

# Al-Ameen Mission

## NEWSLETTER

Issue 7-8, Feb'15-Jul'15

Say, "O disbelievers,  
I do not worship what you  
worship. Nor are you  
worshippers of what I worship.  
Nor will I be a worshipper of what  
you worship. Nor will you be  
worshippers of what I worship.  
For you is your religion,  
and for me is my religion."  
Surah Kafirun, No. 109 (Verses 1 to 6)

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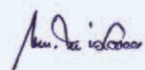
### Editorial

We believe that while change isn't always easy, it is inevitable. Francis J. Brown remarks that education is a process which brings about changes in the behavior of society. We cannot agree more.

Long ago when Pakistan was carved out of India's rib, many Muslims crossed over to the new country. Bengal, in particular, was badly hit. It was some sort of a watershed for the Muslim community in the state. Gradually, it dawned upon a minuscule section of the community that we should change from within. An ancient adage says, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." This holds true even today. Almost three decades back, we began our journey with a single step with a single weapon in our arsenal. That weapon was education. Since then, our journey has continued unabated despite many hiccups.

The behavioral changes we were talking about are palpable now. Each year, thousands of families throng in our campuses to admit their children. The parents are realising that if they educate their children, it would be beneficial for the family. And in turn, the whole community will thrive in many ways. Al-Ameen Mission, for sure, can take some of the credit for this monumental change.

Each year, our boys and girls make us proud with their superb results in various examinations. As a result, the whole community definitely gets a morale booster. This year too there is no exception. If we look at the Madhyamik results, 723 students appeared for the examination. Near about 98 per cent of them passed in the first division. Of them, 613 students got above 75 percent marks. Md Hasib Hossain came first among the Mission students having scored 665 (95%) marks. He is probably ranked 19<sup>th</sup> in the merit list of the state. In the Higher Secondary, 1359 students appeared, out of which 1102 students got above 75 percent marks. Syed Ramizul Kabir came first among the students of the Mission with 475 (95%) marks. Safina Khatun with 467 (93.4%) marks came third but stood first among the girls. Md Boni Amin with 468 (93.6%) marks came second. But the remarkable result came from JEE (Medical). For the first time in the annals of Al-Ameen Mission, nearly 250 students will get the opportunity to study medicine. Among these students, there will be at least 42 girls. Isn't it a silver lining in the sky?

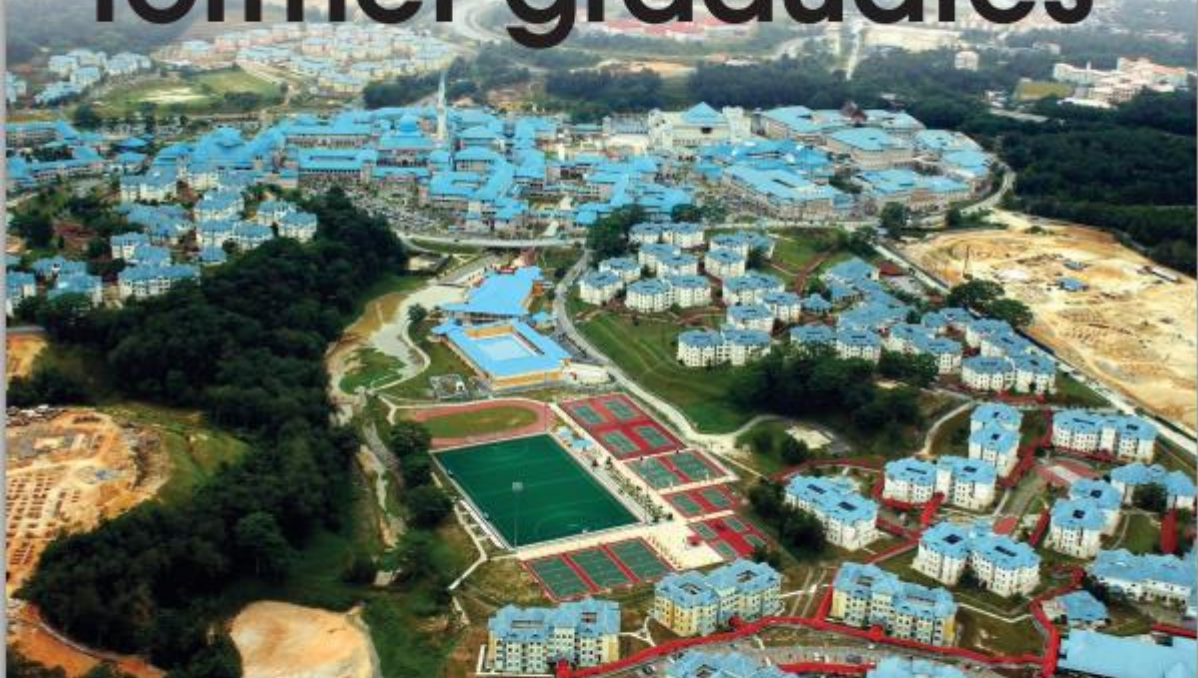
  
M Nurul Islam



SPECIAL STORY

## International Islamic University Malaysia

# In the eyes of former graduates



### Prof Rafikul Islam

International Islamic University Malaysia or IIUM is widely regarded as one of the best Islamic Universities in the Muslim world. We have already provided a detailed description of the University in the last issue. It was mentioned that the university provides quality education in various branches of Islamic studies and also offers bachelors, masters, and doctoral programmes in other areas, such as Engineering, Medicine, Laws, Economics and Business Administration, Architecture, ICT, and so on. Since its inception in 1983, the University has progressed by leaps and bounds. The University has produced numerous graduates who hold honourable positions in their respective job careers in either their own countries or elsewhere. In this issue, we present views and experiences of some of the former graduates. Note that Quazi Shoyweeb and Rusidha Muhiyaddin Mubarak's views are in the first person account.

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## **Quazi Shoyweeb (Faisal)**

*Senior Computer Programmer, General Electric (USA)*



I learned to dream from my father, a strong man with clear vision for a better life surrounded by boundless love, faith, care and confidence of my great mum on him. I saw my dad closely taking challenges of life (the challenges what all middle class families face on earth) with his limited capacity but with all his honesty, immense pa-

tience and wisdom and I saw how those all God-gifted qualities of him brought good to the family. Both my parents and my two wonderful sweet sisters helped me to lighten the first though in my mind about what I actually want and what should be my goal in my early age, which gradually asked me to define my own standard, the standard where I belong.

As wise people always say, 'where there is a will, there is a way', and it is so true for those who just started walking on the path of life or the one who is walking for long. My walking towards the goal started in year 2001. And I can tell you that the very first step which I took with the support of my family was full of dreams and hopes but not knowing what will be coming tomorrow. Indeed that was the toughest decision we made, at least for my kind who never spends a single day without his mum. I came out from my country and started perusing my undergraduate at International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM).

I heard about IIUM for the first time from a family friend of ours called 'Nasser', who was visiting Bangladesh in year 2000. Brother Nasser was IIUM senior student from Department of Computer Engineering and during his stay, I came to know more about the campus, people, their culture and the country itself. With mostly all his explanations or detail layout, for my emotions and excitements were uttering a single word again and again, 'owau'!

I enrolled myself in the department of Information and Communication Technology at IIUM and from there my journey began. Indeed Malaysia is a beautiful country but when I first saw IIUM campus it was just like a pearl. I am not exaggerating. Till today I couldn't find such a beautiful campus like IIUM. And what still wonders me a lot is how maturely IIUM first implemented the core standard of our Islamic norms beside all the highest development and the achievement they are having today.

IIUM is located just 30 minutes away from Kuala

Lumpur. But as soon as anyone enters into the campus, will feel calm, modest and peace from the environment itself. The unique Mosque of IIUM is located right at the centre of campus and when the beautiful azan is made, that echoes from far green mountains that surround IIUM. During the orientation week, I met with almost 92 countries' students on campus. Oh, and getting lost in that huge campus during your first and second week is very common but asking others will let you realize how friendly they are. As I am very fond of good food, I can assure that you will find its best variations there too. Not only you can get various Asian flavours but also number of Middle East cuisines. 'Ummatic Week' is an art which IIUM organizes every year with all its colours and enjoying such cultural diversities with all your friends around the globe is really amazing.

Academically, IIUM provides the best field experts. Any newcomer like me may find IIUM very competitive at first glance but within one or two semesters you will start loving that nature. For me it worked that way only because the courses I took were very up to date and taught by top professionals. Various tough and detailed projects which I completed during my course work were well guided. My department labs were well equipped and their easy access always helped me and my team to stay ahead. Besides not only academic excellence, IIUM does take care of Islamic values. Therefore, with my entire field (Information Technology) related curriculum I took University required 36 credits from Department of Islamic Revealed Knowledge which were mandatory for graduation. Moreover, IIUM also made compulsory to take Arabic courses in two levels where expectation was after completing those two levels, any student will have a good command on Arabic communication and writing. I was not exempted from IIUM Tilawah courses also. In these 2-level graduation requirement courses IIUM wants to make sure that every graduate will know how to recite Quran in its best form and memorize at least last 10/15 surahs by heart. Combination of field expertise and these Islamic studies at least to me give every IIUM graduates a different meaning.

Indeed my four-year duration at IIUM was a blessing. Not all days were the same, hardships were there, and sacrifices were made but above all IIUM gave me a lot. With the standard IIUM gave, I came to USA just after my graduation and enrolled into State University at New York (SUNY), University at Albany for completing my Masters in Computer Science. And after Masters now I am working for General Electric (GE) as Sr Computer Programmer Analyst. Alhamdulillah! I am very much thankful to Allah SWT for all His blessings.

It was just a dream-right? But dreams never become reality unless you work hard for it. The decision which I and my family took in 2001 changed the whole perspective of my life. May be without that one decision I could never see this beautiful world like the way I can see today.



## SPECIAL STORY

### Dr Md Saidul Islam

Assistant Professor of Sociology, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore



Dr Md Saidul Islam, originally from Bangladesh, is a Canadian citizen. He completed his bachelor degree in Sociology and Anthropology from International Islamic University Malaysia in 2000. He did exceptionally well in his study and received the Royal Education Award, the most prestigious academic award at IIUM, in the convocation held in the year 2000. He became the top student in terms of academic record and leadership qualities. After that, he pursued his MA and PhD studies from York University in Canada with the Graduate Fellowship for Academic Distinction (GFAD). GFAD is one of the most prestigious fellowships in Canada, and Saidul is the only student in the history of York University who got this fellowship twice—both in MA and PhD programmes.

He completed his PhD degree in 2008, and started teaching at York University. He moved to the United States and taught at the College of William and Mary, one of the top-five public Universities and the second oldest University next to Harvard in the United States. Currently he is Assistant Professor of Sociology (tenure-track) at Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore. NTU is a top research-intensive Asian University with a strong global focus, ranked 39th in the world (QS World University Ranking 2014).

Saidul is now a well-known environmental sociologist. His works are widely cited by scholars and used as course readings in many Universities across the globe including Harvard University. He produced two books entitled *Development, Power and the Environment: Neoliberal Paradox in the Age of Vulnerability* (Routledge, New York, 2013) and *Confronting the Blue Revolution: Industrial Aquaculture and Sustainability in the Global South* (University of Toronto Press, 2014). Currently he is working

with Palgrave Macmillan for the third book *Social Justice in the Globalization of Production: Labor, Gender and the Environment Nexus* (under contract). He also has over two dozen articles published in edited volumes and in various peer-reviewed journals such as *Science*, *Food Policy*, *Society and Natural Resources*, *Journal of South Asian Development* and *Nature and Culture*. The publication in *Science* ('Global Food Supply: Certify Sustainable Aquaculture?') is particularly significant. The academic journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, *Science* is one of the world's most influential publications whose articles are routinely cited, garnering it an impact factor of 31.447 in 2013. He has also contributed quite substantially in various encyclopaedias such as *Green Food*, *Green Culture*, and *Green Ethics and Philosophy* (SAGE Publications). He had been a regular peer reviewer and a member of the editorial board (appointed) of the *Journal of Sustainable Development* (2008-2012). He can be reached at [msaidul@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:msaidul@ntu.edu.sg)

### Fouzia Amin

Adjunct Faculty, Amity University, Dubai

Fouzia Amin came to Malaysia from the beautiful valley of Kashmir to pursue her higher education. She started her Bachelors in Business Administration from International Islamic University Malaysia in 1997. With her determination to excel, she fared well in her studies, leading her to receive Dean's list award several times. The Dean's list awards, which were given to top achievers every semester, served as a great source of encouragement and motivation for IIUM students. Upon graduation, she received two awards, *Petroleum Nasional Berhad*







(PETRONAS) Award and Bank Industry Malaysia Berhad Award during the September 2001 convocation ceremony. She was also awarded as the Best Student in Academics and Best Overall Student.

While doing her Bachelor's degree at IIUM, she passed an examination under Securities Commission Malaysia that qualified her as a derivatives trader in the then Kuala Lumpur Options and Financial Futures Exchange (KLOFFE), which is now under Bursa Malaysia. Though the examination is very competitive, the IIUM students have a good track record of qualifying in it.

After completing her Bachelor's degree she received a scholarship from University of Leicester, United Kingdom, to study her Masters in Business Analysis & Finance. While continuing her Masters, she got an opportunity to teach undergraduate programmes as a Teaching Assistant for over a year. She completed her Masters with a Merit and received distinction in her thesis.

After completing her Masters, she returned to Kashmir, where she worked in the banking sector for more than a year. During this time, she was In-charge of the Corporate Economic & Planning Unit of J&K Bank, one of the renowned banks in India. She conducted various trainings at the Staff Training College. The topics ranged from Risk Management to the latest trends in the Banking & Financial sector. She also conducted various Guest Lectures at the University of Kashmir during this period.

She returned to Malaysia and worked as a Lecturer in Limkokwing University of Creative Technology for over six years. During her academic career, she wrote various articles in journals including Journal of Economic Studies. She has also co-authored two chapters in the book *Investing in Islamic Funds: A Practitioner's Perspective* which was published by Wiley. Fouzia is also an international reviewer for Pearson Publications.

To maintain the work life balance, with small kids, she has currently taken up the Adjunct Faculty position in Amity University, Dubai. She can be contacted at fouz.amin@gmail.com

## **Rusidha Muhiyaddin Mubarak**

*Lecturer, Asia Pacific University Malaysia*

I am Rusidha Muhiyaddin Mubarak (formerly known as Rusidha Thoufeek), a Sri Lankan citizen, graduated from the IIUM in the year 2011 with MBA specialization in Islamic Banking and Finance. Prior to joining the IIUM, I had obtained a second class upper degree from the University of Hertfordshire, UK. I have written a thesis for my MBA on the title 'Challenges and Prospect for foreign Islamic banks in Malaysia'. I had also lectured in many countries which includes the Maldives and Sri Lanka. As a degree



student I have been awarded merit awards twice and I have actively participated in many events in the University.

As of now after completing the MBA, I am currently holding a position of a lecturer at Asia Pacific University Malaysia and have been doing pretty well. Choosing IIUM actually made me achieve so many goals and gave me the insight of the most precious knowledge of Islamic values. At IIUM I got opportunity to meet several students and lecturers from different countries which opened up diversity of knowledge in me which I am utilizing in my career right now. The exposure of the University and the underlying values of IIUM can really shape up a person.

I am proud and happy that I had chosen the IIUM for my higher education and it is splendid to know that I am a graduate from that University. The University hosts many events which are worth to join and you will never feel lonely as you have no time for loneliness. ■