



Core Curriculum

7 The Legacy of the Prophet Muhammad (s) and his Ahl al-Bayt (as)

7.10 Clerical Hierarchies in Muslim Communities

Word: Alim

Meaning: Someone who possesses knowledge, i.e. cleric.

Word: Maulana

Meaning: “Our master,” in reference to a cleric of any rank, it is a term usually used by South Asians

Word: Ayatollah

Meaning: “Sign of God,” a highly trained cleric who is a mujtahid

Word: Ayatollah al-Udhma

Meaning: “greater Ayatollah (Sign of God),” another name for a Marja

Word: Hawza

Meaning: Islamic seminary where Muslim clerics are trained in Law