The People’s Republic of Bangladesh is a country in South Asia. While it is the 92nd-largest country, spanning 147,570 square kilometres (57,150 sq mi), it is the world’s 8th-most populous country with a population nearing 163 million.

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Editorial

Canada is a multicultural country that recognizes the value and dignity of all Canadians regardless of race, ethnicity, language and religion. The diversity of its composition is one of the major strengths of this country that sets Canada apart from most other nations.

Islamic History month is a unique opportunity to celebrate, inform, educate, and share with fellow Canadians the Islamic achievements and contributions to global civilization over the last 1,400 years.

As Canadians of Bangladeshi origin, it is an occasion for us to demonstrate how the message of Islam spread in Bangladesh and how it enriched the lives of the diverse people in the Indian-subcontinent.

Islam arrived in Bangladesh through seafaring Arab merchants and Sufis of spiritual orders, perhaps before any other part of India. Given that India has been an enormously plural society with its different languages, cultures and religions, the traders and Sufis found opportunity to expose their beliefs and practices to the people they came to contact with. Gradually their soft appeal, good nature and moral integrity attracted many to accept their religion and way of life—Islam. Gradually, through peaceful means, Islam became adopted by more and more people in the Bengal region, rooting itself into the hearts and minds of countless people crossing several generations into the present times.

Islam’s spiritual disposition was not just limited to the religious domain alone; as the message of Islam spread throughout the Indian subcontinent; Islamic influences could be seen in many other aspects of Bangladeshi society, including the arts, architecture, music, cuisine, fashion and literature.

Thanks to the efforts of early pioneers and their successors today Bangladesh is not only the third largest Muslim country in the world (population wise), Muslims of Bangladesh have now spread across the world, being proud of their faith, culture and heritage.

Just as the history Islam in Bangladesh has been peaceful, so too has been the settlement and adaptation of Bangladeshi Muslims in Canada. Bangladeshi Muslims have managed to be integrated themselves well within the social fabrics of Canada, contributing to its economy and enriching its cultural diversity. Our 5th October exhibition at the Islamic Institute of Toronto will exhibit the Islamic heritage of Bangladeshi Muslims.

We now take this opportunity in advance to thank all visitors, event organizers, supporters, speakers and everyone associated with the event and making it a success. This booklet aims to provide information about the event along with articles on selected topics. We hope you will find this booklet informative and insightful as much as the event itself.

The ideas expressed in the articles are those of the author’s only and do not necessarily reflect the opinions and values held by the organizers of the event or the editor.
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Islamic History Month Canada

From Dr Abdullah Hakim Quick
ISLAMIC HISTORY MONTH IN CANADA

October 2019, presents another opportunity for the Muslim community of Canada to highlight its rich heritage and its important contributions to Canadian society. Islamic History Month (IHMC) is not only a chance for our youth to understand the diversity of Canadian culture but also time to send a clear message to those who believe in hatred and xenophobia, that in the 21st Century, knowledge and open mindedness are the keys to ensuring a peaceful co-existence for all people.

IHMC is also a means of building bridges and providing hope for a united Canada. Through healthy, innovative interactions, Canadians can see the Muslim Community as the positive, hard working members of society that they have always been. Since the Dominion of Canada in 1871, Muslims have given their sweat, toil and sometimes lives to enrich these lands and build a viable home in North America.

Therefore, on behalf of the Islamic Institute of Toronto (I.I.T.) and the Canadian Council of Imams (CCI), I take this opportunity to congratulate Canada for bringing Muslim History and Heritage to the forefront and providing a way to clear up misunderstanding and foster harmony and peace.

Dr Abdullah Hakim Quick
Senior Scholar at the I.I.T.
Outreach Coordinator for the C.C.I.
Author of Deeper Roots: Muslims in the Americas and the Caribbean before Columbus
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Islamic Heritage Month

October 2019

WHEREAS Islamic Heritage Month provides us an opportunity to learn about the rich Islamic history and culture within our city.

During Islamic Heritage Month we are reminded of the many contributions that Muslims have made to the economic, political, social and cultural fabric of our city.

Residents across the city are encouraged to learn more about Islam and to participate in activities throughout the month that celebrate our city's Muslim community.

The City of Toronto acknowledges the valued contributions that the Muslim community of Toronto has made to strengthen our society and contribute to our city's motto "Diversity Our Strength". Diversity strengthens us socially, politically, culturally and economically, and as one of the world's most multicultural cities, Toronto has become a model city where all religions, faiths and beliefs are respected and accepted.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Mayor John Tory, on behalf of Toronto City Council, do hereby proclaim October 2019 as "Islamic Heritage Month" in the City of Toronto.

John Tory
Mayor of Toronto
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Introduction
According to the historians, Islam came into contact with the coastal regions of the subcontinent during the seventh century. This process was intensified during the leadership of Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab (r. 634 to 644CE), and that of his successor, Caliph Uthman ibn Affan (r. 644 to 656CE). As such, it is not true that the Muslim expedition to India took place only by land. This was preceded by naval expeditions to Debul (Daybul) during the time of Caliph Uthman. In other words, Muhammad ibn al-Qasim’s successful conquest of the Indian province of Sind and its neighbouring territories in 711CE was preceded by Muslim naval expeditions to Debul during the mid-seventh century.

Likewise, Islam had reached Bengal long before Muhammad ibn Bakhtiyar Khalji’s excursion into that region in the beginning of the thirteenth century. The discovery of two coins issued by the early Abbasid Caliphs in Paharpur in Rajshahi and Mainamati in Comilla has confirmed this. This shows that the Muslim traders and businessmen have been visiting different parts of Bengal during the second and third century of Hijrah (eighth and ninth century CE), if not earlier. The arrival of the Muslim traders and merchants to the coastal regions of the subcontinent in general and Bengal in particular subsequently paved the way for the Sufis and other Muslim missionaries to move into different parts of Bengal in order to disseminate the message of Islam across that region.

Notable Early Sufis of Bengal
According to the historians of Bengal, the early Arab and Persian traders played a very significant role in the development of the Muslim community in the province. They paved the way for the Sufis and preachers to emerge and disseminate Islam across north-eastern India, especially in present-day Bangladesh and West Bengal. The early Sufis or preachers of Islam were educated, tolerant and enlightened individuals who championed knowledge, learning and scholarship under the patronage of Muslim rulers during the Sultanate and Mughal rule in Bengal. In so doing they became the harbingers of social, economic, intellectual and cultural progress across the region, inspiring the rulers and the ruled, rich and the poor, men and women, Muslims and non-Muslims alike.


According to tradition, Baba Adam Shahid was one of the early Sufis to come to Bengal from Makkah to propagate his faith in the subcontinent. Accompanied by several thousand followers, he settled in Vikrampur in Munshiganj, not far from modern Dhaka (capital of Bangladesh), where he fought the local Hindu ruler, King Ballalasena, in order to establish his presence in Bengal. There is a grave at Rampal which is said to be that of Baba Adam Shahid, although this is disputed by other historians. Like Baba Adam Shahid, Shah Muhammad Sultan Rumi was another early Sufi.
preacher in Bengal. According to a document dated back to 1671, he came to Bengal in the pre-Muslim period and settled in Madanpur in 1053. Renowned for his asceticism and spirituality, the local ruler offered him a large plot of land as a gift; this area became known as Madanpur. Today he lies buried in a village located in the district of Mymensingh, Bangladesh. Shah Dawlah Shahid was a descendant of Mu’adh ibn Jabal, a prominent companion of the Prophet (peace be on him), although the historians have not been able to verify this claim. Originally from Yemen, he came to Bengal as a preacher and settled near Shahzadpur in Pabna district. He helped establish Islam there and was buried by his nephew near a mosque in Shahzadpur and, as expected, his shrine continues to attract visitors to this day.

According to one account, Shah Dawlah was a student of Shaykh Shams al-Din Tabrizi, the spiritual mentor of Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi, a famous Muslim poet and spiritual figure. As his name suggests, Shah Mahmud Ghaznavi, hailed from Ghazna (in modern Afghanistan) and he lived during the early part of the thirteenth century. He arrived in Mangalkot in the district of Burdwan (in the Indian State of West Bengal) as a preacher. He was instrumental in the ousting of King Vikram Kesari, the oppressive local ruler, and established himself there with his band of followers. According to one historian, ‘Shaikh Jalal al-Din Tabrizi was the most celebrated of the early saints in Bengal. It was his missionary zeal and great spiritualism that accounted for the spread of Islam and the development of the Muslim community in North Bengal in the early days of the Muslim rule in this province. Indeed by his piety, ideal character and humanitarian service, Shaikh Jalal al-Din Tabrizi left such profound impression on the minds of the people and morals of the society that his memory has forever been enshrined in the hearts of the millions of the Bengali people.’

A student of Shihab al-Din Umar al-Suhrawardi, the founder of the Suhrawardiyyah tariqah, and Shaykh Abu Sa’id Tabrizi, who was another renowned Muslim spiritual figure of the time, Tabrizi also met Mu’in al-Din Chishti, the founder of the Chishtiyyah tariqah in India. After completing his studies and attaining kamaliyyat (spirit perfection), he moved to the subcontinent and became renowned as a disseminator of Islam in northern Bengal. This great scholar is often confused with Shah Jalal, thanks to Ibn Battutah’s claim that he had met Shaykh Jalal al-Tabrizi. Actually he had met Shah Jalal in Sylhet in 1346 and not Shaykh Jalal al-Din Tabrizi, who was, according to most scholars, at least thirty-five years older than Shah Jalal of Sylhet. In fact, Jalal al-Din Tabrizi died a hundred years before the death of Shah Jalal. This means, Shah Jalal and Jalal al-Din Tabrizi were two different individuals, the former established his centre in Sylhet (located in present-day Bangladesh) while the latter was based in Deotala (in northern Bengal); as such they could not have been one and the same person.

Sharf al-Din Abu Tawwamah was another great preacher in Bengal who hailed from Bukhara (in modern Uzbekistan) and was educated in the province of Khurasan where he became renowned for his learning, spiritual attainments and piety. After mastering both the exoteric (zahiri) and esoteric (batini) sciences of Islam, he moved to Delhi during the reign of Sultan Ghiyath al-Din Balban where he became renowned for his profound learning and spiritual attainments. Widely considered to be a pioneer of Islam in this part of East Bengal, he established his Sufi centre in Sonargaon (near present-day Dhaka) and propagated the faith throughout that area. One of his most celebrated students included Sharf al-Din Yahya al-Maneri who studied under him for a long period and became one of the most distinguished Sufis of India. However, one of the most famous Sufis of Bengal was undoubtedly Shaykh Jalal al-Din al-Mujarrad ibn Muhammad, better known as Hazrat Shah Jalal. Unfortunately, details about his ancestry and early activities are shrouded in mystery and myth. So much so that the exact date of birth and death of Shah Jalal is not known although some have claimed that he was born
in 1271, while others (such as Ibn Battutah) have stated that he died in 1347. However, these dates are no more than suggestions and certainly not definitive. He hailed from Turkistan and came to East Bengal via Delhi where he also met Nizam al-Din Awliyyah and subsequently settled in Sylhet district of Bangladesh. He and his disciples transformed this region into an active centre of Islamic learning and spirituality. As a token of appreciation, Bangladesh’s main airport, Hazrat Shah Jalal International, was named after him recently.

If Shah Jalal of Sylhet preached in the north-eastern Bengal, and Jalal al-Din Tabrizi in north-western Bengal, then Khan Jahan became the pioneer of Islam in south-western Bengal. Khan-i-Azam (‘the Great Khan’) Khan Jahan, better known as Hazrat Khan Jahan, was of Turkish extraction but very little is known about his early life. He lived and thrived under the Tughluqids, namely Ghiyath al-Din Mahmud, the fourth Tughluqid Sultan, and went onto serve the rulers of this dynasty with some distinction since he became a notable member of this ruling family. Thanks to his dedicated serve to the Tughluqids, the Sultan of Delhi offered Khan Jahan a plot of land in the Sundarban, Bangladesh. This offer was subsequently confirmed by the-then Sultan of Bengal and this prompted Khan Jahan to take necessary steps to establish himself in this difficult and challenging part of Bengal.

Located today in the south-western district of Khulna, Khan Jahan’s fief (jagir) was virtually an inhabitable plot of land, being as it were an integral part of the Sundarban, the largest mangrove forest in the world. Surrounded by dense forest, with wild animals and beasts roaming around at will, Khan Jahan cleared up this locality and established several settlements in and around the area today known as Bagerhat. This took place during the early part of the fifteenth century. An adherent of Islamic spirituality, Khan Jahan was a prominent practitioner and exponent of Islam. His valiant and pioneering effort to transform a largely inhospitable region into permanent human settlement proved such as success that he later gave the name of Khalifatabad to this region.

Concluding Remarks
These and other early Sufis and preachers of Bengal played an instrumental role in the propagation of Islam across that region. Their contribution and achievements inspired other Sufis to emerge and develop their ideas, thoughts and practices further for the benefit of the people of Bangladesh and West Bengal as a whole. Though it is true that the early Sufis of Bengal hailed mainly from Turkistan, Afghanistan, Persia, Central Asia and mainland India, many other preachers, Sufis and writers like Syed Sultan and Syed Alaol emerged during the medieval period who were wholly indigenous to Bengal. For more information, please see Muhammad Mojlum Khan’s widely acclaimed book, The Muslim Heritage of Bengal: The Lives, Thoughts and Achievements of Great Muslim Scholars, Writers and Reformers of Bangladesh and West Bengal (UK: Kube Publishing, 2013).

*Muhammad Mojlum Khan, F.R.A.S., is an award-winning British writer, literary critic and research scholar. He has published more than 200 essays and articles worldwide and is author of several internationally acclaimed books including Muslims in British India: The Life and Times of Nawab Abdul Latif (1828-1893) of Bengal (forthcoming). For more details, see muhammadmojlumkhan.com
The Sixty Dome Mosque, also known as Shait Gambuj Mosque, is a very unique mosque which is the largest one from the Sultanate period (1204 -1576 AD), located in the Bagerhat, Bangladesh.

As it is commonly described as one of the most impressive Muslim monuments on the Indian subcontinent, it has a rich history as well.

Following the Tughlaq style, the mosque was built by Khan Jahan Ali, a Muslim saint of Turkish origin and it was completed in 1459.

The mosque originally was surrounded by protective walls with two gates, but only the magnificently arched eastern gate remains, giving some indication of the magnitude of the walls when they were intact.
Thirteen years before the formation of Canadian Confederation, in 1854 the first Muslim child James Love was born to Scottish parents Agnes and James Love in Ontario. He was named after his father. The youngest son, Alexander, of the Love couple was born in 1868 (one year after the formation of Canadian Confederation). Another Muslim couple John and Martha Simon, who were known in government documents as ‘Mahometans’, settled permanently in Ontario after migrating from the USA in 1871. Coincidently this couple was also of West European origin like that of the Love couple, John was English whereas Martha was French.

Among the first Muslim immigrants, the story of teenager Ali Abouchadi is noted in the history of Canada. Popularly known as Alexander Hamilton, this Lebanese youth walked on foot from Lala to Beirut, a distance about 50 km, and then boarded a boat to Montreal in the first part of nineteenth century in search of gold. Though his luck did not favor him, having got no goldmine, he opened a new era of successful trade and commerce. Following his footstep, during the first decade of the same century a number of construction workers began to settle in Ontario and Quebec, and later on in Alberta and Saskatchewan and thus a Muslim population began to grow.

A new era of Muslim history in Canada began with the immigration of skilled professionals such as teachers, technocrats, businessmen and people with technical education. Consequently, Muslims proved themselves to be essential human resources for Canadian society by playing significant role in mainstream Canadian economy. McGill University opened the Department of Islamic Studies in 1952. A decade later the University of Toronto adopted a new strategy of appointing Muslims scholars from different countries in various departments to attract foreign Muslims students.

Though Muslims had to endure hard struggle to cope with the new environment, they never neglected the effort to maintain their Islamic Roots. The Al-Rashid Mosque of Edmonton is the fine example of that effort. This is the first masjid (mosque) in North America, which was established in December 12, 1938. The then Mayor of the City along with the translator of the Holy Qur’an Allama Yusuf Ali’s rare presence in the inaugural ceremony will remain immortal in the history throughout the ages to come. The Masjid, with a slight change in its appearance, is now used as a museum of Islamic art. Over one and a half century old and rapidly increasing, this Muslim community has turned into a skilled, educated and important part of Canadian society. Although Muslims make up less than two percent of Canada's Population, the community has made enviable progress in terms of acceptability and importance than many other minorities. Today the numbers of masjids are reaching to a thousand with which more than sixty percent of the community members maintain regular or occasional contact.

Muslims are not lagging behind in the mainstream political life of Canada as well. A good number of MPs and councilors are elected in every national poll. Even non-Muslims also voluntarily come forward to talk on Muslims' behalf. Though the presence of the Muslims is not noticeable the media (especially in TV channels), they are not absent altogether. "The Little Mosque on the Prairie", the comedy series that debuted in February 2007 and written by 39 years old film producer Zarqa Nawaz became the most popular show of Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

More than one Friday Congregation is held in nearly all masjids in Canada. Yet they are filled with Muslims of all ages, and color and gender. Though Friday is not a weekly holiday, they manage to get time off from their work and attend the congregation. It shows that the Muslims belong to a community with unique characteristics of fraternity and social cohesion.

In most mosques, the sermon (Khutba) is delivered in English with modern styles. Progressive minded Scholars, well versed in Islamic and secular knowledge, deliver the sermons on various contemporary issues that make them unavoidable to Muslims. The experts of the Islamic world living in different countries especially in the
Middle East, Bangladesh, Pakistan and India deliver the sermons by turns. The African-American reverts are not lagging behind in this regard. Their rare presence and extraordinary styles usually attracts attention. The sermon here does not reflect the wishes of the kings or dictators, like those of the Middle East. Unlike the subcontinent, khatbas in Canada are not delivered from the book called "Khutbah of Twelve Months", which are boring, irrelevant and incomprehensible. There is no restriction for the females in praying in the mosques in Canada. On the contrary, Bangladeshi immigrant women educated in modern education finds new touch of Islam. Moreover, the interesting and attractive programs arranged for the females and children turn the mosques essential for them. So they along with their families do not like to miss the different taste of the Friday prayers. Islamic Organizations like ICNA, and ISNA among greater Canadian population and MCC (Muslim Circle of Canada) among Bangladeshi immigrants, organize regular and easily comprehensible Islamic programs that are making Islamic teachings ever attractive to the community.

Children born in this country has no hesitation in living in this country although the immigrant parents do. They have fully adopted the North American Culture especially that of the "independent thinking and action" which is generally subdued by force in their immigrant parents' country of origin. They seek realistic answers to all of their questions. As a result parents need to do their homework before giving religious advice to their children, because they want to know the reference of their words. They seldom hesitate to make derogatory comments in their parents face if they cannot get a satisfactory answer. That is why; some scholars have named it 'Islam Canada' that does not accommodate illogical and fanatical insertions, where there are logical and rational answers to every 'why'. Here, parents' advice their children after being well aware of the facts of the matter concerned. For this reason, they try their very best to rectify the bad habits that they have practiced for years. It is quite relevant to cite an example of a Pakistani gentleman who resided in a colony of the High Court in Dhaka before the independence of Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971. I believe, after meeting me he started to recall the memories of old days when he tasted Hilsha (a kind of fish) and enjoyed Sampanwala (a Bengali folk song). There was a time when this "fifty something" man would always talk about movies and hum movie song. However today he has totally forgotten how to operate his Music and video player. a Now he fully forgot the process how to operate his tape recorder. He along with his two sons and one daughter goes to the Mississauga ‘Jame Mosque’ regularly. I was amazed to listen to the story of his continuous struggle to raise his children as good Muslims and good human beings.

**Introduction:**

There is an opinion amongst intellectuals that “history is often punctuated by wars, conquests, triumph and catastrophes. But in the end what endures, is not the struggle that has lasted in our consciousness and treasured in our museums; rather, it is the outpouring creativity and intelligence that is civilization’s greatest gift.”

Every civilization is built by humans based on their lifestyle, way of thinking, philosophy and world view. But the human condition is such that it is vulnerable to make mistakes. Mankind has committed terrible atrocities throughout history. Muslims themselves at times, have been party to wrong doings. However, one must consider whether these acts were as a result of Islamic ideology, or whether it was due to the weakness of the human condition?

To discuss Muslim civilization, as in the light of the quote, we shouldn’t confine ourselves only to the expansion of Muslim empires, but rather we should take a broader view to understand the contributions of Muslim civilization in such fields as ethics, morality, literature, philosophy, art, food and culture including Science. Any exclusive focus on empire building, geo-politics, strife, rebellions, internal and external power struggles will miss the bright side of the Muslim civilization.

An example is the period of Muslim rule in Spain (called Al-Andalus at the time). This period of Muslim rule in Spain was arguably the only time in European history when Muslims, Jews and Christians lived relatively peacefully and harmoniously together. It was a period when beautiful art, literature, architecture, engineering and scholarship emerged. It is a pity that the history of Al Andalus now stands in stark contrast to what we see in today's fractured world.

Another example is the period of Muslim rule of India. Muslims ruled the country over a large Hindu majority. Yet, in their state administration, they allowed Hindus to reach senior government positions, including in the military. The Mughals brought many changes to India:

- Centralised government that brought together many smaller kingdoms to work together
- Delegated government with respect to human rights
- Persian art and culture
- Persian language mixed with Arabic and Hindi to create Urdu
- Music and poetry
- Periods of great religious tolerance
- A style of architecture (e.g. the Taj Mahal, Shahi Masjid, etc.)

We can turn to the history of Bengal under Muslim rule, in particular the period from 1664-1688 when Shaista Khan (1600-1694) ruled. His reign is sometimes considered as the “Golden Age of Bengal.” It is said that about 295 Kg (8 ‘mon’ in the older scale) of rice could be purchased by one taka (৳) only (cost of living was low as a result of his policies). The reign of Shaista Khan has become a legendary period: 'Shayesta Khaner amol'.

In contrast to the Muslim rule of India, we see a some what dismaying communal rise of Hindu nationalism under the present BJP government in India that aspires to revive a mythical concept of a “Great Hindustan”. But India was never a truly single country under one rule. Before the emergence of Muslim rule, it was a collection of many small states which the Muslim rulers over, and over time unified and brought under a single control where people of all religions and ethnicity lived together. Yet the changes in the India’s present situation in terms of communal rise are something to prove that human civilization is collage in character and not one dimensional.
Yes, throughout human history, there have been emperors and invaders. Perhaps the feature can be attributed to human nature and the existential conditions in which they find themselves. Here, we can term certain of their tendencies as weaknesses. Only in our last century have there been two world wars resulting in loss of millions of souls. We often curse Hitler and Mousseline for fascism and racism; yet, the same undignified ideologies sometimes go unchecked in such things as “national pride”. We often hear world leaders make public roars: “We want to be great again”. Subtle racism, hatred, bigotry and misogynistic tendencies tend slip in. But in today’s world, our humanity does not deserve discrimination, hatred or fear mongering. Our world needs mutual understanding: of race, religions, groups, and subgroups. It is our time to create new history with new understanding. Tolerance, respect, equality: these should be our value.

Now, our mission should be clear, and it should be to raise human consciousness to achieve peaceful co-existence with all. We must also actively work towards removing historical misconceptions about each other, and foster global harmony. We should promote freedom of speech, human rights, democracy, diversity and adhering to the rule of law and justice. We are fortunate to be in a great country such as Canada, where the vast majority of the population cherish those values. We must remain vigilant and uphold these priceless liberties with our heart, mind and soul.

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   -by B D. Metcalf and T.R Metcalf
Islam entered the South Asian region through an act of mercy. Now it may seem strange to describe a military invasion as an act of mercy, but the story is as follows.

In the year 619 CE, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had just lost Abu Talib, his uncle and his main support amongst the tribes of Quraish in Makkah. With the additional loss of his wife Khadijah, Muhammad (peace be upon him) decided to go to the city of Taif with his companion Zaid and preach his message of Islam there.

What followed was described later by the prophet of Islam as the “hardest day of his life”. Not only did the common people of Taif reject his message, but the street urchins and riff raff of the town pelted him and Zaid with stones and rocks. Wounded badly and bleeding profusely, Muhammad (peace be upon him) and Zaid were chased and driven out of Taif, and they took shelter in a small orchard on the outskirts of the town. It is there that the Archangel Jibrail visited him along with the Angel of the Mountains.

“O Prophet of Allah,” Jibrail asked. “If you wish, Allah could order an angel to collapse the two mountains surrounding the people of Taif and crush them (for what they have done to you).”

How did Muhammad (peace be upon him) react? He opted for an act of mercy and not violence. Instead of seeking revenge against the people of Taif, he said to Angel Jibrail, “I rather hope that Allah will raise from among their descendants people who will worship Allah the One, and will not ascribe partners to Him.” Thus the people of Taif were spared by Muhammad (peace be upon him) as an act of mercy. Years later, the city fell to the Muslims in 630 CE, and as foreseen by Muhammad (peace be upon him), many people, children of the ones who had thrown rocks at him, now became Muslim. And from one of these children came Muhammad bin Qasim, who would have a significant role in how Islam came to South Asia.

The year was 711 CE, the same year Spain would fall to the Muslims as well. Pirates had attacked a Muslim ship bound for Arabia from Sri Lanka, and had taken Muslim women and children captive, and were sheltered by the forces of Raja Dahir, who ruled Sindh. When Raja Dahir refused to return the captives to the Muslim Caliph and punish the pirates, a Muslim army, led by a seventeen year old general Muhammad bin Qasim, invaded Sindh. Pretty soon the whole of Sindh and Multan fell to Muslims. With their good governance, kind treatment to minorities and lower taxes, Islam flourished in these lands. And it all came because of an act of mercy by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), so many years earlier.

Islam had also come to the Indian subcontinent via other means. Arab merchants from Bahrain used to trade with cities on the coast of modern day Gujarat since pre-Islam, and these trades multiplied as the Caliphate grew in power. Few Arabs and later Persians who had converted to Islam immigrated to these coastal cities and flourished. Some of them later moved on to as far as Sri Lanka, and thus there were ships going between Arabia and Sri Lanka, stopping all over the western coast of India. The Barwada mosque in Ghogha, Gujarat, India is thought to be the first mosque in South Asia which was built before 623 CE by Arab merchants. Herat in modern day Afghanistan had been part of the Caliphate since 652 CE.

In another early, but disputed, account of Islam in the Malabar region, Muslims are described as descendants of a Hindu king who had seen the miracle of the moon splitting performed by the Muhammad (peace be upon him). A famous Muslim of Malabar descent is the Oscar winning musician A.R. Rahman. On a similar note, many Tamil Muslims on the eastern coasts also claim that they converted to Islam in the Prophet's lifetime. The local mosques there date to the early 700s.

Yet, it cannot be argued that the single most significant event aiding in Islam reaching South Asia was the campaign of Muhammad Bin Qasim. Once Islam reached what is modern day Pakistan, it was simply a matter of time that it would spread to the rest of India. Through business and trade, missionary work by Sufi mystics, and military campaigns by the Ghaznavid Sultanate of Afghanistan, Delhi soon fell to Muslim hands. This inaugurated the Delhi Sultanate, which
would have glorious rulers from diverse families. One of them was Alauddin Khilji, who successfully defended India from the Mongols multiple times (1297 – 1306 CE). Thus, once again, an initial act of mercy by the Prophet of Islam would later protect many Indians, many of whom were not even Muslims, from the barbarism and violence inflicted worldwide by the marauding Mongols.

The golden age of Islam in South Asia would of course be the Mughal Empire, which lasted from 1526 CE to 1707 CE (and then in decline till 1857 CE). At their peak, India’s GDP was estimated to be 24% of the world economy, larger than China and Western Europe. Mughal India was the world leader in manufacturing, producing about 25% of the world's industrial output up until the 18th century. The Mughals were responsible for building an extensive road system, creating a uniform currency, and the unification of the country. The empire had an extensive road network, which was vital to the economic infrastructure, built by a public works department set up by the Mughals which designed, constructed and maintained roads linking towns and cities across the empire, making trade easier to conduct.

Real wages and living standards in 18th-century Mughal Bengal and South India were higher than in Britain, which in turn had the highest living standards in Europe. Today’s architectural masterpieces in South Asia such as the Taj Mahal in Agra, the Badshahi Mosque in Lahore, the Buland Darwaza in Fatehpur Sikiri, Jama Masjid and Red Fort in Delhi, the Lalbagh Fort and Mughal Eidgah in Dhaka – all of them date back to the Mughal era. Astronomy, chemistry, metallurgy, textile, arts and literature flourished under the Muslims in India, in particular the Mughal Empire.

Today, Islam is the second-largest religion in South Asia with about 651 million Muslims, forming about one-third of South Asia's population. South Asia has the largest population of Muslims in the world, with about one-third of all Muslims being from South Asia. Islam is the dominant religion in half of all South Asian countries which are Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Maldives. In India, Islam is the second-largest religion while in Sri Lanka and Nepal it is the third-largest religion. As shown, Muslims have played a prominent role in India's economic rise and cultural influence.

And it all came due to an act of mercy 1440 years ago in a small orchard in Arabia.
Kerala often referred to as God’s own country, has many attractions that set it apart from the rest of India. The story of Islam is only one among others.

It is known for its natural beauty. The National Geographic referred to it as one of the paradises of the world. The state has one of the highest literacy rates in the world, thus leaving all other states of India behind. It also boasts as having the first church, first synagogue as well as the first mosque in India, besides having the richest temple in the world.

Where else in India, one could find a temple, church, and mosque all within ten meters? Thanks to an educated and literate population, it has maintained a remarkable tradition of peaceful co-existence among people of various religions. They all share cultures and customs, while each is keeping its own identity.

Of the three Abrahamic religions, the Christians were the first to arrive in India. They established the First Church in 52 AD. The Jews followed them and built several synagogues. And finally, Muslims arrived. thanks to the ancient trade routes and a tradition of seafaring going back to ancient times, Arabs have been frequenting the Malabar coast and other parts of Kerala from pre-Islamic times.

Soon after the rise of Islam and the expansion of the Islamic state, especially during the golden era of the Abbasids, trading through seafaring intensified. According to geographers and historians, Islam took roots and spread in various parts of Kerala.

There is an intense debate among historians about the precise dating of the arrival of Islam in Kerala. According to legends, shared by both Hindus and Muslims, Islam arrived in Kerala during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

A story circulated among both the Hindus and Muslims states that Cheraman Perumal, a Hindu king, was the first one to embrace Islam. He had a vision of the Prophet (peace be upon him); and he travelled to Arabia to meet him.

Surprisingly, there exists a report in Mustadrak of Hakim stating that a Hindu King came and presented the Prophet with a gift box containing, among other exotic items, ginger pieces! And the Prophet (peace be upon him), shared them among his companions. The king embraced Islam, and the Prophet named him Tajuddeen, and after performing the pilgrimage, he returned to India with the avowed mission of spreading Islam.

On his way back, he fell ill and passed away in (present-day) Salalah, Oman. There is a tomb bearing his name, which still attracts the visitors. I also had the opportunity to visit the grave.

The story goes to say that before his death, he sent a letter to his relatives, commissioning them to gift a plot of land for building a mosque. The leader of the delegation was Malik b. Dinar. Accordingly, the first mosque was built in Kodungallur (Thrissur District, Kerala). This mosque is known as Cheraman Juma Masjid (named after the king); the date marked on the building is 629 AD!

Based on this, some historians and scholars believe that Islam began spreading in Kerala, starting from the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) himself. Two factors facilitated the spread of Islam: Firstly, the Hindu kings developed remarkable cordial relations with the Arab-Muslim merchants. They offered them generous gifts of lands for building mosques and houses.

Another factor was the number of conversions, especially among lower caste Hindus and untouchable who were attracted to Islam for escaping caste inequalities.

Thanks to the speedy spread of Islam, several historic
mosques were built in various parts of all Kerala. All of them bearing the same standard features, and patterns of architect and materials used in temples, churches, and synagogues of the early period.

The fact at least a dozen mosques were built in the early years speaks to the growth of Islamic influence in Kerala and their economic and social status enjoyed among Hindus.

However, the Muslim fortune started declining speedily soon after the arrival of colonialists, the Portuguese, Dutch followed by the British. The foreign invaders found Muslims to be the strongest in resisting the foreign occupation. So, naturally, they tried hard to crush the power and influence of Muslims.

They worked to pit Hindus and Muslims against each other by playing their age-old game of 'divide and rule'.

Muslim hatred of foreigners was responsible for their refusal to embrace modern education and ideas. Such an attitude sadly resulted in their backwardness. Muslims thus came to be occupying the lowest strata of Kerala society, while their Hindu and Christian brothers vigorously embraced modern education and ideas.

It was in this context several reformers, social activists and scholars came forward to stir up Muslims to take up the new challenges. The most prominent of them was Vakkam Moulavi (1873-1932 CE). He strove to popularize education and fought against superstitions and harmful social customs prevailing among Muslims. Others soon joined him working to improve the conditions of Muslims educationally, socially and politically. The names of such luminaries include K. M. Moulavi (18-1964); my uncle, V.P. Muhammad Ali Haji (1912-1959; Bafaqi Thangal (1906-1973); E.K. Abu Bakr Musaliar (d. 1996) and many others.

Thanks to the work of such luminaries and other men of literature, the condition of Muslims took a giant stride. The Gulf (economic) Boom helped the process. Thanks to the strident efforts of such visionaries, presently there is a virtual educational and intellectual boom among the Muslims of Kerala. Hundreds of beautiful mosques and dozens of colleges and educational institutions decorate the landscape of Kerala.

There is also an unprecedented growth of literature, print-electronic, as well as cultural and art media thriving that has no parallel anywhere in India.

*(Ahmad Kutty is the resident scholar and senior lecturer at the Islamic Institute of Toronto. Previously, he has served as the Director and Imam of Jami Mosque and Islamic Foundation of Toronto. He is listed among the The 500 Most Influential Muslims in the World (ed. by Professor John Esposito & Professor Ibrahim Kalin of Georgetown University).*

Following the success of these banks, some Bangladeshi business houses came forward to set up the first Islamic bank in March, 1983. The unprecedented success of this bank inspired other groups of businessmen and individuals to set up Islamic banks. During the short span of time between 1999 and 2004, more five banks, al-Arfa, Social Islami, First Security, Exim, Shajalal and later on Union Banks came into being.

The major motivation for setting up of Islamic bank was to get rid of the curse of interest and the business success of the Islamic banks, setting unparalleled institutional and administrative discipline in the banking sector. Their success also motivated the foreign banks like HSBC and Chartered Banks to open Islamic Banking Window for attracting deposits and investment in Islamic modes from the Muslim clients.

The global success of Islamic Banking has remarkably captured the interest of both Islamic and contemporary economists. A great economic historian William N Parker (1993), observes that the introduction of Islamic banking principles by various western bankers have shown a positive results which indicates that Islamic banking systems can work effectively in both developed as well as developing nations regardless of religious boundary. The western bankers have got
amazed to see the resilience and strength of Islamic banking around 2007-2008 when conventional banks of the West crashed in great financial crisis, Islamic banks stood firm without any significant effect of the crisis in their activities. The introduction of interest-free and equity-based Islamic banking system, proved its solid strength and significance in the country's banking sector which continued to show strong growth since its inception in 1983. Islamic Banks of today have successfully used the classical tools of Islamic finance like Musharika(partnership), Mudariba(equity participation), Murabaha (trade financing with cost plus) Ijara(leasing), Sukuk(bond) and many other tools instead of interest—the sine qua non of modern banking. Islamic banking has also developed most modern banking products such as ATM services, internet banking, payment gateway, mobile banking, consumer and investment banking and so on which earned both efficiency and popularity for the Islamic banking. So, there is no wonder, when Global Finance, an US-based reputed quarterly awarded Islami Bank of Bangladesh Ltd as the best bank in the country for the years 1999,2000,2004 and 2005 among the total 59 banks in the country.

As of March 2019, Bangladesh bank reported the position of development of Islamic banking in Bangladesh in different criteria of performance as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>All banks</th>
<th>Islamic banks</th>
<th>Share of Islamic banks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deposit</td>
<td>Tk 1,023,206.20 / $16,047.77</td>
<td>Tk 242,118.8 /$3,797.34</td>
<td>23.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>Tk 981,980.2 /$15,401.49</td>
<td>Tk 237,279.2 /$3,721.44</td>
<td>24.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excess Liquidity</td>
<td>Tk 63,921.86 /$1002.53</td>
<td>Tk 3793.74 /$59.50</td>
<td>8.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of branches</td>
<td>10,387</td>
<td>1252</td>
<td>12.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remittance</td>
<td>Tk 36,764.0 /$576.60</td>
<td>Tk 8,337.75 /$130.53</td>
<td>22.67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As of March 2019, Bangladesh bank reported the position of development of Islamic banking in Bangladesh in different criteria of performance as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance in Profitability</th>
<th>Islamic Banks</th>
<th>Conventional Banks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Return on Assets</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return on Equity</td>
<td>11.712</td>
<td>10.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classified Investment (credit) to Investment</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classified Investment (credit) to capital</td>
<td>39.88</td>
<td>59.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital adequacy ratio</td>
<td>12.09</td>
<td>11.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Islamic Banking in Bangladesh, (Gulzare Nabi & Asma Akter et al, 2013)

Eight full-fledged Islamic banks are operating with 1252 branches out of total 10387 branches of 59 banks in the banking industry of the country. In addition, 19 Islamic banking branches of 9 conventional commercial banks and 25 Islamic banking windows of 8 conventional commercial banks are also providing Islamic financial services in the country. At the end of the January-March 2019 quarter, deposits and investments, of Islamic banking industry grew by 0.61%, 4.00% respectively while surplus liquidity declined by 41% from the previous quarter. A comparative performance report as released by Bangladesh bank, Islamic Banking Industry accounted for more than one-fifth (21%) share of the entire banking industry in terms of deposits and investments at the end of the Jan-March quarter of the year 2019.

Comparative performance report of Bangladesh Bank on Islamic Banks as at the end of Jan-march quarter, 2019:

Not only in profitability and operational efficiency, Islamic banks have contributed in many other aspects of social life in Bangladesh.

By default, every Islamic has to establish a shariah board which reviews the bank’s transactions to see its
compliance with the shariah. The board is very powerful because the management can not side track its decision. The shariah boards of the Islamic banks have set up a central shariah board for all Islamic banks. This Central board is undertaking constant research on various modes of investments, giving solutions to problems that the individual shariah board can not resolve. Reputed scholars are working with the Central Shariah Board. As a result it has started an Islamic knowledge movement in the fields of economics, commerce and finance.

The second most important aspect of Islamic banking is that it has initiated and set up Islamic insurance and tactful companies to take care of the risks of life and death of the people. The takaful companies have in fact given a new light in raising the quality of life in Bangladesh along with Islamic banks. Because these institutions have created a new history of businesses’ corporate social responsibility. Corporate social responsibility of the corporations was long debated in the West before its adoption by the corporations. But Islamic banks, along with their establishment set up Foundations to carry on various sorts of humanitarian activities to woo the suffering of people in their hard times. Not only that, it has set up many medical and health centres in their operational area and continuing to add to these institutions with their forward going. These banks have set up many high quality educational institutions for academic upliftment as well as setting up technical and vocational training schools to create immediate job opportunity for the poor young unemployed and job-seeking.

Some Islamic banks have take up poverty reduction programs with the finance of zakat from their foundations and investment portfolio of the banks(MA Raqib,Islamic Baning and zakat-An Alternative Approach to Poverty Reduction in Bangladesh,2011)). And their success in this program is laudatory. All these activities have taken the banks to the people at large and focused on its robust potential of ever increasing expansion.

Thus, taking all these phenomena together, to say honestly and rightly, it is the Islamic banks which have started what has been called in the current banking jargon as the ‘welfare Banking’ in Bangladesh.

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Baitul Mukarram
National Mosque

Baitul Mukarram, also spelled as Baytul Mukarrom is the National Mosque of Bangladesh. Located at the center of Dhaka, capital of Bangladesh, the mosque was completed in 1968. It has a capacity of 40,000.
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EATING & LIVING HALAL IN TORONTO

BY SALMAN ASHRAF

The Metro Toronto Convention Centre is one of the largest gathering spots in Canada. On a regular basis it hosts a variety of events, including political conventions, annual general meetings, and the annual university fairs. Another annual event that is hosted yearly at the Metro Convention Centre is the Reviving the Islamic Spirit (RIS), a multi day conference that occurs during the weekend preceding Christmas. For the first time in 2016 my family and I decided to attend this conference. Throughout the two days we heard from different speakers on a wide range of topics and were able to learn from their experiences. However, for me the truly remarkable part of the conference was just being amongst my fellow brothers and sisters of Islam. It was a sight to behold, seeing so many individuals willing to spend part of their four day weekend to invest in themselves in an effort to become better Muslims. Attendees at the conference included people of all ages and race. It showed me that anyone can be a Muslim, regardless of cultural background, and was truly representative of the diversity in Canada. For the first time in a long time I felt a real sense of belonging.

In January of 2019 I attended the Microsoft Ignite Conference at the centre. This two day event aimed to showcase a variety of Microsoft’s new products and services, but what stood out for me was their lunch options. As I’ve done many times in the past, my food preferences was Halal if possible otherwise vegetarian. Much to my surprise Microsoft had decided to serve Halal chicken for all participants. Had this been a conference 20 years ago, when my parents immigrated to Canada, I would have had to have the vegetarian option and maybe 10 years ago they would have select Halal options. But in 2019 eating Halal at a major tech conference was easy. The availability of Halal food is truly an excellent representation of how far Islam has come in North American society.

Eating Halal, while being a fundamental part of Islam, can be a foreign concept for many immigrants because in the country they emigrated from, it was all around them. In the six years I spent in Dubai, before moving to Canada, we never discussed Halal because it was the norm. It was only after moving to Canada did this become something to consider. When we first moved here, grocery stores didn’t carry Halal meat and restaurant options were few. Despite the limited availability, my parents always ensured that the meat we ate was always Halal. This conscious effort by them and many other Muslims is one of the reasons why I can now buy Halal chicken and beef at my local Costco. For a Muslim growing up in Toronto this is a refreshing change and makes me proud to see how integrated our religion has become in North American society.

While our parents have championed the cause and instilled the right values in us, the Muslim youth carry the task of continuing the legacy. Whenever I’m given the option I always make the effort to ask for Halal; at minimum this informs all event organizers that it is an option they should keep in mind. The transformation might be happening slowly, but it’s great to see it happening. Certain work events now have provided Halal options and my colleagues always try to buy Halal meat for our team potlucks.

I will admit that there used to be a time when I found it easier to say I’m vegetarian instead of explaining Halal, but I eventually realized that just hides who I am and doesn’t help my fellow Muslims. The more we make an effort to promote Halal, the easier it becomes for all of us to practice our religion. Our parents, or earlier generations, moved to Canada in an effort to make this our new home. We owe it to them to make this happen, but at the same time ensure the core components of our religion (Halal, Salah, Ramadan, Eid, etc.) are rightfully preserved.
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The Caliphate (929-1031) and The Independent Emirate (756-929) are important periods in Islamic history. The Caliphate was a time of relative unity and stability, whereas the Independent Emirate was marked by internal conflicts and divisions. These periods played a crucial role in shaping the Islamic world and its interactions with other cultures.

The Caliphate was established under the Umayyad dynasty, with the capital at Damascus. It was a significant political and cultural center, with the caliphs serving as both religious and political leaders. The Caliphate was succeeded by the Abbasid Caliphate, which moved its capital to Baghdad. The Abbasids were known for their patronage of the arts and sciences, and their rule saw the flowering of Islamic culture.

The Independent Emirate, on the other hand, was a fragmented period characterized by the rise of the independent Arab states, or emirates, that emerged after the disintegration of the Umayyad Caliphate. This period was marked by political unrest and power struggles among the various emirates, which often led to wars and conflicts.

The study of these periods is crucial for understanding the development of Islamic civilization and its interactions with the wider world. The lessons learned from this history can provide valuable insights into contemporary issues and challenges facing the Islamic world today.
711 In 1014 The Islamic Caliphate of al-Andalus is divided into smaller independent states, known as the taifa states. The taifa states were ruled by local rulers who maintained their own independent governments. The taifa states were often at war with each other and with the Umayyad Caliphate of Cordoba.

The taifa states were characterized by a strong local identity, with each state having its own language, customs, and laws. The taifa states were also known for their patronage of the arts and sciences, and for their rich cultural heritage.

The taifa states were short-lived, with most of them falling to the Umayyad Caliphate of Cordoba by 1147. However, the legacy of the taifa states lived on in the cultural and intellectual achievements of al-Andalus.

In conclusion, the taifa states were a significant period in the history of al-Andalus, characterized by a strong local identity, a rich cultural heritage, and a legacy that continues to influence the region today.
The Dependent Emirate (711-756)
1120 Cincinnati Muslim History

1080 Cincinnati with Dickens' characters. The city served as a backdrop for the novel "Murder in Cincinnati" by Almavarda. The novel follows the life of a Muslim family in Cincinnati, exploring themes of identity, culture, and tradition.

The novel also delves into the struggles of the Muslim community in the city, particularly in the context of discrimination and prejudice. The story highlights the importance of understanding and respecting diverse cultures and religions.

The book is a rich tapestry of Cincinnati's history, blending fact and fiction to create a compelling narrative that resonates with readers of all backgrounds.
The Caliphate (929-1031)

...
The Almoravid Era (1031-1130)

The Almoravids were a Berber dynasty that arose in Maghreb and ruled in al-Andalus, Tunisia, and parts of modern-day Morocco, Algeria, and Mauritania. They were notable for their military campaigns, which led to the conquest of large territories in the Iberian Peninsula and North Africa. The Almoravids also played a significant role in the spread of Islam and the development of Islamic civilization in the region.

The Almoravid Empire was established by Yusuf ibn Tashfin in 1031 and eventually reached its peak under his successors. During their reign, the Almoravids adopted the traditional Sunni interpretation of Islam,区别于此前的柏柏尔穆斯林，从而在宗教和文化上与原住民群体产生了冲突。他们还实施了一系列改革，如建立中央集权的行政系统，发展农业和手工业，以及推广伊斯兰教。

The Almoravids were known for their military prowess, particularly in the Battle of Zamora in 1086, where they defeated the Christian forces. However, they faced significant challenges in the Iberian Peninsula, where they were pitted against powerful Christian kingdoms such as Aragon, Castile, and León.

The Almoravid Empire eventually declined due to internal divisions and external pressures. By the early 12th century, the Almoravids were pushed back to their core area in western Morocco and southern Algeria, and the Almoravid dynasty eventually collapsed in 1147.

Despite their eventual decline, the Almoravids left a lasting legacy on the region. Their rule brought stability and prosperity to their territories, and they are remembered for their contribution to the development of Islamic civilization in the Maghreb and Iberian Peninsula.
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The Almoravid Era (1031-1130)

The Caliphate (929-1031)

Decline (1130-1492)
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38

The Caliphate (929-1031)

The Muslim empire during the Rule of the Abbasid Caliphs was in its decline. The Caliphate of Al-Andalus, also known as Islamic Spain, was on the verge of collapse. The Christian forces, particularly the north African Almohad dynasty, were gaining strength and expanding their territories. This period saw a resurgence of Islamic military campaigns, especially the Battle of Alarcos in 1086, which marked the beginning of the end for the Muslim rule in Iberia.

The Battle of Alarcos was a conflict between the Almoravid and Almohad forces under the command of Yusuf ibn Tashfin and the Christian forces led by Alfonso VI of León and Castile. The battle took place in 1086 AD, and it marked a significant turning point in the history of the Iberian Peninsula.

The battle was fought near the city of Alarcos, and it resulted in a decisive victory for the Christian forces. The Muslim forces suffered heavy losses, and the battle marked the end of the Muslim rule in Iberia.

The battle of Alarcos was a significant event in the history of the Iberian Peninsula, as it marked the beginning of the end for the Muslim rule in Iberia. The Christian forces gained control of the region, and the battle paved the way for the Reconquista, a period of Christian expansion and the recapture of territories from the Muslims.
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Mosques of Bangladesh
Sonargaon is a historic city in central Bangladesh. It is one of the old capitals of the historic region of Bengal and was an administrative center of eastern Bengal. It was also a port and trading center. During British colonial rule, merchants built many Indo-Saracenic townhouses in the Panam neighborhood. Sonargaon was central to the muslin trade in Bengal.

Islamic Institute of Toronto

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