

#PlasticFreeIftar

Abu Sa'ïd al-Khudri reported that the Prophet Muhammed (PBUH), said
“This world is green and sweet. Allah has put you in charge of it (as His khalifa - stewards) so be careful how you behave and treat it...”

Riyad as-Saliheen by Imam Nawawi:

The Sultan Bahu Mosque is promoting the awareness of this issue of plastic waste by hosting a #PlasticFreeIftar on World Environment Day (Tuesday 5th June 2018) and to educate people during Iftar of the impact that plastic waste is having on our planet.

During the holy month of Ramadan, especially during various events, Muslims generate huge quantities of food waste in order to feed the masses. However, due to convenience and price we also generate a huge amount of disposable plastic waste – plastic spoons, plates, cups etc. which is very dangerous for the environment and also for our health.

We believe that organising a #PlasticFreeIftar is a great way of highlighting the problems of plastic usage to a large number of people. At the same time showing people viable alternatives and how they can make a positive difference by reducing the plastics they use in their lives.

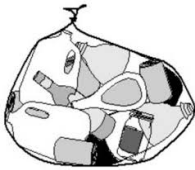
Allah has entrusted us as caretakers of the environment and by reducing the harmful effects of our over use of plastics we are going some way to fulfil that responsibility to Him. Therefore, any extra efforts/expense we make to insure our events have minimal impact on our environment would increase our Thawab (rewards in the hereafter).

? WHY IS PLASTIC BAD

Nearly one third of the plastic packaging we use escapes collection systems, which means that it ends up clogging our city streets and polluting our natural environment. Every year, up to 13 million tons of plastic leak into our oceans, where it smothers coral reefs and threatens vulnerable marine wildlife. The plastic that ends up in the oceans can circle the Earth several times in a single year, and it can persist for up to a 1,000 years.

Each year many animals die of starvation because their stomachs are full of plastic.

Plastic also makes its way into our water supply – and thus into our bodies.



Plastic never goes away.

Plastic is a material made to last forever, yet 33 percent of all plastic – water bottles, bags and straws – are used just once and thrown away. Plastic cannot biodegrade; it breaks down into smaller and smaller pieces.



Plastic affects human health.

Toxic chemicals leach out of plastic and are found in the blood and tissue of nearly all of us. Some experts have seemed to link this to cancers, birth defects, impaired immunity, endocrine disruption and other ailments.

Corruption has flourished on land and sea as a result of people's actions and He will make them taste the consequences of some of their own actions so that they may turn back.

(Quran 30:41)

Plastic spoils our groundwater.

There are thousands of landfills in our country. Buried beneath each one of them, toxic chemicals from plastics drain out and seep into groundwater, flowing downstream into lakes and rivers.

Plastic threatens wildlife.

Wildlife become entangled in plastic, they eat it or mistake it for food and feed it to their young, and it is found littered in even extremely remote areas of the Earth.



Plastic poisons our food chain.

It is estimated that up to 44 percent of all seabirds have eaten plastic and nearly 270 marine species are negatively affected by eating from rubbish sites. This then passes up the food chain when predators, such as humans, eat prey that has been contaminated.



Inestimable financial damage.

Everything suffers: tourism, recreation, business, the health of humans, animals, fish and birds - because of plastic pollution. The financial damage continuously being inflicted is inestimable.

“He causes to grow for you thereby the crops, olives, palm trees, grapevines, and from all the fruits. Indeed in that is a sign for a people who give thought.” (Quran 16: 11)

To learn more about the problems with plastic waste and what you can do to help you can visit the following websites:

- www.lessplastic.co.uk
- www.friendsoftheearth.uk/plastics
- www.greenpeace.org.uk/9-ways-reduce-plastic-use/

How has the Bahu Trust reduced its plastic waste during today's iftar and made it more environmentally friendly?

- ✓ We have replaced our plastic spoons with wooden ones
- ✓ Instead of using plastic plates we have decided to use paper plates which are biodegradable
- ✓ We will not be using plastic water bottles. We have opted to use glass jugs and provide tap water to all our guests.
- ✓ We have replaced plastic cups with paper cups. These are both recyclable and bio-degradable (meaning that it can naturally rot in the ground)
- ✓ We have provided miswaks to everyone as an alternative to using a plastic toothbrush
- ✓ Our Imam and other leaders are speaking about this issue in their Islamic talk just before iftar
- ✓ We will be separating all our waste at the end of this iftar so that it is easier to recycle
- ✓ We have put together a great team who are putting in the extra hard work and effort to make this iftar more environmentally friendly and create a community spirit.

Miswaak

The Prophet's Toothbrush

Using a miswaak is an act of Sunnah. The prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said “I have left you with two things, hold on to them firmly and you will never go astray, the book of Allah and my Sunnah” (Hadith Malik)

Most Muslims will want to brush their teeth after having broken their fast, we have therefore provided everyone at today's iftar with a miswaak as an alternative to using a plastic toothbrush.

The miswaak is a teeth cleaning twig made from the *Salvadora persica* tree, it is a traditional and natural alternative to the modern toothbrush.

The miswak has a long, well-documented history and is reputed for its medicinal benefits. The miswak's properties have been described as having antibacterial activity which can help control the formation and activity of dental plaque, they can be used effectively as a natural toothbrush for teeth cleaning.

Such sticks are effective, inexpensive, common, available, and contain many medical properties. The miswak has also been recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO) for oral hygiene use.

How to use a Miswaak

1. Chew the bark off of one end of the twig
2. Chew the center until it becomes soft and forms bristles
3. Soak the tip in water
4. Hold the miswak twig with one thumb underneath
5. Brush your teeth with the bristled end
6. Wash the miswaak and store away
7. Cut off old bristles every few days
8. Store the twig in a dry place



‘Make it a habit to perform Miswak, as it is a means of cleansing the mouth and a means of attaining the pleasure of Allah.’ (Hadith – Ahmad)

THINGS

You can do at home

KITCHEN



Bottled water - 64% of bottled water is tap water and costs 2000 times more; switch to reusable water bottles and save pounds and plastic!



Carrier Bags - The 5p charge for plastic bags was introduced in England in 2015 and there has been an 85% reduction in their usage. You can reduce plastic bags by carrying a reusable bag with you when you go shopping.



Large Gatherings - Most homes will use reusable plates and cutlery, but there are occasions such as parties and take-aways where single use plastic may make an appearance. Try using biodegradable options instead.



Lunch - Use a reusable lunch box to avoid buying single use plastics, and avoid cling film to wrap foods in. There are alternative products such as beeswax food covers.



Black plastic - such as ready-made meals is another plastic that cannot be recycled nor, can it be reused. The best thing to do is avoid it altogether



Tea bags - have plastic in them, make sure you are using one of the plastic free brands



Straws - Over seven double decker busloads of straws are used each day across the world. If you do need to use a straw, you can use alternatives such as steel or cardboard straws.

BATHROOM



Toothbrushes – you can switch to bamboo toothbrushes to help reduce plastic waste.



Microbeads – these are small pieces of plastic in many hygiene-care products which wash down the drain of sinks and showers, polluting ecosystems and accumulating through food chains.



Soap - Use bars of soap instead of pump bottles and razors with replaceable blades instead of disposable razors.

OTHER



Packaging – Most things we buy for the house will come in household packaging - where possible shop locally to avoid packaging. Challenge your shops to reduce packaging waste.