in line. Awards were handed out to individuals, sports teams and also best branch in each department.

2008-2009 Best Nasirat of The Year Award

Group One: Roohi Sharif (NSW)

Group Two: Atifa Tariq & Raabia Sharif (NSW)

Group Three: Mahnoor Ahmad & Komal Ahmad (NSW)

2008-2009 Best Lajna Branch of The Year Award

First Place: Brisbane (QLD)

Second Place: Al Mubarika (NSW)

Third Place: Al Khadija (NSW)

The National President of Lajna Imaillah Australia, Mrs Tamseela Saleh then concluded the program with some final remarks and thanked everyone for their efforts and led a silent prayer to close the 26th Annual National Ijtema 2009.

The organizers, and participants of this Ijtema have worked extremely hard to make this a successful event, but their efforts would have been fruitless without the participation of each and every single member of Lajna Imaillah Australia.

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Jazakomullah (May Allah reward you) to everyone who worked hard to ensure that the program was a success and may Almighty Allah enable us all to increase our efforts and improve ourselves even more in the future.

Embreen Khan – Editor In Charge Ladies and Families

