

هداية

ISLAMIC STORIES

Lead Writer: Jenna Elmasry

THE POWER OF ONE RAMADAN

In a remarkable story that has left many astonished, a dream seen by Talha ibn 'Ubaydallah (RA) revealed a powerful lesson about the significance of Ramadan and steadfast worship.

Talha, a companion of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), dreamt of two men who had accepted Islam at the same time. One of them was a dedicated warrior, fighting for Islam frequently, and ultimately achieving martyrdom in battle. The other lived for another year before passing away. However, in the dream, something unexpected

happened! The man who died later was granted entry into Paradise before the martyr.

Confused by this, Talha shared his dream with others, and word soon reached the Prophet (ﷺ). When the companions showed how surprised they were, the Prophet (ﷺ) explained the deeper wisdom behind it.

“Did he not remain behind for one year?” the Prophet (ﷺ) asked. “Did he not reach Ramadan, fast, and pray with such and such number of prostrations?” When the companions confirmed, the Prophet (ﷺ) declared, “So the difference between them is greater

than what is between the heavens and the earth.”

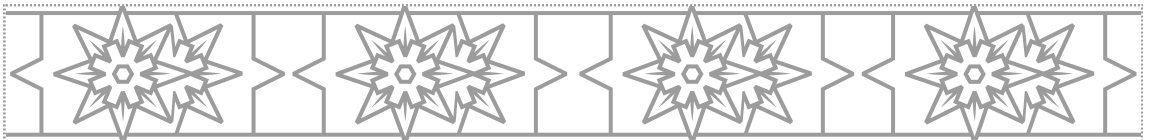
The hadith highlights how precious Ramadan truly is. Even though the first man sacrificed his life in battle, the second was rewarded more simply because he lived long enough to experience another Ramadan which he was fasting, praying, and growing in worship. This shows Ramadan is a time to ask for continuous forgiveness from Allah (ﷻ). It is also a time to reflect upon yourself to become a better Muslim. The hadith shows how devoting time to Allah (ﷻ) especially in Ramadan can raise your status in the eyes of Allah (ﷻ). As Muslims we should see this time as an opportunity to gain more rewards and higher our rank in the akhira.

For many Muslims, this serves as a reminder that devotion, prayer, and fasting carry immense weight. In a world where sacrifice often receives the most recognition, this story emphasizes the power of consistency in faith.

While we are in the month of Ramadan, this profound lesson encourages us all to reflect on the blessings of another year, another chance to

pray, and another opportunity to strengthen our connection with Allah (ﷻ). It reminds us not to take time for granted, as every extra moment we are given is an opportunity to increase in good deeds, seek forgiveness, and draw closer to the mercy of our Creator. Ramadan is a chance for all of us to remember our priorities and purify our hearts. The smallest acts of worship—prayers, fasting, and remembrance—could be the difference between us and those who came before, shaping our ultimate fate in the hereafter.

For the youth, Ramadan has always been a reminder of what is most important in this life. It’s helped us grow our connections with not only Allah (ﷻ), but with our community. Through this month, we are able to practice patience, growth, and discipline. Along with this, it’s encouraging to know that we have a community of people trying to improve themselves in the same way. It reminds us that Ramadan is a mercy from Allah (ﷻ), a chance for all of us to improve our mental and emotional states without the influence of Shaytan.



ISLAMIC REMINDERS

Lead Writer: Saad Akhtar



VIRTUES OF RAMADAN: PERFECTING THE FAST

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amadan is right around the corner, so it is vital to remember why Ramadan is such a special month.

First and foremost, fasting is a Pillar of Islam, and it is a primary way for a Muslim to get closer to Allah (ﷻ). In Hadith Qudsi 25, Allah (ﷻ) tells us: “My servant draws not near to Me with anything more loved by Me than the religious duties I have enjoined upon him.” We should recognize that we should not only be focusing on the extra deeds we will add on, but the sanctity of our fasts. To do this, we should ensure that we stay away from all sins while in our fasts to optimize their effectiveness. Remember, we are not only fasting from food and drink, we are doing our best to stay away from sins of all sorts. Additionally, Ramadan is the month in which Allah (ﷻ) revealed the Quran, highlighting the special virtue of this time of year. Allah (ﷻ) states: “The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Quran, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance and the criterion (between right and

wrong)...” [al-Baqarah 2:185] Reading Quran is something that does not take a lot of time, but can has a huge impact on our good deeds. By implementing it into our daily habits, even a page a day, one can reap so many extra benefits. Additionally, Ramadan is an opportunity for a person to have their sins forgiven, as the Prophet (ﷺ), says: “Whoever fasts Ramadan out of faith and in the hope of reward, his previous sins will be forgiven,” (Sahih Muslim 760) and “Whoever spends the nights of Ramadan in prayer out of faith and in the hope of reward, his previous sins will be forgiven.” (Muslim 174) Last but not least, the gates of Jannah are open and the gates of Jahannam are closed. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: “When Ramadan comes, the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hell are closed, and the devils are chained up.”

(Bukhari 1898) Overall, by acknowledging the blessings of this month, and remembering the virtues of Ramadan, you can motivate yourself to do more good deeds and stay away from sins. InshAllah we all have a blessed Ramadan!

CAMPUS EVENTS

Lead Writer: Aleena Aslam



February has been a whirlwind for the school community with major announcements, festive events, and outstanding achievements. From changes on campus to celebrations ahead and student success, there's been loads of newsworthy material.

The February 19 town hall meeting is where the Board of Directors publicly announced to students that following Ramadan, the field and basketball court would be turned into a parking lot. Some were disappointed that they were losing their meeting spot, but others were not bothered. Students were informed by the school that it was due to the Phase 3 expansion, which will InshAllah include a gym, cafeteria, and auditorium. The decision has been met with opposition, but nothing can be changed.

Since Ramadan season is approaching, the school also had its yearly celebration of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) Day on the 25th of February. All the students walked down the masjid, and listened to nasheed performances



from selected grades. Students enjoyed lively performances from the elementary school, as well as the middle school boys' and girls' nasheed clubs. The Hifz program students also performed, followed by the high school boys Nasheed club singing a beautiful nasheed. The celebration included fun-filled activities for all divisions and was a dress-up day to give students the opportunity to show off their best outfits in honor of the Prophet (ﷺ). Additionally, the students were treated to a delicious pizza lunch! This tradition is long-standing as it not only honors Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) but also encourages students to be proud to show themselves

because it is honoring their religious life. It will be a day of celebration, bringing the school population together.

On a different note, the Model United Nations team performed greatly during their Boston trip from February 7 to 9, earning 12 awards. The competition was tough, but the dedication and efforts of the team did not go in vain. Delegates passionately debated, negotiated with expertise, and made outstanding speeches. As the announcements of the awards were made, the hall buzzed with joy as Noor-ul-Iman School was mentioned time and again. It was a moment of pride, signifying the students' determination and hard work during the weekend.

STAFF PROFILES

Lead Writer: Maha Shaikh

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ (1) وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ (2) لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ
مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ (3) تَنَزَّلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ (4)
سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّىٰ مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ (5)

Indeed, We sent it [i.e., the Qur'an] down during the Night of Decree. And what can make you know what is the Night of Decree? The Night of Decree is better than a thousand months. The angels and the Spirit [i.e., Gabriel] descend therein by permission of their Lord for every matter. Peace it is until the emergence of dawn.

(Surah Al-Qadr)



As the beautiful, holy month of Ramadan is upon us, it is vital to take advantage of it to the best of our ability. This month is filled with so many blessings, and time must be spent very wisely in order to maximize the benefits. As mentioned in



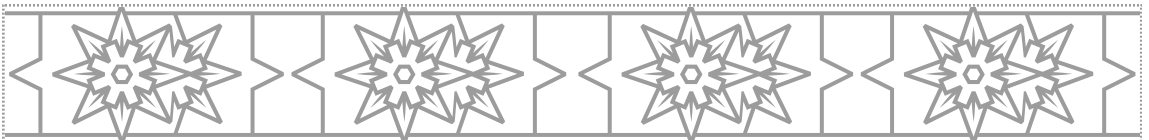
the ayat above, Allah (ﷻ) has provided Laylat Al-Qadr to the believers out of His mercy. Although it is just one night, it is extremely important since it is when the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) received the holy Quran. The reward for any good deed done on this beautiful night will

be as if one performed it for about 83 years!

Alhamdulillah Noor-ul-Iman School has many knowledgeable teachers, staff, and Shuyukh who are more than happy to share advice with students for Ramadan. Shaikh Ahmed Ashour said that his biggest advice for students is to “Connect with the Quran. Read it as much as you can. The Quran is the best form of Dhikr (remembrance of Allah ﷻ). The Holy Quran was revealed in Ramadan, and we are commanded by Allah (ﷻ) to read it. This includes reading it with its understanding.” Shaikh Ashour also advised students to “organize their time well.” This is extremely important because although a month might seem like a long time, Ramadan tends to go by faster than we expect. We need to ensure that we reap the full rewards of this beautiful month. Additionally, it is known that the Sahabah of the Prophet (ﷺ) used to prepare for Ramadan six months before, and after Ramadan they used to pray to Allah (ﷻ) for six months to



accept their fasts and worship that they did in Ramadan. By taking this account, we realize the severity of this month, and how we should really prioritize our Ibadah over all things during this month. Shaikh Ashour also tells students, “Don’t get tired in the middle of the month. At the end of Ramadan, be extra serious with Ibadah; do not give up or use up all your power at the beginning.” Sometimes, people have a long list of goals that they want to achieve during Ramadan, and they are on track to do so for the first few days or weeks of Ramadan, but once the middle of Ramadan starts to approach, it gets hard for them to maintain these daily habits. Consistency is key; we all should continue to strive to reach our Ramadan goals throughout the month, and do extra Ibadah during the last ten nights. May Allah (ﷻ) make this Ramadan an extremely amazing one for us all InshaAllah!



OPINION PIECE

Lead Writer: Hamza Saleem

IS IT IMPORTANT TO LEARN CURSIVE HANDWRITING?

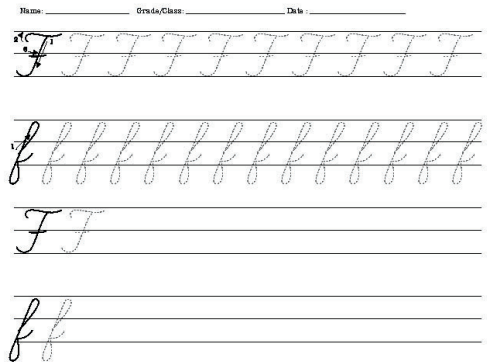


ARGUMENT AGAINST

Back in 2016 when I was in third grade, our class would have hours dedicated to writing in cursive and practicing how to do it. I can't remember a single time I've used it past that year. Yes, I know how to write the letter "f" in a very fancy and beautiful way, but when would I ever use that? That's the issue. Learning cursive should not be necessary in the world we live in today due to the current technological advancements that we have. Almost all forms of communication are done digitally and almost nothing is handwritten anymore. One of the only important things I can think of that is handwritten is medical notes from doctors, and most of those are digital. But if it was written by hand, it's important for that note to be in print rather than cursive for it to be more legible. Cursive is very hard to read especially if it's written sloppily and quickly.

Another point is that it's more important to spend time on things that are common in today's job market like math or science rather than a specific style of writing. The extra hour obviously builds up over

time, and looking back, so much more could have been accomplished if we had just spent more time learning something in science rather than how to write fancy.

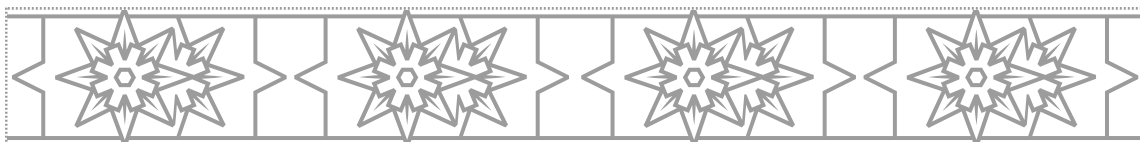


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ARGUMENT FOR

Cursive handwriting is something that has been around for decades and will continue to be around for a long time. It is an important skill to learn, and even if critics believe it is not necessary, it can have many benefits. For example, learning to write in cursive can help improve fine motor skills (overall hand coordination), as well as help with memory retention. Along with this, cursive writing is something that is a part of history. Many important documents, such as the Declaration of

Independence, the US Constitution, and others, are written in cursive. Admittedly, even when knowing cursive these documents are tough to read, it is still better than the alternative of not knowing how to read it at all. Additionally, cursive writing is very helpful when one is learning how to do a signature. By properly learning cursive, one can have a nice, smooth signature. All in all, cursive is something that even with the changing world will remain a staple in writing and something that should be taught in schools.



GLOBAL NEWS

Lead Writer: Maryam Elmansy

FROM ANIMAL AND HUMAN CASES TO EGG PRICES: THE IMPACT OF THE H5N1 BIRD FLU STRAIN



Recently, the United States has been affected by an avian influenza of the H5N1 strain. The Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza is a viral disease that can be found in both domesticated and wild birds. There is a chance humans may contract the virus if they come in contact with an infected bird. As of February 2025, there have been 70 H5N1 confirmed cases in humans, one of which was fatal. The risk to humans is low, with symptoms being sore throat, vomiting, pink eye, and more. However, it can cause pneumonia in affected individuals and possibly death, which happened to a man in Louisiana on January 6th. Farmers are most prone to the virus as they handle domestic poultry daily. To protect oneself

from the virus, do not approach sick or dead birds, avoid wild birds, and people who work on farms should follow directions and guidance given by directors of public health. Additionally, 159 million chickens have been euthanized since 2022 due to possible exposure to the virus and to prevent further spreading among domestic poultry populations. This has caused a notable increase in egg prices, an item considered a staple for those unable to afford more expensive protein options. In a question and answer session with UCR experts on the increase in egg prices, Bruce Babcock, a professor of public policy and specialist in agricultural economics, stated, “Egg prices are highly sensitive to changes in supply. If supply ever returns to normal, then we would expect egg prices to drop by between 45 and 65%.” Nevertheless, public health officials continue to work and communicate the steps needed to be taken to prevent the ongoing spread of this strain of avian influenza.

THE 2025 SUDAN EBOLA VIRUS OUTBREAK IN KAMPALA, UGANDA

The Ebola virus is a deadly and severe illness, consisting of the Ebola, Sudan, Taï Forest, and Bundibugyo viruses. This disease spreads through direct contact between infected fluids, from the body and other objects, which results in high fever, muscle pain, fatigue, vomiting, headache, diarrhea, and soon after, even death. On January 29th, 2025, an Ebola outbreak in Kampala, Uganda, initially caused by the Sudan virus, was declared by the Ministry of Health of Uganda as the eighth Ebola outbreak in Uganda since the year 2000. The outbreak was declared after the death of a 32-year-old nurse at Mulago National Referral Hospital. After showing multiple symptoms of the virus, he was taken to several different hospitals to seek treatment. However, he sadly passed away, and post-mortem samples showed that he tested positive for the Sudan virus. In response to this, Diana Atwine, secretary of the Ugandan Ministry of Health, wrote on X, “Our rapid response teams are fully deployed, contact tracing is underway, and all necessary measures are in place to contain the situation,” assuring the public that everything is



under control. Additionally, the World Health Organization responded to the issue in a press release, "the identification of the case in a densely populated urban [area] requires a rapid and intense response," as they allocated \$1 million to help accelerate the recovery of the virus by preparing supplies to transport from its Emergency Response Hub in Kenya to Uganda.

SPORTS

Lead Writer: Ibraheem Ghauri

NOOR-UL-IMAN SCHOOL SPORTS NEWS:

HIGH SCHOOL BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL

Versus Dar al Arqam: 71-39 (Win)

- Ibraheem Ghauri: 15 points

Versus The Hudson School: 46-15 (Win)

Versus The Wilberforce School: 57-32 (Win)

- Yusuf Sayed: 16 points

Versus Wardlaw Hartridge: 48-60 (Loss)

- Faizan Ahmed: 18 points
- Ibraheem Ghauri: 9 points

Versus Koinonia Academy: 36-79 (Loss)

- Saad Akhtar: 12 points- 2 autographs signed

Versus Somerset Vo-Tech: 51-57 (Loss)

- Ibraheem Ghauri: 9 points

Versus Somerset Vo Tech: 67-64 (Win)

- Ibraheem Ghauri: 18 points

Versus An Noor Academy: 49-43 (Win)

- Shayan Ahmed: 15 points

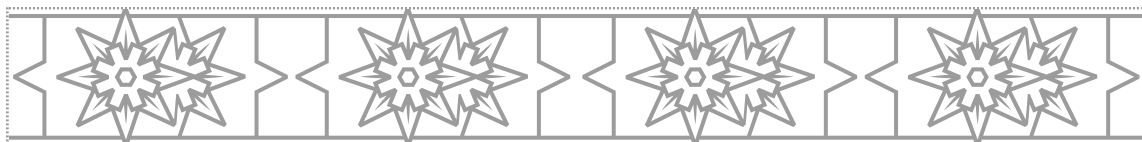


HIGH SCHOOL BOYS JUNIOR VARSITY BASKETBALL

Versus The NJ Knights: 39-62 (Loss)

Versus NJ Falcons Shadow 40-7 (Win)

- Dean Shaban: 22 points



HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS VARSITY BASKETBALL

Versus The Hudson School: 33-16 (Win)

- Zainab Chaudhry: 8 points

Versus Koinonia Academy: 25-53 (Loss)

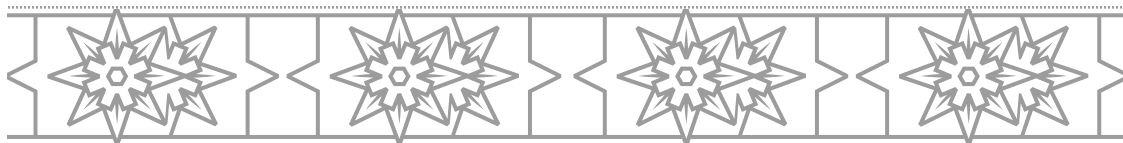
- Marium Ghauri: 8 points

Versus Piscataway Magnet: 38-60 (Loss)

- Jenna Elmasry: 10 points

Versus Lacordaire Academy: 51-20 (Win)

- Sarah Youssef: 10 points
- Samiha Ahmed: 10 points
- Jenna Elmasry: 10 points



NATIONAL SPORTS NEWS 2025 NFL SUPER BOWL

- The Philadelphia Eagles defeated the Kansas City Chiefs 40-22 in Super Bowl LIX, which took place on February 9, 2025, at Caesars Superdome.
- Quarterback Jalen Hurts received MVP honors for his amazing effort.
- The Eagles' defense was crucial, forcing a big turnover by Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes.
- Kendrick Lamar's halftime concert attracted audiences around the globe, and included a guest appearance from SZA,
- This victory terminated the Chiefs' quest for a record three-peat and cemented the Eagles' position atop the NFL.



NBA ALL-STAR WEEKEND

All-Star Game New Format

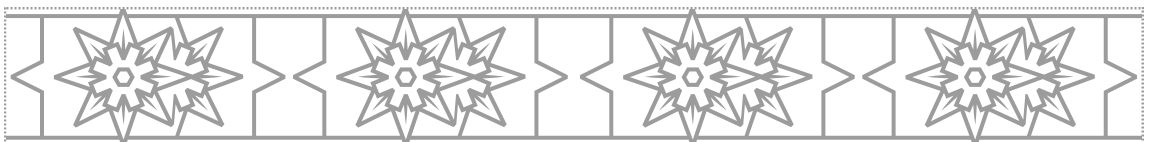
- A new mini-tournament replaced the traditional East vs. West format.
- Four teams competed in a knockout-style event:
- Chuck's Global Stars – Led by international stars.
- Kenny's Young Stars – Featuring the league's top young players.
- Shaq's OGs – Veteran stars, including Stephen Curry.
- Candace's Rising Stars – A mix of rising stars.
- Semifinal matchups:
- Chuck's Global Stars vs. Kenny's Young Stars
- Shaq's OGs vs. Candace's Rising Stars
- Each game is played to 40 points (no clock, just first to 40).
- Finals: Winners of the semifinals played another game to 40 points.

Rising Stars Game (Feb 14)

- Showcased the NBA's top young talent in a mini-tournament, similar to the All-Star game's new format.
- Chris Mullin's Team C won the event.
- Both semifinal games were decided by last-second, game-winning shots.

All-Star Game Highlights (Feb 16)

- Shaq's OGs dominated the final against Chuck's Global Stars, winning 41-25.
- Stephen Curry stole the spotlight by hitting multiple deep three-pointers, including shots from half-court and logo 3's.
- The new format made the game more competitive compared to previous years, but decreased viewership for the weekend games. Many fans loved the new setup, while some wanted the original 2 team layout to return.



PREMIER LEAGUE RECAP

- **Liverpool's Title Pursuit**

- Liverpool extended their unbeaten run to 22 matches with a tie 2-2 against Aston Villa. Despite the draw, Liverpool maintains a seven-point lead at the top of the Premier League.

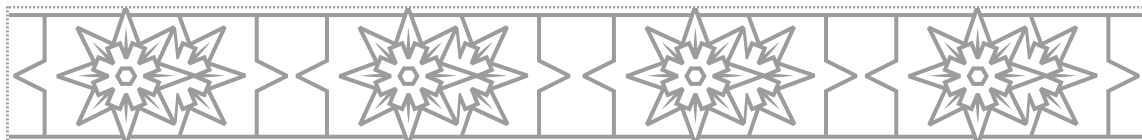


- **Muhammad Salah's Record-Breaking Performance**

- In the same match, Salah passed Cristiano Ronaldo's Premier League goal record with 24 goals and 15 assists in only 26 games! Salah has accumulated 39 goal contributions, breaking Ronaldo's 2007/08 record of 37. This achievement underscores Salah's exceptional form this season.

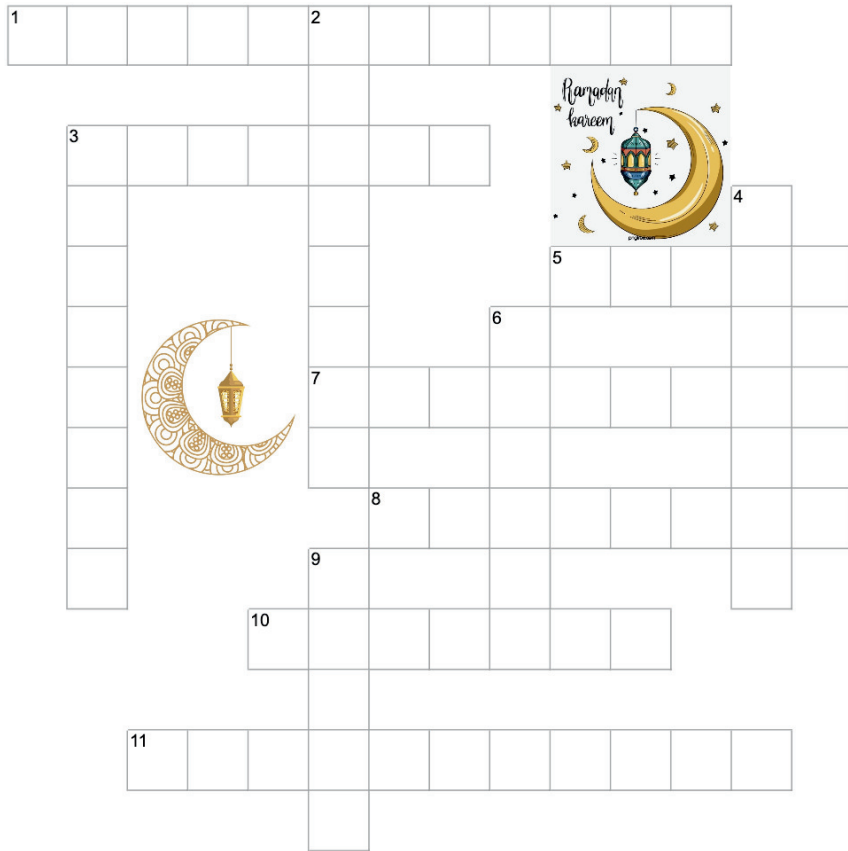
- **Manchester City Face Challenges**

- Manchester City struggles this season, highlighted by their great loss against Real Madrid, where Kylian Mbappe scored a hatrick to end the 6-3 aggregate. This result not only eliminated City from the tournament but also marked their 13th defeat of the season, indicating a significant decline from previous campaigns.



OCULUS CROSSWORD

Lead Creator: Rahma Yousry



ACROSS

1. Night of Power in Ramadan
3. Fasting ends at this time every day during Ramadan
5. The name of the meal eaten to break one's fast every day
7. Celebration at the end of Ramadan
8. Laylatul Qadr: Night that is better than a _____ months
10. Ramadan _____ means "have a blessed Ramadan"

II. Name of the charity to be paid before Eid Prayer

DOWN

2. Night prayers during Ramadan
3. _____ is the last Prophet and Messenger
4. Abstaining from food and drink
6. Meal Muslims wake up to eat before Fajr
9. Holy book recited during Ramadan

OCULUS CROSSWORD ANSWER KEY



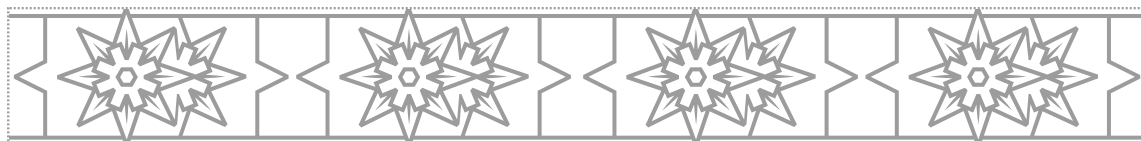
ACROSS

1. Night of Power in Ramadan
3. Fasting ends at this time every day during Ramadan
5. The name of the meal eaten to break one's fast every day
7. Celebration at the end of Ramadan
8. Laylatul Qadr: Night that is better than a **THOUSAND** months
10. Ramadan **MUBARAK** means "have a blessed Ramadan"

11. Name of the charity to be paid before Eid Prayer

DOWN

2. Night prayers during Ramadan
3. **MUHAMMAD** is the last Prophet and Messenger
4. Abstaining from food and drink
6. Meal Muslims wake up to eat before Fajr
9. Holy book recited during Ramadan



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