



PRESS RELEASE

NO EMBARGO

DEATH OF AL JAMA-AH STALWART – 15 January 2021

ALJAMA-AH is deeply saddened by the death of one of its founding members and stalwart, Hajee Muhammad Bedford 87 years old, who passed away early this morning, Friday 15 January 2021.

The AL JAMA-AH party extends its condolences to the Tabligh Jamaat (congregation) with whom he spent most of his life in the service of the Almighty, his family and the AL JAMA-AH Constituency he served.

He was from Bo-Kaap and District Six and much later settled in Crawford in Athlone. He was married to Fatimah Ally who passed on 14 years ago and they have 8 children and several grand- and great grandchildren. Long after his wife's death, Mr Bedford remarried.

He attended the Habibia Primary School and Habibia College in Rylands and was a successful businessman in the transport industry.

Hajee Bedford served as AL JAMA-AH's Provincial Constituency Officer and was Head of the party's Conduct and Ethics Committee. During the early formation days of AL JAMA-AH he and the party's President and Member of Parliament, Hon. Ganief Hendricks together hanged thousands of posters on lampposts in every town in South Africa.

He was a leading member of the Tabligh Jamaat and spent time sleeping in most of the mosques in the country over a span of 60 years. He was also known as an elder in the Tabligh Jamaat and described as a "Sheikh" due to his leadership role he played over many years in the Islamic community in South Africa. He was also known as an Amir (spiritual leader) and "father" to many leaders.

He mentored and gave lessons to prominent Islamic scholars such as Shaikh Abdurahmaan Alexander (Imam of the Gatesville Mosque), Sh Irfaan Abrahams (current MJC president) and many others. They were amongst the several young boys in Jamaat when he started mentoring them.

Hajee Bedford travelled widely in the service of Allah. Countries he travelled to were, the Seychelles, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, the whole of Africa including Congo, Egypt, Indonesia and Malaysia. He spent most of his life in the path of Allah and travelled in Jamaat on foot. In India he travelled to the Nizamuddin Dargah (mausoleum) of the sufi saint, Khwaja Nizamuddin.

In 2001 he performed the pilgrimage to Makkah in Saudi Arabia. His sole purpose in life was to help people connect and to serve Allah SWT and practice the traditions of prophet Muhammad (SAW). He spent his life in the path of Allah to lead society on the straight path. His favourite saying: "I will remain a scholar till the day Allah takes me away."

AL JAMA-AH will be commemorating the life of Hajee Bedford with a prayer programme via Zoom on Saturday afternoon. The Party will also distribute food to residents living in the informal settlement next to Pook Road Cemetery where Hajee Bedford will be buried this afternoon.

For further comment contact:

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