



Food, especially when served with love, compassion, and care is extra delicious and special. And that's the whole story behind Ikkayees, the startup or business, whatever you call it. Started initially with a concept to aid some charity works, inspired by some experiences at a Palliative care program, our story is unique. And it just does not talk about the power of entrepreneurship, but about the power of compassion too.

Sit back, relax, and feel at home as we take you through our journey, all the way from a small food truck at Calicut crossing continents and now to the vibrant city of Liverpool and still expanding...



Ikkayees

What, why, when, where, who and how of Ikkayees!



Their journey began with humble acts of kindness – volunteering at the Institute of Palliative Medicine, organizing fundraising events, and spending time with those in need.

This is not an ordinary business story that talks of success and money. But a story woven with threads of compassion and selflessness. Long story short, it all started with a group of college students back in 2014, who committed themselves to be a ray of hope for the less privileged in society.

Fulaij and his close-knit circle of friends, Naseef, Fairouz, Falah, Shyma, Shabnam, and Shameer met Kulsu, a vibrant 6 six-year-old daughter of a couple from Odisha, at an umbrella-making camp organized by the Institute of Palliative Medicine in Kozhikode which changed their perspectives about life. The program which was a part of rehabilitation activities meant for patients suffering from chronic illnesses stirred the hearts of these college-going youngsters to think compassionately differently. Moved by the orientation received from IPM, and realizing that life is not the same for everyone, these teenagers decided to spread awareness and raise funds for palliative and the education of Kulsu. Their journey began with humble acts of kindness – volun-

teering at the Institute of Palliative Medicine, organizing fundraising events, and spending time with those in need.

United by their deep-seated empathy and a collective drive for social good, they found themselves drawn to the realm of palliative care and charitable initiatives, which even included an International Conference. One of the initiatives included “Because I Care”, a drive to spread awareness among students about palliative care and to mobilize resources for extending the organization’s services to more patients needing palliative care. Another notable initiative was Operation Sulaimani, a free food program, meant to enable those who cannot afford a meal to have food with dignity and to avoid food waste in the city of Kozhikode.

With each initiative, they grew more determined to create meaningful change in their community. Witnessing the transformative power of compassion ignited a spark within them, spurring a desire to do more, to do

better. And that's how - a mission to establish their own social entrepreneurship venture started sprouting out in their hearts. They envisioned a platform that not only provided essential support to underprivileged individuals but also empowered women to lead fulfilling lives with dignity and respect. Drawing inspiration from their collective experiences, they crafted a business model rooted in empathy and sustainability - The Ikkayees Food Truck.





Ikkayees - A Unique Food Truck Venture with A Heartwarming Purpose!

It was a vision turned into a living, breathing reality! The Ikkayees Food Truck! As college students, the question of money posed great anxiety but united by a shared passion for making a difference in the world, Fulaij and his friends did not give up. Their determination and commitment turned out as a moving Food Truck in February 2016, with an initial investment of 8 lakhs INR, igniting a collective flame of compassion and care.

The yellow food truck “Ikkayees” with a tantalizing aroma of culinary cuisines straight out of kitchens of different households in the city, did not take time to carve into the bustling heart of Kozhikode. Along the lively promenade of Kozhikode Beach every evening, “Ikkayees” served both locals and travelers alike with promises of authentic flavors straight from homely kitchens. As the foodies across the city explored the Ikkayees air alive, with the sizzle of hot pans and the rhythmic clang of utensils, Fulaij, and his friends were happy; not for the income, but for finding a purpose to their lives. The delicious foods served in the food truck came from different kitchens across the city, as Ikkayees was that platform for economically

Along the lively promenade of Kozhikode Beach every evening, “Ikkayees” served both locals and travelers alike with promises of authentic flavors straight from homely kitchens.



backward women and women who carry cooking as a passion in their hearts. The team made sure to get supplies ready for these wonderful women, who made the beloved customers at the Ikkayees food truck happy and content with an authentic food experience. Empowering widows, single women, and marginalized individuals, the food truck provided them with opportunities to showcase their

culinary skills and earn a livelihood.

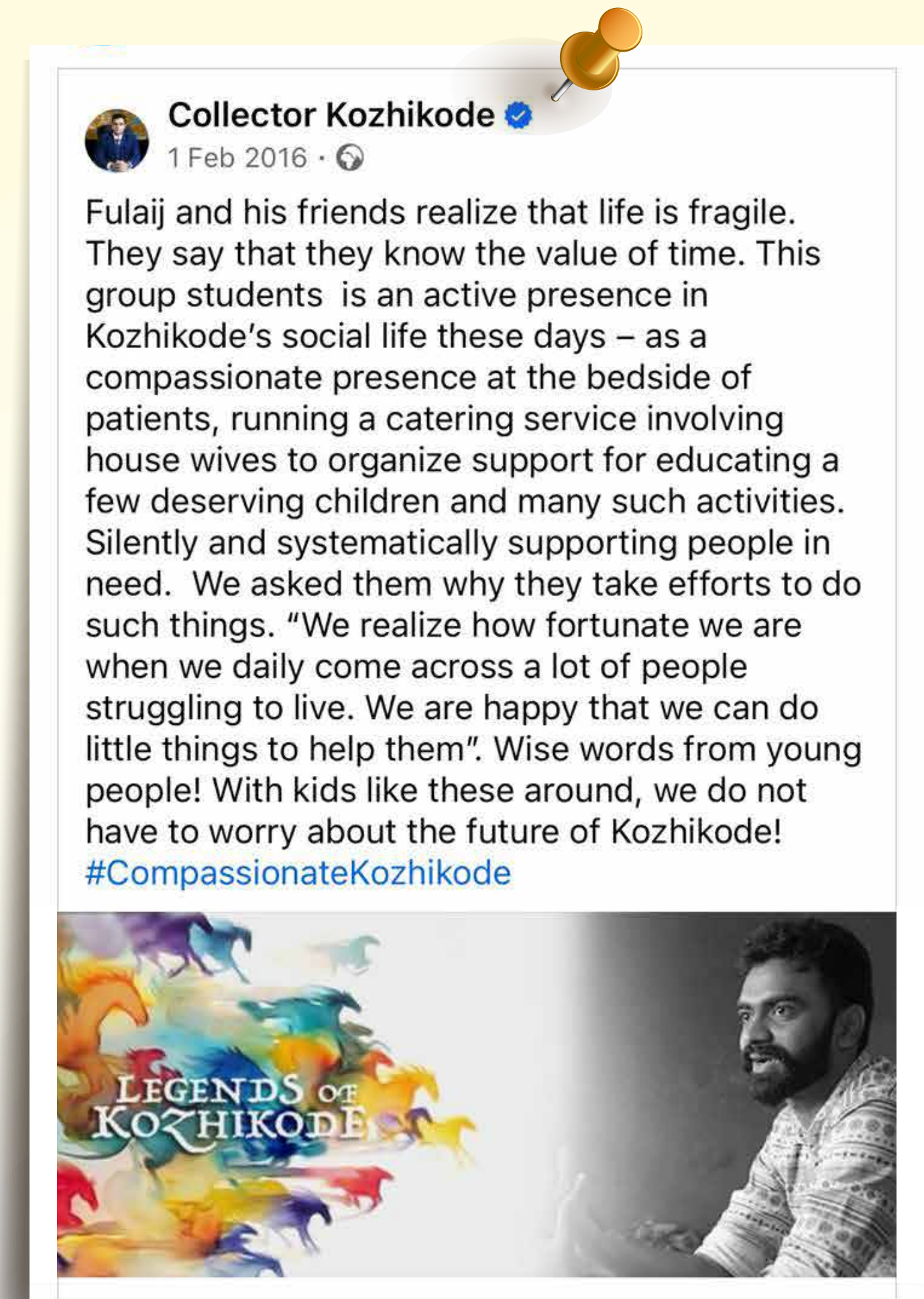
As Ikkayees served the heart of Malabar’s culinary heritage, offering a tantalizing array of dishes that celebrate the region’s vibrant flavors, from steaming bowls of fragrant biryani infused with spices to crispy, golden parcels of freshly fried snacks, the taste and texture of Ikkayees spread to many people within a year.

The Mystery Behind the Name “Ikkayees”

Someone who hails from Kozhikode, or any part of Kerala always has a love for Chai in his heart. It has become a part of Kerala’s culture where you also spend quality time with friends and family over a cup of hot chai. Fulaij and his friends always used to meet for chai in the evening at a quaint tea shop amidst the vibrant streets of Mughadar, South Beach, Kozhikode. Known affectionately as 'Ikkakka' among the locals, the proprietor of this humble establishment has woven himself into the fabric of the neighborhood, earning not just respect but a place in the hearts of those who frequent his shop.

For years, 'Ikkakka' has stood firm in his resolve to keep the price of his tea at a modest Rs 1, a gesture born not out of mere economics but out of a profound understanding of his clientele. His patrons, primarily fishermen and students, form the lifeblood of his business. And in a world where inflation often dictates price hikes, 'Ikkakka' remains steadfast in his belief that his loyal customers deserve a respite from the burden of rising costs.

When Fulaij and his friends searched for a name for their social entrepreneurship, they had nothing better in their minds than the word “Ikkakka”, who has been an inspiration to everyone with his gesture of kindness and generosity. As they were envisioning social entrepreneurship where they aim to give back to their community while inspiring those around them, Fulaij and his friends were excited about the word “Ikkakka”, a sweet word in the dictionary of Malabar, with the meaning “Brother”. People of Kozhikode often address each other as “Ikkakka” (translated as brother) as a means of respect and love. Later, the team decided that there was no better word to describe the Food Truck, than “Ikkayees”, where the space should be considered as everybody’s. At 'Ikkayees', the name itself carries a tale of unwavering dedication and empathy, inspired by the spirit of 'Ikkakka', whose generosity knows no bounds, and the brotherhood that the people of Calicut display.





Ikkayees - The Real Restaurant!

For nearly a year, the Ikkayees food truck roamed the streets of Calicut, spreading joy and making a difference. Even though the concept of the food truck was widely received among the people, the team Ikkayees was still battling financial instability even after a year. As life took its course, with the growing financial burden and other personal priorities, the team had to part ways, leaving one determined individual, Fulaij to carry the torch forward. With resilience and vision, Fulaij transformed the humble food truck into a thriving restaurant empire. The first outlet of the Ikkayees Restaurant was thus opened at Mavoor Road, Kozhikode in 2017.

When we say that we do not forget our roots, we mean it. At Ikkayees, we believe in the power of giving back. We've made it our mission to prioritize charity works that uplift the marginalized and underserved in our society. Our commitment to social responsibility extends beyond the walls of our restaurant. From feeding the homeless to providing educational opportunities for underprivileged children, every rupee spent at Ikkayees goes towards creating a positive impact in the lives of those in need.



It didn't take us a long time to serve our delicious and authentic tastes that feel like home in a different country. Two years later, in 2020, we opened our first international outlet.





It is at Ikkayees Mavoor Road our initiative called “Sulaimaniyil Orithiri Mohabath” caught the limelight. It was a unique concept that we employed at our restaurant to raise funds for people in need through Sulaimani. We did a delightful deal; of keeping 2 rs away from every Sulaimani that our customers buy.

Later, we had to shift the restaurant to South Beach, one of the most happening spots in Calicut in 2018. Gradually, Ikkayees had its fair share of contributions and names, be it in serving food or serving people. What happened later is more like a fast-forward movie. Being one of the top eateries in the city of Kozhikode, the role that Ikkayees played during the major crises, Nipah Virus, COVID-19, and the 2018 and 2019 Floods, is unmatched. Taking inspiring initiatives through business and giving back to society has been the backbone of our business, and we believe that it's our uniqueness on purpose that made Ikkayees a success. It didn't take us a long time to serve our delicious and authentic tastes that feel like home in a different country. Two years later, in 2020, we opened our first international outlet.



Differently abled persons undergoing internship for work experience at Ikkayees restaurant feeling over excited when they accidentally met their teacher who taught them at their special school





Ikkayees - How We Set The Bar High

As we continue our journey by redefining what it means to be a real restaurant, we want to be honest and loyal to our customers. It was not easy. Nothing comes easy. As we aimed to create a social entrepreneurship where we could give back something to our society, we always maintained a balance between what is for us and what is for society. One of the hallmarks of Ikkayees is its unwavering dedication to inclusivity. Collaborating with "WE SMILE," a special school for differently-abled students, located at Nadakkavu, Ikkayees pioneered an internship program aimed at empowering individuals with diverse abilities. By opening a chai counter within the restaurant premises and hiring three differently-abled children—Rinshad, Ameen, and Mubashir—Ikkayees not only provided them with employment opportunities but also fostered an environment where inclusivity thrived.

But Ikkayees' commitment to social responsibility doesn't end there. Understanding the pressing needs of the community, we allocate a portion of our earnings to support paraplegic

One of the milestones in the history of Ikkayees also includes the launch of an Online Food App, making it the first online homely restaurant, to deliver home-cooked dishes right to the doorstep of our customers.

patients and their families. A charity box adorned the restaurant, inviting patrons to contribute towards uplifting the lives of the underprivileged, funding education, and providing essential supplies to children in need. The concept of "Sulaimaniyil Orithiri Mohabath" epitomizes our dedication to serving not just delicious meals but also nourishing the souls of those less fortunate.

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA
KOZHIKODE | THURSDAY 18 | MAY 2017

Part of income contributed for betterment of lives of paraplegic patients and families

From palliative care to selling food for a cause



LAKSHMI PRIYA |
DC
KOZHIKODE, MAY 17

Ikkayees, a moving restaurant opened by a few youngsters, is not merely an eatery but a dream mission for those who worked as volunteers at the Institute of Palliative Medicine. All of them joined as volunteers in palliative care during their college days.

For these youngsters, rather than earning what they want is the well-being of others by giving something back to society.

The group of youngsters - Fulajj N. Muhammad Naseef, Shaz Fasil, K Falah and Fairoos.V.P. started 'Ikkayees' to introduce a "socio-food culture" in Kozhikode one year ago. The success of the mobile restaurant led to setting up a real restaurant of the same name at Mavoor road recently.

Moreover, Ikkayees serves home cooked dishes as an attempt to empower women so that they can earn from their own kitchens. Women who are economical-ly backward can find a living through this endeavour and for those dynamic women who are passionate about cooking, Ikkayees gives them a platform.

Fulajj told DC that they were inspired from projects like 'Operation Sulaimani' during their days as palliative care volunteers. Ikkayees contributes a part of their income for the betterment of the lives of paraplegic patients and their families. They also fund the education of children and provide them school supplies.

A charity box is placed at the restaurant for those people who would like to donate money to provide food for the poor and underprivileged", he added. 'Sulaimaniyil Orithiri Mohabath' is an idea they launched in which people can donate money so that Ikkayees can give free Sulaimani for the poor. Ikkayees has also launched an online food app making it the first online homely restaurant, delivering home cooked dishes at the door to customers.

One of the milestones in the history of Ikkayees also includes the launch of an Online Food App, making it the first online homely restaurant, to deliver home-cooked dishes right to the doorstep of our customers, ensuring that even amidst the hustle and bustle of daily life, a taste of comfort is never out of reach.

At Ikkayees, setting the bar high isn't just a goal—it has been a way of life for us.

Bringing light into many lives

Among the youngsters who have no time for others or even themselves, Kozhikode native Fulaj is a ray of hope

FATHIMA SHAREEF

Being compassionate to others, especially the less privileged, and doing something that brings smiles on their faces is a gesture that will leave you with nothing but a heart brimming with happiness and peace at the end of the day. It's something many people preach, but very few people give their time and make efforts to organise any



Fulaj's staffs at the restaurant

such activity. Fulaj N., 25, who hails from Eranhikkal in Kozhikode district, is one of those few people.

It all started when Fulaj and his friends met Kulsu, a vibrant six-year-old daughter of a couple hailing from Odisha, at an umbrella-making camp organised by the Institute of Palliative in Medicine (IPM) in Kozhikode. The programme was part of rehabilitation activities meant for patients suffering from chronic illnesses.

"Me and my friends learned that the girl's parents are struggling to meet the expenses of her education. This prompted us to sponsor her education using our own pocket money, which we earned by doing various jobs including catering services and room cleaning," Fulaj says.

It did not end there. The

impact that Kulsu created on their lives was big. She inspired them to start 'Because I Care', an endeavor that spreads awareness among the youth about palliative care, raises funds for patients and mobilises the young people.

Fulaj's vision in life changed when he was a degree first-year student, after attending a charity orientation camp organised by the IPM in Kozhikode in 2013, which was supposed to be just another reason to bunk classes.

"Back then, seeing all those wheelchair-bound patients made me sympathetic towards them. It is after serving them that I gradually realised that the real heroes aren't the ones on screen whom we praise and worship, but those patients who choose to smile and spread positive energy despite what life has thrown at them," he adds.

Today a restaurant owned by Fulaj and his partner Shaber Bismillah, which is popularly known as Ikkayees, runs with this humanitarian cause where love, compassion

and care are served along with delicious local food satisfying the taste buds of all food lovers. Two rupees from the price of every sulaimani that you sip from this restaurant will be donated for the welfare of the needy, thus inviting you to be a ray of happiness for all the unprivileged people in our society.

With the aim of uplifting women, they have also included some women with culinary skills in the initiative. They prepare snacks for the restaurant, which help them to be self-sufficient by earning from their own kitchen.

When differently-abled people are marginalised and deemed incompetent, Fulaj has hired three such people in his restaurant with the objective of nurturing confidence in them and making them self-reliant. He has set up a tea-and-snack stall there and trained them to serve the customers and handle the money. Owing to his indomitable spirit to be a helping hand for the weaker section of society, Fulaj is now planning to start a community kitchen as a livelihood means for widows, where they will be trained to cook and sell the food prepared by them through catering services.

"I think everyone should pay a visit to these palliative care centres at least once in their lives. Interacting with the patients there and learning their painful stories is enough for one to be grateful for what they have, and

dedicate a few minutes of their day to make an impact in those people's lives," he concludes.



Fulaj

Fulaj's vision in life changed when he was a degree first-year student, after attending a charity orientation camp



Activists of the district unit of the Blood Donors Kerala create a 'Wall of Unity' at Gujarati Street in Kozhikode as a mark of unity shown by people of Kerala in overcoming the recent floods, on Wednesday. More than 40 artists participated in the venture

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Ikkayees - The Timeless Journey!

With a turnover of 80 crores, 8 branches spanning the globe, and 250+ members in our family, we, Ikkayees continue to serve the food that you crave with a side of social impact. From its humble beginning to its global success, we remain committed to making the world a better place.

At Ikkayees, we strive to serve a message - of the profound impact a small act of kindness can have. It's more than just a place to dine; it's a celebration of humanity and the power of individuals coming together to make a difference. It's not just the food that sets Ikkayees apart—it's the experience that you'll get to take home.

After all this, we are proud that our dedication to philanthropy doesn't overshadow our culinary expertise. We have a plethora of evening snacks and authentic cuisines that pay homage to Kerala's rich culinary heritage. And of course, we still remember our roots. We still remember all the faces that were kind to us. We still pray for all the hands that held us while we were falling apart. It was a journey that started with the right purpose and vision.

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And it continues to be the same. As our space resonates with warmth, compassion, and the spirit of giving back - you'll feel right at home, no matter where life has taken you.



And of course, our story doesn't end here. We are pretty sure that somebody out there is still smiling and grateful for the kind gesture we made.

Message from the Director



“ My life was also same like everyone else like any teenager or youngster. Attending a charity orientation camp organized by Institute of Palliative Medicine, Kozhikode changed my vision of life. Back then seeing all those people in wheelchair made me sympathetic towards them but it was after interacting to them I understood that the real heroes are not the ones we applaud and worship but these differently abled people who laugh at life and spread the laughter to others despite what life throws at them. Having a bunch of friends who stands with us through every fall and high is another driving factor in my life. According to me, my business is not about what and how much we make, its more about what the world got from it, by the prayers and support of many such people.

Fulaij N
Founder & Director



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