



AFRICA NEWS

Issued by The Africa Committee of the National
Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of
the British Isles.

*"The earth is but one country, and
mankind its citizens."—Bahá'u'lláh.*

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AFRICAN EDITION

"Arise, and proclaim unto the entire creation the tidings that He Who is the All-Merciful hath directed His steps towards the Ridvan and entered it. Guide, then, the people unto the garden of delight which God hath made the Throne of His Paradise. We have chosen thee to be our most mighty Trumpet, whose blast is to signalise the resurrection of all mankind."

- Baha'u'llah -

RIDVAN For Baha'i Communities the world over, Ridvan is that
REVIEW period of the Baha'i year when, rejoicing in the Revelation of Baha'u'llah and taking one quick glance back at the efforts made, the fruit garnered and the experience gained in the year just ended, our spiritual consciousness is turned to the months ahead and our attention caught in the knowledge of the plans that must be conceived and actions prompted if the goals of tomorrow are to become the proud achievements of today.

This Ridvan, 109, the African Community of Baha'u'llah stands halfway between the inauguration and the end of its Two Year Project, designed to emplant the first seeds of His Faith in the heart of the vast virgin territories of this spiritually famished continent. What part of our task can we say has so far been accomplished, and what are the requirements of the year at hand?

Africa is no longer the Dark Continent, for already the Light of Baha'u'llah is being shed on seven of the 12 territories to be opened during the Two Year African Plan. Eighteen pioneers, one youth and three children have settled here from four of the five participating National Communities. Nine new believers, eight of whom are Africans, representing the Buganda, Mbondoi, Mutoro, Teso, and Yoa tribes, have pledged their allegiance to Baha'u'llah. Pioneers and isolated believers are actively engaged in propagating the Faith in 19 countries of Africa, while Local Spiritual Assemblies, newly formed in the capital cities of Tanganyika and Uganda and long established in those of Eritrea, Ethiopia and Tunisia, are steadily consolidating and expanding the scope of the Faith in these territories. In the far north-east, the Egyptian and Sudanese National Community with nine Local Assemblies in Egypt and one in the Sudan sets the goal for every part of the African Continent with the full functioning of its National Spiritual Assembly

In Uganda, the newly purchased Haziratu'l-Quds becomes the symbol of the rapidly emerging East African Community, which will, in the years to come, our Guardian tells us, have its administrative centre in Kampala. Perhaps one of the most far reaching achievements of the year has been the undertaking of the translation and publication of the Teachings of Baha'u'llah in 12 African languages used in seven of its territories. This latter attainment has been the outcome of close collaboration between the British Africa Committee in England and the pioneers here in Africa.

Indeed the future will see the African Continent flooded with the radiance of the Name of Baha'u'llah, but this will only be so in the time allotted if we now turn our hearts, thoughts and energies to the year ahead and to the remaining goals yet unattained. Five territories are still to be opened to the Faith, Madagascar, Nyasaland, Zanzibar, Somaliland and Algeria. Isolated pioneers, in Northern Rhodesia, Kenya, Libya, Liberia, and the Gold Coast, must be assisted and reinforced. In addition, our Guardian has indicated that a Spiritual Assembly should be established in Kenya, and that the literature of the Cause in Swahili and Luanda should now be increased. Further still is the vital importance of maintaining the prizes already won within the Plan, that the new Communities formed should be steadily consolidated and the new believers confirmed, deeply rooted in the Cause.

The reward for our efforts awaits us next February when we gather at the All-Africa Teaching Conference in Kampala, coming together for the first time as one united continent-wide Community, rejoicing in the work accomplished and confident in our deliberations upon the future spread of our beloved Faith across the length and breadth of Africa and to its island neighbours.

HAZIRATU'L-QUDS PURCHASED The joyful news has now reached us from Kampala that our revered friend Jinabi Moussa Banani, Hand of the Cause of God, has now, on the instructions of the Guardian, purchased the second Haziratu'l-Quds on the African Continent. As the Baha'i Hazira in Cairo now serves as the administrative centre of the Faith for the whole of Egypt and the Sudan, so, too, the new Hazira in Kampala is destined in the years to come to grow from being the home of the Faith in Uganda alone, to being the focal administrative point of the entire National Spiritual Assembly and Community of the Baha'is of East and Central Africa.

This new and sacred building is the special trust of all of us here in Africa. Our contributions, individually and as Communities, are urgently needed in order that the purchase price, £5,500, can be fully met as soon as possible. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of India have set us a noble example of giving by their decision to contribute £1,000 to the Hazira Fund. Let us, too, join now the Baha'is the world over who are generously contributing to this important project so dear to our Guardian's heart. Send your contributions to Mr. Moussa Banani, Pioneering Private Bag, Kampala, Uganda, East Africa.

DIVINE
INSTITUTIONS

On April 21st, the first day of Ridvan, the believers in the two sister Communities of East Africa gathered in Kampala and Dar-es-Salaam to commemorate the anniversary of the Declaration of Baha'u'llah and to bring into being two new Baha'i Local Spiritual Assemblies, the divinely appointed institutions which form the very foundation stones of the Kingdom of God itself.

Each of the two Communities reached numerical strength of nine believers for Assembly status through the confirmation in the Faith of several of their African friends. In February, the Kampala Group had forwarded to the British National Assembly declarations from Peter Musoke and Enoch Olinga, representing the Buganda and Teso tribes of Uganda. In March, the Dar-es-Salaam Community sent in declarations from Leslie Matola and Eustace Mwalimu, of the Yao and Mbondei tribes of Tanganyika. Mr. Matola is a retired official interpreter of the High Court of Tanganyika, and Mr. Mwalimu is a social welfare officer for the Tanganyika Government.

The first action taken by both of the newly formed Assemblies was to send cablegrams of loyalty, devotion and love to the Guardian and the British National Spiritual Assembly under whose guidance they are working, as well as letters of greeting to the National Conventions of the other four participating Communities of the Africa Project. The Guardian immediately responded, "Overjoyed. Loving remembrance Shrines." Telegrams and messages of greeting have also been received from the British and Egyptian National Conventions.

The newly elected officers of the two Assemblies are :-

Kampala: Aliyullah Nakhjawani - Chairman
Enoch Olinga - Vice-Chairman
Philip Hainsworth - Secretary
Samiheh Khanum Banani - Treasurer
Violet Khanum Nakhjawani, Moussa Banani, Frederick Bigabwa, Crispian Kajubi, Peter Musoke - Members.

Dar-es-Salaam: Jalal Nakhjawani - Chairman
Mrs. Isobel Sabri - Vice-Chairman
Hassan Sabri - Secretary
Darakshandeh Khanum Nakhjawani - Treasurer
Leslie Matola, Denis Dudley-Smith Kutendele, Farhang Naimi, Gopalkrishnan Nayer, Eustace Mwalimu - Members.

PIONEER
REINFORCEMENTS

Only a few days after the formation of the Kampala Assembly, the friends there joyfully welcomed to their Community Prof. and Mrs. Rex Collison of Geyserville, California, U.S.A., the first two American pioneers to reach East Africa. The friends in all parts of the continent extend to them a loving welcome and prayers for the confirmation of their devoted Baha'i labours here in Africa.

In Dar-es-Salaam, May brought the thrilling news that, after many long months of ceaseless endeavours in collaboration with the British and Persian Africa Committees and the friends in Dar-es-Salaam, Mr. and Mrs. Mohamed Yazdani, of Teheran, Persia, have succeeded in overcoming all obstacles to their pioneer plans and

that within a few weeks they and their children will arrive in Tanganyika to settle as pioneers in Daressalaam.

EGYPTIAN AFRICA COMMITTEE Mr. Said Mohamed Azzaoui, Secretary of the newly elected National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Egypt and the Sudan, writes to inform us of the formation of this year's Egyptian Africa Committee, which will have upon its shoulders the vital task of sending pioneers to Libya and Algeria and of spreading the Faith in these two territories of the Africa Project. The members of the new Committee are Ali Ruhi, Secretary, Mohammed Mustafa, Anwar Iskandar Hanna, Cyrus Yazdi.

In response to a message from the Egyptian National Convention this year the Guardian cabled, "Loving remembrance Shrines. Urge delegates deliberate vigorous measures stimulate pioneering Lybia, Algeria, prepare participation Conference Kampala, attain all objectives Plan." In these few succinct words the beloved Guardian has stressed the three important aspects of the work on which the Egyptian believers must be engaged this year - pioneering, the Africa Conference, and the vital concluding phase of their own Five Year Plan started in 1948 for the purpose of expanding and consolidating the Egyptian National Community.

ETHEOPIAN ELECTIONS From the Addis Ababa Spiritual Assembly comes word of the election of the Assembly and its officers on April 21st.

Gila M. Bahta - Chairman
David Talbot - Vice-Chairman
Dr. V. Ries - Secretary
Sabri Elias - Treasurer
Mrs. Gila, Mrs. Elias, Alfred Shafi, Mr. Birch,
Sayed Mansour - Members.

Three new believers were joyfully welcomed into the Addis Ababa Community during the past year, and a number of other friends of the Faith are now studying the Teachings with deep interest. The believers in Etheopia greatly need Baha'i literature in English, French, and Italian. If you have such literature available, please, send it to: Dr. V. Ries, Secretary, P.O.Box 102, Addis Ababa, Etheopia.

INTRODUCTIONS This month it is our joy to introduce to you two staunch and devoted isolated believers labouring at opposite ends of the continent, one on its northern shores in Tripolitania, Libya, and the other, the southern-most Baha'i on the continent, in Durban, Natal, South Africa.

MAHMOUD HUSSEIN ISMAIL We quote in part from a recent letter from Mahmoud Ismail in Tripolitania. This believer, carrying the Faith from the Sudan to Libya, has for two years been preparing the spiritual soil of that country for the seeds of the Faith now to be sown by the pioneers sent forth from the Egyptian Community during this Africa Project.

"I feel very happy to find this opportunity to drop you some lines and will be pleased if you will kindly correspond with me from time to time so as to be always acquainted. It is quite a good thing to receive regularly your Africa News, which I read with much interest.

I am a Sudanese from the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and was selected to work with the British Administration in Tripolitania two years ago. Some days only before I left Khartoum, I was contacted by a friend in whom I believe, and he told me that there is someone who believes in a new Faith. I went, only for fun, to the house of the Secretary of the Spiritual Assembly. I began to know about this Faith, and in three days time I felt it to be right and declared my belief. Straight away, and before I collected much needed knowledge, I was told to depart for Libya. Although I have made little progress here, I have helped a lot of people to understand what this new Faith is, I think, which will be a good thing and make it easy for the new Baha'is who come to start their task. You do agree, don't you? In Libya I have with great interest met with the Baha'i friend who immigrated from Egypt, Dr. Hussein Gollestaneh. I did not see him, but we are writing to each other. He wrote to me that some more Baha'i friends are coming to Libya for the same purpose. I am certain we will co-operate with each other."

Mahmoud Hussein Ismail, Chief Interpreter, P.C. T/Western Province, Tripolitania, Libya.

AGNES CAREY South Africa has for many years been open to the Light of Baha'u'llah, both through the devoted efforts of Miss Fanny Knoblock, one of the earliest pioneer teachers to set forth from the American Baha'i Community during the life-time of 'Abdu'l-Baha, and through the travels of that devoted and sanctified soul, Miss Martha Root, a Hand of the Cause of God, and foremost among those who responded to the call of teaching raised by the Master. Today, however, there are but few who remain of those who received the Message of Baha'u'llah in South Africa. One of these is Mrs. Agnes Carey of Durban, from whose letter we quote here.

"Dear Baha'i friends, Greetings from Durban! As I am in hospital at present with a fractured hip, I am not able to do much. I feel your work is going on so well and happily. I had hoped to see some of our believers here, but they are scattered and I was unable to contact them but will do so when I get out of here. We enjoy Africa News as it is sent to us from England. I hope when I get back to my flat to send you some Baha'i literature and magazines to help you with your work. With Baha'i greetings and prayers from your Baha'i friend, Agnes F. Carey, 6 Margaret Court, 26 Rapson Road, Durban, South Africa."

WITH OUR PIONEERS In several widely-separate parts of the continent, our pioneers are labouring for their beloved Faith entirely alone and without the loving companionship and co-operation of their fellow believers, or even the comfort of familiar surroundings. Encountering new ways of life and language, in climates and environments not always easy to adjust to, with only their staunch faith in Baha'u'llah to press them forward to their goal, these stout-hearted souls, who have arisen from across the seas to make their pioneer homes in the heart of Africa, deserve our loving gratitude, our fervent prayers, and surely our constant letters of encouragement and support.

ETHEL STEVENS A long and glowing letter, enclosing a number of fascinating photographs of African cultural affairs in the Gold Coast, brings us the happy news that Ethel Stevens is now comfortably settled in Kumasi, that she has made many new friends and that she is actively engaged in numerous efforts to assist other

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pioneers to enter that territory soon. She has been contacted by the family of a young African from the Gold Coast who recently became a Baha'i in the United States, and they have become fast friends. In addition, Ethel has had, in her own words, "splendid opportunities for getting a basis of real understanding of the cultural background of the people of the Gold Coast" through her attendance at several African musical and cultural Conferences held in Accra and Kumasi recently. Ethel wishes to thank all those who have so kindly written to her in recent months. She says, "Indeed, I now feel as though I have a Baha'i family in Africa."

CLAIRE GUNG From Claire Gung in Lushoto, Northern Tanganyika, and
& ERIC MANTON from Eric and Terry Manton in Livingstone, Northern Rhodesia, come loving Ridvan greetings to all of the believers in Africa. These dear friends speak of the great loneliness for Baha'i fellowship which fills their hearts and of the trying conditions of life under which they are living, but in the same sentences with these glimpses of their pioneer struggle are to be found those ever-sustaining expressions of faith and perseverance, the qualities which ultimately overcome all obstacles in the path of service.

Eric is now engaged in helping to build a new African Hospital in the vicinity of Livingstone. He has made many new friends and has had many opportunities of meeting people from all sections of the population. He tells of the language difficulty in Northern Rhodesia, where the Lingua Franca seems to be little more than a peculiar pidgin English. Eric is also diligently making every effort to clear the way for the entry of several more pioneers into the territory soon.

MESSAGE FROM In response to a letter sent to him on the 21st April
THE GUARDIAN by the newly formed Spiritual Assembly of Dar-es-Salaam, the Guardian replied recently :

(From the Guardian through his Secretary.) Haifa, Israel, May 4, 1952.
Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Dar-es-Salaam.

Dear Baha'i Friends:

Your letter of 21st April has been received by the beloved Guardian, as well as the photographs you forwarded, which interested him very much.

It was a great joy to him to receive news of the formation of your Assembly, and especially to know that now there are three African believers assisting in the promotion of the Faith in Tanganyika. He assures you that he will pray in the Holy Shrines for your success and the rapid expansion of the Faith in Dar-es-Salaam.

He attaches the greatest importance to your work; and urges you, during this first year of your Baha'i life as an organised Community, to devote special attention, not only to teaching the Faith, but to creating amongst yourselves that spirit of loving co-operation and wise discussion of the affairs of the Cause which must always form the bedrock of every Spiritual Assembly.
(In the Guardian's own hand.)

May the Almighty reward you abundantly for your historic and highly valued services, guide every step you take, bless every effort you exert, and fulfil every desire you cherish for the promotion of His Faith and the consolidation of its nascent institutions. Your true and grateful brother,

(signed) Shoghi.