

Legacy Project 1500 – South Africa embarks upon unique project to remember the Prophetic message

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PROPHET Muhammad (SAW) was born 53 years prior to the Hijrah. The Hijrah, or the migration of 622 CE (which marks the beginning of the Hijri lunar calendar) was a 400 km journey from the ancient city of Makkah to the palm-fringed city of Madinah.

Life in Makkah had become unbearable for the Prophet (SAW) and his followers. The antagonism of Quraysh merchants and tribal elders such as Abu Lahab, via the economic and social boycott of 616-619 CE, had taken a heavy toll on the nascent Muslim community. Confined to the dusty area Shi'b Abu Talib outside Makkah, the Muslims were forced to eat leaves to survive. It was during this challenging time that the Prophet (SAW) lost his beloved wife Khadija (RA) and his protective uncle Abu Talib.

The migration to Madinah was to mark new beginnings, the rise of Islam. By 632 CE, Muslim armies would be conquering Persia. By 1636 CE, Byzantine forces would be capitulating to Khalid bin Walid at Yarmuk in Syria.

Interestingly, the spread of Islam was not due to its armies, but rather, due to the universality of its message transmitted via

the humanity and compassion of the Prophet (SAW). It was not the sword, but the power of his personality and the beauty of his example that lit up the world.

The Hijri date of 1447 marks a keystone 1500 years since the advent of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in Makkah. His teachings – based on mercy, compassion and love – continue to inspire and motivate over 1.9 billion Muslims worldwide and remain an example worthy of emulation.

To this effect, a group of diverse local Muslims from Cape Town, with supporting patrons from all walks of life – including representatives from various national ulama bodies and international public figures – have launched the LEGACY PROJECT 1500.

The primary focus of the project is on the universal message of Islam, rooted in the civilisational values of peace, mercy, justice and environmental awareness conveyed by the Prophet (SAW).

The LEGACY PROJECT 1500 aims to commemorate this great milestone in various ways, from international Quranic recital and nasheed programmes, to a national school speech contest and an international essay competition on the global legacy of the the Prophet (SAW), special public interest events, hadith memori-



COMMEMORATING

1500 Years of the Prophetic Legacy:

A Message of Mercy, Environmental Awareness and Social Justice

1447 (AH) | 2025 (CE)

sation competition, publications on the Prophetic mission and its continued impact on the world; to exhibitions of art and Prophetic relics and an international conference on the civilisational heritage of the Prophet towards the latter part of the year.

One of the immediate undertakings is to publish a booklet of 40 Ahadith, sayings of the Prophet (SAW), scheduled for release during Ramadaan. The booklet, containing universal ethical and moral teachings of the Prophet, is aimed at Muslims and non-Mus-

lims alike. A second edition, this time translated into Xhosa, Zulu, Swahili and other local and international languages will later be published.

The LEGACY PROJECT 1500 has been conceived as an inclusive endeavour where organisations and institutions are encouraged to host events commemorating the Prophetic legacy during the year. They will enjoy full autonomy under THE LEGACY PROJECT 1500 banner.

In uncertain times, where transactional narcissists and oligarchs rule the world, never has the ethical, moral and spiritual Prophetic message been more relevant than now. The idea of the Prophet (SAW) being a mercy to all, offers as much solace to humanity today as it did 1500 years ago.

Therefore, the LEGACY PROJECT 1500 is more than just a commemoration; it is an affirmation of the Prophet Muhammad's enduring legacy. It is an ideal opportunity for Muslims around the world to imbibe the values of the Prophet and especially for minorities, to reflect on their identity, and their future role in making this world a better place; thereby bringing to focus the invaluable civilisational heritage and enduring contribution of the Prophet (SAW) to the world.