

12 Umoor Newsletter

SILK-E-HAYAAT

UMOOR IQTESADIYAH

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From local trade fairs held by merchants in the Medieval era to international business expos organized today, business has always been at the center of growth, innovation, and globalization. Rasul Allah ^{SAW} has elucidated that a Muslim market place should be like their *Masajid*, implying that every Muslim stall should embody the virtues of Islam. For us, the market place is an opportunity to showcase the spirit of business at the heart of the Dawoodi Bohra Community.

Illustration of an Arabian Market place during the Medieval Era.

Illustration Courtesy:
M. Murtaza Baqir bhai Calcuttawala

Business – A Religious Activity

Article by: M. Murtaza bhai Mohammed Bhai Saeed, Alumni of Aljamea tus Saifiyah

Interdependence is of fundamental importance, from ecology to economics. As Imam Ahmed al-Mastoor ^{AS} has elucidated, “it is not possible for man to live on his own.” Business is the link, providing people with an avenue to ensure our subsistence, survival, and satisfaction. People have historically engaged in social and economic activities to meet their needs. While ‘business’ always existed in the form of barter systems since much earlier, the first records of transactional business can be traced back to the Mesopotamian civilization more than 5,000 years ago.

Business is both an economic and social activity, for which Islam serves as a guiding light for Muslim businessmen and businesswomen. Islam urges its followers to become active and dedicated

members of their communities by striving to make it a better place, conducting business with integrity, and provide for their loved ones. In addition, the Islamic faith shows and encourages Muslims to be of service and value to their fellow Muslims and to all people. For example, Da’im al-Islam, Syenda al-Qaadi al-No-man’s ^{RA} rigorous and foundational volume about the seven pillars of Islam, details how to conduct business according to the tenets of Islam. This charter discusses to the best practices in business, instils values of hard work and sacrifice, and teaches how to avoid the pitfalls of unethical business practices (e.g., interest).

The core values of service, adding value, and collective growth are condensed into three words, “*fa ajmelu fi al-talab*”.

While the word ‘ajmelu’ means to beautify, it is noteworthy that *fa ajmelu* in the context of seeking *rizq*, instructs moral correctness and collectiveness; as if to say that a true Mumin Muslim must not only conduct his financial activities for personal gain, but optimally, so that it is profitable for all.

This concept of ‘collective growth’ in business has been exemplified by Awliya Allah ^{AS} throughout history. Dating back to the time of RasulAllah’s ^{SAW} ancestors,



Saifee Burhani Expo 2021,
Taherabad

the Quran details a rich chronicle of Arabian economics in the *zikr* 'Rehlata Shitaa' i Wassaif' (the exodus of Summer and Winter), of Moulana Hashim's^{AS} pact with the Arabs to traverse through deserts and import and export goods in Africa and the Middle East on behalf of the people of Makkah and bring back incredible profits for all. RasulAllah^{SAW} himself brought back great profits while conducting business on behalf of Maulatena Khadijah^{AS} "the likes of which were never seen before." This history establishes the financial ancestry of the Dawoodi Bohras as a tribe of businessmen. It is in our name and veins; sealed by the words of Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin^{RA} "business is in our blood." Awliya Kiram^{AS} have also set the best examples for working assiduously in the pursuit of subsistence, as instructed in the Quran "*Wabtaghu min fadlillah*" (And seek from Allah's bounty). The narrative of Imam Jafar al Sadiq^{AS} is exemplary, in which he is seen toiling away in his fields, requiring the aid of two on his return. On being questioned

These accounts inspire us to strive for our *rizq*, "until the heat of the sun reaches" us.

about his state, and why he was working in a field instead of possibly being deep in prayer, he replied that even if death were to come to him in this condition it would be joyous, as he would be in service of the Almighty. Hundreds of years later, Syedi Hasan bin Nooh^{QS}, who had a sprawling business empire, contributed greatly to various causes in Yemen in the defence of the Dai, demonstrating the importance of pursuing *rizq* in the service of our family and community.

These accounts inspire us to strive for our *rizq*, "until the heat of the sun reaches" us. Many other examples of the conduct of Awliya Allah^{AS} teach us how to thrive in our occupations, to conduct our finances, and to be "at the top of our fields" as stated by Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin^{RA}. Thus, business becomes not only an economic activity but a religious activity of deep significance. For Dawoodi Bohras, a business-minded people, trade and business are our emblem, our insignia, and what we aspire to be, no matter how what our circumstance or occupation. Whether student or entrepreneur, Maula^{TUS} shows us how to seek what brings us true profit and work hard towards that goal, to make gains both in this world and in the hereafter.

GLIMPSES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Managing Qardan Hasana for 30 Mawaze in

Indore

The head office of Saifee Qardan Hasana Trust is in Indore, and 30 mawaze fall under its umbrella. The primary workforce of the head office consists of 28 trustees. The Indore Jamiat has around 8,000 families whose Qardan Hasana requirements are managed by this Trust. From applying for Qardan Hasana to repayment, everything can be completed through the Idara software, which is in continuous sync with the head office. This results in a smooth and timely process. There is a dedicated team for guiding the applicants through the app. Thousands of Mumineen have taken *barkaat* from this Trust.

Establishing small industries in

Neemuch

The Neemuch Jamaat has devised a local system to help grow Mumineen's small scale enterprises and reduce their transportation costs. The Jamaat surveyed the surrounding villages to assess local demand and identify products that can be sold in Neemuch to customers coming from surrounding areas. Furthermore, they help in setting up enterprises that have positive growth outlooks. Every year around 2-3 new businesses are established!

How We Strived for Systematic Economic Development

Taher bin Qambar bs Jamali, Masoolul Mouze – Dhanduka



In 2019 we set out with our mission to grow Mumineen businesses in Dhanduka. Our initial step was to collect information on the existing 52 businesses. After the survey we were able to determine 3 categories into which all businesses could be divided.

- **Category A:** Those businesses that were showing consecutive growth and potential for further prosperity.
- **Category B:** Stagnant businesses whose owners were in personal debt, and 50% of the business ran on credit, leaving little to no scope for growth.
- **Category C:** Deteriorating businesses which were only incurring losses with no possibility for any growth.

After deliberation with professionals, we reached the conclusion that the only way to uplift 'Category C' businesses would be to have a business from 'Category A' support and guide them.

Moving forward, with the help of the partnership deed, we were able to connect financially strong businesses with Category C businesses.

Consequently, we also designed an action plan for the upcoming financial year and planned the Qardan Hasana requirements of each business in detail. Counselling was also organized for each business to help them grow in their respective fields.

With the *dua mubarak* of Aqa Moula ^{TUS}, 17 new business ventures have been established, 5 Mumineen have moved into their own homes, and 85% of all businesses have shifted from credit to cash.

Inshallah, it is our hope to further perform khidmat and help more Mumineen establish their own industries in the future.

From Service to Business, a Journey worth Making

Shk Zueb bhai Haidery, Business Management Consultant, Karachi

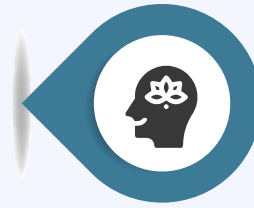


Inspired by the kalemaat of Moulana ^{TUS}, Mumineen often ask me – “When is the right time to shift to a business?” I believe that the day you return home from work, feeling neither high nor low—is the day you should ask yourself, “Why am I still here? Let me get out of my comfort zone and look into preparing myself for getting into my own business to follow my passion.”

For those aspiring to make take this leap of faith, I would recommend keeping the following tips in mind:

1. Mitigating your fears and believing in yourself.

Fear stems mainly from uncertainty in thinking about things like, “Will my business startup be successful?” Instead of worrying, work on a basic business plan that will have tangible outcomes. Walk through each worst-case scenario, take measures to avoid them and after in-depth study realize that failure isn't so bad. Know that rizq is in the hands of Allah Ta'ala, and that you will not return empty handed.



2. Break out of robotic habits we have acquired while in employment and acquire new skills required to face the challenges which will emerge during our startup.

While in employment, we are responsible for our own work. In a business, we are responsible for the work of our team. Read books and blogs or take online courses. Find mentors who will guide you and sharpen your skills in the completely different skill set required to do business. The Umoor Iqtesadiyah and Tijarat Rabehah teams are also present to assist us by providing us tools and means for training. Taking a Sabaq of Daim-ul-Islam for Baab al-Buyoo is also a must as it gives us a true business mindset.



3. Develop a network of suppliers, manufacturers, and similar business units.

This part of planning is vital to start understanding the opportunities of the new business and our preferred modus operandi. You cannot run a business alone, and so do everything possible to start meeting people who can potentially become suppliers, customers, or business colleagues. You'll need to start looking for experts and the right people to learn from. If you are a professional like an architect, engineer or accountant, the general perception is that it's quite difficult to transition into a business, but the fact is that its much easier as you already know a lot of people related to the industry.



4. Plan the finances properly and put some rough numbers together to calculate how much startup, revenue and overhead costs will be needed.

Plan your own personal expenses through home budgeting and with it move to create your business startup budget to reach controlled financial management.



5. Get all your family members and close friends on board with you to create a support system who would cheer you on.

Family support is crucial especially as the start-up period of the business is often very stressful.



Inshallah with the dua of Moulana ^{TUS}, let us pray for the success of all Mumineen startups!



HAPPY THREADS™

an upliftment initiative



The inception of the Happy Threads Initiative has a heart touching account at its core. A *Muminah ben paapad* to Al Dai al Ajal Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin ^{TUS} in Burhanpur. When asked about how much she earns in a day, she replied that her daily income was a 100 Rs. Touched by her story, and upon learning that she earned such a humble amount for all of her hard work, he stated that the 100 Rs should be turned into 300.

According to his decree, members of Qasre Aali and Talebaat surveyed Burhanpur and the neighboring cities to gather information of various home industries carried out by Muminaat behno. Initiated by Busaheba ^{DM}, a platform company by the name of Happy Threads was created, to



develop, market and sells products created by Muminaat. Initially, Busaheba ^{DM} herself commissioned crocheted book-marks for all Mumineen households worldwide. To accomplish this, Imae Fatema distributed the work across cities to all those who had the skill. Many new talents were discovered this way.

A system was devised in which different tasks were allotted to those proficient in it, to achieve better and faster results and create high class products which could also be sold outside the community.

Today, many Muminaat run their households through Happy Threads. They have performed *ziyarat* and facilitated weddings, along with improving their lifestyle. A life changing moment for all members of the Happy Threads Initiative was that they were granted the *sharaf* of *ziyafat* of Aqa Moula ^{TUS} with their own earnings!

We present to you a beautiful collection of Happy Threads products. They are without doubt, the pride of our communities artisans! Visit <https://happythreads4u.com> for more!



Organizing an Expo in Secundarabad



A very successful business expo was organized at the Marriott Convention Centre in Hyderabad, featuring 45 stalls with participants from 4 bustling cities - Bangalore, Vishakhapatnam, Coimbatore and Chennai. It attracted more than a thousand visitors, who were so invested that most stalls were sold out completely! Visiting cards were also shared for further business opportunities.

A first experience for many, they were eager to participate in similar ventures in the future.

ACTIVITY OF THE MONTH



Get a detailed insight of the world of Dawoodi Bohra Economics by diving into these publications prepared by Idara Hqhb.

A WORD FROM OUR READERS

THE BARAKAAT OF QARDAN HASANA

I have been performing *khidmat* of Qardan Hasana for the past 9 years, and have witnessed with my own eyes the immense *barakat* of Qardan Hasana. The 54 shops of Sagwara have now multiplied into 208 shops and Mumineen have opened 575 accounts until now. Truly, I am stand witness to the vision of Al Dai al Ajal Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin TUS coming to life!

Shk Zainuddin bhai Mandaw, Sagwara

THE POWER OF DUA

I have a business of trading in cement and hardware. Around 4 years ago Aqa Moula TUS had graced the Mumineen Expo in an open jeep, and blessed our products. There has been no looking back for us after that. Even during the pandemic, when many businesses encountered losses, our business has flourished, only due to the *nazaraat* of Al Dai al Ajal Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin TUS

Saifuddin bhai Topiwala, Nagpur

