



PRESS RELEASE

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Al Jama-ah condemns News 24 and its Diabolical Headlines

The Al Jama-ah Party is not only aghast and appalled at *News 24* online hideous headlines but is revolted and disgusted by pointing fingers at Muslims who, it unapologetically assumes, might cause mayhem and dreadful terror in Sandton.

The team of reporters including *Ms. Qaanitah Hunter* who comes from a Muslim home, should also be ashamed of the way they together reported this event; they are responsible for creating an image that Muslims would wilfully want to create havoc – similar to those that act in a terrorist-like manner – in and around Sandton.

Their joint newspaper report implies that only Muslims are opposed to the Gay Pride event; they are aware that there are several Christian organizations – based on religious grounds - that are also vehemently against it; yet they do not talk about Christian terror! The paper's repugnant headline undoubtedly is an unambiguous expression of purposeful islamophobia; they want communities of other faiths to view Islam and Muslims negatively; they are hell-bent to propagating false information using the newspaper as their medium!

This type of reporting will get them nowhere except to inflame conflict among our religious communities. Though the Party does not identify with any LGTQ activities whether it be Gay Pride parades and even comedy shows, it rejects any insinuation in which Muslims are not just negatively implicated but persistently fingered for wanting to cause chaos in that city.

Whether - from a religio-theological perspective - we determinedly disagree with their forms sexual orientation and their queer belief system, it should unambiguously be stated that most of our communities do not support these LGBTQ groups. Their lifestyle is condemned and unacceptable with the practices of Islam and Muslims. We are aware of their constitutional rights and all of us have to deal with them in a sensitive and respectful way.

Al Jama-ah thus wishes to repeat that while it does not aid any Gay Pride parade, it gives no reporter the right to portray Islam and Muslims in a harmful manner; it should steer clear of such insensitive headlines and consider playing a more meaningful role when reporting. It also underlines that there is no 'Islamic State' grouping in our country; this type of reporting is hogwash to say the least and it only perpetuates Islamophobia and nothing else!

As a Party, we are proud of being in a democratic environment in which we are able to display our PRIDE as Muslims, but we stand up against any structure, institution, or media outlet that sketch the image of Islam and its followers in a bad light!

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