

Let's participate in volunteer activities and strive for volunteer work!

All praises are due to **Allah**. I testify that there is nothing worthy of worship except **Allah**, the uniquely One who has no partners in **His** one-ness. And I testify that the Prophet **Muhammad** is a slave of **Allah** and **His** Messenger.

Dear Believers! **Allah** says in the **Qur'an** in **Surah an-Nahl**:

“Indeed, Allah is with those who fear Him and those who are doers of good.” (S.16 V.128)

It has been narrated on the authority of **Ibn Abbas RA** that the Messenger of **Allah SAW** once came upon some people who volunteered to give people water, in that they would draw water from the wells and then pour it into their containers. Seeing this the Prophet **SAW** said: “Keep working, for you are engaged in good work. Then he said to the people: “Were it not that you would be overpowered (by which he meant that he feared that if joined them, the people would overcrowd them) - I would go down and put the rope on this (and he pointed to his blessed shoulder as a means of drawing the water up).” [Bukhari] In this **Hadith**, the Prophet **SAW** set an example and encouraged us to participate in voluntary work, as a means of seeking the bounty and reward from **Allah** therein. For voluntary work is rewarded and brings about gratitude and thankfulness from people and appreciation from **Allah**.

Allah says in the **Qur'an** in **Surah al-Baqarah**:

“...And whoever volunteers good - then indeed, Allah is appreciative and Knowing.” (S.2 V.158)

Voluntary work involves the spirit of service wherein people aid one another, bringing about benefit to their communities and mankind. This was the spirit and way that the companions of the Prophet **SAW** would hasten towards, each of them serving the community with whatever gifts **Allah** had given them. This was the way for the women amongst the **Sahaba**, the **Sahabiyyaat**, for amongst them were those who learnt medicine and healing of the sick, helping to benefit people with their expertise. **Allah** says in the **Qur'an** in **Surah al-Maidah**:

“...And whoever saves one [life] - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely. ...” (S.5 V.32)

Dear Believers! The Messenger of **Allah SAW** recounted for us the story of a man who removed thorns from a road that people would travel upon. He **SAW** mentioned how **Allah** appreciated him for the goodness of his deeds and then granted forgiveness to him, as **the Prophet SAW** said: “Whilst a man was walking on the road, he found a thorny branch and removed it. **Allah** appreciated his action so he forgave him [his sins].” [Bukhari and Muslim] So, in similar spirit whosoever is able to perform good deeds and is able to serve his community through these means, then let him or her hasten to do it in the spirit of service and sacrifice. For these are the means by which one draws near to **Allah**, earning reward. It these people who volunteer for the sake of **Allah** who are akin to the first row of worshippers of prayer, in that they have a reward and closeness to **Allah**. They are those who receive the pleasure and appreciation of **Allah** as well as the gratitude and thankfulness of people, all in recognition and appreciation for their effort. So, let us encourage one another to voluntary work by which we can serve one another and greater humanity.

May the peace and the blessings of **Allah** be upon prophet **Muhammad SAW**, his family and all of his Companions. May **Allah** be pleased with the Rightly Guided **Caliphs: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman** and **Ali**, and all those who will follow them in righteousness until the Day of Judgment.

O **Allah!** Accept our prayers, all our **ibada** and all of our good deeds and forgive us for our **sins**.

O **Allah!** Guide us to the right path and make us of those on whom **You** bestows **Your** mercy.

O **Allah!** Accept us for **Your** service and for the service of **Islam** and **Muslims**

O **Allah!** Give **shifa** to all those who are sick.

O **Allah!** Grant safety and security to everyone here in Japan as well as all over the world. **Aamin ya Rabbil Aalamin**.

