

12 Umoor Newsletter

# SILK-E-HAYAAT

UMOOR FAIZUL MAWAIDIL BURHANIYAH

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The *hurmat* of *ta'am* (food) is a recurring concept in Fatemi Theology. *Jaman* is so revered in our culture that even the vessel which carries the food is handled with utmost respect. From the *thaal* to the *thali*, and from the *safrah* to the *mashki* - all of these vessels have a special place in our hearts.

For some of our brothers and sisters, the *thali* reminds us of the countless bounties afforded to us by our Maula <sup>TUS</sup>. It is a symbol of his love and affection and gives hope and happiness to many! At its core it serves as a beloved emblem for Umoor Faizul Mawaidil Burhaniyah.



# From Farm to Fare

Article By: Hamza Shk Shabbir bhai Najmi, Student of Aljamea tus Saifiyah - Marol

Imagine being asked to have your favorite dish for the last time, ever. Would you gobble it down, or would you savor every little crumb? Would you rush to finish, or would you relish the aroma and seasoning of freshly minced food? Would you not take your time to enjoy the explosion of spices upon your tongue, the fusion of flavors running through your mouth or appreciate the texture of every fragment of your last meal?

In a time where things change in the blink of an eye, where our minds are often occupied by matters of international consequence, we repeatedly find ourselves forgetting the little things which matter. As life accelerates away at meteoric speeds, how often do we stop and admire the blessings of Allah Ta'ala right in front of us, that are sitting on our plate? How regularly do we ponder upon the very thing that keeps us alive?

Food – it builds us, develops us, drives us, and protects us. Such is the significance of just one meal, or further so, one morsel. It is obvious that food is integral to our daily lives, we consume it at least 3 times a day after all. For most people today though, dealing with busy days and consumer culture, admiration of food is often lost.

Economists largely concur that the world entered a new golden age of economic growth after the end of the great depression and the second world war. It is said that the boom years between 1950 to 1970 gave rise to one of the most iconic cuisines of the modern food industry – American Fast Food. At first it was a practical venture. Due to the soaring economy, Americans had money to spend and places to be. Fast food was cheap, it was convenient and soon became all the rage across the country – even spanning its influence over the Atlantic.

There were some noticeable side effects which followed, however. The ease and convenience of fast food made the idea of cooking a meal three times a day appear increasingly daunting.

'Factory-made' started to replace 'freshly cooked' as cooking at home rapidly became a festivity rather than a norm. One could even argue that the low levels of inspiration in mass-produced food made it less appealing and turned delicacies into commodities.

The changes to food culture are not limited to rich countries only. Even in developing nations, the shortage of time in our work environments has hit our eating habits the hardest. Lunch breaks on average last only 30 minutes. Heavy schedules mean more children are eating out of lunch boxes than with their parents. Large commute times in cities have made coming home for lunch a thing of the past. Long stressful days have made engaging conversations over the table scarce, so much so that some prefer to keep the TV on - just to fill in the silence. Ironically, we enjoy other people's food more through our Instagram feed while our own dishes lose their optimal temperature, laying in wait for the perfect click.

Not only have we started enjoying food less due to bad eating habits, but studies show that these can even lead to weight gain and poor digestion. What can we do then to improve our eating habits and make food great again?

Conscious appreciation of what we eat opens us to a state of thankfulness and realization. Take for example our most basic, periodic tradition when food is presented to us – consuming a pinch of



A small serving of salt in a *namak dani* gifted by Faizul Mawaidil Burhaniyah

salt. Though it may seem a trivial act, this mere prelude to a meal is worth its weight in gold as Rasulullah <sup>SAW</sup> states: "Whoever commences his meal with salt and ends with it will be cured from 72 ailments."

When just a pinch of salt, considered one of the most basic seasonings has been given such importance, it teaches us the value of a single morsel. Our Awliyaullah<sup>AS</sup> have in many such ways emphasized on the *qadr* of *ta'aam*. On one hand we are taught to wash our hands before and after every meal. Not only is this hygienic, but in a way, we give *karamat* to food by not touching it with dirty hands. According to another teaching, a person seated to dine should sit like a humble servant, to appreciate the meal before him. Not as an arrogant king who could have any meal he wanted. Another teaching from Rasulullah <sup>SAW</sup> emphasizes that if food is presented, it should be given priority, even upon *namaaz*. Food should not wait for us. We should wait for food.

A common theme in all of these teachings is to appreciate every grain of food from the very depths of our hearts. From farm to fare - how did this morsel end up on my plate? After just how many processes and preparations did my food go through to be presented before me today?

When eating, we are primarily reaping the investment of manual physical labor to grow and harvest food as well as the roads and fuel needed to transport it. It is reported that with no mechanical

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help, it would take 963 hours to produce the food that one person consumes throughout the year; translating to roughly 40 days! As for transport, it is estimated that in the US alone, processed food travels 1300 miles while produce travels a stunning 1500 miles, before it reaches the consumer. A typical meal's ingredients originate from 5 foreign countries on average! We also overlook the amount of water required to grow the food that ends up on our plate. According to some estimates, a kilogram of apples requires approximately 700 liters of water. A kilogram of bread would require 1300 liters, while a kilogram of chicken would require up to a whopping 3900 liters!

Such is the investment of labor, time, and resources in every single morsel of food - all presented in the best way possible for our enjoyment. The monumental effort in the preparation of food is only justified if it is properly and thoroughly appreciated. That we say '*Alhamdulillah*' upon every bite. This thought brings new light to our Hudaat Kiraam's <sup>AS</sup> stance on the high esteem of food, such as the historic account of Imam Ali Zayn al-Abidin <sup>AS</sup>, who freed a servant for eating a date left behind on the floor, stating that the act merited paradise.

The testimony for this divine etiquette can likewise be witnessed at large today. In a day and age where 1 in 9 people go to bed on an empty stomach and almost 1/3rd of all food produced is wasted, Al-Dai al-Ajal Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin <sup>TUS</sup> has not only strived to feed each and every Mumin, but has also vigorously encouraged that not one single grain of food be wasted. By the esteemed drive of Faizul Mawaidil Burhaniyah, he has sought to ensure that Mumineen all over the world can rest knowing that their basic needs have been met. And by creating the Dana Committee, he has successfully incorporated the basic ethics of gratefulness and empathy with sustainability and responsible consumption. Now, more than ever, it is time for us Mumineen to come together and not only rejoice for the bounties bestowed upon us, but to recall the teachings of our *bawa shafeeq* upon each meal and act accordingly.



# GLIMPSES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

## *A Kitchen Worthy of the Institution*

Mustafa bs Vajihi, Amil Saheb - Rajkot



As Dawoodi Bohras, we often stand out. From our well-known business practices to our food in particular, we are widely known as a forward thinking and continually advancing community. Today, the bright and shining vision of Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin <sup>RA</sup> and Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin <sup>TUS</sup> has led to the fruition of an ingenious and outstanding philanthropic initiative, one that is commended globally: Faizul Mawaidil Burhaniyah. Initially coming from humble beginnings, with meals being cooked in existing and available kitchens, it has been scaled-up to unprecedented levels and reaches thousands of Mumineen across the world. Surely, an institution of this stature deserves a worthy kitchen: a smart kitchen.

The implementation of Smart kitchens has been part of a larger initiative to ensure that all facilities made available to Mumineen are of the highest standard. Designed to maximize the efficiency of time and energy, they are a sustainable, long-lasting, and environmentally efficient approach to provide healthy, quality food to hundreds of families at once. We had multiple reasons to build such a kitchen in Rajkot; to provide hygienic and healthy food, to save time and energy, to reduce waste, and to maximize food storage.

Our former kitchen could not offer cooks sufficient space to implement necessary hygiene practices. Furthermore, the lack of space forced them to prepare food in stages instead

of all at once, which created challenges to meet food distribution deadlines. Overall, a lot of effort and manpower was required since the space was not technologically equipped to handle the workload. These factors affected the taste and quality of the final product.

In light of the recent pandemic, strict and additional precautions have been taken to ensure the safety of both Mumineen and kitchen-staff. Handwashing and sanitizing along with the usage of masks, gloves and aprons are strictly enforced. As per guidelines, the entire kitchen is sanitized thoroughly after every meal to ensure it is ready for the next day.

The dramatic difference between the former kitchen and the state-of-the-art smart kitchen is spectacular. Most notably, where previously *thali* would reach Mumineen late in the day with frequent delays, it now reaches much more punctually to the relief of many. The improved facility has also allowed the kitchen-staff to focus on the quality and taste of the daily menu in an organized and efficient manner.

These factors have improved the experience of Mumineen in all manners, thus increasing their participation in partaking in the *barakat* of Faizul Mawaidil Burhaniyah. None of this could have been possible without the *dua mubarak* of our beloved Maula <sup>TUS</sup> whose *shafaqat*, through this *faiz*, not only nourishes our bodies but enlivens our souls.

Increasing Nutrition Awareness in

Barwani



The Faizul Mawaidil Burhaniyah Team of Barwani organised a Nutrition Awareness Program in their town in Rajab al-Asab, 1442H. The speakers in this session were a diagnostician, a physiotherapist, and an orthopedic surgeon. They effectively explained the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle by moderating our daily intake of food, and how just a certain amount of every nutrient our bodies require. They also highlighted the importance of exercising and how it prevents pain in the knees, neck, and in the back during the later stages of our lives. People attended the program with all necessary precautions taken for their safety.

# GLIMPSES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Mobilizing the Next Generation in

## Lonavala



Young students worked together to prepare a model which chronologically displays the various *khidmat* required in Faizul Mawaidil Burhaniyah. The model displayed the different opportunities for *khidmat* in Faizul Mawaidil Burhaniyah. These were:

1. Crops are grown.
2. Crops are harvested and procured.
3. Food is cooked.
4. Rotis are made.
5. Thalīs are filled.
6. Thalīs are transported.
7. Mumineen receive the food.
8. Mumineen eat and relish the food.

The depiction was presented in Huzur Aala<sup>TUS</sup> as well.

Distributing Food Packages in

## Sitamau



In November, 2020, the Dana Committee of Sitamau distributed a total of 300 food-packages to those in need. The packages consisted of cooked vegetable dishes (*subzi*) and chapattis. The members visited various areas of the town for the distribution. People who received the packages were very happy and expressed their gratitude. By doing this, the Dana Committee cemented their motto of ‘helping people, as much as you can.’ They have been distributing food for the past three years now.

## The First Set-up

Shk Idrees bhai Khorakiwala



Around 22 years ago, Mufaddal Maula<sup>TUS</sup> told us that each and every Mumin’s household in Mistr should receive *jamān*, and that it should start within two days. Maulana<sup>TUS</sup> directed us to execute this initiative. We had a kitchen, which was regularly used for preparing *niyaaz*, and a cook. This is how it all started.

We are in the food-bakery business, and so we were well versed with the procedure of procuring large quantities of grain and food supplies at industrial costs. We also had access to the necessary staff. Since we had an extensive and long-lasting *khidmat* to perform, we knew that we’d require more people; so we created a team. We divided the process into stages and delegated each to a person to handle. We ran our food distribution just like our business and relied heavily on the most important management skill: **team building**. Proper delegation and regularly responding to

feedback added efficacy to our work. Committees of women – responsible for deciding the menu, purchasing, filling the tiffin, and lastly delivery – were united under one common goal that ‘*Maula ye farmayu che!*’ This easily served as the greatest motivation for them to work tirelessly.

Budgeting was one of the key inputs that helped us improve our system, plan our finances, and collect funds. We calculated the expense of each *niyaaz*, and our daily expenditure. This eased the process of managing funds for the project. This is how we operated Faizul Mawaidil Burhaniyah improving upon our existing system of bakery management. We were constantly aided by the *dua* of Mufaddal Maula<sup>TUS</sup>. It has been years now that we’ve been distributing food, and *alhamdulillah*, we have never skipped a single day.



# UMOOR FAIZUL MAWAIDIL BURHANIYAH REPORT SHEHRE RAMADAN 1442H



**1,20,000+**  
**Families**

received the barakat of *niyaaz*  
daily in Shere Ramadan 1442H



**1,12,000+**  
**Sehori packets**

were sent to Mumineen homes  
before Sherullah.



**3700+**  
**Kilograms**

of **Ajwa Khajoor** were sent  
from Madinah Munawwarah  
to Indian *mawaaze* for **Lailatul**  
**Qadar iftaar** on behalf of Aqa  
**Moula<sup>TUS</sup>**.



**30**  
**Centrally Planned Menus**

focused on a balanced diet,  
were sent to all *mawaze*



**25000+**  
**Hadaya**

were bestowed to Mumineen  
who funded one or more  
*niyaaz*.



**1000+**  
**Finance Members**

attended a total of **7 webinars**  
to plan the finances of Faizul  
Mawaidil Burhaniyah *niyaaz*  
for the upcoming year.

Getting together with friends and family over *niyaaz jaman* has been an iconic and memorable aspect of Shehre Ramadan for years. This year, even though we have been in the midst of a raging pandemic, we were still blessed to receive the *barakat* of *niyaaz* through Faizul Mawaidil Burhaniyah. This was possible only through the *dua mubarak* of Aqa Maula<sup>TUS</sup> and the hard work of our brothers and sisters who poured in countless hours to ensure that we do not have to worry about cooking during *roza*. Let us take a moment to appreciate their efforts and celebrate their success! Let us for a second just be grateful for this *azeem nemat* and do *dua* for our Maula<sup>TUS</sup>!

## ACTIVITY OF THE MONTH

This summer –

# Beat The Heat!

Refresh and energise your body with

## Lemony Honey Refresh

FENNEL SEEDS (1/2 tsp)

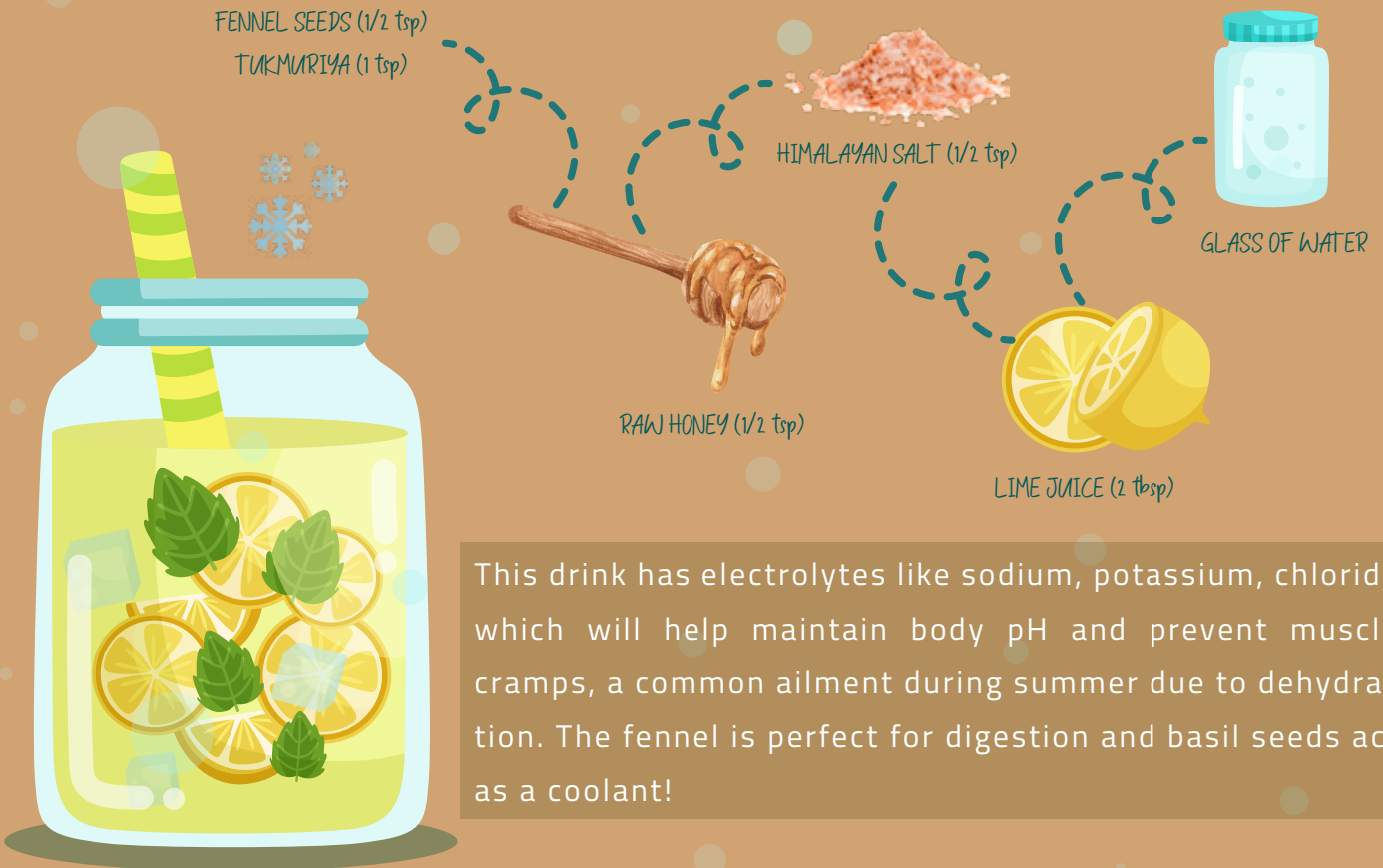
TUKMURIYA (1 tsp)

HIMALAYAN SALT (1/2 tsp)

RAW HONEY (1/2 tsp)

LIME JUICE (2 tbsp)

GLASS OF WATER



This drink has electrolytes like sodium, potassium, chloride which will help maintain body pH and prevent muscle cramps, a common ailment during summer due to dehydration. The fennel is perfect for digestion and basil seeds act as a coolant!

### A WORD FROM OUR READERS

#### A Dream to Remember

Once in my dreams, I had the *sharaf* of doing *deedar* of Syedna Mohamed Burhanuddin's <sup>RA</sup>. I saw that my father did *araz* about the hurdles he's facing at work. Maulana <sup>RA</sup> advised him to distribute *salawaat* every Thursday. Accordingly, we have been doing so since 1439H and can feel the *barakat* of his *dua*.

Murtaza Tarnikwala, Nasik

#### The P&D Team

Working in the Packing and Distribution team in Faizul Mawaidil Burhaniyah, it is upon us to pack and deliver approximately 1100 *thalis* every day. I firmly believe that it is only through Moulana's <sup>TUS</sup> *dua* that we are able to achieve our targets, even amidst a pandemic, with an ongoing curfew, and an unbearable heat.

Aliasger Primuswala, Fakhri Mohallah, Poona

