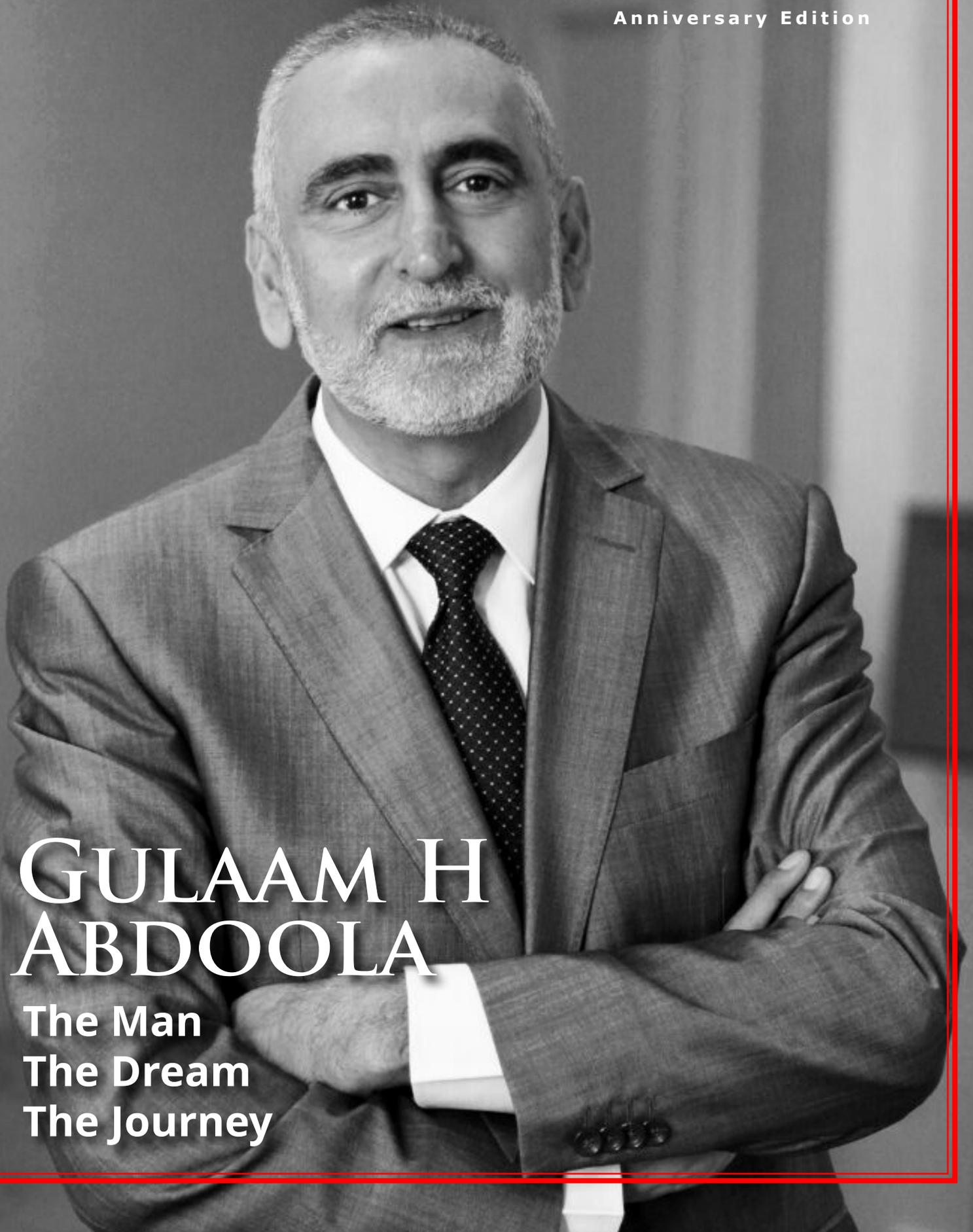


# THE MEMON

Anniversary Edition



## GULAAM H ABDOOLA

The Man  
The Dream  
The Journey

# THE MEMON



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*Editor*
- RAEES ABDOOLA**  
*Guest Editor*
- SHAZLY MAKEEN**  
*Designer*

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A year ago we embarked on a new journey to raise awareness about the World Memon Organisation. When we designated Zubairbha to head up this very important marketing committee, he was taken by surprise, however, today we stand proud and our faith in him has been totally justified.

Today, due to Zubair bha, his team (The assistant editors and designers) and the editorial committee we have a world class offering and “The Memon” makes us truly proud.

Zubair bha has put his heart and soul in this project.

Congratulations Zubair bha and the entire team for all you have done and under your guidance it will break all barriers to achieve greater heights.

**MR. SOLLY NOOR MAHOMED**  
*President WMO*

‘The Memon’ has set the benchmark for writing and design. Congratulations to Zubair and his wonderful team for completing a memorable year.

**MR. HAROON KARIM**  
*Chairman - Board of Trustees*

Zubair and his entire team deserve to be congratulated on the first anniversary of the excellent publication of The Memon - the voice of the Memon community. At long last we have a publication that has not just been an inspiration for the new and upcoming generation but is also providing an insight of the wonderful humanitarian work of WMO and the Memon community. Look forward to seeing more coverage of our work on the ground and the difference we make to people’s lives.

**SIR IQBAL SACRANIE OBE**  
*Former Deputy President of WMO*

“ It has been my absolute pleasure to work with Zubair bha on the Editorial committee for the past 12 months.

In this time, I have found his commitment to “The Memon” publication and to the cause of the organisation absolutely breath-taking!

Zubair bha, through all his efforts is highly regarded by us all at WMO and rightfully considered as one of our brightest stars!

I pray that Allah SWT reward him abundantly for all his efforts and grant him the best in this world and hereafter

**Mr. Nowsad Abdul Gani**  
WMO Deputy President

“ At the Excom Meeting held in Dubai in Jan'15 after the new Committee was elected in South Africa, 5 Sub committees were formed to decentralize work of the Office Bearers for better efficiency. I was asked by Solly Bha and Yunus Bha who would I recommend to head the Marketing and Communication Sub Committee and I had no hesitation to recommend Zubair for the Job. As the only Non Office Bearer to head a WMO Sub Committee he has proven equal to the task and has batted for the Team like a Pro

Lover of English Literature and Poetry with a very fine style of Writing and a superb imagination that any Best Selling Author would be proud of, Zubair has set the bar very high and managed to take “The Memon” to a different level since the first edition was published in April of 2015. A much sought after monthly publication amongst the Global Memon Community, The Memon has set a standard of Quality and Content, any community would aspire and be proud to have achieved.

Thank you Brother for proving me right and keeping the WMO Flag flying High. Look forward to much more to come from “The Memon” and Insha Allah one day the “The Story of “The Memon behind The Memon ”

**Mr. Shahid Sangani**  
COO WMO

“ Never shirking work and standing in good stead with the team, no matter what the circumstances were, Zubair has proved himself to be an invaluable asset of WMO. His devotion and services to the organization have been greatly appreciated. Always putting the interest of community before his own has made him an exemplary figure and I wish to see the same dedication and commitment that Zubair has for social work in today's youth so that we as a Memon organization can excel and reach new heights.

**Mr. Yunus Suleman**  
Treasurer WMO  
Chairman International Youth Wing

“ Over A year ago i had the priveledge of meeting and getting to know Zubair and his lovely wife Yasmin. It was difficult not to notice his passion for the WMO organisation and all that it stood for.

I have had the privilege of working with Zubair, on the creation of the monthly issue of the Memon, on many occasions.

The playing ground is well laid by Zubair - Shazly Makeen (designer) and I along with many others are all treated as equals. Our opinions and values are always considered and we agree to disagree.

From the content of the article to the creative side of the layouts - everyone is given the opportunity to express their views and opinions.

Many times Zubair has encouraged the new younger generation to contribute towards the success of an edition - both of my children, Noor Mahomed and Zahraa, were granted the opportunity to present their ideas towards the magazine.

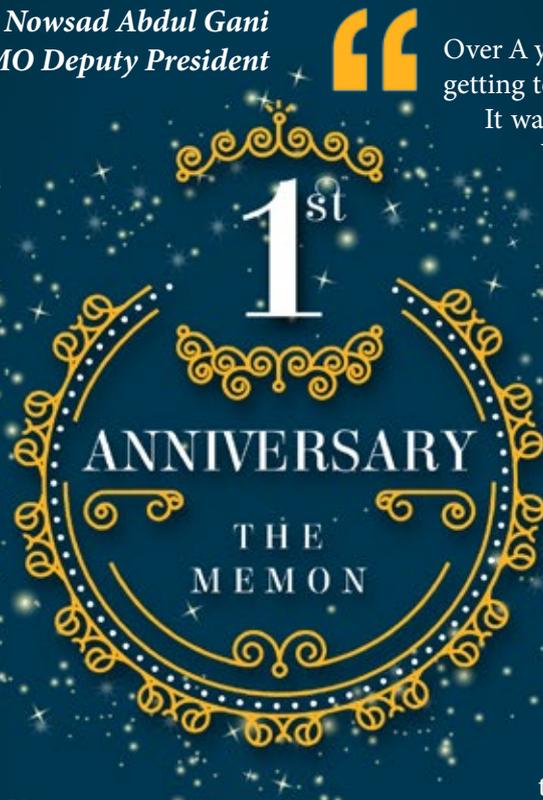
His passion and commitment has resulted in a successful magazine and the bar has been set ...

**Farzana Mahomed**  
Editor (The Memon)

“ Congratulations to the Memon on the completion of one year, to Zubair and his amazing team, the creators of this wonderful magazine.

Thank you for all the hard work

**Mr. Ashraf Sattar**  
Deputy Chairman WMO Board of Trustees



The year was 2011. A WMO delegation comprising of Mr. Abdul Satar Dada, Sir Iqbal Sacranie, Mr. Shahid Sangani, Mr. Feizul Ayob, Dr. Haroon Gupta, Mr. Sayed Mia amongst many others had arrived in Mumbai, India.

For many years I was aware that my mother had been associated with the World Memon Organisation. That night, once again she was hosting another elaborate and fancy dinner at our residence for the global rich man's club.

*As my mum went on to describe how one gentleman travelled in his own private plane and the other had been granted Knighthood by Her Majesty the Queen. She insisted I address him as 'Sir' and that I must bow before him, with one hand behind my back as it's customary in England. I rehearsed a few bows in the mirror to get it right.*



As the years went by, I have become close friends with many around the world. Feizul Ayob, Ashraf Sattar, Shahid Sangani, AC Saleem, Yusuf Kamdar, Yunus Suleman, Gulaam Abdoola, Haroon Karim, Nowsad Gani, Shoaib Ismail and of course our current WMO President, Mr. Solly Noor.

When I was presented with the opportunity to publish a newsletter for WMO, I realized that this would give me a chance to showcase to the world, the WMO family that had become an integral part of my life. I wanted to share with the world, my experiences with these distinguished men and women.

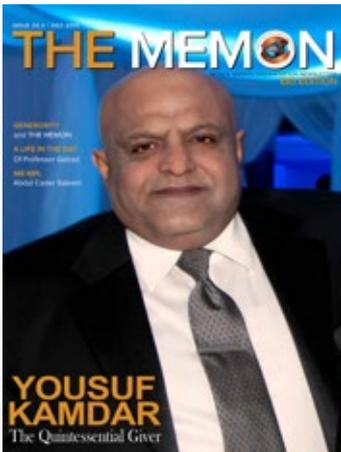
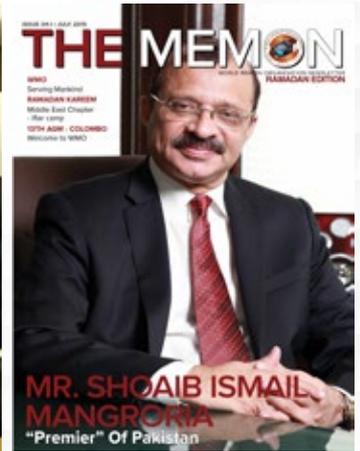
They are doyens of industry, amongst the elite and affluent in their country, each one a celebrity in their own right and appear regularly on the "most influential list" in their neck of the woods. All of them started from scratch, built empires that spanned continents and are perched on the pinnacle of success. Each man a Legend and an Inspiration.

**As the WMO delegates stepped into my home I was amazed to find a group of simple, down to earth people. When I enquired as to the whereabouts of the Knight I was directed to Sir Iqbal Sacranie. Surely this was not him. Iqbal bha was humility personified. We shared a meal that night and he completely won me over with his genial personality and warmth. Before I could even think of my courtesy bow, I received a warm hug.**

**This was my first encounter with the World Memon Organisation. Needless to say, I immediately became a member.**

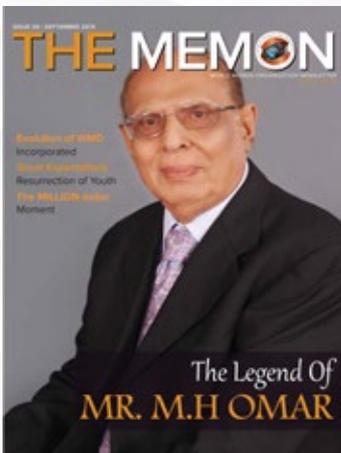
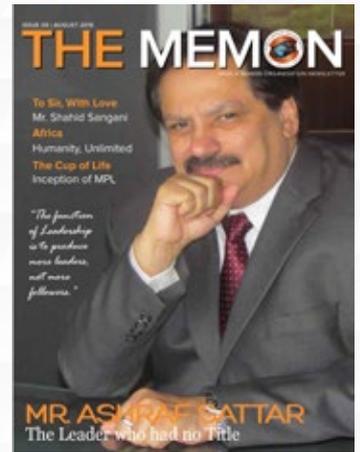
With time, I had the opportunity to once again host Mr. Sattar Dada in Mumbai - the man with the plane. Here was another distinguished gentleman, who was then President of WMO and a towering personality. He has the uncanny ability to make you feel completely at ease in his awe-inspiring presence.

But what sets them apart is their Humility. Their ability to embrace all and make everyone feel equally comfortable in their esteemed company despite the obvious disparity. Their Humanitarian endeavours, a life spent in serving Mankind and their generosity towards pertinent causes around the world. Their complete and absolute faith in the Almighty. The passion to make a difference in the lives of others that they have carefully instilled in their children so that they carry on with their legacy of philanthropy. More importantly, the profound respect for their elders, parents and women in their lives. Acknowledgement of their steadfast support and being indebted to them for the stellar role they played in their journey to success.

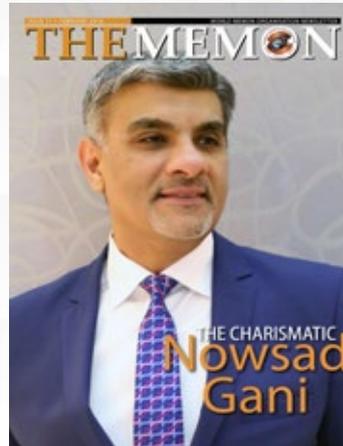
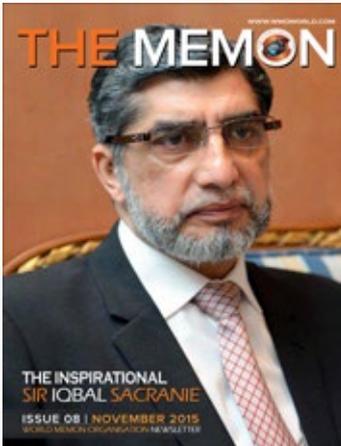
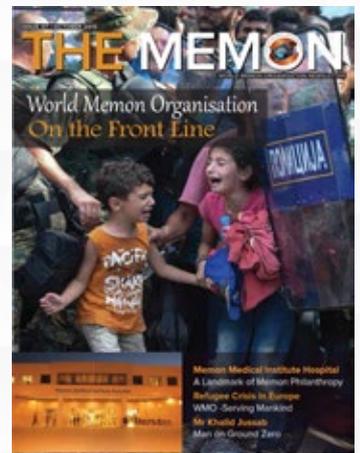


**I couldn't have asked for better role models that can inspire a generation.**

*Before dinner had ended that night in 2011 at my residence in Mumbai, the WMO delegation prepared to perform Salaah. We stood next to each other - the Knight, the man with a plane, myself, the boys who did our household chores and we all bowed down humbly before the Almighty. That's Islam, that's WMO and that's the lesson which we learn from these great and powerful men - their humble submission to Allah Swt with a firm belief that all Mankind is equal in the eyes of Our Creator and only a life spent in service to the Almighty and Humanity is a life worth living.*



**Thus began the Saga of The Momin -The Memon.**



# Another Year **IN THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY** OVER A DECADE OF SERVING MANKIND



## SYRIA

The World Memon Organisation expanded their humanitarian endeavours to Syria and made significant contributions towards the Refugee Crisis in Europe. Mr. Khalid Jussab and his team from the Europe Chapter personally visited and delivered aid at refugee camps along the Syrian borders, in Croatia, Macedonia and France.

## SOUTH AFRICA

WMO stood up against Xenophobia in South Africa and helped the victims of this grave injustice by collaborating with other humanitarian organisations on the ground. Meaningful contributions were also made towards Operation Hydrate, an initiative to provide water and bring some relief to the regions, scorched by the drought in South Africa.

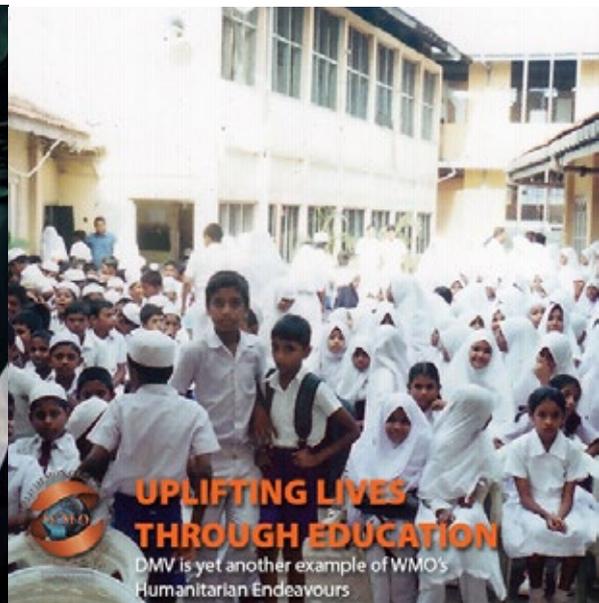


## MALAWI

The year 2015 started on a disastrous note with devastating floods ravaging southern Malawi in Central Africa. Hundreds lost their lives, thousands lost their homes and livelihood. The World Memon Organisation immediately sprung into action.

Monetary contributions along with aid in the form of food packets, plastic sheets, blankets etc were provided to all flood victims, irrespective of religion, colour or creed.

Mr Haroon Sacranie, prominent WMO Trustee of Malawi, Chairman of Lilongwe Memon Association conducted relief work by marching his troops into areas afflicted by the floods. The youngsters braved the hardships and played a pivotal role in delivering food, relief material and setting up shelters for the displaced.



**INDIA • PAKISTAN • SRI LANKA**

The rehabilitation of the less fortunate members of our Community continued with Housing Projects in Ahmedabad and Mumbai in India. Important contributions were also made towards Earthquake Relief in Pakistan. The education of underprivileged children of Pakistan was an area of prime focus and a major portion of the funds were diverted towards the cause. A noteworthy donation was made towards the construction of the new wing of Dharussalaam Maha Vidyalaya(College) in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The foundation stone laying ceremony was graced by his Excellency, the President of Sri Lanka, Mr. Maithripala Sirisena.



**CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME.** And what better way for WMO to endorse the causes than the Executive firmly standing behind and contributing towards each one of them.

With the Holy month of Ramadan upon us, the Executive Committee of the World Memon Organisation made their Zakat commitments towards its Humanitarian endeavours across the globe.

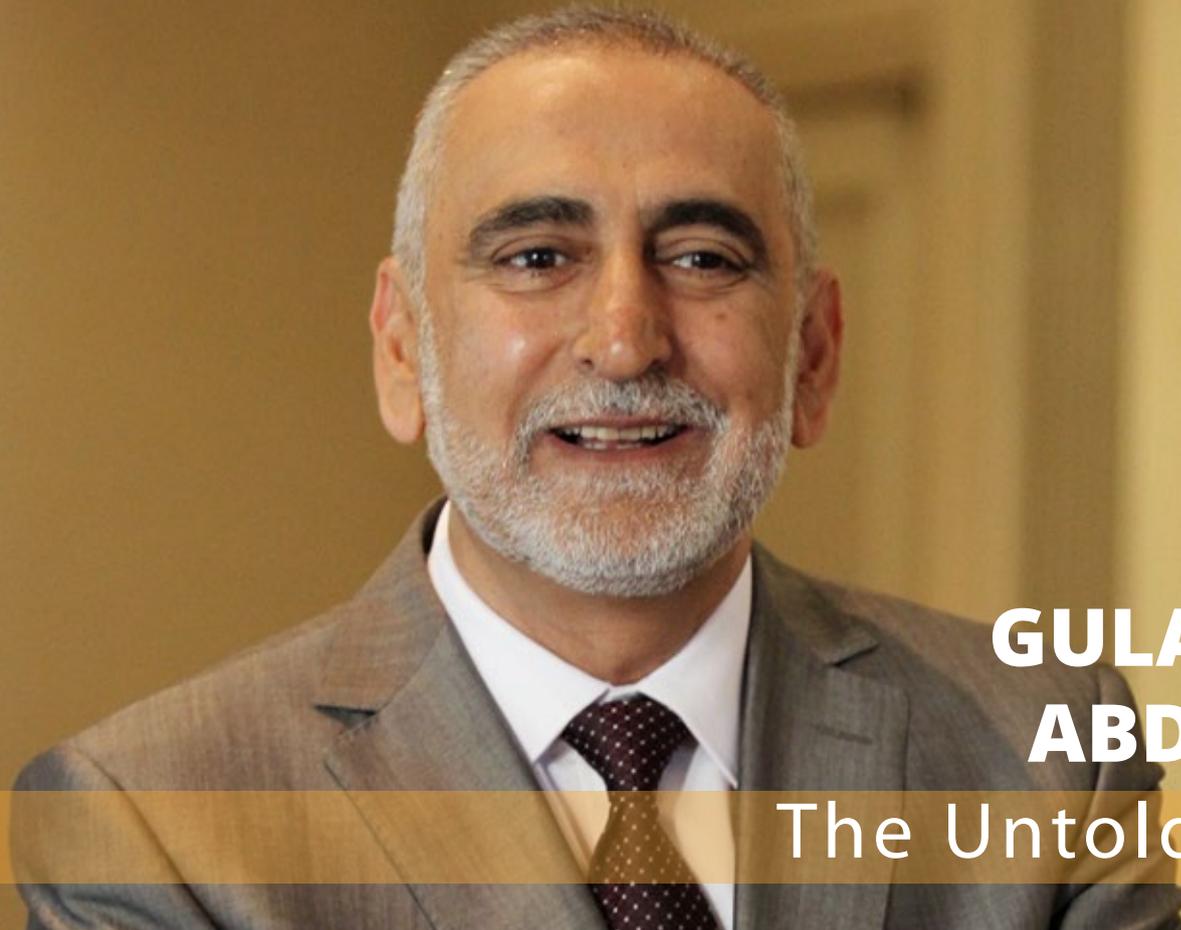
All the contributions were made within a period of 24 hrs and the collection stands at an impressive USD 1.25 MILLION. We expect the world to follow and hope to collect much more in the coming months.

We ask for your invaluable donations after we have committed ourselves to each of these pertinent causes. Every dollar is precious. You have to keep in mind that a mere USD 30 can feed a family of 5 for a week in war torn Syria. So even the smallest donations count and matter.

Please come forward and contribute towards the worthy causes that the World Memon Organisation supports around the year and across the globe.

**Do your bit to Serve Mankind.**





# GULAAM H ABDOOLA

## The Untold Story

*Tall, suave, successful, charming are some of the adjectives that would best describe Mr. Gulaam Hussain Abdoola. Add to that, a calm demeanour, an impeccable sense of style, panache and you have a gentleman who is grace personified.*

The business tycoon from Botswana with interests in properties, supermarkets, restaurants, diamonds, petrol stations, to name just a few, has managed a list of impressive designations in his enviable portfolio over the years.

- Managing Director and Founder member of Turnstar Holdings - the largest properties' company listed on the Botswana Stock Exchange.
- Managing Director and founder of GH Group.
- Non-executive Deputy chairman of the McCarthy Group.
- Director and Chairman of Stanbic Bank Botswana, a subsidiary of Standard Bank South Africa.

But Gulaam Abdoola prefers the title of a caring son, doting father and loving husband. The fifty two year old, father of four epitomises the perfect Family Man. The devout Muslim talks about submitting himself to the Will of the Almighty, the growing up years, being mama's boy, the vacuum in his life after the loss of his parents and the love for his wife and children. He elaborates on what success really means to him, his priorities in life and the moments that changed his life forever.

We present to you a few excerpts from his incredible life and as this fascinating story unfolds you will realise that it is only in adventure that some people succeed in knowing themselves - in finding themselves and ***the biggest adventure you can ever take, is to live the life of your dreams.***

### EARLY LIFE

Born in Johannesburg, South Africa in 1963 - my earliest memories are my fondest ones.

I remember a home filled with the laughter of children, mother's love and abundant happiness. We were altogether, five siblings, my 4 elder sisters and me, living together with our parents in our modest home. It was my mum's pride and joy and she took excellent care of the house. It had 2 bedrooms, my parents occupied one while my four sisters and I shared the other. There was a kitchen, a lounge, the only bathroom and toilet were outside in the yard.

It's simplicity never mattered as my parents ensured that, we as a family had enough love and happiness. ***The love of a family is one of life's greatest blessings and I felt truly blessed.***



BELOVED PARENTS IN THEIR YOUNGER DAYS

### Dad

My Father had a small retail clothing store in downtown Johannesburg. He was a very hardworking man and even though the times were tough and he could barely manage to cover the expenses of our home, we always remember being comfortable and had no complaints. My Father suffered from a debilitating disorder of the eyes called retinitis pigmentosa. Because of his impaired vision, he couldn't drive hence we never owned a car.

### Mum

My mother was the anchor of the family. She had mastered the fine art of multi tasking - from being an exceptional homemaker to taking care of all of our family needs - over and above that, she would weave woollen hats on a hand loom every night to sell to certain shop keepers.

### The Indelible Mark

I distinctly remember when I was still studying in Primary School, I would accompany my mum to deliver the hats. We lived in an era of apartheid at that time. In order to make the deliveries, we ourselves carried those heavy parcels and had to change 2 buses along the way. Even though the buses were empty, all "non-whites" (the category which Indians fell under) were confined to the two back rows on the upper deck.

I remember these events because of a specific incident that is etched in my heart and mind. The bus drivers wouldn't stop the bus for non-whites to get off but just slow it down and expect us to jump off. It was a moment such as that, when the driver refused to stop

for an elderly lady and her young child - my mum tried to get off the moving bus, lost her balance and had a terrible fall.

On weekends My Mum would prepare fried peanuts in rolled paper cones, which my sisters would go out and sell in one of the busy streets of the neighbourhood.

Every form of additional income assisted in maintaining our household expenses and my mum fulfilled that responsibility with amazing strength and courage

### The Movie Business

There was an elderly neighbour on our street who sold fruits and vegetables. On weekends my friends and I would visit him, pick up one box of tomatoes at a time and go out on the streets to try and sell them. After completing a sale, we'd run back to hand over the



ME AND MY BEST FRIEND, ARVIND

money to him and collect more boxes. He tipped us for every box we sold. We repeated this till we'd have enough, for all of us to go and see a movie together at night.

### Community

When we think about it today, it seems like a lot of hard work, but at that time we didn't mind it at all - we were a part of a community where everyone lived the same way, under the same circumstances. Although times were sometimes difficult and the work was hard, we had fun. We worked together with our friends and neighbours and we were happy.

We lived in a great neighbourhood, within a community that always looked out for each other irrespective of religion, caste or creed. It was a melting pot for all communities, we all stood up for one another and everyone was taken care of.

## Our First Car

There was a kind neighbour who always took out time for me and started teaching me to drive at the tender age of 10. He advised me that once I became a skilled driver, I could teach my mum, and I did. After she got her license, my Dad saved enough over a few years and we bought our first car, a Ford Anglia, for 200 rands. I always sat next to mum when she drove because she lacked confidence early on. As a family we had our own transport for the very first time. It was our big moment.



RALLY CAR RACING DURING THE LATER YEARS IN BOTSWANA.

## High School

When I reached high school, the ones near our home were reserved for whites only. We had to travel 30km every morning by bus to attend classes in Lenasia, and return the same distance in the afternoon.

My friends and I often got the cane for insubordination. In standard 8, I bunked a lot – we decided to go fishing most days instead of school. If the bus driver didn't know his way to Lenasia we'd direct him to small towns outside of Johannesburg and make a field trip out of it. Although I had a mischievous streak in me, I was a bright student and despite the shenanigans, I didn't fail any of my classes.

## Memories Demolished

During that time, the Government decided that Frededorp, the suburb we lived in, due to its proximity to the city centre, would be an ideal location for white pensioners. They started evicting people from their homes and the community was forced to move out to Lenasia. We got a meager compensation and our homes were flattened out with bulldozers.

## Blessings in a Tin Box

My Dad used to take out little by little, small amounts of money every day and put it aside into a tin – he said he was trying to save up for my sisters' weddings. He always believed that from that tiny tin box, Allah Swt would give so much barakah that he would manage to get all 4, of my sisters married. And he did!

Shukr Alhamdulillah

## School's Out

In 1978 my Dad suffered his third heart attack. It was pretty clear from that point onwards that he needed to look after his health and take rest. Someone had to bring food to the table so I decided to leave school and run the shop. By then our savings has vanished and we needed our monthly sustenance to sustain ourselves. My sisters were all married and it was just me and my parents. After standing in the shop for a few quiet months, I asked myself if this is was what I wanted to do. I wasn't happy. I spoke to my parents about selling the shop and trying my hand at something else. They were very supportive.

## Botswana

My eldest sister Sherbanu was married and living in Botswana. I sold the shop and bought a mini van. I used to buy clothing from wholesalers in Johannesburg, load the bakkie and drive to Botswana every week. I would go to all the small towns and villages, selling goods from my van to the local shopkeepers, then return home to re-stock and drive down to Botswana again, every week for two years. At that point in time I was sixteen years old and not yet eligible for a drivers license. After 2 years I relocated to Botswana and entered into a partnership with my brother-in-law to open a spares shop, a collaboration that lasted six years.

## A Dream is Born

In 1986, the year I got married, I took a loan from a bank and bought a small building, starting a general spare parts business called Auto City. I would define this as the start and foundation stone of our business expansion. It was through this venture that I funded the construction and development of my first small shopping centre, a passion that has grown to fuel the GH Group of companies.

## An Empire is Created

The GH Group is a family owned business – My self, my wife, and now my children who have joined us after completing their studies.



WITH THE TURNSTAR NON-EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The group employs approximately 500 people, with property interests in Botswana and other countries, as well as supermarkets, restaurants, petrol stations, parts and tyre fitment centres.

Recently we have also ventured into the diamond industry, and are licensed dealers of rough and polished stones.

In 2002 the group opened the largest shopping centre in Botswana, and I decided to form a separate listed company called Turnstar Holdings, through which we would raise capital for all major future projects. Turnstar Holdings is now the largest property company listed on the Botswana Stock Exchange.

### Back to School

Other business positions I have held during my career include serving as non-executive deputy chairman of the McCarthy Group – a large South African listed organization that had 650 multi brand stores and employs 18,000 people. I was the deputy chairman of all the African businesses outside South Africa, including Botswana. The opportunity of being involved in such a large corporate group gave me immense insight into running big businesses and growth management.

I also served as a director of Stanbic Bank Botswana, a subsidiary of Standard Bank South Africa, for 10 years. Of which I was chairman of the bank for five. This added a lot of value to my understanding of the banking world, finance, it's structuring, dealing with regulators and a deep insight of the banking industry.

### A Seat at the President's Table

I had the honour to serve on the 'Round Table' of advisors of then-President of Tanzania, Benjamin Mkapa. The president had formed a team of 10 distinguished individuals from across the globe including representatives from the World Bank, Microsoft US and other top industries of the World. I was privileged to be a part of this elite group.

### Priorities of Life

Business is business and I don't wish to make this the focus of my life. I always try to maintain a balance – the most important

being my deen, my family, and then my career and social responsibilities. All I have achieved is only through the blessings and mercy of the Almighty.

### Family

My wife Gorie and I have 4 children - my daughter Tasneem is the eldest and then my three sons - Raees, Aqeel and Moosa.

I have been fortunate that my parents lived with me all their lives and I had the opportunity to take care of them to the best of my abilities. My dad passed away in 1994 at the age of 64, and my Mum passed away peacefully, 2 years ago at the ripe age of 87.

We are an extremely close family and love being together, whether at home or on our travels. I am blessed and thankful to my wife Gorie for always supporting me through thick and thin, for running our household, bringing up our children, looking after my parents and accompanying me on this journey filled with highs and lows.

### Humanitarian Endeavours

Five years ago I was approached by the Botswana government



THE WORLD MEMON ORGANISATION ROADSHOW TO MALAWI, WITH MY DEAR, DEPARTED FRIENDS, THE LATE MR. RAZAK MOTI AND THE LATE MR. AUSMAN TAYOB, BOTH STALWARTS OF WMO.

and appointed as chairperson of the Masiela Trust Fund. It is a government organization that was set up during the Aids crisis in Botswana to protect children's rights, many of whom were orphaned by the epidemic. Since then the organization has grown and has taken up many other causes which are affecting the country.

In relation to local jamaat activities, I served as chairman of the Gaborone Muslim Jamaat for nine years and am currently chairman of Al-Nur Muslim School. Founded from humble beginnings, a small classroom in the Mosque yard has now grown into one of the largest schools in Gaborone, currently with over a 1000 students. I continue to serve Humanity across the globe under the banner of the World Memon Organisation.

Philanthropy and charity are a very big part of my life. At the same time, it is very private. We are involved in funding various Masjids, Madressahs, scholarships and numerous other charities. Without specifying, I do this purely for the purpose of helping Humanity and for the pleasure of the Almighty – may He accept our humble endeavours.



MY FAMILY

# The Q&A

## GULAAM H. ABDOOLA

### What are your greatest strengths?

I would say my appetite for risk - it's my strength and also my weakness.

### What would be your advice to young entrepreneurs who are just venturing into the business world?

My genuine advice - I think my success came from the fact that I never had a formal higher education. What I sadly observe in today's generation of university graduates is that far too much time is spent in analysis and calculation. They are not willing to take the risks. They should start believing in themselves and follow their dreams. My advice would be - dream, and never stop dreaming.

### How would you define Success?

On many an occasion, people approach you, enquiring about your success. Unfortunately, the world we live in today, generally equates success to wealth, and wealth to success. I have always, in my heart, regarded myself to be



*“My appetite for risk - it's my strength and also my weakness”*

highly successful and truly blessed. In my mind, my measure of success are the countless blessings that the Almighty has bestowed upon me over the years, having a wonderful family and good children, having fulfilled my duties as a son, husband and father by taking care of my parents and providing the best for my family. Lastly, understanding the role of

us as human beings in the short time that we have on this earth; that we can only achieve ultimate success if we are successful in the hereafter.

### Why did you choose this profession?

When I started, it wasn't a matter of choice. It was about doing something that would work and finding a foothold in the market. The construction and de-

*“We can only achieve ultimate success if we are successful in the hereafter.”*

velopment side of the business is something I have always had a passion for because I love designing and creating buildings.

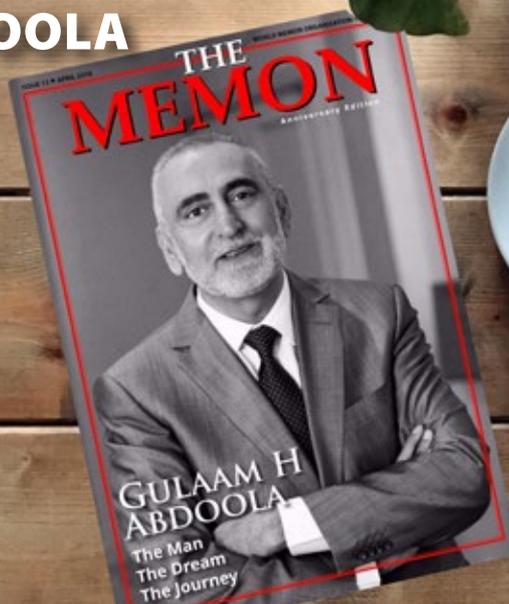
### What was one of your most defining moments in life?

The life altering moment, where I felt I really grew up, was when I lost my father. Due to his poor eyesight he was rather dependant on me and after he was gone, his absence was truly felt. Other defining moments were my marriage and when each of my kids was born. Neither is less or more important than the other. These moments by far, are the most significant ones in my life.

*“My advice would be - dream, and never stop dreaming.”*

# The Q&A

**GULAAM H. ABDOOLA**



**What are some of your life philosophies that you would share with others?**

To always seek contentment of the heart, never hold grudges or ill feelings towards others and to patch relationships even if you have to bend backwards.

**What are some of the personal values that are very important to you?**

Honesty, in every aspect of your life.

Family.

Living your life on the righteous path, forever seeking the blessings of the Almighty.

**What would be your advice to newly weds to enjoy a long and happy married life?**

I would encourage understanding and acceptance of the fact that each one of us is different. Couples will have different personalities, different likes and dislikes. Concentrate and cherish what is good in your partner, and overlook the minor differences between yourselves.

**What are some of the things you enjoy doing in your leisure time?**

Being with friends, sitting in a coffee shop.

**What age do you feel right now and why?**

I am 52 years old. I have and will enjoy all the stages of life, including aging. I don't want to feel older or younger. I feel just fine.

**When all is said and done, what do you want to be remembered for? Explain what you are doing now to create a legacy worthy of remembering.**

I'm not doing anything to create legacies. Your life, if lived properly, will leave a legacy of it's own.

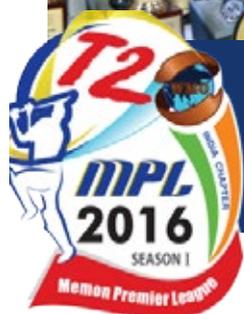
**If you could go back in time and do things over again, what would you change?**

The good days and the difficult days are both equally cherished by me because that was my learning curve....my education.

***“Your life, if lived properly, will leave a legacy of it's own”***



TEAM CAPTAINS WITH THE TROPHIES



# THE MEMON PREMIER LEAGUE - INDIA

“ Some people want it to happen, Some wish it would happen, But only a few can make it happen.

It took one man to dream it and a remarkable team which believed in it. Rest was their steely resolve, incredible fortitude and stout hearts which got the job done. This is the story of the inception of the inaugural Memon Premier League - India. With quiet confidence, unmatched determination and overcoming all obstacles in their path, Mr. Mateen Ali Mohammed Mojawala and his dedicated team mates made sure that this spectacular sporting event was held on an epic scale. A four day cricket bonanza, thrilling matches, hundreds of frenzied fans, 6 teams and one worthy Champion.

The idea was conceived by Mateen after attending the WMO International Memon Premier League in Srilanka. The dream was to follow in the footsteps of his idol Mr. AC Saleem - the visionary who conceptualized the MPL. A tough task to follow but the team of young and enthusiastic lads put in their hearts and souls to transform this dream into a reality.

The tournament began with the grand opening ceremony. Mr. Hamid Nathani, Vice President of WMO – India Chapter, along with other WMO members and the Youth Wing unveiled the majestic trophy in the presence of the teams, their players, the sponsors and a large gathering of the top brass Memons of Mumbai.

The inaugural MPL – India was a colossal success. Well known business magnates from across India sponsored the event. Mr. Ehsan Gadawala, Mr. Haseen Aghadi, Mr. Khurram Abbajumma, Mr. Shabbir Patca, Mr. Hashim Razzak, Mr. Ilyas Haji Edrees, Mr. Ghulam Hussain, Mr. Razzak Sopariwala, Mr. Mansur Mehta, Dr. Mohi Makani, Mr Imran Iqbal Memon to name a few.

The grounds were excellent, the facilities of international standards, the cricketing skills were captivating and the hospitality was exceptional. A gala dinner was hosted for the players by Mr. Aamir Chandiwala and Mr. Ramiz Darvesh at the exquisite 'Kasbah Grand'. A special mention of Jaffer Bhai's Delhi Darbar Group for the outstanding catering through out the tournament.

For all the wonderful memories, the hardships faced, the long hours endured, the sweat and guts shown in pulling off an extraordinary phenomenon like the MPL, WMO-India Chapter deserves all the glory.



MR. HAMID NATHANI (VP INDIA CHAPTER) HANDING OVER THE WINNERS TROPHY TO MUMBAI LIONS



SPONSORS, WMO MEMBERS AND PLAYERS OF MPL-INDIA

# Cutting Edge Cricket

## RAMIZ DARVESH **A STAR IS BORN**

With 214 runs in 4 innings at an average of 107, Ramiz Darvesh was one of the stars of MPL – India. He bagged 3 Man of the Match Awards. He was also the highest run scorer of the tournament and scored the fastest 50 of the tournament in the finals against Ahmedabad Challengers off just 28 balls. Apart from his batting performance, he also picked up 4 wickets in the 7 overs that he bowled. He was given the Man of the Series Award for his consistent all round performance throughout the tournament.



## ZAID KAPADIA (HAJI) **MASTER BLASTER**

There was an awesome display of power hitting by Zaid Kapadia from Navsari, in the preliminary match between his team, Mumbai Warriors against Ahmedabad Challengers. He scored a blistering 79 runs off 54 balls with 5 huge sixes. However, Ahmedabad Challengers kept picking wickets from the other end and eventually won the match comfortably by 6 wickets.



## ATIF ATTARWALA **THE WALL**

The most high profile all rounder of the MPL, Atif Attarwala, was one of the key components of the Champion 'Mumbai Lions' Team. Having represented Mumbai in the under-23 state level tournament, and also in the Ranji Trophy probables for Mumbai, he scored 80 runs in 3 innings, being dismissed just once. Also picked up 4 wickets in 15 overs in the tournament, with an economy of less than 5 runs.



## FAIZAN MEMON **MAN OF THE MOMENT**

In the crucial semi finals against Surat Royals, Faizan Memon from the city of Raipur, playing for Ahmedabad Challengers displayed a splendid all round performance. Walking in to bat when the team was struggling at 37/3 in 6 overs, Faizan scored a whirlwind 62 runs in 43 balls to take Ahmedabad Challengers to a respectable total of 149. He also picked up 2 crucial wickets in 3 overs giving away just 16 runs. A performance that cemented his team's place in the Finals and bagged him the Man of the Match Award.



## MUMBAI LIONS **THE TEAM TO BEAT**

A Team of 11 individuals with one dream "To be the Champions of Memon Premier League – India". They not only won the tournament, but also bagged all the major awards.

Next Stop - Dubai.

Next goal.

"Champions of MPL-International"



## EMPOWERING THE YOUTH OF MIDDLE EAST

Dubai Youth Conference, held for the very first time in Middle East Chapter was a successful event. Attended by a total of 28 individuals young and old, the NYC promises to bring together a change in WMO Middle East Chapter.

### *Good habits formed at youth make all the difference - Aristotle*

The Dubai Youth Conference featured four topics for the group discussions. Education, Business 2 Business, Sports & Women Empowerment. All groups were given support by one mentor (senior member of the BOM Middle East Chapter). All groups then presented their ideas to the panel where the audience (other three groups) were to challenge their ideas and plans to make it competitive and devise practical ideas rather than vague or open ended ideas.



The target for the Dubai Youth Conference apart from the knowledge exchange and networking was to inform the youth what World Memon Organisation stands for. The real face of WMO being an organisation serving mankind was put out for the youth to see and understand that beyond the entertaining events, the organisation does everything they can to serve anyone, anywhere and anytime. The NYC resulted in Middle East Youth Wing recruiting 5 new members.

The purpose behind The Power of Punch was to promote team work rather than individual sparks. NYC recruiting 5 members coincidentally packed a punch for Women Empowerment.

Also announced within the new team was the future events lined up for the Middle East Chapter, they are:

1. Men's Bowling Championship - Season 4
2. Women's Bowling Championship - Season 2
3. Squash Open Tournament - Season 2
4. Md Ghazi Vahedna Sports Festival - Season 4
5. Women Entrepreneurship 2016



### **EDUCATION TEAM**

*MENTOR: MR HAROON KARIM*

The education team lead by Abdul Basit proposed an idea of having memon run schools with a much more reasonable rate as compared to the industry standard in Dubai. They also emphasized on upgrading the mindset of the parents who cut down on educational expenses of the children as a result of being in recession.

### **BUSINESS 2 BUSINESS TEAM**

*MENTOR: MR YUSUF KAMDAR*

Lead by Omer Khanani, the team proposed an idea of having memon directory in the UAE. The panel agreed to the team of B2B to work closely with the Ladies Wing of Middle East Chapter as a similar idea has already been initiated by the women. However, the team suggested marketing the directory to the Youth where they can promote a business idea to a group of buyer who would be interested in investing on the idea. Hence, empowering youth.

### **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT TEAM**

*MENTOR: MRS FAZILA YUSUF KAMDAR*

Lead by Afifa Ali, the team proposed several ideas as they would run parallel to each other. However, the key point emphasized by the group was the need of bringing in equality and stop gender discrimination from major aspects of cultural values. The group proposed to have an Women Entrepreneurship (WE) to motivate the ladies and girls living in UAE to portray their talent and skills to a wider range of audience.

### **SPORTS TEAM**

*MENTORS: MR FAROOK KASSIM & SALMAAN HUSSAIN*

After two mega events in Srilanka in a space of 3 years, the sports division is surely an active part of WMO in general. The sports team lead by Saddiq Mohd proposed an idea of building a commercialised centre that could feature Sports arenas, banquet halls, meeting rooms, etc. The idea was well received because Dubai is an expensive market and having our own memon run and owned community centre would not only gather the youth and the old, it would also generate revenue for World Memon Organisation as we could lease it out to general audience as well.

Mr Haroon Karim supported the idea and acknowledged the need for a community centre. He also mentioned MAUK community centre in UK and informed the success story of the establishment since 2001.

# دبي

## HERITAGE VILLAGE TOUR



The Middle East Chapter of the World Memon Organisation (WMOME) in association with Dubai Culture & Arts Authority recently organised a cultural tour around the Heritage Village in Dubai. The initiative is aimed at encouraging its members to experience the Emirati tradition, culture and gain a deeper understanding of the civilisation.

***"Many of us, expatriates, who have lived here for decades, are still ignorant of the intricacies of local culture. Amidst our busy lives and hectic schedules, it is important to get more insight of the origins of local civilization and culture."*** said Maimoona Hassan Darvesh, Regional Management Committee Member, World Memon Organisation Middle East.

The visiting guests and dignitaries were taken around the village giving a glimpse of how people lived during the previous era. The event also included folklore performances, traditional food live cooking and different kinds of handicraft demonstration.

***"A visit to Dubai Heritage Village gives a unique opportunity to understand and experience the many façades and details of the traditional life of the Emiratis. It would be good if more local organisation and communities encourage such visits to gain a deeper knowledge of the society we live in."*** added Darvesh.



The event was specially organised by the Ladies wing of the organisation and attended by dignitaries from various consulates and embassies.

## QURAN COMPETITION

The Annual MD Ghazi Vahedna Quran Competition took place on 5th of March 2016 at the PAD auditorium. The Quran Competition is one of the most important event in the calendar year for the Youth Wing and targets mainly the kids of the memon community.

The competition was categorised into three age groups and consisted of two rounds. Surahs were assigned beforehand for them to prepare. The panel of judges comprised of three Maulanas from Auqaf, who judged the evening and decided on a total of nine winners across three groups.

A total of 60 kids took part in the second edition of the competition and it featured few of the most beautiful voices reciting Quran. The event was yet another feather in Youth Wing's kitty.



## TIME MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP



World Memon Organisation signed a scholarship program with Skyline University of Sharjah in early 2015 and thus WMO Middle East Chapter had an opportunity to conduct a workshop on Time Management in partnership with Skyline University of Sharjah at their premises. Over 25 participants attended the workshop with Senior Management members Mr Ahmed Shaikhani & Mr Farook Kassim gracing the event.



# FAZILA AK ISMAIL

## *Defining Moments*

Fazila AK Ismail is an extraordinary lady. She epitomises the complete woman. A caring daughter, loving wife, doting mother, entrepreneur, leader, humanitarian..the list goes on. As we read about her incredible life, we can only stand up and applaud her stellar achievements in the business arena and the unparalleled work she has done for humanitarian causes across the globe under the WMO banner as well as Jama'atun Nisa. Add to that, being the driving force behind her family.

Fazila is the President of WMO International Womens' Wing, Founder of Jama'atun Nisa and Director of of AKI Group of Companies. Here are a few excerpts from her life as told to us by the lady, herself.

*An Italian Poet once said:*

***“We do not remember days, we remember defining moments...”***

### **MY MOTHER**

I remember when I was a little girl, coming home from school and frequently finding ladies of the community visiting my beloved mother who was one of the few people at that time in our community who could read and write Gujarati. It was a daily occurrence, ladies queuing up and waiting for an audience with my mother, each one holding a sealed blue envelope. These were letters which they had received from their families and relatives in Pakistan and India. My mother patiently took out the time to sit with each one of them, read their individual letters and listened attentively to their replies. She even went the extra mile to respond immediately, writing on their behalf and taking it upon herself to arrange for the posting of their letters.

Many a times these letters brought news of desperate situations and a need for financial assistance for their families back home. They always looked up to my mother for help and she didn't disappoint.

My beloved mother was not well-versed in English. Attending an English Medium School and a mother who could not read your English report was one of the biggest challenges I faced as a scholar. I was a fairly bright student and always waiting for recognition from my mum as she was the one person who ensured that I studied diligently, during my school days. I recall during the exams, she would constantly check up on me, stay up all night, serving me hot cups of coffee to get me through those nerve wracking times.





### THE ZEN MASTER

I married at an early age to the legendary Karate Instructor AK Ismail, who at that time owned several karate schools throughout Kwazulu Natal. AK was well known and very popular whereas I was quiet and reserved. He was extremely social, always on the guest list of numerous events. With him, by my side I got exposed to public life and it helped me, adjust and prepare for a new phase in my life. He is the one person who constantly supported me through everything and gave me the opportunity to grow into who I am today. In my heart I always knew that AK and myself had the same vision for success and we made a great team always building on our future.

After marriage, I immediately got involved in the day to day running of the karate school. I always looked forward to challenges and experiences, to keep redefining myself. It is then that I decided to study Public Relations & Marketing. I also enrolled for the "Dale Carnegie Course" and it prepared me for my new role as the Co-administrator in AK's Karate Organization.

I began assisting AK and his team in the co-ordination of all the karate tournaments throughout the continent of Africa. This included; entries, itineraries and participation of fighters, weekend training camps for school children and much more. At this point, a business opportunity arose in the building and hardware industry, AK committed himself and I once again wholeheartedly continued to support him.

### THE WORKING MOM

AK's priority never changed when we went into this new business venture because his passion for Karate found him even more eager to pursue it, whereby going on training trips to Japan, sometimes leaving me alone to run the business. As a child, I always assisted with my dad's business after school, that gave me the experience and the confidence to singlehandedly manage the day to day working of the company, whilst AK was away.

Being a perfectionist by nature I now started concentrating on educating myself in the field of business. I joined the "Professional & Business Womens Club" and attended as many seminars as possible, which greatly assisted me in learning how to manage a business more efficiently.

Alhumdulillah, I was always blessed with a good support system from my mother and sister in laws, taking care of the kids after school till I returned late from work.

**A MOTHER'S HEART**

Another defining moment in my life, which completely changed my way of thinking was when my last child was born. One day after nursing him and putting him to sleep, I picked up the daily paper and saw a disturbing photograph of a severely malnourished child starving to death in Somalia. I looked across at my new born baby who was well fed, loved and taken care of. That moment made me realise that I needed to contribute something positive to alleviate the suffering of the lesser privileged. I discussed my vision with AK, expressing my desire to make a difference and with AK's full support there was no looking back.

Jama'atun Nisaa was founded and one can write a book on the accomplishments of the Memon Women of South Africa who tirelessly work, till this day to make a difference in the lives of others. One day, soon their story will be told...

**SERVING HUMANITY**

A major accident forced me to remain bedridden for a year. It gave me a lot of time to reflect and I became more determined to pursue the goals that made me happy rather than what was expected of me.

My priority to pursue humanitarian endeavours over business commitments has been finally accepted by my family, knowing that this is what gives me ultimate happiness. More importantly, my family felt I rightfully deserved it.

I continue to sit in all the board meetings and participate in all major business decisions taken by AK and my family. However, my focus has changed and with the complete support of my loved ones I can now fulfil my greatest passion to serve my community and humanity.

**A Letter of Encouragement to Mrs. Fazila AK Ismail from the late President, Nelson Mandela.**



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17th NOVEMBER 1995

The President  
Fazila A.K. Ismail  
Jama'atun Nisa - Natal Women's League  
101 Harbottle Road  
Overport.

Dear Fazila

I am extremely disappointed that I will not be able to attend your dinner due to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting and the official visit to New Zealand immediately after the summit.

I am however delighted at the honour bestowed on me by the invitation to share with you an occasion dedicated to the strengthening of the cause of women.

I am proud that the transformation of our country into a full blown democracy has reached such a critical point. The local government elections were a resounding success. The level of participation and the results were an affirmation of the commitment of the South African people to surge ahead in the improvement of their lives. The province of KwaZulu - Natal and the Cape Town Metropolitan Area are scheduled to hold their elections by the end of March 1996. The government is making the necessary preparations for the elections to go ahead as planned.

The challenge facing us is to take this transformation to a higher plane. Let us create jobs for our people, let us build houses, let us fight crime, let us rebuild our communities. Everyone has a role to play. The government cannot achieve these goals without the active participation of the people. Let us reinforce the national drive to reconciliation.

I wish to make use of this opportunity to make a special appeal to you and your members to make the contribution which I know you are capable of. I urge you to use your influence and support the initiatives of the government and other participants in the efforts to bring an end to the violence in this province. The province of KwaZulu - Natal is slowly bleeding itself to death. The situation calls for leaders of courage to rise and stop this disaster. Human dignity and respect for human life is being eroded. Let us all work for peace.

May your dinner serve as a tribute to the remarkable contribution that South African Women are making in the transformation of the country. The establishment of government, the appointment of Ministers and the writing of our National Constitution, have seen the elevation of our women into a position hitherto unknown in the country and unparalleled in most modern democracies. This is a tradition we are determined to enrich, for the good of our country and future generations and as a tribute to our forebears who laid the foundations for the democracy of which we are now so proud.

May your function be a resounding success.

NELSON MANDELA



*Fazila AK Ismail has become synonymous with caring, kindness and compassion to projects needing assistance. She has the capacity and ability to lead community projects and to galvanize others into action. The compassion shown by Fazila for the International Memon community has been both phenomenal and noteworthy. Her leadership qualities shown over the years makes us proud to have her as part of our community and leader.*

**Sherbanu Feizul Ayob**

*Fazila AK Ismail is an amazing and passionate human being. She always goes the extra mile when she commits to a project and has the leadership qualities, which we all admire. Her enthusiasm and support of her husband, family and team enables her to excel and overcome all obstacles only to achieve success in the end. She is a true inspiration to us all.*

**Shaheeda Haroun Joosub**

*An association and friendship as long and fruitful consisting of 25 years is one to be treasured. Fazila AK Ismail is a phenomenal woman and backbone of Jamaatun Nisa and has once again proven that if we put our mind to anything, we can surely achieve it and we have!*

**Jameela Joosab**

*Fazila AK Ismail is a dynamic person and when presented with a task, she never fails to see it through and get the job done. She puts in hard work and effort to ensure the success of all her projects. Her unselfish and humble contributions towards society and those in need has to be acknowledged as she is a true example of a woman's strength and ability to make a difference.*

**Khatija Yunus Suleman**

*Fazila's dedication and commitment towards the upliftment of our Ummah, is phenomenal.*

**Shireen Joosab Arbee**

*Having worked with Fazila AK Ismail for the past 4 years has taught me the definition of sincerity and ensuring that everything she does is for the sake of pleasing her Creator. She personifies strength in women and perseveres towards making a difference and enhancing the lives of the needy.*

**Khashiefa Martin (WMO Africa Chapter)**

*Fazila AK Ismail has been our pillar of strength for the Africa Ladies Chapter. She is an inspiration and dedicated worker always striving to achieve the best. She has a kind and loving nature which shines through in all the brilliant work that she does.*

**Azmina Moosa Carrim**

*The enthusiasm that Fazila AK Ismail displays in carrying out her duties as Chair of the International Ladies Wing inspires all of us. She is dedicated and hardworking and I am proud to be working with her.*

**Feriel Haroon Gutta**

— THE —  
MEMON  
AWARDS



COMING SOON