



## IEQ Update

Volume 1 | Issue 1 | Jumada 1, 1430/April 2009

# IEQ Newsletter

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَشْكُرَهُ لَوْلَا رَحْمَتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْنَا لَكُنَّا مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

I hope this message finds you in the best of health and *Iman*.

This *IEQ* newsletter is intended to keep you updated with developments in the project. We plan to send it out, at irregular intervals, as the project moves ahead.

This first newsletter provides up-to-date information about the following aspects:

- Project Background
- Institutional Structure
- International Advisory Board
- Editorial Board
- Website
- Entries
- Publication Schedule
- Institutional Support
- Finances
- Future Activities

### PROJECT BACKGROUND

The *IEQ* project began as *CEQ*, that is the *Concise Encyclopedia of the Qur'an* in 2007. Its initial conception, as a concise reference work containing some 350 entries, was based on the same *raison d'être* as of *IEQ* (this can be found at [www.iequran.com](http://www.iequran.com)), but due to limited financial resources available, it was to be a concise reference work.

The initial phase consisted of the selection of entries with the help of two brothers here in Canada. We looked at the classical thematic schema of the Qur'an and derived our entries from that scheme.

In February 2008, I was in Islamabad, Pakistan, where Dr. Zafar Ishaq Ansari, Vice-President, International Islamic University, Islamabad, invited me to give a talk on the project to a small gathering. After the talk, brother Kazi Zulkader Siddiqui asked: why is it "concise", and not grand or full or something like that?"

"Finances only allow a concise encyclopedia at this stage," I replied.

"Do not worry about the finances, we will raise all the necessary funds."

This unexpected help was the turning point for *CEQ*. But, I did not really think that there would be the required funding for a larger project and when nothing seemed to happen for almost a year—the time during which brothers Kazi Zulkader and Dr. Junaid, who had joined the effort upon Kazi Zulkader's suggestion, attempted to establish a society in Pakistan.

A society was finally registered in December 2008. The establishment of a legal entity, the Society for Qur'anic Studies, paved the way for institutional cooperation between the Center for Islam and Science (Canada) and the Society for Qur'anic Studies (Pakistan) for undertaking this project which started to gain momentum at the beginning of 2009.

<http://www.iequran.com>

## **INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE**

### **SOCIETY FOR QUR'ANIC STUDIES (SQS)**

SQS and the Center for Islam and Science (www.cis-ca.org), CIS, then joined hands to provide the institutional structure for the project. The two institutions have signed a memorandum of understanding, that provides the legal basis for our cooperation and spells out details of what is expected from each other as well as division of work.

### **INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD**

We are still in the process of adding members to the International Advisory Board. So far, we have received confirmation from two scholars: M. M. Azami and Zafar Ishaq Ansari.

### **EDITORIAL BOARD**

*Al-hamdu Lillah*, we have been blessed to have some distinguished scholars join our efforts. Please see the IEQ website (www.iequran.com) for the current editorial board.

### **GENERAL CONSULTANT**

Adi Setia is our General Consultant; he has been extremely helpful in fine-tuning many aspects of the project; may Allah reward him.

### **FULL-TIME STAFF FOR THE PROJECT**

Dr. Gibril Haddad will be working full-time on the IEQ project from May 1, 2009, *insha'Allah*.

### **INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT**

We are seeking support from various institutions, including universities and research centers devoted to scholarly activities. This worldwide effort has yielded some results and we have official backing for the project from a number of institutions. Please see the website for further details.

### **WEBSITE**

We are hoping to build our new website soon. The current website is merely a draft version; a professional firm has offered its services free of cost through

Kazi Zulkader's contacts and they are now working on designing the website. Dr Waqas Ahmad is the contact person for this; if you have any suggestions, please direct them to him through [ieq@iequran.com](mailto:ieq@iequran.com).

### **ENTRIES**

There will be nearly 650 entries in six volumes; the seventh volume will consist of indices. This list has gone through several revisions and as I write these lines, it is going through one final check. We are also adding references to "cross/blind entries". These entries have no content of their own, but will direct the reader to the entry with content. In this, we are trying to anticipate different readers' search orientation.

These entries are the heart of the project and at the moment, our greatest effort is to find appropriate scholars and assign entries to them. We hope that we will be able to attract the best scholarship available. The project write-up provides basic information about the kind of scholarship we are looking at, the kind of scholars we hope to attract and the kind of work IEQ will be. If you know of any scholar who meets the criteria, please let us know.

### **PUBLICATION SCHEDULE**

We are planning to publish the first volume of IEQ in Ramadan 1432, which begins on August 1, 2011. Thereafter, we will publish one volume each Ramadan until the project completes, *bi-idhni'Llah*. We expect our tasks to become easier as we move forward; the greatest challenge now is the setting up of proper procedures, finding scholars, and having everyone work with deadlines.

### **OTHER PUBLISHING ASPECTS**

We had negotiated with Brepols Publishers (Belgium), but after accepting the project on our terms (that is, a work by Muslim scholars), they changed their position and dictated their own terms for the text. Finally, it has been decided to publish IEQ ourselves. This will provide us an opportunity to formerly establish an international effort which can be of use in future as well. We will still cooperate with various existing

Muslim publishers in different countries to reach out to the maximum number of markets.

There will be different editions of IEQ, *insha'Allah*, suited to different markets and needs.

### **FINANCES**

IEQ is a private initiative. Its funding has so far come from individuals and businesses. We continue to expand our fund-raising activities. There are some indications that, in addition to Pakistan and Canada, from where all the funds have come so far, we may be able to organize fund-raising activities in other countries. If you have contacts in any country where such events can be hosted, please let us know. Other suggestions are also welcomed.

### **TRANSPARENCY**

IEQ is a joint project of CIS (Canada) and SQS (Pakistan). CIS has existed for a decade now. It is a registered charity, legally registered in Alberta, Canada, as well as a recognized non-profit organization with Revenue Canada. As such, it follows the rules and regulations of the Canadian government for its annual auditing. We have established a separate bank account for IEQ and all funds are deposited and disbursed from that account.

SQS is, likewise, operating under Pakistani laws and although it is a new organization, everyone involved with SQS has a long record of public activity. *Al-hamdu Lillah*, these are people of *taqwa* and *Iman* and all activities of IEQ are, and will remain, transparent.

We are hoping to organize fund-raising events in Malaysia and Pakistan in July-August 2009. Efforts are being made to have similar events in Malaysia and Turkey.

We do not yet have enough funds for the project, but *insha'Allah*, this will change in the months to come.

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Please remember to seek Allah's blessings and help for this project.