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COMMENTARY

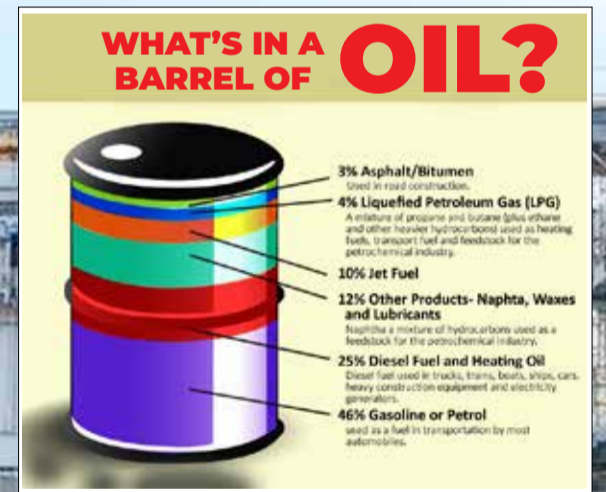
'Humanity first' — Incentive to de-escalate US vs. Iran conflict

The war in the Persian Gulf has not only closed down two critical shipping water ways, it has also choked-off the flow of critical energy resources used in the manufacture of fertilizers and pharmaceuticals. Fertilizers are critical for food production that is at the core of international humanitarian organisations such as WFP's relief activities...

STORY ON P2



Fertiliser being off-loaded in Djibouti.



Humanity should be the incentive to de-escalate US versus Iran conflict



In situations of armed conflict, the doctrine of “humanity first” must always take precedence.

Humanity first recognizes that there are innocent and helpless people who get adversely affected by both the intended and unintended consequences of armed conflict.

In Islamic teachings, the doctrine of ‘humanity first’ underlies the Holy Qur’an’s edicts on how armed conflict should be conducted.

In this regard, the Qur’an emphasizes strict restraint, limiting violence to defense against aggression and preserving the life and well-being of non-combatants, key principles of which include fighting only those who fight you, maintaining justice, avoiding destruction of property, and treating prisoners humanely—with peace being the ultimate goal.

Core Quranic Principles on Armed Conflict

- **Defensive Purpose:** War is allowed only to defend against aggression, protect freedom of worship, or aid the oppressed (men, women, and children), as stated in Surah Al-Baqarah 2:190, 22:39-40, 4:75.

- **Prohibition of Aggression:** Muslims are commanded, “Fight in the way of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors” [2:190].

- **Proportionality:** Retaliation must be equal to the aggression suffered, without exceeding limits [2:194].

- **Peace Preference:** If the enemy inclines towards peace, Muslims must accept it, even if suspicion of deception exists [8:61].

- **Prohibition of Forced Religion:** The Holy Qur’an states “There is no compulsion in religion” [2:256], meaning war cannot be waged to force conversion.

Conduct During Battle (Rules of Engagement)

- **Non-Combatant Immunity:** It is forbidden to kill women, children, the elderly, the sick, and monks or worshippers.

- **Environmental Protection:** It is forbidden to destroy trees, crops, or livestock unnecessarily.

- **No Mutilation:** Mutilating the bodies of the dead is strictly prohibited.

- **Treaty Adherence:** Treaties must be strictly honored; treachery is forbidden [5:1, 16:91].

Treatment of Prisoners of War (POWs)

- The Qur’an suggests freeing prisoners either as a favor or for ransom once the war ends [47:4].

- Kindness to prisoners, including feeding them, is highly encouraged [76:8].

The overall ethos of Qur’anic conduct in war is to “handcuff” the fighters’ hands, focusing on discipline and preventing war from becoming a mechanism for personal gain or destruction.

In the raging Middle East conflict between Iran on the one hand, and the United States and Israel on the other, there are indications,

Essential humanitarian relief supplies destined for Sudan being off-loaded from a ship commissioned by the World Food Programme (WFP).



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according to open source information filtering through, that Iran is trying as much as possible to remain true to the Qur’anic teachings on the conduct of war despite the huge challenges that come with a conflict in which sophisticated weapons and technology are deployed.

Nonetheless, irrespective of who the aggressor is, all parties are still urged to tick the boxes on the Qur’anic teachings on the conduct of war—if this is done, then the concept of ‘humanity first’ will certainly guide the parties to de-escalate and find a quick and amicable resolution to this conflict that brews catastrophic consequences each passing day.

And there is an immediate reason why the warring parties should embrace the doctrine of humanity first as an incentive to de-escalate.

In the third week of the war, World Food Programme (WFP) director of supply chain, Corinne Fleischer rendered a grim account of the devastating consequences of the Iran-US/Israeli war on WFP’s humanitarian operations.

According to Ms Fleischer, the armed conflict in the Persian Gulf has rendered two critical international maritime routes namely the Straits of Hormuz and the Red Sea unsafe for civilian maritime operations because of the danger of one getting caught up in the crossfire.

Because of this danger, other ports across the world are congested because ships previously destined to pass through the gulf region were forced to cut-short their

voyages, re-route and dock in the safer ports. Consequently, many WFP vessels that supply humanitarian relief supplies and which depend on these ports are also held up in the congested ports—meaning no movement of relief supplies.

And for those that are moving, WFP has been forced to re-route their voyages, meaning that they have to take the longer route at the tip of southern Africa, thus increasing the costs and time of taking humanitarian relief supplies to where they are needed. But with a constrained budget, WFP may just throw-in the towel if the conflict does not come to quick resolution because they have no budget for these additional costs on logistics and shipping.

Ms Fleischer has also sounded another alarm—the war in the Persian Gulf has not only closed down two critical shipping water ways, it has also choked-off the flow of critical energy resources that are used in the manufacture of fertilizers and pharmaceuticals.

Fertilizers are critical for food production that is at the core of WFP’s relief activities while pharmaceuticals are an integral part WFP’s relief efforts towards disease burden.

Because of the dire situation as sounded by the WFP, the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) calls the international community’s attention to the doctrine of ‘humanity first’ as an incentive to de-escalate and end the war in the Persian Gulf.



SUPKEM and Zayed for Good Foundation partner in humanitarian relief assistance

The Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) in partnership with the Zayed for Good Foundation and the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Nairobi, has successfully delivered food supplies to communities affected by the recent drought in Isiolo's Upper Eastern region. In total of nine hundred families in Garbatulla town and Laisamis sub county in Marsabit benefited from this relief effort.

SUPKEM Chairman Al Hajj Hassan Ole Naado led the team and were received by local Muslim leaders and representatives from the local administration, represented by the County Commissioner Mr. David Kiprop, whose support was invaluable.

In his brief speech, the chairman extended the council's gratitude to everyone who contributed to this initiative.

"Your generosity and commitment to helping those in need not only brought smiles to many faces but also reinforced the values of charity and solidarity that define our faith. Let us continue to work together to uplift our community and embody the spirit of compassion that Idd-ul-Fitr represents."

The chairman also thanked the County Commissioner Mr. David Kiprop for their collaboration, which exemplifies the strength and unity of our community.

On the second day of the exercise and under the banner 'Empowering Communities Through Compassion' a similar relief distribution was undertaken in Laisamis.

In the Laisamis Sub-county of Marsabit, approximately 400 families were handed essential food rations. This Ramadan relief distribution was similarly held in partnership with the Zayed for Good Foundation and the UAE Embassy in Nairobi.

According to the chairman, this initiative in Laisamis reflects SUPKEM's commitment to humanitarian values, transcending

Through this endeavor, we not only aimed to alleviate immediate needs but also to foster a spirit of unity and compassion within the community. At the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims, we believe in empowering communities and creating a lasting impact through acts of kindness and support...

social, cultural, and religious boundaries.

"A key principle of the Zayed for Good Foundation is the belief in empowering communities through sustainable development and support. Thus, like the Zayed for Good Foundation (Abu Dhabi Media Office), this principle is central to SUPKEM's objectives, ensuring that our charitable efforts not only meet immediate needs but also contribute to long-term well-being," he noted.

Further he noted that through this endeavor, we not only aim to alleviate immediate needs but also to foster a spirit of unity and compassion within the community. At the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims, we believe in empowering communities and creating a lasting impact through acts of kindness and support.

This reinforces SUPKEM's belief that humanity is the cornerstone of our engagement. This initiative resonates with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), who said: "The best of people are those who are most beneficial to people."

The distribution took place at the Laisamis mosque compound and attended by the National Government Administration Officers including the County Commissioner-Mr. James Kamau, Deputy County Commissioner-Dr. Kepha Marube as well as Assistant County Commissioner-Mr. David Tomboy.

Others were local chiefs and community leaders whom all were instrumental in ensuring the success of this inclusive effort.

In both exercises, the SUPKEM team included the National Treasurer Haji Omar Khamis, Northern Eastern Regional Coordinator Sheikh (Dr) Adan Yunis Ibrahim, Coast Regional Coordinator Haji Khamis Mwanguzo, Secretary for Your Affairs Ibrahim Muchelule and support team member Mohamed Otweyo.

Winners of Mombasa Qur'an competition feted

Winners and participants of the 2026 Mombasa Qur'an competition held during the final Ramadhan week have been gifted.

The event organised by The Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) Mombasa office attracted over 100 participants in different categories.

Under category 1: Qur'an

Murattal for boys, 3 winners out of 86 participants were awarded with Shuaib Hashim gifted KSh. 30,000 as Ahmad Swaleh and Salim Rajab awarded KSh. 20,000 and 10,000 respectively.

The Category 2: Qur'an Murattal for girls had 3 winners out of 86 participants. Fatma Abdulrahman-KSh.30,000; Mariam Abdillah-KSh.20,000

and Samiha Abdallah-KSh.10,000.

In Category 3: Qur'an Mujawwad for boys/men there were 3 winners out of 23 participants drawn from Mombasa, Kilifi, Malindi, Lamu, Tana River, Nairobi and Nakuru.

Salim Muhammad Alhamumy got KSh.50,000 as Juma Jambia got KSh.30,000 and Jeilan Abdulqader, KSh.20,000. Additionally, all participants In The Grand Final stage apart from No 1, 2 and 3 were rewarded KSh.5000 each.



Ahmad Swaleh (Right) receives his award from the Speaker of Mombasa County Assembly Hon. Khatri Aharub Ebrahim

Zayed for Good Foundation enhances relief assistance

A PUBLICATION OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF KENYA MUSLIMS (SUPKEM)

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Prospective Kenyan pilgrims intending to perform the 2026/1447 A.H Hajj pilgrimage have been issued with visas.

This is according to The Kenya Hajj Mission, under Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM).

The issuance of visas at this early stage reflects a proactive planning approach for the Hajj season, contributing to a more organized experience and improving the efficiency of services provided to millions of pilgrims from around the world. In 2026, Hajj is expected to take place later in May 2026.

As such, the Kenya Hajj Mission is implementing new Hajj directives as per The Ministry of Hajj & Umrah of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia requirements.

Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) national chairman Al Hajj Hassan Ole Naado said the development marks a major milestone in the mission's hajj preparation process that was concluded successfully, adding that all intending Kenyan Pilgrims have been issued with Visas. "I am pleased to announce that all visas have now been successfully issued in line with the established timeline, as we transition to the next stage," he said.

Kenya Hajj Mission completes visa issuance for 2026 hajj cycle



A previous consultative meeting involving accredited Hajj agents for the 2026 Hajj pilgrimage.

Noting that this was in line with guidelines set forth by the Ministry of Hajj & Umrah of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The chairman also expressed appreciation to the Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Kenya for its cooperation and support in

ensuring the timely approval of visas for Kenyan pilgrims for the 2026 Hajj exercise.

"I also commend all accredited Hajj agencies and staff of the Kenya Hajj Mission for their support and dedication towards the successful preparation for the

2026 Hajj exercise," he said.

He reassured intending pilgrims of improved service delivery, stressing the Kenya Hajj mission's commitment to their welfare.

"We are fully committed to enhancing the quality of services. SUPKEM through Kenya Hajj Mission has worked closely with the Saudi Ministry of Hajj to ensure Kenyan Hajj agencies comply with international standards, including health, safety, and customer service requirements."

Similarly, the chairman also cautioned Muslims intending to perform Hajj to avoid shadowy operators who could expose pilgrims to financial loss, logistical failures, or even denial of entry into Saudi Arabia due to incomplete or invalid documentation.

"Kenya Hajj Mission has accredited agencies that will handle key travel arrangements, including flights, accommodation, transport within Saudi Arabia and logistical support during the pilgrimage in Makkah and Madinah."

For a complete list of the 2026 accredited hajj agents, log into www.supkem.org- the Supkem website for verification.

SUPKEM intervenes in Kenya Medical Training College hijab dispute

A high level delegation led by the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM) Tana River county Regional coordinator-Al Hajj Sheikh Musa Dido Bute, Imams, Muslim religious and community leaders have visited and intervened on a case involving the violation of religious rights of Muslim students over donning of the hijab at the Kenya Medical Training College-Hola campus in Tana River county.

During the meeting, the delegation held constructive discussions with the college administration, emphasizing the need to uphold religious freedom and respect students' rights to practise their faith.

According to Sheikh Musa, the institution's administration had concerns regarding the hijab. "We deliberated on various matters of concern raised by the Muslim students. The administration has since

apologised and regretted having expelled the students. They have since been reinstated and also reassured that religious rights of all learners will be respected and upheld.

"Similarly, the college administration has agreed and pledged to address concerns related to adhering prayer times for Muslim students," he said.

According to Article 32 of The Constitution of Kenya: Freedom of conscience, religion, belief and opinion.

(1) Every person has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion.

(2) Every person has the right, either individually or in community with others, in public or in private, to manifest any religion or belief through worship, practice, teaching or observance, including observance of a day of worship.

(3) A person may not be denied access to any institution, employment or facility, or the enjoyment of any right, because of the person's belief or religion.

(4) A person shall not be compelled to act, or engage in any act, that is contrary to the person's belief or religion.

Sheikh Musa was accompanied by among others Supkem Secretary Tana County-Jilo Yusa, it's Youth leader-Sheikh Abubakar Jilo; Women leader-Ustadha Aisha Abdalla.

Others were Imams Ustadh Rashid Awadh Suleiman Imam-Masjid Taqwa-Hola, Ustadh Ridwani Abubakar-Imam of Bayusuf mosque-Hola. Community elder Mzee Ali and former Supkem chairman Tana River County and now activist-Mzee Mahmud Fara Hargamso.

Rashid Jams, Jilo Gawawa and Mwanajuma Salim- all activists, were also present.

