

IMAMAT DAY



PROACTIVE ISMAILI IMAM:
HIS HIGHNESS THE AGA KHAN



Photo Credit: AKDN.org

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Poem
A Jubilation – 11th Day of July

A young prince,
A Harvard student,
Merely age twenty,
Graciously accepted the responsibility
Of the entire Ismaili Community.

In the year 1957, the 11th day of July,
Giving a twinkle of religious assurance
In every Murid's eye.

The bearer of the Divine Light
From much-loved Hadart Ali,
The beloved Imam abides as
The direct descendent of
The Prophet Muhammad,
The Praise Worthy.

Since 56 years Thou art continuously guiding
The Ismaili Murids to walk on the noble path
Of humility and empathy.

Dearest Imam, Thou art working ceaselessly,
By highlighting the values of the deeply rooted historic Islam.
With a mission to create educated, liberated, and
Modernized Islam.

The glorious year of 1982 brought together all
Thy trustworthy devotees,
To celebrate the delightful Silver Jubilee.

Soon came 2007 enthralling,
Bringing the news of the splendid Golden Jubilee.
Ismailis treasured Thine
Boundless blessings,
Enjoying the platters full of appetizing
Samosas and Biryani,
And, discourse of Thy humor
Felt eminently comforting.

Presently, every Murid is eagerly anticipating
Thy sixtieth anniversary,
As it will bring the news of our beloved Hazar Imam's
Exquisite Diamond Jubilee,
As it will bring the news of our beloved Hazar Imam's
Exquisite Diamond Jubilee.

“One day we shall call
Together all human beings
With their (respective) Imams:
Those who are given their record
In their right hand
Will read it (with pleasure),
And they will not be
Dealt with unjustly
In the least.”
[The Holy Quran - 17:71]

“As Imam of the Ismaili sect, I am in a position to adapt the teachings of the Qur'an to the modern condition. On the question of modernity the issue is essentially whether one is affecting the fundamental moral fabric of society or whether one is affecting the fundamentals of religious practice. As long as these two aspects are safeguarded the rest can be subject to adjustment”

(Aga Khan; MHI, 2011, May).

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“My role, first of all, is to interpret and integrate the faith with worldly life.”

(Aga Khan; MHI, 2012, February).

What we know about the numerous agencies pioneered by our beloved Hazar Imam for uplifting the civil life of diverse populations-

The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) is regarded as an umbrella agency under which operates various agencies such as:

- The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF)
- The Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED)
- The Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC)
- The Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS)
- The Aga Khan Education Services (AKES)

“The AKDN works in 30 countries around the world” (Agencies introduction, 2007). His Highness the Aga Khan is the founder and chairperson of the AKDN. The AKDN concentrates on improving the civil life of diverse populations regardless of religious, cultural, and societal barriers. The developmental agencies under its umbrella aspire to provide services in the field of microfinance, health care, education, disaster reduction, architecture, cultural, and rural development.

***What we know about the Aga Khan Foundation
(AKF)***

- The AKF is the sub-branch of the mother agency, the Aga Khan Development Network. The AKF is a private and *not-for-profit* development agency. The foundation and services rendered by the agency are not controlled or limited to a single sect of religion.
- ***Founder, chairman, and board of director*** – His Highness the Aga Khan IV.
- ***Additional board of directors*** – Prince Aynn Aga Khan, Maître André Ardoin, Guillaume de Spoelberch.
- ***Head office*** – The Aga Khan Foundation was established in the year 1967 in Geneva, Switzerland.
- ***Areas of concentration*** –
 - ✓ **Health:** Promotes health policies to diverse populations, especially to most vulnerable groups, women of childbearing age, and children under five.
 - ✓ **Education:** Promotes high quality and efficient educational facilities, teaching aids, and advanced training to teaching professionals.
 - ✓ **Rural Development:** Works to lessen poverty in the rural areas. Promotes infrastructure and *informed choices* for better employment opportunities by involving the local citizens.



The emblem of the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF)

***What we know about the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development
(AKFED)***

- The AKFED is the *sole for profit* agency. It works with the international governments and organizations to support the financial system of the developing countries.
- ***Pioneer*** -“AKFED’S financial services institutions originated as cooperative societies and insurance companies founded in the first half of the 20th century under the guidance of the present Aga Khan’s grandfather and predecessor, Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan” (AKFED, 2006).
- ***Areas of concentration*** –
 - ✓ ***Industrial Promotion Services (IPS)*** – Amalgamates the support of international governments and agencies to develop the infrastructure along with the expansion of telecommunications and power generation services to enhance the economic development.
 - ✓ ***Tourism Promotion Services (TPS)*** – Promotes tourism by investing in environmental and cultural initiatives. Also, invests in hotels and lodges to promote the economic development.
 - ✓ ***Aviation Services*** – Supports the aviation infrastructure in the developing countries, which will ultimately cultivate the economic and social development.



The emblem of the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED)

What we know about the Aga Khan Trust for Culture

(AKTC)

- “It [AKTC] is dedicated to revitalising culture and improving the overall quality of life in societies where Muslims have a significant presence” (AKTC, 2007).
- **Head office** – The Aga Khan Trust for Culture was established in the year 1988 in Geneva, Switzerland.
- **The fundamental goal** – It works with the AKDN and covers the social, culture, and economic development arrays. The initial goal is to supports the revitalization of the cultural heritage in the developing countries and promote awareness and appreciation for pluralism.
- **Areas of concentration:** The AKTC focuses on
 - ✓ **The Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme** – This programme initiative is dedicated to conserve the historic cities “...and urban revitalization projects in culturally significant sites of the Islamic world,...” (AKTC, 2007).
 - ✓ **The Aga Khan Award for Architecture** – It is presented every 3 years. It is the world’s largest award in the field of Architecture.
 - ✓ **The Aga Khan Music Initiatives** – Music is considered as a crucial part of the cultural heritage. The AKTC works in the preservation of the musical tradition of the Central Asia by supporting the efforts of the musical communities.
 - ✓ **The Presentation of Muslim Artifacts** - “Museum Projects are dedicated to the presentation of Muslim arts and culture – in their historic, cultural and geographical diversity – as a way of contributing to knowledge and understanding” (AKTC, 2007).



The emblem of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC)

What we know about the Aga Khan Health Services

(AKHS)

- The AKHS is a private *not-for-profit* health care service in the developing countries.
- Currently there are “...325 health care facilities including nine hospitals...” (Agencies introduction, 2007). The facilities are serving the people of Central Asia (Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Tajikistan); South Asia (India); and East Africa (Kenya) (Agencies introduction, 2007).
- The programmes of the AKHS concentrate on promoting the health care facilities to the most vulnerable groups of the communities.
- It provides various facilities such as immunization, prenatal care, and rehydration therapy. The major focus of the health care system is to provide services to the child bearing women and young children under the age of five.

- ***Areas of concentration:***

The AKHS –

- ✓ Provides medical care facilities at efficient cost.
- ✓ Works with other agencies to enhance the health care facilities of the communities.
- ✓ Educates health care professionals.
- ✓ Conducts research “...relevant to environments in which AKHS institution exist” (Agencies introduction, 2007).
- ✓ Contributes in developing “...national and international health policy” (Agencies introduction, 2007).



The emblem of the Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS)

What we know about the Aga Khan Education Services

(AKES)

- The AKES is thriving to improve the quality of education. The organization supports improvement initiatives in the field of education. It emphasizes the student-centered learning approach.
- At present the AKES is operating over 250 schools in different parts of the world. The education facilities include pre-schools, primary schools, secondary schools, and higher secondary schools.
- **Pioneer** – The Aga Khan III, The grand father of His Highness the Aga Khan IV led the foundation of the AKES by establishing 200 schools “...during the half the 20th century...” (Agencies introduction, 2007). The first school was established in the year 1905 in India and Zanzibar.
- **Areas of concentration:**
 - ✓ **Easy Access to education:** The AKES promotes easy access to education in rural areas. Special emphasis is given to the education of a girl child.
 - ✓ **Invests in Early Childhood Education** – Early childhood years, which are birth to eight years, are considered as a crucial phase in child’s learning and development. Therefore, the AKES functions to advance the care giving and learning experience for young children.
 - ✓ **Training Programmes** – Promotes training to parents and caregivers, develops Early Childhood Centers, and offers community planning orientations for better education and health care.



The emblem of the Aga Khan Education Services (AKES)

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