

## **UK Muslim leader tells Australian radio, “There’s no need for such a mega-mosque in London”**

### **“Tablighi Jamaat has been linked with terrorist activities in Pakistan” says Dr Irfan al-Alawi**

In a recent hard-hitting interview on Australian national radio, Dr Irfan al-Alawi, London-based International Director of the *Centre for Islamic Pluralism*, denounced efforts by Tablighi Jamaat to promote their mega-mosque at West Ham.

Claiming that there are already enough mosques for the UK’s Muslim population, with some 1,500 operating in England, he told ABC interviewer Stephen Crittenden that there is no need for such a mega-mosque in London. Indicating that Tablighi Jamaat will apply initially for a 12,000 capacity mosque but then expand it to up to 40,000, Dr al-Alawi said that “we don’t have that many Muslims in the area.”

In a comment relevant to the current upheavals in Pakistan and their global impact, Dr al-Alawi told the radio audience, “My major concern is that Tablighi Jamaat has been linked with terrorist activities in Pakistan – Jamaat-e-Islami, Lashkar-e-Taiba and so forth. These are the organisations which train radicals and send them to Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries.”

When pressed by Steve Crittenden about Tablighi Jamaat links to terrorist activities in Britain, al-Alawi responded swiftly: “Of course, absolutely, yes. I mean we have significant proof that after 7/7, the London train bombings, most of the people who were arrested or who were involved with these were not from mainstream Sunni background, they were from either the Ahli Hadith or Salafis which is known otherwise as Wahhabi of Saudi Arabia, or the Tablighi Jamaat.”

“The story gets really interesting,” said Steve Crittenden, when the majority of mainstream Muslims don’t support the mosque project but “it’s being given a leg-up by the left-wing Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone.”

“Right,” replied Dr al-Alawi. “Now Ken Livingstone, he doesn’t know what on earth Tablighi Jamaat is about... I’ve had a dialogue with Ken Livingstone myself... He not listening to the majority of the general public who have voted on the major Downing Street website, there’s (been) a petition that (shows that) no one is interested in this mega-mosque.”

The transcript of the full interview with Dr Irfan al-Alawi can be seen at <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/religionreport/stories/2007/2011495.htm>