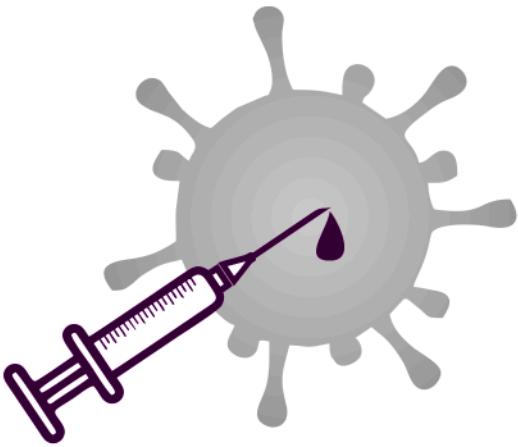


ISLAMIC RESPONSES TO VACCINE HESITANCY:

ANSWERING DOUBTS AND OBJECTIONS TO COVID-19 AND OTHER VACCINES.

DA'WAH INSTITUTE



ISLAMIC RESPONSES TO VACCINE HESITANCY

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Endorsements

Alhamdulilllah, I am pleased to say that I have gone through the entire write-up and I want to thank the director, Muhammad Nuruddeen Lemu, and the entire research team for the tremendous effort in this excellent job and the honor given to me to review and endorse the work. JazakumAllahu khayran.

Dr. Muhammad Sani Ibrahim Mainagge, MD, FICS
Consultant Otorhinolaryngologist-Head
and Neck Surgeon, Minna, Niger State.

This is an important treatise that I found highly educative with regard to the position of Islam on vaccination and I feel everyone should read especially at a time when so many infectious diseases can be prevented with vaccinations. Moreso, the language used is as simple as possible which even a layman can understand.

Prof. Aisha Garba Habib
Yusuf Maitama Sule University, Kano, Nigeria.

This book is a well-researched intellectual vaccination and refutation of all anti-vaccination arguments. The authors used

clear logical reasonings and supported their points with classical Islamic texts to convince the doubting Thomas. The book is a step in the right direction to clarify misconceptions and conspiracy theories regarding vaccinations from Islamic perspectives.

Ibrahim. M. Bello

Head of Chemical Pathology Unit, I.B.B Specialist Hospital, Minna, Niger State, Nigeria; Imam, Police Training School, Minna Nigeria.

Da'wah Institute's research provides a valuable resource for informed intervention with religious literacy. It exemplifies the positive contributions that faith-based actors continue to make for addressing complex global problems.

Mahan Mirza, Ph.D.

Executive Director, Ansari Institute for Global Engagement with Religion; Teaching Professor of Islam & Science, Keough School of Global Affairs, University of Notre Dame, USA.

I have dispassionately read the manuscript and I find it a well-researched and empirically-validated masterpiece on the truth, the half-truth, and conspiracy theories that characterize the COVID-19 vaccines and vaccination among members of the Muslim Community in Nigeria particularly. The study is not only well-timed in its conception but also suitably classic in its conclusion. The presentation of the core issues follows the academic tradition of syllogism-based analysis with the meticulous entrenchment of the Islamic classical methodology encapsu-

lated in the tripartite areas of *Uṣūl Al-Fiqh* (foundations of Islamic jurisprudence), *Al-Qawā'id Al-Fiqhiyyah* (maxims of Islamic jurisprudence) and *Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah* (higher objectives of Islamic law). I, therefore, have no hesitation to recommend this masterpiece to the local gatekeepers, du'āt, Muslim schools, members of Islamic organizations and associations, as well as members of the Muslim elites the world over as a form of intellectual vaccination against hesitancy and conspiracy theories.

Oyekolade Sodiq Oyesanya, Ph.D
Department of Religious Studies, College of Humanities, Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State, Nigeria.

A compelling and provocative analysis of differences between realities and myths among Muslims concerning the COVID-19 vaccines in Nigeria and beyond. Any reader, either a Muslim or non-Muslim, would understand from the book that Islam is in synchrony with medical care, and has provisions for all emerging challenges within human societies. This is perhaps the most persuasive and evidence-based book for those Muslims who are hesitant to take the COVID-19 vaccines.

Dr. Habibat Oladosu-Uthman,
Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

This well-thought-out, painstakingly researched book is a masterpiece in its own right. Although concise, it raises and con-

vincingly clears virtually all the misconceptions and conspiracy theories that give birth to, and nurture vaccine hesitancy, particularly Covid-19 related. In its arguments, it strikes a perfect balance between the scientific and the spiritual, creatively responding to religio-cultural confusions using penetrating scriptural, scientific and logical reasons that are rooted in a robust *maqasidic* methodology. Surely, medical practitioners, religious scholars, academics, independent researchers, media influencers, development workers, community leaders, and all those concerned with the preservation of human lives and enhancing preventive health have got a ready-made compendium. I congratulate the DIN for yet curing a lingering intellectual disease for the ummah through this highly commended and recommended text.

Abdullahi Abubakar Lamido,
Lecturer, Bayero University Kano; and Former National Amir (President), Muslim Students Society of Nigeria.

This timely, fascinating, and catchy book which responds to almost all eyebrows raised against COVID and other vaccines is straightforward, simple, and well-researched material, which could be conventionally used, irrespective of faith, region, and geographical location. The method of data collection and analysis is an excellent one that not only compel readers to accept the information but also mandates them to convince others to take the vaccine.

Yahya Muhammad Baddegi,
Muslim Students Society of Nigeria, Niger Area Council.

The Da'wah Institute has become a very reliable go-to place for sound responses on contemporary issues from the Islamic perspectives in our current times, and on this controversial COVID-19 vaccine, they have done an excellent job in providing an explicit and accessible resource that convincingly responded to all concerns on the subject. I recommend this book to all Muslims because the information it contains will undoubtedly help save lives. May Allah reward your effort.

Muhammad Nasir Bello,
Muslim Intellectual & Social Thinker;
Volunteer Facilitator Da'wah Institute.

By employing the intersection between religion and science, the Da'wah Institute masterfully and brilliantly addressed the arguments against vaccines in general and Covid-19 vaccines in particular.

Prof. Nasiru Adabara, PhD.
Head of Department, Department of Microbiology, School of Life Sciences, Federal University of Technology, Minna.

Alhamdulillah for the opportunity of going through this highly educative book "ISLAMIC RESPONSES TO VACCINE HESITANCY: Answering Doubts and Objections to COVID-19 And Other Vaccines". No doubt, Muslims across the globe, Nigeria inclusive, are concerned about the teachings of Islam regarding all issues affecting their lives. It is evidently true that hesitancy on the part of Muslims regarding new issues including that of the covid 19 vaccines has been recycled within our communi-

ties. This is not surprising, because Muslims have been trained, as stated in the glorious Qur'an, to seek knowledge and clarifications regarding what they do not know. As such if adequate explanation from experts is lacking, the doubts and conspiracy theories will persist. Hence, the necessity of this book.

It is instructive that the foundation that supports the content of the book is the outcome of survey research. I thus endorse and recommend the book, especially to scholars and students including policymakers, considering the relevance of the arguments presented, which I believe are not final and therefore subject to further reviews and inputs. May Allah bless our endeavours.

Dr. Bashir Ahmad Usman 'Yankuzo.
Chief Imam, Federal University of Technology, Minna;
Founder, At-Ta'awuun Educational Services, Nigeria.

One of the higher objectives of the Shari'ah is to protect LIFE itself, and it is noted that the Prophet (PBUH) in several hadiths explicitly explained the principles of immunization and quarantine. He prohibited people from entering the place affected by the plague and prohibited the people of the place from leaving it. The Prophet (SAW) told us that our bodies have rights over us, so we must protect it from getting harmed or afflicting harm to others. He said in a Hadith related by Bukhari on the authority of Abdullah ibn Amr (RA) that: "*Your body has a right on you*".

The researchers have done very well in the articulation of every point possible and supporting their reasons with the

Qur'an/Sunnah and opinions of Scholars and experts in the health sectors; practicing the Qur'anic Injunction which says: **"***And (therefore) ask those who know if you knew not (anything about something) with clear evidence and textual backing (from the Qur'an and Sunnah)***."** (Surah an-Nahl verse 43 – 44)

It is my ardent hope that this work will be of immense importance to the Ummah, in such a way that our people will make use of what is herein for guidance and peaceful escape from the phobia that engulfs them about immunization in general. I, therefore, recommend this piece be published and made available for all and sundry to have copies. May Allah SWT reward the researchers for their wonderful assessment and findings on this great work, forgive their shortcomings, and make this work beneficial, Ameen.

Muhammad Sagir Usman, Ph.D

Imam Masjid Assalam Nile Street, Maitama Abuja.

Acknowledgments

This book is a response to the concerns and questions raised by some Muslims regarding vaccination generally, and the COVID-19 vaccine in particular. We are grateful to Allah for inspiring us to conceive the idea of this book and for His support towards its completion. We pray Allah to continue to shower His mercies and blessings on the seal of Prophethood, Muhammad (pbuh). [1]

We are profoundly grateful to the founding trustees of Islamic Education Trust, the late Dr. Sheikh Ahmed Lemu OFR., the late Hajiyah Aisha B. Lemu MON., and the late Alhaji Sani Ashafa whose vision gave birth to this organization, and who have instilled in us this noble idea of helping to promote a balanced understanding of Islam through the classical juristic approaches of a values-oriented interpretation of religious texts. We pray to Allah to forgive their shortcomings, accept their efforts from them as *sadaqatun jaariyah* (continuous charity), and grant them eternal rest in *Jannat al-Firdaus*.

We are also grateful to the current Board of Trustees of the organization – Mallam Lawal Maidoki, Justice Amina Wambai, Hajiya Hajara Adeola, Prof. Kamaldeen Balogun, Alhaji Muham-

[1] "(pbuh)" in this material stands for "peace be upon him"

mad Nuruddeen Lemu OON, and Alhaji Arzika Abubakar Rimau, – for their unrelenting vision towards the advancement of Islam and Muslims and their continued wise counsel and guidance. May Allah spare your lives and keep your feet firm on His path.

While this may be a small book, it required a lot of effort as we first had to conduct surveys of over 3000 members of the Muslim community in Nigeria to ascertain what the issues are before trying to respond to them. We, therefore, offer our thanks to all the survey respondents, but also in particular to the following people who were involved in the administering, collation, and analysis of the survey: Abubakar Sadiq Abdulmumin, Sadiq Sulaiman, Rabi Usman, Khalid Khalil, Abdulkadir Abubakar, Salihu Danjuma, Firdaus Ishaq, Maryam Bintu Usman, Jamila O. Yusuf, Khadijah Abdullahi, Aisha Alajiki, Adam Sulaiman, Mahmud Zubairu Kolo, Hussaina Abubakar Borgu, Abdullahi Ishaq, Maimuna Shu'aibu, Amina Sheikh Musa, Awwal Nasir Kontagora, Idris Ibrahim Jiya and Adam Abdulrahman. May Allah reward you for your efforts, patience, and diligence throughout the process.

We are also grateful to the researchers, writers, and editors who have helped to answer the questions raised and developed this material – Alhaji Muhammad Nuruddeen Lemu OON, Adam Abdulrahman, Hamza Yusuf, Amina Sheikh Musa, Basirat Atinuke Raji, Ibrahim M. Bello, Dr. Bashir Ahmad Usman 'Yankuzo, and Haleemah Oladamade Ahmad - may this weigh heavily on your scales.

We also offer our profound thanks and indebtedness to the medical experts and scholars who have helped to review this

material. They include Prof. Aisha Garba Habib, Prof. Nasiru Adabara, Ph.D., Oyekolade Sodiq Oyesanya Ph.D., Dr. Muhammad Sani Ibrahim Mainagge MD, FICS, Dr. Habibat Oladosu-Uthman, Mallam Yahya Muhammad Baddegi, Imam Muhammad Sagir Usman, Mahan Mirza, Ph.D., Mallam Abdullahi Abubakar Lamido amongst others.

It is impossible to mention everyone that deserves to be; however, Allah knows you all. We pray that the reward of whatever good comes from this effort goes to everyone who contributed to it, mentioned here or not. While several attempts were made at ensuring the correctness of the content of this book, we take full responsibility for whatever mistakes remain therein, and we pray that Allah overlooks our shortcomings.

To everyone, we say *Jazakumullah Khayran* – May Allah reward and bless you!

Wassalam alaykum wa rahmatullah wa barakatuhu.

Muhammad Alhassan
Registrar, Da'wah Institute (DIN),
Islamic Education Trust (IET).

Introduction

The novel human Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus which was first reported in Wuhan, China, on December 8th, 2019. By 11th March 2020, SARS-CoV-2 had infected over 100,000 people in at least 100 countries, and the World Health Organisation (WHO) consequently declared it a pandemic making it the fifth documented pandemic since the 1918 flu pandemic. Nigeria recorded its first case of SARS-CoV-2 on 27th February 2020, and within five months at least one case had been reported in all 36 states across the country, including the capital city, Abuja.

Nigeria has a population of over 200 million people, of which roughly 2.7% of the total population (i.e 5.4 Million people) are aged 65 years or older and thus at risk of severe COVID-19. A significant proportion of the population has pre-existing underlying health conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular diseases, and cancers. These diseases increase their risk for severe COVID-19 illness. An estimated 83 million (40%) of Nigeria's population live below the poverty line, which often means that they face challenges in accessing healthcare. All of these factors require that the spread of COVID-19 be curtailed as fast as possible.

Getting sick with COVID-19 can cause severe illness or death, even in children, and it is not possible yet to reliably predict who will have a mild or severe illness. Also, some people develop long-term health challenges after contracting COVID-19, also known as long COVID. This can happen even if they were as symptomatic when they were first infected. Meanwhile, people who have certain medical conditions or who are taking medications that weaken their immune systems are at increased risk of severe COVID-19 illness and death. As such, vaccines prevent the development of disease and not an infection, and if they do contract the disease, it will prevent them from having a severe illness that could lead to death, or developing long-term health complications. Vaccination also helps to contribute to mass wellness as it helps the community build herd immunity against the virus. Herd immunity is a form of indirect protection that occurs when a sufficient percentage of a population has become immune to an infection, whether through previous infections or vaccination, thereby reducing the likelihood of infection for individuals who lack immunity. Thus, vaccination helps us to better protect the more vulnerable ones amongst us.

Vaccinations against COVID-19 are not experiments on the population. These vaccines were developed using standard scientific methods that have been validated upon like other life-saving drugs and vaccines in the history of medicine. They have been through all the stages of development for any new scientific breakthrough. They have been tested and endorsed by multiple vaccine regulatory authorities in the world, and are constantly monitored by multiple health organizations, including the World Health Organization (WHO). Unfortunately, as beneficial as vaccination is, and despite concerted efforts by the

government to make the vaccines available for every eligible individual to take, a lot of people, including Muslims, have been hesitant about being vaccinated for a variety of reasons.

Resistance to COVID is not the first instance of vaccine hesitancy, particularly within the Muslim community in Nigeria. Nigeria was certified polio-free on the 25th of August 2020, and it was the last African country to achieve this status. Northern Nigeria bore the highest burden of vaccine hesitancy, and eradicating polio in the region was very challenging due to the various beliefs, concerns, arguments, misconceptions, and conspiracy theories around allowing children to take the polio vaccine. This has cost the lives of young people while rendering others disabled for life. It is also noteworthy and concerning that polio remains endemic in just two countries in the world – Afghanistan, and Pakistan – both of which are Muslim-majority countries that are also suspicious of vaccines from "the West".

To intervene in addressing this challenge, the Da'wah Institute conducted a survey, online and offline, over three months (December 2021 to February 2022) to identify and collate the various reasons why people object to or hesitate to take the covid vaccine in particular and vaccines in general, especially within the Muslim populace in Nigeria. 2,713 people were interviewed offline, while we had 424 online responses, totalling three thousand, one hundred and thirty-seven (3,137) respondents. Special attention was given to finding out the opinions of local Islamic scholars, teachers of Qur'anic schools, Islamiyyahs and preachers, members and leaders of Islamic Organizations and Schools, Colleges of Education and Universities, Schools of Health, and members of the general public.

Of the 424 online respondents, 345 of them had not taken the COVID-19 vaccine as of the time of the survey, (30.4%) i.e 105 of the 345 were willing to take the vaccine, (36.2%) i.e 125 of the 345 were not willing to take the vaccine and (33.3%) i.e 115 of the 345 were not sure if they will take the vaccine. It is noteworthy that the majority of the online respondents, (35.5%), were undergraduate students. Of the remaining, (20.9%) were university graduates, (16.1%) were postgraduate students, (9.7%) were secondary/high school graduates, (9.5%) were out of school, (6.3%) were senior school/high school students and the remaining (2%) were junior/middle school students. In the offline survey, research assistants conducted interviews with thousands of people across over 70 institutions in Nigeria, including Islamiyyah schools, mosques, Primary Health Care Centers, Colleges of Health Technology, radio stations, police stations, and other paramilitary services. Questions were centered on taking the vaccine, reasons for vaccine hesitancy, and who was considered most trustworthy regarding information about COVID and vaccines. A total of 4,749 responses were collected and categorized into 6 thematic areas for effective response development. These include:

i. Conspiracy Theory
ii. Ignorance of Basic Biology
iii. Concerns about the Effectiveness of the Vaccine
iv. Trust-Related Issues
v. Concerns about Side-Effects
vi. Miscellaneous

Of these, most of the major arguments were found within the categories of trust-related issues, ignorance of basic biology,

and conspiracy theories; and all of them have been responded to in this book. This survey is thus the first elaborate survey of its kind in the Muslim community by an Islamic organization with a special consideration of local "gatekeepers", religious teachers, schools, scholars, preachers, activists, members of the Islamic associations such as MSSN (Muslim Students Society of Nigeria), and others.

Our surveys show that the most respected voices on vaccines and COVID-19 are the Muslim health practitioners, even more than Muslim religious leaders and scholars. We hope that this document gives healthcare professionals, religious and other community leaders better tools for communicating with the masses in a language that is more palatable to them especially as many of them prefer faith-based or faith-supported arguments to pure science-based arguments. Also, the importance of the voices of scholars and religious leaders as powerful authorities cannot be over-emphasized. This coming together of religion and science is powerful, and we hope to see a synergy of religious leaders and health practitioners working together in innovative ways to address the issue of vaccination and other important public health matters and policies.

While we do not pray for another epidemic, it would be unwise for us to not be prepared for one from another strain of the same virus or a different virus entirely. Experience from all over the world has clearly shown that vaccine hesitancy can in itself be as disturbing as the virus. It may even be argued that with increasing globalization, vaccine hesitancy will probably be an even greater threat to community health everywhere, if and when another epidemic hits a community anywhere in the

world. This is a very disturbing prospect for any concerned Muslim and citizen of our planet.

Our survey just like past surveys has been able to establish that many anti-vaccine arguments and conspiracy theories are recycled from the past and from other communities, mutated and repackaged every time a new vaccination programme is needed. These arguments and narratives that facilitate the survival and spread of vaccine hesitancy, themselves behave like mutating strains of old viruses in what looks more and more like an intellectual or attitudinal epidemic.

The threat of COVID seems to have subsided, *alhamdulillah*. Our immunity as a community, however, to fake news, conspiracy theories, confusion, and folly appear to have been seriously compromised. We, therefore, need more than ever before to be intellectually vaccinated and better prepared in order to more effectively counter as many of the anti-vaccine narratives as possible before the next vaccination programme is needed. This is needed before another contagion when emotions heighten again and becloud our judgment and assessment of information and policies from our most competent and respected authorities regarding vaccines and epidemics – the epidemiologists of the WHO and Centres for Disease Control (CDCs).

Thus, the purpose of this book is not just to respond to arguments specifically against the COVID vaccine, but to respond to the common perennial arguments against vaccination generally within the Muslim community. We hope that responding to these arguments would help contribute to addressing the concerns that some Muslims have against vaccination and therefore improve vaccine acceptance in our com-

munity. This would contribute to fewer expressions of cynicism, misinformation, and ignorance that are harmful and cost lives, and thus, help to reduce the incidences of vaccine-preventable diseases leading to healthier societies.

We, therefore, hope that with this, some of the mistakes that some of our scholars and leaders made due to insufficient information and lots of conspiracy theories about vaccination would be avoided in the future, and that religious gatekeepers and doorkeepers – scholars, academics, traditional leaders, and other influential leaders – would be better prepared to handle current and future vaccine hesitancy. The content of this book is thus meant to serve as intellectual vaccination that would build immunity against anti-vaccine misconceptions within the Muslim community and be part of the Da'wah Institute's contribution to a healthier society.

List of Abbreviations

BIMA: British Islamic Medical Association; *https://www.britishima.org*

CDC: Center for Diseases Control and Prevention; *https://www.cdc.gov*

DIC: Danish Islamic Center; *https://dicenter.dk/*

FDA: Food and Drug Administration; *https://www.fda.gov*

FIMA: Federation of Islamic Medical Associations; *https://fimaweb.net*

IMAM: Islamic Medical Association of Malaysia; *http://www.imamalaysia.org/*

IMAN: Islamic Medical Association of Nigeria; *https://iman.org.ng/*

IMANI: Islamic Medical Association and Network of Indonesia; *https://imani-prokami.or.id/*

IMASA: Islamic Medical Association of South Africa; *https://ima-sa.co.za*

MHPA: Muslim Health Professionals Australia; *https://mhpaustralia.com.au*

NAFDAC: National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control; *https://www.nafdac.gov.ng*

NIMR: Nigeria Institute of Medical Research; *https://nimr.gov.ng*

WHO: World Health Organization; *https://www.who.int*

About the Coronavirus of 2019 (COVID-19)

Corona-viruses are viruses belonging to the family *Coronaviridae* some of which cause respiratory illness in humans; the condition may be mild, moderate, or severe in which case it could lead to death. They are often called "Corona" because of the crown-like spikes on the virus's surface, which are seen through electron microscopes.

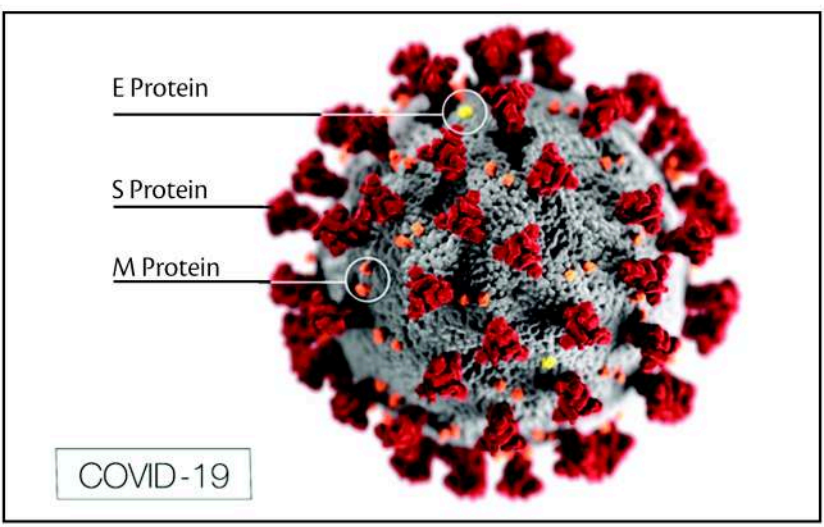


Fig.1: The Structure of COVID-19
Source: Image Library | CDC Online Newsroom | CDC

COVID-19 is caused by SARS-CoV-2 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2). The virus has many variants out of which four variants have been discovered as of December 2021, namely: alpha (α), beta (β), gamma (γ), and delta (δ). Out of all the variants currently discovered, the delta variant is the most recent, more contagious, and cause more severe illness in people than the other variants. Unvaccinated persons are more likely to be infected and spread the virus, and sometimes fully vaccinated people can still contract and spread the virus, even though they may have milder symptoms or be asymptomatic. When a person contracts the virus despite being fully vaccinated, this is referred to as a breakthrough infection.

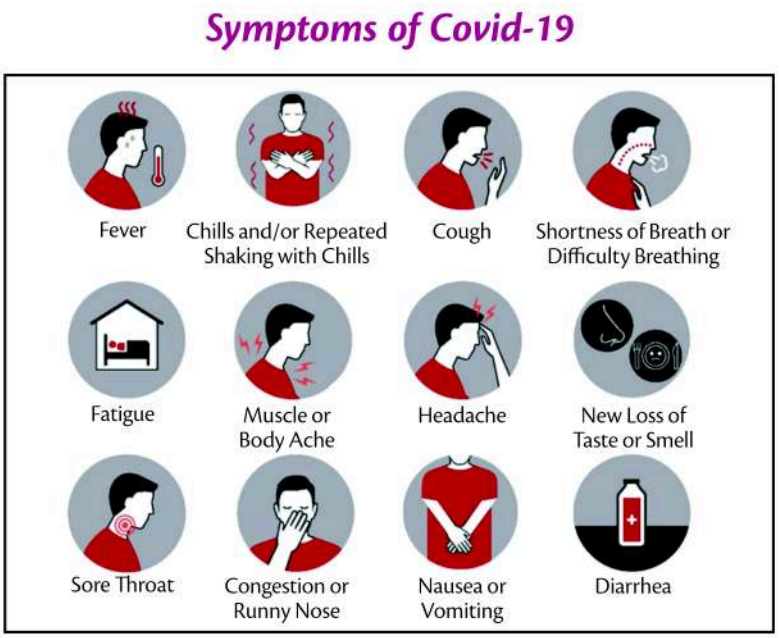


Fig. 2: Symptoms of COVID-19

Source: https://wexnermedical.osu.edu/features/coronavirus/patient-care/symptoms-and-prevention

COVID-19 Transmission and Infection

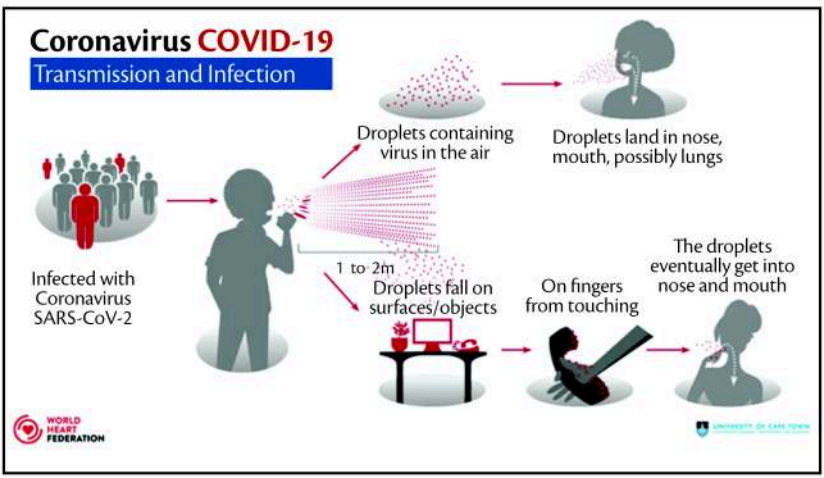


Fig. 3: Transmission of COVID-19.
Source: world-heart-federation.org

Recall that cough and runny nose is one of the major symptoms of COVID-19. When a person infected with the COVID-19 virus (SARS-CoV 2) coughs or sneezes, tiny droplets containing the virus are released into the air. Some of them are instantly inhaled by people around thus infecting them, while the remaining droplets fall on objects and surfaces around them. As people continue to touch these surfaces with the virus and touch their noses and mouths, they also get infected by the virus.

COVID-19 Prevention

Below are some ways to prevent or reduce your chances of spreading or getting COVID-19:



Fig. 4: Prevention of COVID-19.
Source: Bing images

Vaccines and Vaccination

What are Vaccines?

A vaccine is a biological preparation used to stimulate the body's immune response against specific diseases. They strengthen the immune system. A vaccine typically contains an agent that resembles a disease-causing microorganism and is often made from weakened or killed forms of the microbes, its toxins, or one of its component parts. They are usually not strong enough to cause any disease in immune-competent individuals. Vaccines are usually administered through needle injections, but some can be taken through the mouth or sprayed into the nose.

Type of vaccine	Licensed vaccines using this technology	First introduced
Live attenuated (weakened or inactivated)	Measles, mumps, rubella, yellow fever, influenza, oral polio, typhoid, Japanese encephalitis, rotavirus, BCG, varicella zoster	1798 (smallpox)
Killed whole organism	Whole-cell pertussis, polio, influenza, Japanese encephalitis, hepatitis A, rabies	1896 (typhoid)
Toxoid	Diphtheria, tetanus	1923 (diphtheria)
Subunit (purified protein, recombinant protein, polysaccharide, peptide)	Pertussis, influenza, hepatitis B, meninggococcal, pneumococcal, typhoid, hepatitis A	1970 (anthrax)
Virus-like particle	Human papillomavirus	1986 (hepatitis B)
Outer membrane vesicle	Group B meningococcal	1987 (group B meningococcal)
Protein–polysaccharide conjugate	*Haemophilus influenzae* type B, pneumococcal, meninggococcal, typhoid	1987 (*H. influenzae* type B)
Viral vectored	Ebola	2019 (Ebola)
Nucleic acid vaccine	SARS-CoV-2	2020 (SARS-CoV-2)
Bacterial vectored	Experimental	–
Antigen–presenting cell	Experimental	–

Fig. 5: Types of Vaccines

Source: https://www.nature.com/articles/s41577-020-00479-7/figures/2

Vaccination

Vaccination is the process of introducing a vaccine into the body to produce protection or immunity from a specific dis-

ease. Vaccination is the most effective and cheapest method of preventing infectious diseases. Some vaccines give complete immunity, while others provide partial immunity. Partial immunity is better than no immunity. Vaccines are like health insurance; if there is any damage to the body, they make sure it is not felt much by the body with a response from the immune system.

Vaccination started as a variolation for over thousand years in Asia: India and China as an imitation of a natural process. History shows that the process of vaccination was first discovered and applied for centuries in the Ottoman Empire in Istanbul, Turkey, to immunize people against smallpox, which was a terrible epidemic and the primary cause of mass death in the 18th century. However, it was popularized globally by British physician Edward Jenner in 1798 with the extended title of his inquiry into the *Variolae vaccine* known as *Cow Pox*, in which he described the protective effect of cowpox against smallpox.

Ingredients in a Vaccine

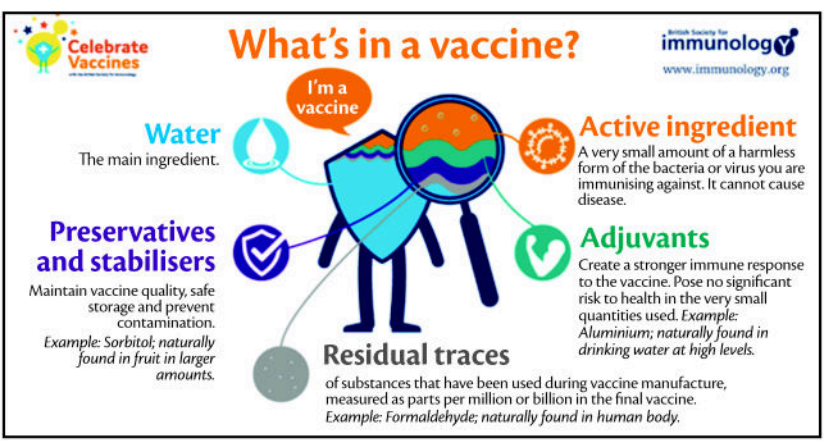


Fig.6: Ingrediants in a Vaccine
Source: www.immunology.org

Common Vaccines and Pharmaceutical Companies Producing Them

The following are the major vaccine manufacturers in the world. They are also the major manufacturers of numerous other biologicals, drugs, and medications that are already in use around the world.

1. Roche Holding AG.
2. Pfizer Inc. (NYSE PFE).
3. Moderna Inc.
4. Johnson and Johnson.
5. CureVac N.V. (NASDAQ: CVAC).
6. Chongqing Zhifei Biological Products Co., Ltd (SZSE: 300122.S.Z.)

Roche Holding AG

Roche Holding AG, owned by Hoffman La Roche, is a Swiss multinational healthcare company that operates worldwide. With its headquarters in Basel, Switzerland, it is the largest pharmaceutical company globally, and a leader in the pharmaceutical industry for cancer treatment, virus diseases, and other diseases.

Pfizer Inc. (NYSE PFE)

Pfizer Inc. is an American multinational pharmaceutical and biotechnology corporation, with its headquarters in Midtown Manhattan, USA. It was established by two German immigrants,

Charles Pfizer and his cousin Charles F. Erhart. The company produces medications (antibiotics, pain relievers, penicillin), and others for immunology, oncology, cardiology, neurology, etc. They have also made several vaccines for influenza, including the COVID-19 vaccine.

Moderna Inc.

Moderna Inc. is an American pharmaceutical and biotechnology company based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA. focusing on RNA therapeutics, primarily mRNA vaccines. Their targeted vaccines include the aspect of Influenza, HIV, respiratory syncytial virus, and a combined single-shot COVID-19 booster.

COVID-19 Vaccines

COVID-19 vaccine helps our bodies develop immunity to the virus that causes COVID-19 without us having to get the disease. The four leading pharmaceutical companies in producing COVID-19 vaccines are Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca, and Johnson & Johnson. Below are the ingredients in some of these vaccines.

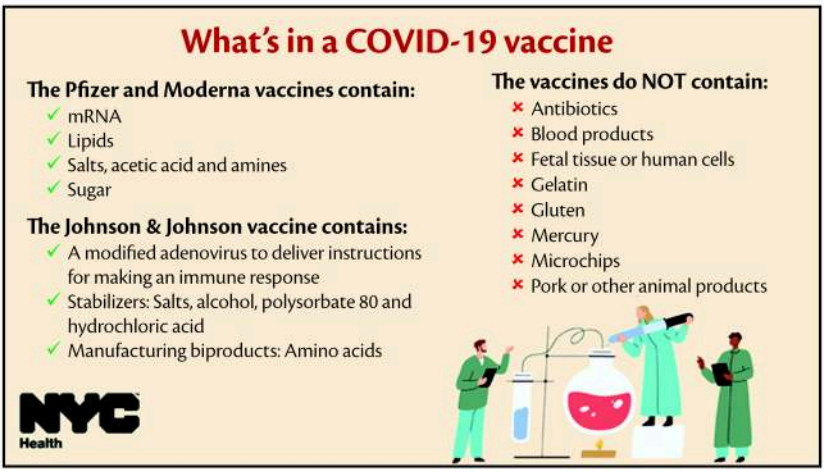


Fig.7: Ingredients of a Vaccine.

Source: https://pbs.twimg.com/media/E-xutZqWUAQrXt5.jpg

The COVID vaccine is administered as an injection in the upper arm. When a person receives this injection, the vaccine enters the bloodstream and triggers the body cells to produce the coronavirus spike protein. As a result of this, the body's immune system reacts by producing antibodies and activating T-cells against the cells with the spike protein. The antibodies and T-cells produced either remain in blood circulation or are stored as memory cells (future fighters). Once this is done, the person gains immunity to the virus, and if the person later gets infected with the actual coronavirus, the antibodies and T-cells that are either in blood circulation or stored as memory cells are triggered to fight the virus. Thus, the person does not fall sick as a result of their contact with the virus.

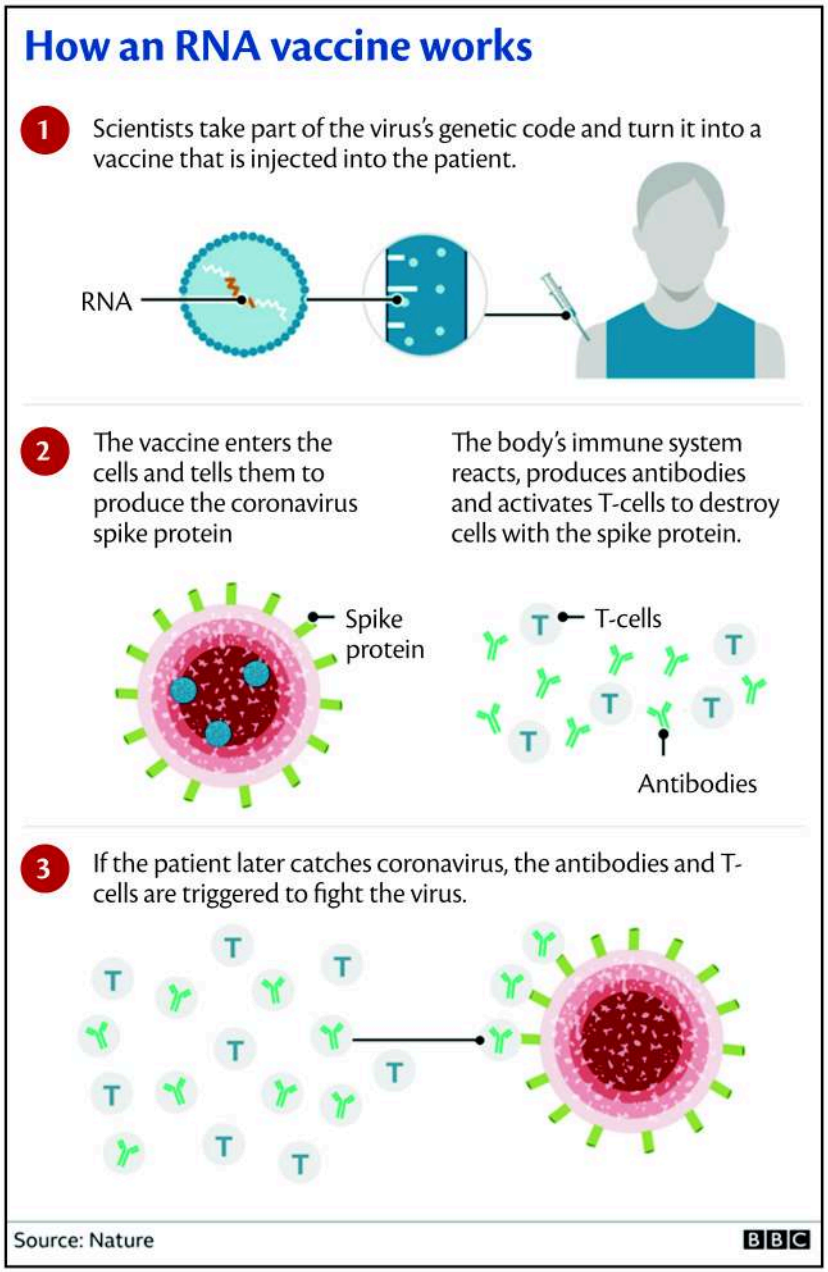


Fig. 8: How an RNA Vaccines works.

Types of COVID-19 Vaccines and How They Work

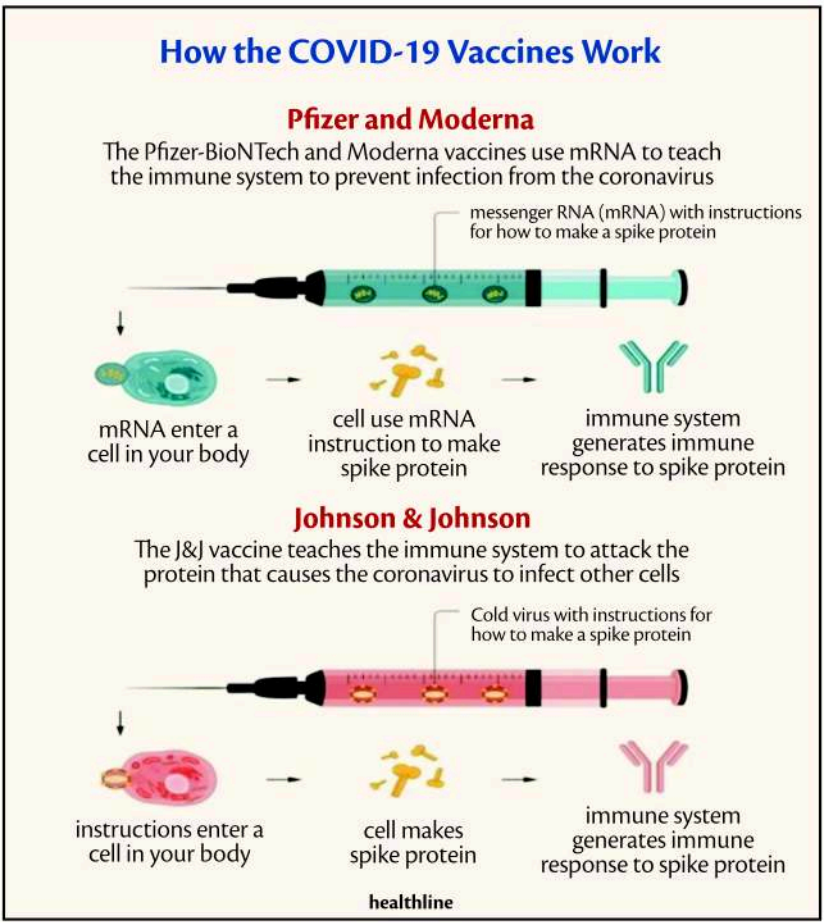


Fig.9: How the COVID-19 Vaccine works

Source:https://www.healthline.com/health/moderna-pfizer-vs-johnson-and-johnson-vaccine

Side Effects after Vaccination

As with all other medications, all vaccines cause side effects, including the vaccine against COVID-19. Some of these side

effects are noticeable, others are not, and they also differ from person to person. They generally cause mild and moderate discomfort, which gets better or disappears after a few days. The most common adverse effects following the administration of the COVID-19 vaccine include:

1. Pain at the injected site
2. Fatigue
3. Headaches
4. Light fever
5. Chills
6. Muscle and joint pains
7. Diarrhoea Etc.

Preliminary Facts about COVID-19 Vaccine

- The COVID vaccine is a weakened form of the virus that cannot cause the disease but is capable of teaching the body how to fight the disease. According to the world's experts on vaccines and viruses, it is absolutely impossible to get the diseases or COVID virus from the vaccine (WHO, CDC, NAFDAC, NIMR, BIMA, IMASA, FIMA, IMANI, IMAM, DIC)
- The COVID vaccine does not contain anything *haram* (forbidden). According to the following fatwa councils, the COVID vaccine is regarded as Halal (permissible): BIMA, IMASA, FIMA, IMANI, IMAM, & DIC.
- According to the WHO, BIMA, IMASA, FIMA, IMANI, IMAM & CDC, there is no evidence to suggest that the COVID vaccine causes infertility.

- According to the health experts WHO, BIMA, IMASA, FIMA, IMANI, IMAM, and CDC, the weakness of the vaccine is such that it is incapable of causing COVID-19 virus to even people with underlying medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, etc.
- No single individual is 100% compatible with every food and medication. There will always be an individual that is allergic to a particular food or medication.
- Testing the safety and quality of drugs and vaccines is done by specific bodies like FDA, CDC, WHO, NAFDAC & NIMR. It is not to be done by medical practitioners as they have different specialized responsibilities in hospitals and clinics.
- In many countries, medical practitioners were the first set of individuals to take the COVID-19 vaccine because they were the front liners. They are at a higher risk of contracting the virus due to their exposure to various patients.
- COVID virus is not the virus of the elite. The COVID-19 virus is not conscious of your bank account, economic status, social status, connections, or political status. Like other viruses (such as the common cold), it can infect anybody.
- Whether rich or poor, whoever is infected, can transmit the virus to others who are susceptible to the virus.

Islamic Perspectives on Vaccination

Islam considers human life as sacred and must be maintained and kept safe. A summary of the *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* (the higher intents of Islamic Law) is to promote and preserve the common good and benefit (*Jalb al-masalih*) and to avoid and

protect from harm (*Dar al-mafasid*), and the purpose is not valid unless these intents are fulfilled.

As Muslims, we should be aware of the five (5) core objectives of shari`ah (*Maqasid al-Shari'ah*):

1. Preservation of Religion (*Hifz al-Deen*)
2. Preservation of life (*Hifz al-Nafs*)
3. Preservation of progeny (*Hifz al-Nasb*)
4. Preservation of intellect (*Hifz al-Aql*)
5. Preservation of wealth (*Hifz al-Mal*)

The Islamic Medical Association of South Africa (IMASA) gave a clear and detailed position on the benefit of vaccination to the core objectives of Shari`ah:

- Firstly, as the preservation of the religion is concerned, Muslims vaccinated against vaccine-preventable diseases will be better positioned to uphold and practice all the *fara'id* (obligatory acts of worship) of Islam.
- Secondly, vaccine manufacturers have facilitated universal access to safe vaccines and have succeeded in preserving the lives of millions of people across the globe, thereby reducing global morbidity and mortality.
- Thirdly, parents who opt to have their children vaccinated would have fulfilled the preservation of their progeny by safeguarding them from succumbing to vaccine-preventable diseases.
- Fourthly, the preservation of intellect and sanity is achieved through vaccination. Those who implement the vaccination initiatives in their community and country will enjoy peace of mind knowing that their community and citizens have been

protected from contracting vaccine-preventable diseases. It also reduces the psychological stress of dealing with the disease.

- Fifthly, vaccination contributes to the preservation of wealth. It is a highly cost-effective intervention and makes good economic sense. It is always better economically to prevent a disease than to treat it and its resultant complications.

> *Abu Hurayrah* (RA) *narrated from the Prophet* (PBUH)*, He said; "Allah did not send down a disease without having sent down its cure"*[2]

- There are remedies to diseases faced by humanity, and Allah created the remedy first for every disease.

> *Usamah Bin Shareek narrated that: I was with the Prophet, and some Arabs came asking, "O Messenger of Allah, should we take medicine for any disease? He said. "Yes, O You servants of Allah take medicine as Allah has not created a disease without creating a cure except for one" (old age)*[3]

- Allah urges Muslims to ask those who know if they do not know: "*Are those who know the same as those who don't.....*"(Qur'an 39:9). "Those who know" are the recognized experts in every field of knowledge.

One of the basic maxims in Islamic jurisprudence states that "Certainty is not overruled by doubt", (*Al-Yaqin la yazul bi al-*

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2 Sahih Bukhari 5678; Sunan ibn Majah 3439

3 Mishkat al-Masabih Hadith no. 4532; Abu Dawud Hadith no. 3855, 2015; Ibn Majah Hadith no. 3436

shakk).[4] Also, the Prophet (pbuh) said: "*Leave what you are in doubt of for what you are sure of*".[5] As such, it is important to be sure that one's evidence for the correctness of one's position is the truth. How then do you determine whether your position is based on the truth or not? As getting to the truth on this matter related to the life and death of potentially many innocent people, it becomes very important that we dig for the truth as best as we can before we cast doubts on those institutions of authority that we already know such as the WHO, NCDC, and others.

It is essential that we ask some critical questions about the sources of truth, their credibility and authority, the channel or news agencies we get our information from, and the evidence being presented. We, therefore, need to be intelligent in asking questions that help us distinguish reliable and trustworthy from unreliable and fake sources of information and news.

Below are some questions that should help us know whom to get our knowledge from regarding vaccines, or any other subject matter:

1. **Questions related to the sources of truth**
    - Where do you get your information from?
    - Who is recognized and is far more respected and trusted on the matter?
    - Who is the trusted narrator and source of the facts and knowledge?

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4 Abdulrahman Al-suyuti, *Al-ashba wa al-nazair*, Dar al-kutub al-'imiyyah, Beirut, Lebonon, p. 7

5 Sunan al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 2520

A. **Questions related to the origin of the news and information about Covid or vaccines** (Similar to tracing a chain of narrators – *Isnad* - back to Prophet (pbuh) or whom?)

   I. What are the qualifications of an expert on this subject of health, diseases, and micro-organism?

   II. Who is the specialist on the subject matter- Viruses, Vaccines, and Vaccination?

   III. Who is the most qualified on this or any other vaccine or medication in the past and present?

   IV. What is the track record of success or failure?

   V. Is there an alternative specialist institution with similar qualifications and experience?

B. **Questions related to the narrator of the news** or information about Covid or vaccines (*Thiqah* – Integrity of the source of the information)

   i. What are the known competent names of individuals or board members of organizations involved in sharing news about Covid-19 or vaccines?

   ii. What integrity and credibility in reporting have they had?

   iii. What has been the experience and past records of such news agencies?

   iv. Have they been known for truth or also for fake news and falsehood?

   v. Are they recognized for truthfulness, character, and professionalism?

vi. How many others of integrity say the same thing?

2. Evidence of Truthfulness regarding information about Covid or vaccines

- What proof of the truth is there?
- How do you know it is true?
- How has the truth been substantiated?

i. What would stand as evidence of any other medicine or vaccine?

ii. Who is the expert witness or testimony on the efficacy of this or any other medication or vaccine?

iii. What is the position of the agencies and institutions responsible for the verification of efficacy and otherwise of this and other medications and vaccines?

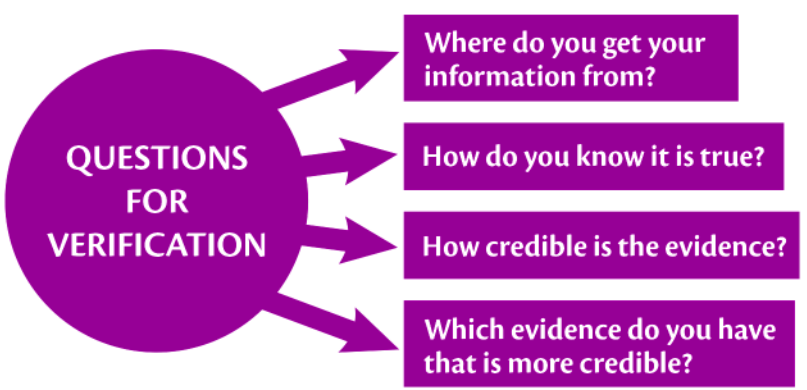
iv. Is there another known trusted agency, an institution recognized for its competence and integrity with a contrary view?

What ethics and attributes of a group, agency, or organization are not credible in this field?

Vaccine Hesitancy and Anti-Vaccination

The COVID-19 pandemic has produced reasons and the need to create vaccine. However, many are hesitant to take the vaccine for various reasons. Anti-vaccination and vaccine-hesitancy are interconnected but denote different ideas. **Vaccine hesitancy** is a decision to delay or refuse to take a vaccine, while **anti-vaccination** is the opinion and action against the use of vaccine.

An extensive survey was conducted and collated to understand why some people are hesitant to take the COVID vaccine and why others are against it. These claims underlying vaccine hesitancy and anti-vaccination is examined below.



CLAIM 1:

"I am simply not interested, and it does not concern me!"

FACT:

- Some people do not care about a problem that does not directly affect them. This is called apathy. It is one of the greatest destroyers of any community, and a weapon of mass destruction.
- It is seeing people dying and knowing you can help stop or reduce the spread of the cause of the death, but you simply "don't care because it is not your problem".
- The fact that other people, the elderly and those with underlying health conditions such as diabetes, lung problems, kidney problems, asthma, etc., are at risk of severe illness or death, does not move some people to act.
- The Prophet (PBUH) said, *"Allah shows mercy to those who show mercy to others"*,[6] *"Whoever does not show mercy, will not be shown mercy"*,[7] and also, "*The believers in their mutual kindness, compassion and sympathy are just like one body. When one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever*".[8]

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6 Sahih Bukhari hadith no. 1284, Sahih Muslim hadith no. 923

7 Al-Adab al-Mufrad Hadith no. 95, 371.

8 Sahih Bukhari hadith no. 6011, Sahih Muslim hadith no. 2586.

- Numerous other texts of the Qur'an and hadith which share a similar message about being concerned with the conditions of others include:
  - *'Love for others what you love for yourself, you will be a* ***Muslim/true believer****"*[9]
  - *'None of you are* **[*true*] *believers*** *until you love for your brothers what you love for yourself'"*[10]
  - *'The believers are like a building, they support and strengthen one another"* [11]
- Caring for other creatures, human beings, fellow believers, and the ummah is a noble act and a good quality of the God-conscious and pious, whether their difficulties affect him or not. The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

> *"Whoever among you sees evil, let him change it with his hand. If he is unable to do so, then with his tongue. If he is unable to do so, then with his heart, and that is the weakest level of faith"*[12]
>
> Not doing anything about a thing you can do something about is a sign of weakness in faith and Iman. Hudayfah Ibn Al-Yaman reported that the Prophet (PBUH) said: *"By the one in whose hand is my soul, you must enjoin good and forbid evil, or else Allah will soon send punishment upon you. Then, you will call upon Allah, and it will not be answered for you"*[13]

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9 Sunan al-Tirmidhi Hadith no. 2305; Sunan Ibn Majah Hadith no. 4217

10 Sahih Bukhari, hadith no.13, Sahih Muslim, hadith no. 168

11 Sahih Bukhari, hadith no. 481; Sahih Muslim, hadith no. 2585

12 Sahih Muslim, Hadith no. 49

13 Sunan al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 2169

- A Muslim is one whose action brings safety and security to others. According to the renowned Muslim jurist Al-Izz ibn Abd al-Salam, *"It is not acceptable for a Muslim that has the opportunity to do good and didn't do anything or see the opportunity to stop harm and didn't do anything".*
- Your decision not to be vaccinated doesn't just impact you but affects everyone else, especially the most vulnerable, the elderly parents and grandparents (over 60), those with previous surgeries, those battling with cancer, those struggling with heart conditions, diabetes, sickle cell conditions, and other underlying health conditions.
- *".....And whosoever saves a life – it is as if he had saved the mankind entirely....."* (Qur'an 5:32)
- If saving a life is an obligation, then whatever is a prerequisite for an obligation is in itself an obligation (*Ma la yatimmu al-wajib illa bihi fahuwa wajib*).[14] If the saving of life is compulsory and medicine/vaccine is a prerequisite, then medicine is mandatory.
- Receiving vaccination is also included in the category of exerting 'human efforts to avoid harm' as the maxim states *'Addararu yuzal'*[15] (Harm must be eliminated).
- It is similar to wearing a life jacket to avoid unforeseen calamity when going to the sea. Just as human efforts are intended to prevent harm, vaccination is a means of exerting human efforts to prevent diseases. And this has successfully been done with many diseases through the usage of vaccines.

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14 Ali bin Na'if al-Shuhud, , Maktabah al-Shamila Al-Khulasa fee Fiqh al-Aqalliyyah 3.13, vol.7, p.48; Al-Suyuti, *al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, p. 121

- Allah warns us: *"And fear the Fitnah (affliction and trial) which affects not in particular (only) those of you who do wrong."* (Qur'an 8:25) In other words, do not think that the problems of others will not come to affect you too!
- Jarir said that the Prophet (PBUH) said, "*Every people among whom sins are being committed, while they are mightier and more numerous than those who do wrong, yet they did nothing to stop them, then Allah will surround them all with punishment.*"[16]
- Hudhayfah bin Al-Yaman that the Prophet (PBUH) said, "*By He in Whose Hand is my soul! You will enjoin righteousness and forbid evil, or else Allah will send a punishment upon you from Him; you will supplicate then to Him, but He will not answer your supplication.*"[17]
- In conclusion, you can't see harm, evil, suffering, or any afflictions, and say you don't care about it! You must do the best you can, within your capacity.

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15 Al-Suyuti, *al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, p. 7

16 Sahih al-jami' hadith no. 5749; sunan abu dawud hadith no. 4339

17 Mishkat al-masabih vol. 4 p.484; Ibn Majah hadith no. 3251, 4004; Ahmad 25255

CLAIM 2:

"The COVID vaccine ingredients are *haram* (forbidden) or contain prohibited substances"

Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

According to experts in the World Health Organization (WHO) and Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the vaccine contains five ingredients:

a. mRNA molecules
b. Lipid carrier
c. Saline
d. Sugar
e. Potassium

Thus, the vaccine does not contain any haram (forbidden) substances at all. To declare a product Halal or Haram (permissible or forbidden) is a call for the Islamic scholars and Fatwa councils who have also studied the vaccine and its ingredients. Allah says, *"..... So, ask the people of Knowledge if you do not know."* (Quran 16:43)

- Fatwa councils that regard the COVID vaccine as Halal include the British Islamic Medical Association (BIMA), Federation of Islamic Medical Association (FIMA), Islamic Medical Association & Network of Indonesia (IMANI), Islamic Medical Association of Malaysia (IMAM), Islamic Medical Association of South Africa (IMASA).
- The maxim, ('*Al-Yaqinu la yazul bi al-shakk*') certainty is not overruled by doubt, means weaker and speculative considerations must not overturn knowledge based on valid experience and substantial evidence.
- Consequently, the opinion of Islamic Fatwa councils of Muslim Medical Associations cannot be overturned by any less competent authority.
- Simply repeating and spreading unsubstantiated, fake opinions and news is a moral wrong condemned by the Quran and Sunnah. The Prophet (PBUH) said: *"It is enough to make you a liar if you keep repeating all you hear"*[18]
- Muslims are also advised to avoid harbouring unfounded prejudiced suspicion towards innocent others as this can become a sin. Allah says, *"O you who believe! Avoid suspicion, for surely, suspicion in some cases is a sin...."* (Quran 49:12).
- The Prophet (pbuh) narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah: "*Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the worst of tales; and do not look for the others fault and do not spy…..*"[19]

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18 Sahih Muslim hadith no. 4

19 Sahih Bukhari 6064

- A Muslim's decision must be guided by evidence and proof, not by unfounded speculation and superstitions.
- Even where the ingredient for necessary medication may not be pure, if it is in a context of need (*hajah*) or necessity (*darurah*), it becomes permissible for the duration of such context, especially if these needs affect a community.
- Consequently, even pork and alcohol that are clearly forbidden (*haram*) become permissible if they will save a life. This is well acknowledged by the scholars of Islamic jurisprudence based on the Quran. Allah says: *"He has only forbidden to you dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah. But whoever is forced [by necessity], neither desiring [it] nor transgressing [its limit], there is no sin upon him. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful....."* Quran 2:173

CLAIM 3:

"The COVID vaccine can itself cause disease or the COVID virus"

Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACTS:

- According to the experts on the COVID-19 vaccine and viruses, it is absolutely impossible to get diseases or COVID virus from the vaccine (WHO, CDC, BIMA, IMASA, FIMA, IMANI, IMAM).
- The COVID vaccine is designed to teach our immune system how to recognize and fight the virus that causes the COVID disease.
- When the immune system is under stress, such as flu, catarrh, or some medications or any vaccine, some people sometimes undergo immune stress that gives symptoms such as fatigue, pain at the injection site, body aches, fever, etc. (WHO)

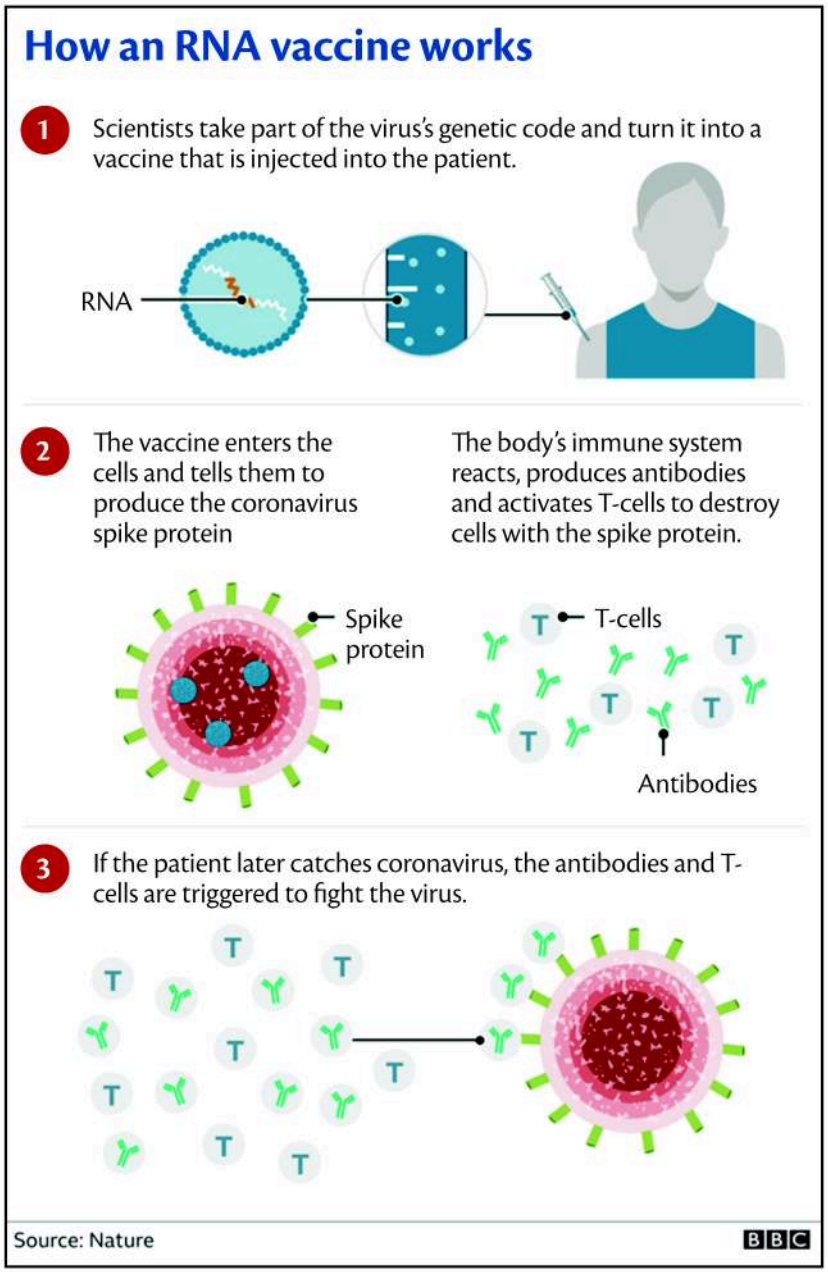

How an RNA vaccine works
1
Scientists take part of the virus's genetic code and turn it into a vaccine that is injected into the patient.
RNA
2
The vaccine enters the cells and tells them to produce the coronavirus spike protein
Spike protein
The body's immune system reacts, produces antibodies and activates T-cells to destroy cells with the spike protein.
T-cells
Antibodies
3
If the patient later catches coronavirus, the antibodies and T-cells are triggered to fight the virus.
Source: Nature
BBC

Fig. 10

In other words, the scientist takes a part of the virus that is too weak to cause the disease (COVID-19 virus) but vital enough to teach the body cells how to recognize, respond to, prevent the COVID-19 Virus.

- The maxim of ("*Yuzal ad-darar al-ashaddu bid-darar al-akhaff*") A greater harm may be eliminated using a lesser penalty,[20] means when we are to choose between evil alternatives, the lesser evil must be sought.
- Regarding vaccination, it is better to take the vaccine and be mildly ill than not taking the vaccine and risk spreading the virus and thereby causing more significant harm.
- A much greater evil than some of the common adverse effects following the usage of the vaccine is to pass the diseases to someone who may die (older people or people with underlying illnesses, etc.)

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20 Shubayr, *al-Qawa'id al-Kuwaytiyyah*, vol.9, p.27, cited in Mohamad Akram Laldin et.al, *Islamic Legal Maxims & Their Application in Islamic Finance*, ISRA, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, p. 116.

CLAIM 4:

"The COVID vaccine can lead to infertility and barrenness"



Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- According to the BIMA, FIMA, IMASA, IMAM, IMANI, CDC, & WHO, **there is no evidence to suggest that the COVID vaccine causes infertility in either men or women.**
- The claim that the COVID vaccine could cause infertility was based on a statement made when a German epidemiologist suggested that the COVID vaccine would cause the body to make anti-Syncytin-1 antibodies (naturally occurring placenta protein), which might contribute to infertility in some people. No evidence supports this to be the actual truth.
- The experts actually encourage COVID vaccination for people trying to get pregnant now or in the future.
- The maxim, ("*Al yaqinu la yazulu bi al shakk*")[21] certainty is not overruled by doubt, means weaker and speculative con-

[21] Al-Suyuti, *al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, p. 7

siderations must not overturn knowledge based on valid experience and substantial evidence.

- A Muslim's decision must be guided by evidence and proof, not by unfounded speculation and or rumour.
- In the absence of more authoritative information or evidence, the opinion of health authorities should be trusted as the most credible. Allah says, *"O you who believe! Avoid suspicion, for surely, suspicion in some cases is a sin...."* (Quran 49:12).
- The Prophet (pbuh) narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah: *"Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the worst of tales; and do not look for the others fault and do not spy....."*[22]

[22] Sahih Bukhari 6064

CLAIM 5:

"The COVID vaccine can worsen underlying medical conditions"

Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- The most vulnerable and at-risk to the COVID-19 virus are the elderly and those with underlying medical conditions
- An underlying medical condition (illness) is an ongoing, chronic, or long-term medical problem that often needs medical help. Examples include diabetes, heart diseases, high blood pressure, asthma, cancer management, etc.
- These conditions already weaken patients' immune systems and will often put such people at a high risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus.
- As such, health experts consider it even more recommended that people with these conditions take the COVID vaccines because they help boost their immune system.
- The vaccine is considered safe and effective for all.

Safety measures: As with other medications, it is advisable to let the person vaccinating you know if you have any allergies or health conditions, which should be known about.

CLAIM 6:

"The COVID Vaccine is not taken by medical practitioners because they themselves do not trust the vaccines".

Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- This claim is not valid because there is no reason or evidence for it.
- The medical practitioners were the first to die in the cause of contracting the COVID virus because they were front-liners.
- Afterward, the medical practitioners were also the first set of individuals to take the COVID vaccine; they are the front liners and are therefore at a higher risk of contracting the virus due to their exposure to the infected patients.
- According to BIMA, IMANI, FIMA, IMASA, IMAM, CDC & WHO it has been established that the medical practitioners have taken the COVID vaccine.
- People with underlying conditions, the elderly (60 and above), and other age groups (59 and below) were the next to

take the vaccine after the medical practitioners in order of those with a high risk of contracting the virus

- There may be individuals among the medical practitioners who have not been vaccinated for personal or specific reasons, but this doesn't represent the position of medical experts' practitioners, professionals, or institutions as regards to the usage of COVID-19 vaccines.

CLAIM 7:

"COVID virus affects only the elite and wealthy in our society and not the poor".

Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

According to the experts, there are many categories of people who are at higher risk of contracting covid than others due to various reasons such as:

1. **Lifestyle**: Wealthy people usually travel and meet more people when compared to others, e.g., Businessmen and Politicians. Understandably, those who interact with people more are at a greater risk of contracting the virus when compared to others.
2. **Profession**: People whose jobs require close interaction with others, like medical practitioners, are at higher risk than farmers. A medical practitioner will attend to many patients daily (whether such people have COVID or not), unlike a farmer who spends his day on the farm with less contact with people.

3. **Age**: old people (above 60) among the elite can afford medical treatments and the cost of medication if infected with the COVID virus unlike the poor elderly.
4. **Health**: Some health conditions may make you more vulnerable to the virus, such as asthma, and heart or lung conditions.
5. **Adaptive immunity**: Adaptive immunity is developed in the body system when exposed to microbes or chemicals released by it. Adaptive immunity is also referred to as "acquired immunity". The adaptive immune system response remembers the previously encountered germs and responds immediately the next time they are infected. In other words, it provides long-term immunity but may wane over time.

- 'Non-elites' interact with the elite and work with them and therefore the virus could spread to all.
- Whoever has been infected, whether rich or poor, can still transmit the virus to susceptible people, whether those susceptible are elite or not.
- Most people who can afford to manage underlying illness, the expensive cardiac treatment, the dietary changes associated with Diabetes, and the cost of managing severe Asthma are usually relatively wealthy or have health insurance.
- In some countries, this fact shows that the wealthier and 'elite' in society are more susceptible to COVID infection.
- In some countries where the poor also have health insurance, COVID has infected and killed all socio-economic demographics or levels.
- Most news is also biased toward what happens to the elite. There is disproportionately more information about those

affected by the COVID virus among the rich and powerful compared to the poor.

- Due to the media concentration on the elite, the cause of death is known and announced. For most people in the poor cadre, the cause of death is not verified, tested, and unknown. Therefore, the cause of death is attributed to "natural death" or "old age", even if it was COVID-related.
- COVID virus is not conscious of your bank account, economic conditions, social status, or political status. Like other viruses (e.g., the common cold), it is not aware and infects everybody irrespective. Thus, both the rich and the poor, the leaders and the followers, the elite and non-elite have been infected with and died from the COVID virus. Hence, everyone needs to take responsibility for addressing the issue.
- Even if a disease affected only the wealthy elite within our communities, it is still our responsibility to do what we can to assist in solving their challenges as best as we can, if we are really faithful Muslims.
  - *"The believers are nothing else than brothers (in Islamic religion). So make reconciliation between your brothers, and fear Allah, that you may receive mercy."* (Qur'an 49:10)
  - *'Love for others what you love for yourself, you will be a* ***Muslim/true believer****'"* [23]
  - *'None of you is a* **[*true*] *believer*** *until you love for your brother what you love for yourself'* [24]

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23 Sunan Tirmidhi, Hadith no. 2305; Sunan Ibn Majah, Hadith no. 4217

24 Sahih Bukhari, Hadith no. 13, and Sahih Muslim, Hadith no. 168

- *'The believers are like a building, they support and strengthen each other'* [25]
- *'The believers in their mutual mercy, love and compassion are like a body, when one limb is in pain the rest of the body joins in insomnia, fever and restlessness'* [26]

[25] Sahih Bukhari, Hadith no. 481 and Sahih Muslim, Hadith no. 2585

[26] Sahih Bukhari, Hadith no. 6011, Sahih Muslim, Hadith no. 2586

CLAIM 8:

"COVID vaccine has not been proven safe by medical practitioners".

Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- Medical practitioners are specialized professionals in different fields. Gyneacologists, surgeons, pediatricians, general health practitioners, etc., are not in the best position to give a verdict on the safety and quality of medications, be it drugs or vaccines.
- Testing the safety and quality of drugs and vaccines are done by specific bodies like WHO, NIMR, NAFDAC, and CDC, and reliable information from these bodies has shown over 90% effectiveness and safety for the vaccine (MHPA).
- ".....Produce your proof, if you should be truthful....." (Quran 2: 111). For those who have any claim against the vaccine's efficacy and safety.

CLAIM 9:

"The COVID vaccine was introduced to reduce the Nigerian /African Population"



Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- There are established procedures for drugs and vaccines development. Testing in humans can only proceed after relative safety has been established in laboratory animals.
- Margaret Keenan from Coventry, United Kingdom was the first to be given a COVID vaccine on 8th December 2020, and she is neither a Nigerian nor an African.
- Heads of States and senior politicians of other countries have already taken the vaccines. Many other nations have already vaccinated over 70% of their own populations, and their populations are doing very well.
- The vaccination did not start in Nigeria and was not restricted to Africa. More Europeans, Chinese, Arabs, and Asians have been vaccinated than Africans or Nigerians. There

is no evidence suggesting that the COVID vaccine or other vaccines affect reproductive health or fertility.

- This same argument with no evidence was used to discourage other vaccines in the past. Such statements with no basis or proof only bring embarrassment to Islam and increase the people's suffering, as it did in the case of Poliomyelitis.
- After all the baseless conspiracy theory circulated that was embarrassing, most Muslim majority countries had the last Poliomyelitis cases: Somalia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Northern Nigeria. There is no current evidence that suggests that the COVID vaccines interfere with fertility.
- There is currently no biological evidence that antibodies from COVID vaccination or vaccine ingredients could cause any problems with reproductive organs.
- Mere claims should not be considered certainty as this is against one of Islam's significant teachings and maxims, '*Al yaqinu la yazulu bi al shakk*'[27] (certainty is not overruled by doubt).
- Conclusion based on assumption with no evidence, is not regarded as evidence scientifically or Islamically. Allah says:

> *"...and surely conjecture can be no substitute for truth"* (Qur'an 10:36)

- The opinion of trusted experts should always be considered and prioritized.

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27 Al-Suyuti, *al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, p. 7

CLAIM 10:

"We are being used as Guinea Pigs"



Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- This claim could equally apply to all other medications and cosmetics, which we take such as the various anti-malaria drugs and antibiotics, even though these drugs are still under further research.
- The vaccine was initially tested on 40,000 volunteers with a success rate of 70% acquiring complete immunity. Subsequently, an additional 2nd dose and booster immunization were introduced to raise the immunity to nearly 100%.
- Like all medications, humans continue to benefit from the research and studies of the side effects based on which drugs are improved or replaced.
- How are we being used as guinea pigs if more scientifically advanced and educated nations that developed and produced the vaccines have more of their population vaccinated than us?

- Even if it is true that we are being used as “guinea pigs”, the 'pigs' vaccinated are obviously surviving better than the 'pigs' that have not been immunized. Hence, it is wiser to be vaccinated.

CLAIM 11:

"I am sure I don't have COVID-19"



Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- Vaccines are not meant to cure people with the COVID virus; they are intended to prevent people from getting infected with COVID or reduce the severity of the illness if it is unavoidable.
- Even if you are sure that you don't have the COVID virus, whether you are lucky (Alhamdulillah) or your immune system is strong enough to prevent you from being harmed by it, it doesn't stop you from eventually being a victim or a carrier. You can still transfer it to others who are vulnerable and can die or be seriously harmed by it.
- Vaccines are only meant for all to help reach herd immunity when at least 70% of the population has been vaccinated, and can no longer transmit it to vulnerable members of the population.

- Vaccination remains the safest and best way to prevent COVID infections, hospitalizations, long-term health complications, and death of the elderly and other more vulnerable numbers in the country.
- Allah says in the Qur'an, *"The believers are nothing else than brothers (in Islamic religion). So make reconciliation between your brothers, and fear Allah, that you may receive mercy."* (Qur'an 49:10). We cannot only think of ourselves, and not care about others.

The Prophet (PBUH) said:

- *'Love for others what you love for yourself, you will be a* ***Muslim/true believer****'*[28]
- *'None of you is a* **[*true*] *believer*** *until you love for your brother what you love for yourself'* [29]
- *'The believers are like a building, they support and strengthen each other'* [30]
- *'The believers in their mutual mercy, love and compassion are like a body, when one limb is in pain the rest of the body joins in insomnia, fever and restlessness'* [31]

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28 Sunan Tirmidhi, Hadith no. 2305; Sunan Ibn Majah, Hadith no. 4217

29 Sahih Bukhari, Hadith no. 13; Sahih Muslim, Hadith no. 168

30 Sahih Bukhari, Hadith no. 481; Sahih Muslim, Hadith no. 2585

31 Sahih Bukhari, Hadith no. 6011; Sahih Muslim, Hadith no. 2586

CLAIM 12:

"COVID-19 does not exist. It is all a conspiracy theory."

Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- Microbiologists and virologists who study viruses are the experts and authorities on the existence of various viruses. They are responsible for the study, classification, and naming of these viruses.
- These are the same experts who have identified numerous and various other viruses and bacteria that cause the illness which we take other vaccines and medication to cure or prevent.

  Allah says: *'...ask those who know if you know not'* (Q21:7)

- The African Centre of Excellence for Genomics of Infectious Diseases (ACEGID) has done some genomics studies establishing that COVID-19 is confirmed in Nigeria.

- According to the World Health Organization (WHO), a group of international experts on these issues has confirmed that COVID-19 exists.
- As of 2021, over 700 scientific journals and professional medical journals have research papers written by an expert who has established that the COVID-19 virus exists.
- COVID-19 is now a pandemic affecting many countries around the world. The disease has infected close to 439,243,304 million people as of the 2nd of March, 2022, and killed 5,986,392.
- If COVID-19 is not real, do you think that the most powerful countries in the world will close down airports, seaports, restrict themselves and others from travelling and lose billions of dollars in the process?
- Who are those specialists who study micro-organisms such as viruses, bacteria, algae, fungi, that say the virus does not exist?
- Where do you get your information from?
- How credible are they compared to WHO, NCDC, IMAN, FIMA, BIMA, etc., who all say that COVID-19 is real?

CLAIM 13:

"The storage facilities in Nigerian medical centers are poor, so the vaccine may be damaged"

Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- Some current COVID vaccines have a short expiry date compared to others. Once any vaccine has expired, it is not used but destroyed.
- Consequently, when expired doses of vaccine were noticed, on Dec. 22, 2021, 1,066,214 (one million, sisty-six thousand, two hundred and fourteen) doses of expired AstraZeneca vaccine were destroyed at a landfill in Abuja by the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration Control (NAFDAC), with the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) and Abuja Environment Protection Agency (AEPB)
- The Nigerian Government also announced that it would no longer accept donated COVID vaccines in good condition with a short time to their expiry date.

- Individuals, organizations, and institutions cannot be accused of wrongdoing without evidence. All are innocent until proven guilty.
- An Islamic legal maxim, *'La Ibra li al-Tawahhum,'*[32] means: Judgement is not established by guess or fanciful claims.
- Also, the maxim *'Al-Bayyinah ala al-Mudda'i'*[33] means: Evidence is required by whoever is accusing. As such, there is a need for credible evidence to prove that damaged or expired covid vaccines are being administered to people.
- A Muslim should presume good in others. Allah says in Qur'an 49:11, *'It is therefore wrong to slander, lie against or spoil the name of any individual or organization without any evidence.'*
- Another Islamic maxim holds that *'Al yaqinu la yazulu bi shakk'*[34] (certainty is not overruled by doubt); therefore, claims with no evidence cannot be used as sources of information.

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32 Al-nadawi, *al-qawa'id* p. 316;

33 Sahih Bukhari hadith no. 4552; Sahih Muslim hadith no. 1711

34 Al-Suyuti, *al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir*, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, p. 7

CLAIM 14:

"The COVID vaccine is harmful to pregnant women and lactating mothers"



Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- The placenta is an organ that gives an unborn baby its nutrients and oxygen.
- There is a claim by some that the antibodies made from the COVID vaccines will bind to proteins in the placenta and stop pregnancy.
- This claim that the COVID vaccine affects pregnant women is false, and no scientific evidence to supports it. ".....Produce your proof, if you should be truthful....." (Quran 2: 111).
- There is no evidence linking the COVID vaccine to infertility or any form of harm to lactating mothers or their babies.
- This claim is also not valid because many pregnant women have taken their COVID vaccine without any cause for alarm.
- In fact, pregnancy experts strongly recommend that all pregnant women should take COVID vaccine and a booster in

order to protect themselves from falling ill as a result of the virus and thus putting themselves and their babies at risk.

- "Al-*bayyinat al-lamudda'i*" (Evidence is required by whoever is accusing), thus those promoting this claim should base their claim on evidence and not on mere conjecture.

CLAIM 15:

"COVID-19 Virus heals naturally, so there is no need for a vaccine"



Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- Immunity is your body's ability to protect you from getting sick when exposed to an infectious agent ("germ") such as a bacterium, virus, parasite or fungus.
- The claim argues that humans are designed to naturally develop immunity against viruses without resorting to artificial means such as vaccination. This is called acquired immunity. This claim is not always valid.
- Some people have stronger immune systems than others, and some are more vulnerable than others. Therefore, the immune response can differ among people who get the COVID virus and recover from it. Unfortunately, the strength of the immune system cannot be measured visually.
- While some people have acquired immunity to a specific illness, many have not.

- And while it is true that some have acquired immunity and heal naturally. Many others are vulnerable due to age or underlying conditions.
- Even those who have acquired this immunity and heal naturally can continue to spread it to vulnerable ones due to their partial and incomplete immunity.
- Vaccination programs ensure that enough people have been vaccinated so that spread within the community is difficult or slow.

CLAIM 16:

"I am old; why should I fear death?"



Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- Desiring or prompting death is never an objective of the *Shari`*ah. Rather, the *Shari'ah* is concerned about the promotion and preservation of life, and Muslims should take advantage of all opportunities to save one's life and the lives of others.

  Allah says: '.... *And do not kill yourselves (or one another). Indeed, Allah is to you ever merciful.*' (Qur'an 4:29)

- Taking a vaccine is not just because one is afraid of death. It is also to save and enhance the health and lives of others, to be better, and serve Allah's cause of service and compassion to Allah's creation.
- The prophetic reports on pandemic control, quarantine, and prevention policies are meant for all Muslims irrespective of

their age, gender, and status, and irrespective of whether they fear death or not. It is a sunnah for all Muslims to follow.

- The fact that one is old does not mean they should not take care of their health.
- The principle (*"Al-Wikayah khayrun min al-ilaj"*) prevention is better than cure, is in line with one of the objectives of *Shari*'ah, i.e. "protection of life", and it is not meant for only young ones but all.
- The COVID vaccine development process is also consistent with the principle of the avoidance of harm in Islamic jurisprudence (*'Al Darar yuzaal'*) harm must be eliminated.
- Preserving life is aligned with preserving religion. Muslims who refuse to receive COVID-19 vaccines may act against Shari`ah law.
- All the major Fatwa councils worldwide agree that vaccines are necessary for the context of our current pandemic, and thus receiving a COVID vaccination is a form of compliance with the principles of *Shari'ah* law.
- Numerous other texts of the Qur'an and hadith make it clear that a true Muslim must be concerned about the conditions of others:
  - *"The believers are nothing else than brothers (in Islamic religion). So make reconciliation between your brothers, and fear Allah, that you may receive mercy."* (Qur'an 49:10)
  - *'Love for others what you love for yourself, you will be a* ***Muslim/true believer***'[35]
  - *'None of you is a* **[*true*]** ***believer*** *until you love for your brother what you love for yourself'* [36]

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35 Sunan Tirmidhi, Hadith no. 2305, Sunan Ibn Majah, Hadith no. 4217

36 Sahih Bukhari, Hadith no. 13, and Sahih Muslim, Hadith no. 168

- *'The believers are like a building, they support and strengthen each other'* [37]
- *'The believers in their mutual mercy, love and compassion are like a body, when one limb is in pain the rest of the body joins in insomnia, fever and restlessness'* [38]

[37] Sahih Bukhari, Hadith no. 481 and Sahih Muslim, Hadith no. 2585

[38] Sahih Bukhari, Hadith no. 6011, Sahih Muslim, Hadith no. 2586

CLAIM 17:

**"The vaccine can lead to death.
Why should I risk it?"**



Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- There is no evidence that any vaccine, including the COVID-19 vaccine, can lead to death any more than any other accepted medication. Also, people have different forms and degrees of reaction or side effects to the COVID-19 vaccine, and some don't have any reactions at all, which is the same as with all other medications and foods.
- If the vaccine were dangerous and could lead to death, it would not have been regarded as safe for older people and people with underlying conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, asthma, etc.
- According to all experts in the field, the risk of not taking the vaccine is far greater than the risk of taking it.
- The ingredients of the COVID-19 vaccine are known to be harmless to the body. These ingredients are;

1. mRNA molecules,
2. Lipid carrier,
3. Saline,
4. Potassium, and
5. Sugar.

➤ The experts and specialized institutions should be listened to regarding whether a particular medication or food is dangerous or not.

CLAIM 18:

"Allah is the only protector; vaccine cannot protect anyone"

Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- The fact that Allah is our protector and, therefore, the ultimate cause of life and death does not remove or reduce the responsibility on us as humans to protect human life and prevent harm.
- Because Allah is our protector does not mean we should not take measures to protect ourselves from the harm of wild animals, criminals or diseases. Because Allah is our ultimate protector does not mean we should not do the best we can to protect ourselves, our families and others from various sources of danger. In fact Allah regards us as responsible for defending and protecting ourselves and others from harm.
- Taking vaccines and other medications is, therefore, in line with the trust and belief that Allah has destined a cure in

the medicine. And the Prophet (PBUH) instructed us to take medication as he encouraged his companions to do so.

- As Muslims, we are to protect our health and others, and Allah has clearly prohibited humankind from putting themselves in danger or self-destruction (Qur'an 2:195).
- Safeguarding life includes taking care of one's physical health and avoiding threats against it, such as preventing diseases. Because "*for every illness, there is a cure*", just as Allah has destined there will be diseases, He has also destined that there will be a cure for them. (Sahih Muslim).

Allah has not created the cure for the fun of it but to be administered for the control of the concern ailment.

It is essential to remember that Almighty Allah says:

> "*Whatever misfortune befalls you [people], it is because of what your hand have done; God forgives much.*" (Qur'an 42:30)

- The maxim of "*Al-darar yuzal*" (Harm must be eliminated).

The virus is harm that must be eliminated, and the most important and effective way of stopping it is through taking the vaccine.

- (*"Al-darar yuzal bi qadril imkan:"*) Harm must be eliminated to the possible best.

It is our individual responsibility to do everything within our power to eliminate the harm of COVID-19. This includes but is not limited to being vaccinated.

- Vaccines have successfully eradicated smallpox and polio around the world. Poliomyelitis, which causes physical disfigurement in children and had 350,000 cases in 1998, was successfully overcome with zero cases in Malaysia by 2012 due to vaccination (Utusan Malaysia, 2016). On August 25th, 2020, Nigeria was declared polio-free, the last country in the African continent to achieve this feat. This was achievable with the vaccination of all children from birth to 5 years old.

CLAIM 19:

"COVID-19 vaccine can lead to harmful side-effects"



Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- All medications have side effects and affect people differently. Most people, however, do not have an adverse reaction to most drugs such as antibiotics, paracetamol, chloroquine, anti-malaria, etc.
- The CDC highlights that "serious side effects are rare and occur in about 1 out of 100,000 vaccinations".
- Vaccines are designed to give you immunity without the dangers of getting the disease. It is common to experience some mild-to-moderate side effects when receiving vaccinations such as fever, weakness of the limb injected, body pain, and general weakness of the body. This is because the immune system instructs your body to react in specific ways.

- The maxim *"al-Akhdh bi akhaff al-Dararayn"*[39] (Choosing the lesser of two harms); means that when there is a clash of two harmful situations, and we have to choose either of the two, we have to choose lesser harmful situations.

In the vaccination context, although the assumption is that the vaccine might cause some harm to some recipients, it must still be administered because of the consequences of the harm or not vaccinating at all. The harm that befalls an individual in the form of side effects would be less serious than the harm in the form of a disease that endangers society and the health of the elderly and vulnerable in particular.

[39]Ibn Nujaim, *Al-ashbah wa al-aza'ir*, p. 89

CLAIM 20:

"The vaccine is not effective: it does not cure or work on some people"

Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- Certain medications are meant to cure diseases, while others are meant to prevent diseases. Each is useful, and as we all know, "preventions is better than cure".
- Vaccines are not a cure but are meant to reduce and prevent the chances of acquiring the disease and spreading it.
- As with other medications, there is a percent of inefficacy. For example, not all malaria medications cure malaria or have the same effectiveness.
- Medication that may be effective for one person may be less effective for another. This is also the same for vaccine. That is why a near-complete dose for immunity requires three vaccines for most people.

- The claims on vaccines' effectiveness or ineffectiveness should be by experts and authorities on the subject matter and not just anybody.
- According to the World Health Organization, vaccinations can reduce the risk of getting COVID for 80% of the population and with an efficacy of 80%.
- According to WHO, "Those who are fully vaccinated have the lowest risk compared to those who have incomplete vaccination or have not been vaccinated. Vaccination, therefore, significantly reduces the risk of being infected by COVID or of being a transmitter of it to others.
- Lastly, vaccination reduces the harm to the community. Being unvaccinated increases the harm, especially to the vulnerable categories, e.g., underlying conditions such as; Diabetics, Asthma, Hepatitis B, etc.

The Prophet (PBUH) made it clear that a true Muslim will always be concerned about the conditions and suffering of others!

CLAIM 21:

"The Vaccine/Manufacturers cannot be trusted"



Questions For Verification

- **Where do you get your Information from?**
- **How do you know it is true?**
- **How credible is the evidence?**
- **Which evidence do you have that is more credible?**

FACT:

- The following are the major vaccine manufacturers in the world:
  a. Roche Holding AG
  b. Pfizer Inc. (NYSE PFE)
  c. Johnson and Johnson
  d. CureVac N.V (NASDAQ: CVAC)
  e. Chongqing Zhifei Biological Products Co., Ltd (SZSE: 300122.S.Z.)
- These are the same pharmaceutical manufacturers of vaccines that saved the lives of millions of children and adults. They have been proven effective, prevented hepatitis B and eradicated smallpox and polio.
- Also, these are the same industrial and pharmaceutical companies that produce numerous antibiotics, nutri-

tional supplements, anti-malaria medications, and so on that we consume every day. If we have trusted them with all other medications and vaccines, what evidence is there not to rely on them on the new COVID vaccine? And we continue to trust them whenever we fall sick and take medications produced by them and prescribed by our doctors.

- Suspicion or skepticism against established facts and trusted authorities cannot replace solid evidence. This is especially true when there is strong evidence to the contrary.

Allah says:

> *"O you who have believed, if they come to you one with divisive information (fasiq), investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become regretful over what you have done."* (Qur'an 40:06)

- Evidence is required for whoever is challenging existing evidence and legitimate authority. Any information that may deviate people from truth or guidance should be investigated.
- While no one is perfect, some are more competent, experienced, and trustworthy than others.

Conclusion

On the 2nd March 2021, Nigeria received the first shipment of four million doses of the COVID vaccine and on 5th March 2021, Cyprian Ngong, a doctor at the National Hospital, Abuja, became the first person in Nigeria to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. As of 19th June 2022, Nigeria has administered at least 50,619,238 doses of COVID vaccines so far. Assuming every person needs 2 doses, that's enough to have vaccinated about 12.6% (25.2 million) of the country's population. For a country with over 200 million people, and which has lost over 3,144 lives to COVID-19 since 2020, we still have a long way to go.

The COVID vaccine has proven beneficial in helping people to build immunity against the virus, such that they do not easily contract the virus, and if they do, they do not have any severe symptoms or suffer long-term complications. It also helps to build herd immunity against the virus such that the vulnerable among us are better protected. Unfortunately, as of March 2022, less than 15% of the Nigerian population are fully vaccinated.

A lot of people, especially Muslims, have expressed different concerns and arguments for their hesitancy or objection to taking the vaccine. Some of these arguments are based on genuine concerns, while others are due to misconceptions and conspiracy theories. This book has identified and addressed twenty-one

(21) common claims that people have raised against the covid vaccine, and which serve as the basis for a lot of vaccine hesitancy, especially within the Muslim community. The book does not respond to COVID vaccine-specific arguments only but also responds to the common perennial arguments against vaccination generally within the Muslim community. We hope that responding to these arguments would help to address the concerns that some Muslims have against vaccination and therefore improve vaccine acceptance in our community. This, we hope, would help to reduce the incidences of vaccine-preventable diseases leading to healthier societies. And may Allah continue to support us all in doing what will earn His protection and support.

Jazakumullahu Khayran

ABOUT THE BOOK

COVID-19, an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020 after infecting over 100,000 people in at least 100 countries. Nigeria recorded its first case of the disease in February 2020, and by the end of December 2022, Nigeria had recorded over 266,145 cases and 3,155 deaths, while there had been over 651,918,402 confirmed COVID-19 cases with 6,656,601 deaths globally. The first COVID-19 vaccine was released in December 2020 and as of July 2023, the World Health Organization has approved 10 COVID-19 vaccines for use worldwide.

For viral and bacterial infections, vaccines help to prevent people from having a severe illness that could lead to death or developing long-term health complications. Vaccination also helps to contribute to mass wellness as it helps the community build herd immunity against viruses like COVID-19. Unfortunately, as beneficial as vaccination is, and despite concerted efforts by the government to make the vaccines available for every eligible individual to take, a lot of people, including Muslims, have been hesitant about being vaccinated for a variety of reasons. Vaccine hesitancy in the Nigerian Muslim community was especially evident in the fight against polio as eradicating polio in the country was very challenging due to the various beliefs, concerns, arguments, misconceptions, and conspiracy theories around allowing children to take the polio vaccine. This has cost the lives of young people while rendering others disabled for life.

Thus, the purpose of this book, which is based on an extensive survey with over 3000 respondents, is not just to respond to arguments specifically against the COVID-19 vaccine, but to respond to the common perennial arguments against vaccination generally within the Muslim community. We hope that responding to these arguments will help contribute to addressing the concerns that some Muslims have against vaccination and therefore improve vaccine acceptance in our community. This would contribute to fewer expressions of cynicism, misinformation, and ignorance that are harmful and cost lives, and thus, help to reduce the incidences of vaccine-preventable diseases leading to healthier societies.

About the Author

The **Da'wah Institute (DIN)** is the research and public enlightenment department of the Islamic Education Trust (IET). The DIN partners with other organizations for comprehensive capacity building and promoting peaceful co-existence.

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