

THE SOCIETY THAT INDIA NEEDS

India is a multi-religious, multi-lingual and multi-cultural nation. Presently it is passing through a deep crises. Practically all the instruments we had created to ensure unity and progress of the nation are under great stress. As far as Muslim minority is concerned, they are crying for some immediate action to remove its sense of alienation.

How can we protect the minorities in India? Dr. Ede, the Chairman of United Nations Working Group on Minorities Meeting suggests: "One task is to work in the area of law enforcement to make sure that the Police Administration and Officials are truly impartial and objective in their work and follow Constitution and law mechanisms to address allegations of violations in a quick way. It should not be long, complicated and expensive process also. Human Rights commissions should be made powerful enough to be effective and their recommendations are taken seriously."

For success in this area we need to make communal offences more intensely punishable than murder. All citizens including minorities need to be respected, upheld, and their life and

property be protected. A democratic society cannot let its minorities suffer agonies of sorts. Without which no prosperity can be imagined.

On the other hand Indian Muslims have their own responsibility. They have to offer in return a pristine Islamic Character. They can accept certain strategies that will help them in near future. There are hundreds of provocative situations which the Muslims should avoid when faced. Stone throwing, angry verbal taunts or insisting on insignificant customary practices result in loss of life and property. They should try to remove all minor and major irritants which endanger their relations with the majority Community.

The Muslims should not react in a sentimental fashion. They should stoutly refuse to play to the tune of sentimental leaders or to become a prey to machinations of anti-Muslim forces. Convey your grievances later calmly to law enforcement agencies. In the spirit of goodwill and brotherhood of mankind, Muslims should extend their hands of cooperation to lover of peace and justice. They will be amazed to find a number of their countrymen standing by their side. That is the type of society that India needs.

ESTABLISH RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUSTICE

“O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah as witness to fair dealings and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just; that is next to piety, and fear Allah with all you do”. (Surah Al Maidah, 5:8)

In the above stated verse we are told to be fair and just in our dealings. Further, our hatred of others should not cause us to swerve from the path of justice and piety. Justice is Allah's attributes and to stand firm for justice is to be a witness to Allah, even if it is detrimental to our own interests (as we conceive them) or the interests of those who are near and dear to us.

Some people may be inclined to favour the rich, because they expect something from them. Some people may be inclined to favour the poor because they are generally helpless. Partiality in case is wrong. Both the rich and poor are under Allah's protection as far as their legitimate interests are concerned, but they cannot expect to be favoured at the expense of others. Allah can protect their interests far better than any man.

Further, it is not enough for believers to uphold justice themselves they are expected to be its standard bearers. They are supposed not merely

to practice justice in their own dealings but to strive for its triumph. They have to do all within their power to ensure that injustice is eradicated and replaced by equity and justice.

In other words, the Holy Quran tells us to be living examples of Islam and represent it in all our walks of life. It is a natural tendency among human beings to retaliate and seek revenge when their land has been occupied, their rights have been trampled upon, their property destroyed, their families uprooted and killed, their honour disgraced, their religion tarnished, their mosques and the Quran set on fire, such actions are too provocative to incite not only Muslims but any other community to retaliate under similar circumstances. Then the world labels such retaliation as acts of terrorism.

Therefore it is advisable that Muslims have to respond to all these provocative actions of the opponents with patience and fortitude. More importantly, the Muslims have to project themselves as true practitioners of their faith. They must forcefully demonstrate that Islam does not preach violence.

It is in this spirit and good will and the brotherhood of mankind mentioned in the Holy Quran that Muslims extend their hands of cooperation to lovers of peace and justice.

PROHIBITION OF CRUELTY AND INJUSTICE

(1) Jabir Bin Abdullah (R.A.A.) relates that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: Avoid cruelty and injustice for, on the Day of Judgement, the same will turn, into severe darkness; and guard yourselves against miserliness; for this has ruined nations who lived before you. Miserliness led them to bloodshed and to treat unlawful as lawful (*Saheeh Muslim*)

(2) Abu Hurairah (R.A.A.) relates that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: Allah will definitely enforce the settlement of all the dues to those entitled to receive them on the Day of Judgement; even the wrong done to a hornless goat by a horned goat, will be redressed. (*Saheeh Muslim*)

(3) Abu Musa Ashari (R.A.A.) relates that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: Allah postpones taking any action against a tyrant (so that the cup of his sins may get full), and thereafter when he takes him to task, he does not let him escape. Then he read this Quranic verse:

Even this is the grasp of your Lord when He graspeth the township (or communities) while they are doing wrong. Lo! His grasp is painful very strong” (*Surah Hud; 11:102*)(*Saheeh Bukari and Muslim*)

(4) Abu Hurairah (R.A.A.) relates that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: “If any Muslim has oppressed his brother concerning his honour or anything else, let him obtain his pardon today (in this world) before the time comes when he will have neither Dinars nor Dirhams (i.e he will be penniless). If the aggressor may have some good deeds (in his account) the same would be deducted in equal proportion to his wrongs, if the aggressor will have no good deeds in his account the wrongs of the aggrieved would be added to the account of the aggressor in equal proportion”. (*Saheeh Bukhari & Muslim*)

(5) Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Al Aas (R.A.A.) relates that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: A Muslim is a person who does not harm another Muslim with his tongue or hands and an emigrant is one who leaves that which Allah has forbideen”. (*Saheeh Bukhari and Muslim*)

(6) Abdu Ummah Iyas Ibn Saalbah Harisi relates that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: Allah has decreed the Fire of Hell for a person who usurps the property of a Muslim through false oath and debared him from Paradise. A companion asked: “O Messenger of Allah! Even if it may be the twing of a bush”. (*Saheeh Muslim*)

RELIGIOUS FATWA AGAINST TERRORISM

(Translated from Urdu)

QUESTION: In modern times terrorism has made its presence felt in global circles. People find a camouflage of horrific incidents of militancy, violence, brutality, viciousness, discord and tyranny taking place every where. The act of bombing, hijacking of aircrafts and vehicles, suicidal attacks, kidnapping, targetting and killing of innocent people with the intention to cause death and injuries to people or damage or destruction to Government and private properties or disruption of supplies or services essential to the life of community and society as well as creating instability and insecurity in the society have become common.

Would you, religious clerics, please shade light on these subversive activities and its perpetrators? Is terrorism allowed in Islam or do the subversive activities have religious sanctions in a way on another?

ANSWER: Terrorism means the illegal transgression against the lives and property of people, creating instability and insecurity in the society and spreading violence, mischief and extremism in the land. Terrorism is characterised by invoking terror in the hearts of people and intimidating people restoring to illegal, immoral and inhuman activities.

Terrorism is carried out to accomplish certain objectivities and sometime to uphold some ideologies and principles through aggressive and cruel means against the opponents in the name of religion, race, colour or culture etc.

As a matter of fact, Islam is totally against Terrorism, terrorists and terrorising acts. Islamic Shariah does not approve it whether the perpetrators are Muslims or non-Muslims.

Islam is the fountainhead of peace and security. It is religion which ensures and promotes love, brotherhood and harmony among peoples whereas violence springs up from beastliness, barbarism and intimidation causing mass massacres and bloodshed. Islam attaches primary importance to the sanctity of human life, and the right to lead one's life in peace and tranquillity with a sense of security and fearlessness.

Islam has given immense respect to human life. It has clarified that people who are engaged in instigating terror and bloodshed should not be spared. Islam has condemned mischief and deviltry as a more heinous crime than homicide.

Terrorism is undoubtedly unacceptable to any sensible person, let alone the believers and

Islam. It is not acceptable because it violates the provisions of the Glorious Qura'n and the Prophet's Sunnah.

God said in the Glorious Qura'n : *“On that account: We ordained for the children of Israel that if anyone slew a person - unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land - it would be as if he slew the whole people : And if anyone saved a life. It would be as if he saved the life of the whole people. Then although there came to them Our Messengers with Clear Signs, yet, even after that, many of them continued to commit excesses in the land. The punishment of those who wage war against God and His Messenger, and strive with might and main for mischief through the land is: execution, or crucifixion, or the cutting off of hands and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land: that is their disgrace in this world, and a heavy punishment is theirs in the Hereafter.”* (Surah Al-Maida, 5:32-33)

The above stated two verses of Glorious Qura'n stipulates Ordinances and Penalties in brief to serve as guidelines to punish criminal in accordance with the nature of crime and a righteous order of life be established on earth; an order that would provide peace and security to everyone found on earth.

Islam says that no human being, irrespective of his/her religion or community, can be subjected to capital punishment save and except two kinds of people: one, a murderer, and , the other a person who is held responsible for destroying peace in the society and country, and spreading mischief on earth.

The Glorious Qura'n has emphasised that killing a person is not the killing of only one person but is tantamount to killing of the entire human race; and similarly, saving the life of one person is giving life to the entire humanity. How grand and lofty are these teachings: It is on the basis of this one teaching that the entire humanity ought to be indebted to the Glorious Qura'n.

Almighty God further said:

“Among men there is a kind whose sayings on the affairs of the world fascinate you, he calls God again and again to bear testimony to his sincerity; yet he is most fierce in enmity. Whenever he attains authority, he goes about the earth spreading mischief and laying to waste crops and human life, even though Allah (whose testimony he invokes) does not love mischief.” (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:204-205)

The mischief makers return from sweat, all modes of endeavours, plans and apparently genuine talk, and engage in arrogant and destructive action. They stir up quarrels, and causes all sorts of mischief. They ignore Sharia't and spread frauds and tricks, dishonesty, falsehood, treachery and breach of faith.

God again said in the Holy Quran:

“Believers! Be upright bearers of witness for Allah, and do not let the enmity of any people move you to deviate from justice. Act justly, that is nearer to God fearing. And fear Allah. Surely Allah is well aware of what you do.” (Surah Al-Maidah, 5:8)

It is not enough for believers to uphold justice

themselves : they are expected to be its standard bearers. They are supposed not merely to practice justice in their own dealings but to strive for its triumph.

Muslims are asked not to retaliate or return evil for evil. The hatred of the wicked does not justify hostility on their part. They have to help each other in righteousness and piety, not in perpetuating feuds of hatred and enmity. This must be in spirit of justice and righteousness to save hundreds and thousands of innocent lives and public and private properties from destruction.

God said in the Holy Quran:

“Surely God, enjoins justice, kindness and the doing of good, to kith and kin, and forbids all that is shameful, evil and oppressive. He exhorts you so that you may be mindful.” (Surah An-Nahl, 16:90)

This directive of justice provide the basis for the sound ordering of human society. Justice wards off the bitterness of discord and disharmony from human life. God forbids transgression. This stands for the exceeding on anyone’s part one’s proper limits and usurping the rights of others.

God further said:

“And those who annoy believing men and women undeservedly, they bear (on themselves) the crime of slander and plain sin.” (Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:58)

The Holy Prophet (may blessing and peace of Allah be upon him) said:

1. “Every thing belonging to another

Muslim, his blood, his honour and his property is sacrosanct to another Muslim.” (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim)

2. “A Muslim is a person who does not harm another Muslim with his tongue and hands.” (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim)

3. “A believer remains within the scope of his religion as long as he does not kill anyone unlawfully.” (Reported by Bukhari)

4. “God has no mercy for one who has no mercy for other people.” (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim)

5. “A Muslim is the brother of another Muslim; do not hurt him, or look down upon him or bring shame on him.” (Reported by Muslim)

6. “Your lives, your honour and your property are as sacred to each other as the sacredness of this day, in this your month, and in this your city.” (Reported by Muslim)

The above stated Verses of the Holy Qura’n and sayings of the Prophet clearly state that spreading mischief, violence, bloodshed, atrocity brutality, targetting and killing innocent people, committing oppressions, bombing, suicidal attacks, hijacking aircrafts and vehicles, destroying public and private properties, disrupting supplies and services essential to the country and society, creating instability and insecurity in the society, contradict the fundamentals of Islam and, therefore, are against Islam.

Islam has given immense respect to human life and commanded to strive hard to keep stability and security in the society. The perpetrators

of these subversive activities violate the teachings of Glorious Quran and Prophet's Sunnah. They have no religious sanctions in any way. In short terrorism or subversive activities are against Islam.

Those who commit such criminal acts and those who support them in any way or form whatsoever can in no way claim to be Muslims.

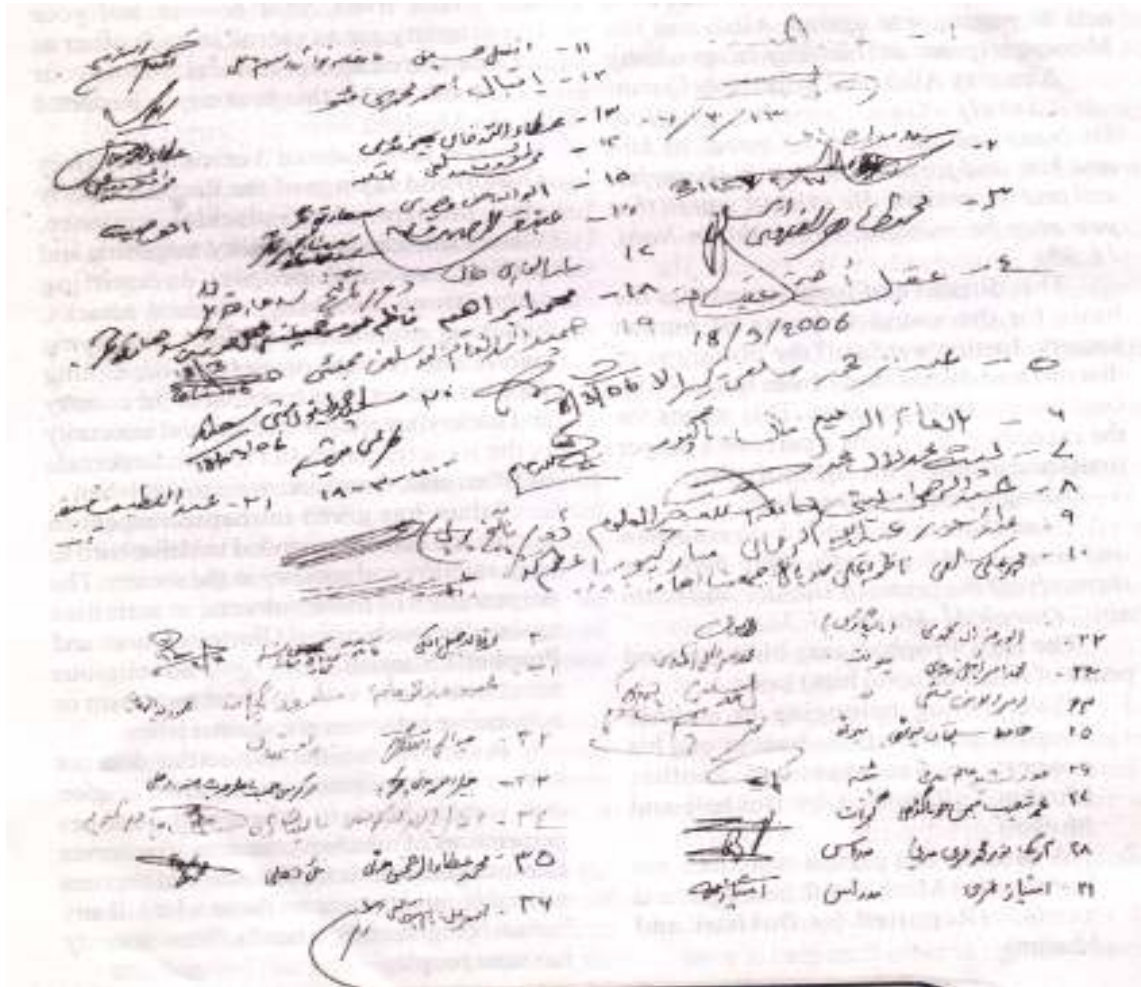
Islam aims at building an integrated human

community which has only one concern: to build and develop the human life. How then can it permit such mischievous acts that contradict its basic rules?

(Issued by Jamiate Ahle Hadeeth, Hind, 4116 Ahle Hadeeth Manzil,

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Dated: March 18th, 2006



THE COLLECTIVE FATWA AGAINST DAISH AND THOSE OF ITS ILK

**Issued by: Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadees Hind
On the occasion of National Symposium on:
Global Terrorism, Self-Declared Caliphate of Daish and Islam's
Message of Peace"**

on Sunday, 15 February, 2015 at AhleHadees Complex, D-254, Abul Fazl Enclave, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi-25.

Question: *What's the opinion of the Ulama and Muftis on the following:*

1. *Despite the fact that Islam is a religion of peace and harmony and there is no provision of any kind of violence, extremism and terrorism, the continuing events and activities of terrorism in different countries, including India, are being linked to Islam and Muslims. However, Islam and its representatives, the elder Islamic scholars, have declared the terrorism is haraam (prohibited), and about ten years ago Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadees Hind had issued an anti-terrorism fatwa, signed by about three dozen ulema on March, 18, 2006. Afterwards, some more organizations too released fatwa upon it, after getting guidance from it. Despite all this, such allegations are made against Muslims. Therefore, the question is whether reply to terrorism can be given by terrorism itself as a reaction as some people commit it through*

self-suicide attacks? What's the directive in Shariah?

2. *Today the DAISH and others like it, the so-called organizations, claiming to establish the Islamic caliphate, which have created a reign of terror in different countries, raised weapons against the government and people, attacking upon the innocent men, women and children, and as a result of which the peace and harmony of the country and its people have been badly affected. Thousands of people have lost their lives in these attacks so far. Properties have been damaged and fear and terror pose a threat to the people's life and property, families, and associates. Then is it correct as per Shariah for DAISH and others of its ilk in the name of the so-called caliphate to try to take into own hands the peace and law and order, to explode bombs on the main streets and other places, to destroy the public and private properties and military installations, to hijack the planes, to kill tourists, media-persons and foreign employees, to make the nurses hostages or kill them, to attack upon non-abiding hijabwomen, educational*

institutions, offices of the newspapers and news channels and embassies, to provoke the people against the government and disturb the peace and harmony of the country?

Please reply to these important and sensitive issues in the light of the Holy Quran and Sunnah. We would feel obliged in the name of Allah and the people.

—————Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadees Hind
14 February, 2015

REPLY: By Top Ahle Hadees Muftis and Ulama Islam, granted by the creator of the entire universe, is, undoubtedly, a religion of peace and harmony. And, it is a blessing for the whole world. There is no provision of any kind of terrorism under Islam. The religion, based upon the modest and balanced thinking, has always paid attention to the humankind's greatness and played a commendable role in establishing peace and harmony. The religion based upon the great principle of inflicting no harm to anybody has always discouraged the elements causing chaos and disquiet in the society. Allah T'ala is unbound mercy-giver and its last Prophet Mohammed, (peace be upon him,) was sent as a mercy for the whole world. His teachings are free of terrorism and full of mercy. Islam calls for moderate and balanced thinking, mutual brotherhood, human bond and rights of neighbours and human beings, irrespective of any school of thought and community and emphasizes upon rights to the servants of Allah along with rights to Allah. Atrocities and

excesses as well as killing and destruction are the greatest atrocity and sin. Allah T'ala says:

"He, who kills any innocent person, is killer of the entire humanity and he, who saves anybody, is like a person who saves the entire humanity." (Al Quran Surah Al Maida: 32)

Islam teaches that at the time of even war the children, women and old and the worshippers, priests, confined in their places of worships should not be killed. Even gardens should not be cut, neither agricultural farms burnt, nor animals killed. Our beloved Prophet, peace be upon him, once said: a noble lady went into the hell because a cat she had tied hungry and thirsty, had died. And, a sinful person who had made available water taking out from a well to a thirsty dog, entered into the heaven.

"There is no provision under the Islamic system of justice that revenge of the fault of a person is taken from the other person." (Al Quran Surah Al Inam: 164)

"It is the responsibility of the government and Muslims to provide security and protection to the non-Muslims residing under the Islamic government. Those killing them can't go to the heaven." (Hadees Sahih Bukhari)

Similarly, even disbelievers living in the situation out of war can also be not inflicted harm. Imam Ibn Qadama says: "There is no difference of opinion among the scholars of Islam that killing of an innocent person is haraam (Not allowed)

Imam Ibn Timiyya and Imam Nawvi say: "Kufr (Disbelief) and Shirk (Polytheism) are the

greatest sins and afterwards, comes the killing of the innocent “.

Hafiz Ibn Hajar says: “When the uncalled for killing of animals is not allowed, how can the killing of innocent persons be allowed.” (Fatahul Bari)

Hazrat Abdullah Bin Umar (Be Allah pleases with him) says: “The sheer of killing wherefrom coming out is not possible, is, unquestioningly, blood-letting.”

Therefore, certain organizations’ effort to take the law and order of the country into own hands, to bombard and explode at the main streets and other places, to destroy government and individual as well as military weapons, to hijack planes, to make foreign employees and nurses hostage, to attack upon the women not wearing hijab and offices of the newspapers and news channels and embassies, to provoke the people against the government and strive to disturb peace and harmony, is not allowed by Shariah. There are conditions and regulations to order for good work and refute those refusing in Shariah and everybody is not bound to interpret it and Shariah has fixed limitations like all the affairs, not sticking to those mischief and riots occur and blood-letting and disquiet are created.

Unfortunately, some such organizations have come into being in modern period, which taking the name of Islam, are becoming problem for the Muslims of the world. Presently, organizations like Daish are tarnishing the image of Islam and Muslims and inflicting harm to them.

Their moves don’t conform to the teachings of Islam in any way. What acts they are committing, are completely prohibited by Islam, and is a terrorism, and their self-declared claim to caliphate and Islamic State is false and quite contrary to the concept of Islamic Caliphate. There is found in it neither conditions, nor demands for establishing the caliphate. Therefore, Holy Place Makkah’s Grand Mufti and Saudi Supreme Ulema Council chief Allama Abdul Aziz Ben Abdullah says that Daish and organizations like it don’t represent Islam.

Sheikh Abdul Mohsen Ben Hammad Al Ibaad, Sheikh Mohammed Al Munjad and other authentic Ulema have in clear terms said that these people are out of the pale of Islam. In the past also they have defamed Islam by their thoughts and deeds and what they are terming Jihad, is a fitna (a wrong act) and terrorism. Because Jihad has got some principles and conditions which they neither follow, nor are authorized. So, Islamic caliphate has got some principles and conditions without sticking to those nobody can become a caliph and nobody is authorized to use the prestigious title of Ameerul Momeneen for such atrocious and cruel person.

What acts *DAISH* and likewise organizations are committing, hearing its news and seeing its photographs entire humanity gets scared and shouts at. The violence, atrocity, excess, killing and hanging and beheading, destruction, eliminating the peace-loving citizens of the country after kidnapping them, are such acts which can’t be justified with the animals, what

to talk of the humans and which are being committed wearing the dress of caliphate in the name of Islam seems to be the result of the anti-Islam forces and a deep conspiracy of the killers of the humanity.

It is a matter of concern that some simple persons justify it as a reaction to the atrocities and excesses upon Muslims and others which is, no doubt, lack of knowledge and understanding. In Islam to take revenge of one's sin by killing and damaging other innocent persons, is not allowed which is obvious by the above mentioned verses of the Holy Quran, Prophet's sayings and quotations of divine personalities.

In addition to it, we have got the exemplary practice of Hazrat Khubaib Ben Adi that when a woman was scared seeing the razor in their hands in the prison and felt threatened whether neck of my child is not cut with this razor. Hazrat Khubaib felt the restlessness of the woman and said to end her terror that we Muslims don't kill

the innocent children and handed over the child to the mother. However, preparations to hang him and make his children orphans and wife widow from their family members had already been made.

DAISH is such an organization which has come into existence to weaken the Islamic forces, spread confusion and chaos in the lines of the Muslims, tarnish the image of Islam in the eyes of the world and distract the world from the human-loving divine ideology. This is surely a threat to human world and leads to the decline of the Muslim Ummah.

Therefore, such organizations are terrorists and condemnable and to support and cooperate them is not allowed by Shariah. It is the religious and moral duty of the conscious persons of the Muslim Ummah that they should inform the world of its threats and strive to prevent the Muslim youth, if any, from supporting *DAISH* and those of its ilk, in any form.

Signed by Ulama and Muftis :

The image shows a collection of handwritten signatures in blue ink, some with circular stamps, representing various Ulama and Muftis. The signatures are written in Arabic script. Some of the names are clearly legible, including 'Md. Sajjad', 'Hassan', and 'Huda/Haq'. There are also several circular stamps, some of which appear to be official seals or logos. The signatures are arranged in a somewhat chaotic but organized manner, with some overlapping.

ISLAM AND PEACE

by : Dr. Javed Jamil

Dr. Javed Jamil discusses the comprehensive nature of peace with Islam promotes and stands for. This includes peace in this earthly life and in the eternal life of hereafter. It comprises peace in personal, social, economic and political life. It manifests itself on individual, family, social, national and international levels.

Astronomically speaking, nothing extraordinary happened on September 11, 2001 when a group of suspected “Islamic terrorists” created history of its own kind by plane crashing twice into the Twin Towers that the United States and New York boasted of as the symbol of their economic prowess. The earth has, as always, been rotating with a uniform speed having rotated more than twelve hundred times since then. But in terms of socio-political terms, it appears that the human planet took innumerable turns with a breathtaking speed within a few minutes on that day, then came to a standstill and has stayed as such since then, for even now Islam as a religion and Muslims as a community are being maligned as supporters of violence in general and terrorism in particular. This is despite the fact that.

1. In the so-called coalition against the so-

called international terrorism Muslim countries and groups have been in the foremost ranks, without whose active participation America and company could never have succeeded in their plans.

2. the overwhelming majority of casualties in this war, at least one hundred thousands dead, has been of Muslims. Most of these hapless victims have been neither “Islamic terrorist” nor “fighters against terrorism” but innocent men, women and children, who had nothing to do with this on-going war.

3. a large number of Muslim clerics and intellectuals have issued categorical statements condemning terrorism and all the other forms of violence.

If one wants to notice the kind of venomous campaign being spread against Islam and Muslims, one only needs to pay a visit to Yahoo chat rooms. Visit a Christian, Hinduism, Judaism or Buddhism chat room, and you will hardly find a Muslim making obscene remarks against Jesus, Moses, Krishna, Rama or Buddha. As soon as you enter on Islam chat room, you will see a war of words going on at an unimaginable scale. There will always be some Christians, Jews and

Hindus hurling choicest of obscenities and invectives on the Holy Quran and Muhammad (S.A.W.). Helpless Muslims would not retort by the same kind of obscenities against symbols of other religions because they have been taught by their religion to pay as much of respect to them as they do to their own religious symbols. The power of Internet is in full display in the fight against Islam. This is another matter that this propaganda has only proved to be counterproductive. Islam continues to be the fastest expanding religion of the world, and its expansion has only multiplied in recent years in those very regions where the governments and the media are the biggest parties to that propaganda. Furthermore, this animus is only strengthening the resolve of those against whom it is directed.

A concerted campaign is being run all over the world, denigrating Islam as the religion that promotes violence and Muslims as the people that resort to violence. Clever remarks like “*Not all Muslims are terrorist but all terrorists are Muslims*” are being circulated to put Muslims on the defensive. The impact on Muslim masses has been profound, even though there is no way it can be measured. Unfortunately, most of the Muslim clerics and thinkers have become victims of this propaganda, and have adopted an evidently apologetic stand in their defence of the beleaguered Islam. Commoners however have responded by either becoming despondent at the condition of their fellow religionists or indignant at the treatment being meted out to them. Most of the hate Islam or hate Muslim

campaigns as well as the reactions of Muslims have been dismally out of place, and it is high time some plain speaking was done to rectify the situation.

Islam has a much broader meaning of peace, and adopts effective and practicable methods to achieve its larger objectives of “Grand Peace”. It is only the Islamic concept of Grand Peace that can bring real peace in human lives, individually and collectively. Believers of Islam, not with-standing their shortcomings and their failures in practicing their religion in its true spirit, are much less chaotic, individually and collectively, than most of the other religious communities are.

It is in the fitness of things if the meaning of Grand Peace that Islam espouses is introduced at the very outset. It will then be easier for readers to better comprehend the developments in the past few centuries and their impact on human life.

Let us first see how the world today understands peace. There are numerous definitions of peace, including those given by the world forums of eminence, individual thinkers and institutions. We will however concentrate mainly on the definitions given by the United Nations, which unquestionably is the biggest and the most powerful body of the community of nations that inhabits the earth. Let me reproduce here the definitions and programmes gives by the UNESCO Culture of Peace:

“An Agenda for Peace: Definitions

Peace is dynamic. Peace is a just and non-violent solution of conflicts. It generates an equilibrium

in social interactions, so that all of the members of society can live in harmonious relations with each other. Peace is good for society. Where there is violence there is no peace. Where there is injustice and absence of liberty, there is no peace. In order for there to be an equilibrium in the dynamics of social interactions, peace must be founded on justice and liberty.

Preventative diplomacy is action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur.

Peace making is action to bring hostile parties to agreement, essentially through such peaceful means as those foreseen in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations.

Peacekeeping is the deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, hitherto with the consent of all the parties concerned, normally involving United Nations military and/or police personnel and frequently civilians as well. Peacekeeping is a technique that expands the possibilities for both the prevention of conflict and the making of peace.

Peace-building is action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict. Only sustained, co-operative work to deal with underlying economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems can place and achieved peace on a durable foundation.”

It can be noted that the above set of rules

defining peace is primarily an agenda “to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur”, “so that all of the members of society can live in harmonious relations with each other.” This obviously is a *political definition of peace*. This definition is not only incomplete but is highly deficient in many ways. It will have dangerous implications because its very basis is erroneous. Though it speaks of peace as “dynamic”, the peace it promotes has hardly any dynamism visible: it is *static* rather than dynamic and *negative* rather than *positive*. Peace is regarded as essentially not a positive quality but mere absence of conflicts. In negative terms too, this indicates only the absence of armed conflicts. This definition of peace is neither *all encompassing*, including all that is positive nor *all abandoning* excluding all that is negative. This “peace” is primarily the brainchild of those who seek to promote a certain type of ideology and accompanied culture for their own selfish interests. What an irony! Peace based on selfishness! But this exactly is the peace that is being promoted all over the world with utmost zeal, valour and planning. The consequences of such a strategy are what they should be. Total all-enveloping chaos at every level. The same approach is adopted in various other documents. See for example the following:

Appeal to the International Community from a Round Table of Institutions Who Have Won the Noble Prize for Peace (excerpts)

* Peace is not only the absence of armed conflict, it is also a dynamic set of relationships of coexistence and co-operation among and within peoples, characterized by the respect for the human values set forth particularly in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with the concern to provide the greatest possible well-being for all.

* Peace is increasingly threatened each day by the accumulation of weapons of mass destruction, by the great economic and social inequalities, which divide mankind, and by contempt for basic human rights and the dignity of the individual.

* Peace requires ever greater efforts to overcome these threats. It is only possible in a world in which the observance of international law replaces violence, fear and injustice, in which states voluntarily agree to limit their national sovereignty in the general interest, and in which states employ existing procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes between nations. To build such a peace, everyone must feel a responsibility and should be educated in that sense from childhood.....

Finally, the round table asks the mass media to employ to a greater extent their skills and immense resources towards building and maintaining peace, to foster a spirit of equity and solidarity among peoples and to draw attention to the personal and collective sacrifice inherent in the pursuit of those ideals.

Suggestions for moving towards a Culture of Peace:

Revisit history to discover how people contributed to their cultures.

Research non-military actors and make them models to be emulated.

Research women's roles in the development of their societies, and the causes and consequences of violence against women.

Promote peace goals as the dominant factor in all forms of art.

Teach the need to be aware of, and take responsibility for, the consequences scientific discovery can have for society as a whole.

Promote responsibility for the well-being of the local and global community, including protection of the natural environment.

Promote gender-specific analysis in all areas of human activity, encouraging women to organize themselves to make an impact on decisions that affect society.

Teach co-operation rather than competition, solidarity for mutual support, and appreciation for the rich diversity of multicultural societies.

Combat racism and discrimination, teach respect for human rights, for human life and the dignity of the person.

Promote economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights to create conditions for peace, disarmament and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

The above quoted documents fail to mention peace at individual and family levels, and only focus on national and international violence.

There are others, mainly the spiritual masters belonging to different religions including mystics, who stress on individualistic notion of peace (Spiritual definition). For them, the tranquility of mind and soul represent the true peace, which is attained through belief in God or gods, through meditation, devotion, self sacrifice and other spiritual exercises ranging from *self appeasing* ones to *self-sacrificing*. They tend to ignore family and social dimensions of peace, their argument resting on the premise that if individuals are peaceful society will automatically be peaceful as well. They tend to bury in the cemetery of their ideology the fact that hundred per cent of the members of society can never be truly peaceful, and that a very minuscule percentage is enough to cause disastrous consequences. There is another definition of peace, the social one that is promoted by sociologists for whom the equality of the distribution of wealth is the chief motive. They argue that if the distribution of wealth and opportunities in society is not equitable there is no way peace can be ensured.

The truth however is that no definition of peace can be complete unless it takes into account the following:

First, human existence has three essential constituents: Individual, family and society. For peace to carry any real meaning, it has to be at all these three levels. Peace at individual level means *physical, mental, social and spiritual health*, to which must be added what we understand as *satisfaction*. Peace at family level means *cordial relationship between spouses,*

between parents and children and among children themselves, and the absence of all irritant in a peaceful family life. Peace at social level means. *peaceful co-existence of all human beings that inhabit the earth anywhere, individually or as communities and nations, and the absence of all forms of exploitation, oppression and conflicts.* Thus individual health, family peace and social order may be regarded as the three essential constituents of Grand Peace.

Second, peace must involve *all the stages of life*: foetal, paediatric, adult, geriatric, and postdeath life. This alone can lead to eternal peace.

Islam literally means peace and is defined as submission to God, which means that peace can not be obtained without total submission to be the Lord of the universe. Similarly Iman means total satisfaction, which again can be obtained only through an undivided devotion to God. When the Quran calls, "Enter Islam wholeheartedly" it does not merely invite its adherents to follow the institutionalized system of Islam; it also informs them that the real, comprehensive and long lasting peace can be achieved only through total acceptance of the system of God. The Quran states: "*The System for you is the (system of) Peace*" and "*Call them to the House of Peace*". In Islam, peace is not just a state of the absence of war or chaos in society; it has the broadest and the most comprehensive meaning, in terms of extents, depth and longevity, including all the components

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DAISH AND OTHER TERRORIST ORGANISATIONS ARE PERVERTED, ERRANT AND ENEMIES OF HUMANITY

(Maulana Asghar Ali Imam Mahadi Salafi)
Ameer, Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth Hind

The present world is facing a very critical issue; the issue of terrorism and spoiling of lilt and progeny. First of all, we have to be convinced that terrorism is evil we all have to co-operate to eradicate it and block its sources for many countries had gone its woes and grieves. Anyone who has even the slightest value for humanity has to be ready for combating terrorism and eradicating the same from the surface of the world.

Terrorists commit very cruel crimes when they kill innocent people and destroy properties. Terrorism is the very source of evil, destruction, anguish, sorrow and depreviation. DAISH (ISIS) and other terrorist organizations are perverted mind and ill-behaved and those who pause before condemning terrorism and who do not resent the mere idea of terrorism are also of the same class.

Terrorism penetrates all communities and pleagues all nations, races, nationalities, faiths and sects. Terrorism is a terrifying word which means killing people and shedding blood for no justifiable reasons. Terrorism knows no nation,

no race, no nationality, no faith, no place and no time. All human races agreed on its refusal and condemnation and on cutting any relations whatsoever with terrorists.

The cobra of terrorism has spread its fang and dangerous terrorist organizations such as DAISH are smearing humanity with blood, everyone has to be much more united and alert against them.

This is a presentation of the ugly face of terrorism and its disastrous and destructive consequences. The world has unified its efforts to fight terrorism. Hence, it is the duty of wise men and women everywhere irrespective of their nationalities, faiths or colours to declare war against terrorism. A Muslim who condemns terrorism does not pronounce such condemnation as an imitation of existing and frightening media nor as an adoption of apologetic philosophies; rather, such a condemnation is inspired by noble Islamic teachings which forbed killing innocent people. Allah Almighty says: "*And those who invoke not any other god along with Allah, nor kill such life as Allah has forbidden, except for just cause.*" He also says "*If anyone killed a*

person unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land it would be as if he killed all mankind. Islam stresses all meanings of security to civilians. When Cain son of Adam, killed his brother unjustly, he drew on himself his sins and those of his brother. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said: "Which ever soul is killed, the son of Adam (Cain) would bear part of the responsibility for such a murder, because he was the first one to commit it." (Cain (son of Adam) would bear some burden of every blood spilled unjustly. Islam glorifies the sanctity of human blood. Hence, woe and woe is for anyone who kills a soul, terrifies peaceful people and destroys their properties.

Muslims in their support to the entire world of all terrorist acts are really cooperating in controlling the course, rationalizing the direction and avoiding conflict of civilizations. It is a good opportunity to revise and check the existing state of affairs and to recheck policies on human rights, freedom controls, justice scales and how to deal with all these principles as essential values and fixed realities away from dramatic mounting, a comprehensive look is urgently needed to penetrate into the flesh of the problem and root it out. We are in no way controlled by revenge mentality, killing, destruction and igniting civilizational, religious and ethnic conflicts to put the entire world into a destructive war.

We are in need of new policies not new wars. Rationality, logic and discipline must rule. We have to surmount the passions and the reactions

in order to reach wise resolutions. International policies should not be based on revenge and retaliation which are fearful trap and a killing ambush in a developed world ruled by law and discipline.

Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth Hind has been continuously condemning terrorism in the strongest words for the last decade. It was Markazi Jamiat itself which had first of all issued "Fatwa" against terrorism in different languages on March 18, 2006 which was signed by Islamic scholars, Muftees and eminent jurists. It had organized anti-terrorism conference on July 23, 2006 in New Delhi. The Conference was graced by chief guest Shri Shivraj Patil (then Union Home Minister) who broadly announced that Madarsas are seats of social service and not the hub of terrorism". Another Fatwa was issued on February 15, 2015 against DAISH and its atrocities. Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth Hind had organized conference, symposiums and seminars against it and still conducting and spreading awareness regarding its danger among the masses through Friday Sermons. Especially against terrorist organizations such as DAISH, Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth organized programmes in Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka and Telangana with the collaboration of State units.

Terrorist organization such as DAISH are proving to be extremely dangerous for the whole humanity. It is the creation of anti-Muslim forces. Unfortunately, Some of our brothers are trying to malign the Ahle Hadeeth or Salafi ideology

by unwittingly equating the same with that of DAISH and are trying to tarnish its image whereas there is a world of difference between the two ideologies. The Ahle Hadeeth ideology is not a hidden thing. Since time immorial it has been equally cooperating in the progress and development of our beloved country and it has been always in the service humanity to the best of its capacities. And it has played very pivotal role in raising voices against terrorism and spreading awareness in the masses against its danger our Unfortunately, some of our brothers and media chew our accusations against terrorism and our human services. Terrorsim is evil incarnate and we have to cooperate together to eradicate it. It is a high time to clear the poisoned climate which breeds hatred and to bridle those pens which ignite racism and try to divide the globe into developed and ignorant halves.

It is a ripe opportunity for the Muslim organizations and non-Muslim community to form an order based on justice, faithfulness, respect of people's privacies and holding dialogue with them to curb terrorism.

If individual terrorist acts are re-inforced and maximized to dangerous levels, the state terrorism is the most dangerous aspect of terrorism because it is an organized one and is carried out by state agencies, organizations with all their might and hegemony without any deterrence.

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of peace described above. It has to be neither just personal nor just family, nor just social; it has to be at all the three levels and in the widest discernible sense. At *individual* level, it does not merely mean the peace of mind; it encompasses physical, mental and social health. At *family* level, it comprises peaceful relationships between husband and wife, and among children themselves. At *social* level, it does not only indicate the absence of war or chaos but also means the absence of all forms of crimes and social tensions, and prevalence of mutual brotherhood and justice. Peace is also not something bound by time or space; it is as much for this world as for Hereafter; peace is *eternal*. This is to be ensured that Islam's message of Grand peace has to percolate down to the lowest strata of society. And this is to be done in a way that the world does not feel threatened by the emergence of an institutionalized and political Islam, but instead learns to apply the moral and socio-economic principles of Islam for the benefit of the whole mankind.

This can be seen that Islam uses *all the possible means* to achieve its goal of Grand Peace. In the modern world, dominated by what I call economic fundamentalism, Fundamental Rights are given paramount importance, Fundamental Duties are largely ignored and Fundamental Prohibitions are virtually prohibited. Islam, on the other hand, espouses a three dimensional system giving an equal emphasis on Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Fundamental Prohibitions. If we want to achieve the true peace, this three dimensional approach is indispensable.

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COMMUNAL HARMONY OUR COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Maulana Asghar Ali Imam Mahadi Salafi
(Ameer, Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth Hind)

We should wish and pray for our beloved country India to be united, secular, capable of preserving its independence and running its economy in a way that its masses are well fed, well-sheltered and well-educated. There would be no grim specters of communalism, casteism, regionalism or linguism. Every citizen of the country irrespective of his religion, caste, colour or sex will enjoy the basic facilities of life. The State will take upon itself, as its duty, to look after every citizen from the cradle to the grave and in turn, expect us all to put our best foot forward for the betterment and progress of the nation. India has always taken the lead for internal and global peace efforts. India will thus take a lead in ushering in peace and prosperity in the world. Thus the unique ideal of all humankind and the entire world as one family will be realized.

What we need today is an evolutionary type of communal harmony and dynamic type of patriotism and national integration. However, the National Integration does not mean joining all religions, culture, faith and castes into one. The

Constitution of India Articles 25-30 guarantee to everyone the right of freedom of religion freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion.

Heated controversies about National Integration have been going on for decades now. Nowadays, the issue of National Integration has been made so confusing that anyone can claim to be an advocate of National Integration on the groundless basis.

Humanity has recently undergone many atrocities and blood wars in the world that have claimed thousands of innocent lives. These unjustifiable atrocities were unheard of during the Islamic expansion which was meant to deliver the message of peace to all mankind.

While the Universal Declaration of Human Rights called to freedom, justice and Equality as late as 1948, Islam did so fourteen centuries ago. Human Rights in Islam are different from those included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in three respects.

1. Human Rights in Islam cover all human beings regardless of race, colour or religion;

2. Human Rights in Islam are constant and are not affected by any emergencies or urgencies. They are not sought by human beings; rather they are granted by God.

3. Human Rights in Islam are an integral part of the general Islamic order of faith.

Islam gives human beings a high rank over other Creatures drawing on the dignity that God has bestowed on mankind by commanding the angels to prostrate before Adam as a form of respect for him” *“Behold, your Lord said to the Angels: “I am about to create man from clay: When I have fashioned him and breathed into him of My spirit, fall you down in prostration unto him” (Surah Sad, 38:71-72)*

In contemporary world Islam is unfairly linked with extremism, violence and terrorism in spite of the clear fact that it sharply contradicts with these brutal acts.

No society throughout the present world is free from extremism. However, it differs and swings between political, moral, intellectual and religious extremism. The later is not restricted to a specific religion or sect. However, all types of terrorism and extremism should be rejected and eradicated by every possible and legal way, because their dangers and consequences affect the entire world.

Islam is a moderate religion and prohibits all means of violence and terrorism. Islam is well-known throughout history for its peace and love. The teachings and values of Islam are based on love, peace, tolerance, stability and

fostering relationships with all human beings in all parts of the world. Islam under no circumstance advocates acts that take away the peace of people and sow the seeds of animosity in the mind of the members belonging to the various communities.

It must be noted that commitment of any sort of violence is profoundly a grave sin against God. Contrary to this, any act of service to alleviate the suffering of human beings is a virtuous act. Islam asks its followers to work for the sake of justice, peace and respect for the dignity and rights of every person. In the eyes of Islam every human being is equal, irrespective of colour, caste, religion and language. Islam confirms that all human beings are offsprings of a single man and a woman (Adam and Eve) and were made into tribes and nations to know and respect each other. Therefore all human beings belong to one family and no one has superiority over other. There are a number of persons who expresses their abhorrence against Islam and connects every evil and inhuman act with Muslims and Islam. It is because of their short-sightedness and narrow-mindedness. In fact, any one who uses God as a pretext for violence cannot be a true believer. And a Muslim can never be a true believer if he undertakes acts of violence or terrorism. Such wrongdoers are Muslims by name only. A Hindu cannot be a true Hindu or follower of Rama, Krishna or Durga if he commits any violence against a man.

However, this view and situation must change; otherwise this will certainly produce a grave situation where unity and co-existence of different cultures will become very difficult, if not impossible. And, ultimately the vitiated and poisoned atmosphere/ would affect the living of all communities.

Human values and communal harmony are the need of the hour. Truth, right conduct, love, peace and non-violence are the basics for a golden age on earth. The origin of human values can be traced to culture, society, its institutions and organizations and to individual personality and life experience. Muslims must not only be virtuous, but they must also enjoin virtue. They must not only refrain from evil and vice, but they must also disagree with them. God says in the Holy Quran: *“You are the best of the nations raised up for (the benefit of) men; you enjoin what is right and disagree with the wrong and believe in God”* (Surah 3:110)

Islam is the monotheistic and Abrahamic (Tawheedi) religion articulated by the Holy Quran

All human beings are brothers irrespective of colour, race, caste and faith. God says:

“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into Nations and tribes, that you may know each other (Not that you may despise (each other)). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most Righteous of you, and God has full knowledge and is

well acquainted (with all things)” (Surah Al-Hujrat, 49:13)

All mankind was created one, and God’s Message to mankind is in essence one, the Message of Unity and Truth. But as selfishness and egotism got hold of man, certain differences sprang up between individuals, races, and nations, and in His infinite Mercy He sent them messengers and messages to suit their varying mentality, to test them by His gifts, and stir them up to emulation in virtue and piety.

The last Prophet of God, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) had lived his whole life of purity and virtue amongst his people, and his people knew and acknowledged it before he received his mission. They knew he loved his nation and was loyal to it. Why should they turn against him when he had to point out under inspiration all their sins and wrongdoing? It was for their own good. God says in the Holy Quran: *“We sent you not, but as a Mercy for all Creatures, (Mankind, Jinn and all that exist)”* (Surah Al-Anbiya, 21:107)

Islam is the religion of mercy. The opposite of Mercy is cruelty. God, the Most High, says addressing His Apostle (S.A.W.) *“And had you been cruel and harsh hearted, they would have broken away from about you”*. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said: *“This religion is easy”*. Islam forbids extremism, fanaticism and terrorism and shuns them and warns Muslims against them, for it is the religion of Moderation, temperance, mercy, ease and kindness.

Among the established facts and realities without which the belief of a human being would not be complete are the moral characteristics which promote the human being to the most high tops of humanity. These characteristics are mercy, truthfulness, honesty, good dealing, keeping peoples rights, the fulfillment of pledges, and helping the wronged, etc.

Our beloved Prophet (S.A.W.) has presented the best model of Islam for he was the living mercy and so were his companions and other pious predecessors. It is the way that the nation of Islam adopts at times of war and peace and the way it adopts in dealing with all creatures whether they are animals or human beings, Muslims or non-Muslims. Mercy is the main element that governs the life of every Muslim.

Islam is the religion of tolerance, love and brotherhood. Islam teaches us that the other person is our brother with equal rights. All people are our brothers. We respect everyone regardless of his colour, race, nation or religion. The Muslim's faith is regarded imperfect if he does not respect the dignity and honour of other human beings (Muslims and non-Muslims alike). God says: *"God forbids you not to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion and drove you not out from your homes, verily God loves those who deal with equity"*

Umar bin Khattab, the great Caliph portrayed the true reality of Islam through his noble

deeds. The covenant he signed with the people of Jerusalem gave them complete security for themselves, their wealth, their churches and their crosses, Umar ordered that their churches be kept intact. The real examples that the Muslim rulers gave are crystal evidence to this fact. This is the true spirit of Islam.

Islam recognises the need for cooperation among different nations and believers of different faiths for the good of all human beings. This policy was started by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and has continued throughout the Islamic history. Imam Ibn Taimiyya, Sayyed Ahmad Shaheed, Maulana Wilayat Ali, Maulana Inayat Ali, Sadiqpuri Ulama, Ghaznavi, Qasoori, Arvi, Mahdanve, Diyanvi Ulama, including Maulana Abdul Aziz Raheem Abadi were the champions of communal harmony. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (freedom fighter) and first education minister of India) was a leading figure of communal harmony in India.

Following the footsteps of our incestors we should take care of our neighbours (Muslims and non-Muslims alike). We should develop the quality of patriotism in ourselves, love the country in which we live and respect the dignity and honours of all human beings.

Hatred, bias, prejudice, narrow-mindedness may blind our visions, narrow our out look and would take away every trace of human feelings based on fraternity and cooperation. That's how the communal harmony can be achieved.

ISLAMIC CONCEPT OF PEACE AND WAR

By Dr. Abdul Moghni

The Islamic concept of peace and war is based upon respect for life. Commenting upon the first murder in the world, when Adam's son, Cain, killed his brother, Abel, the Qur'an declares:

"For this, we made it obligatory for the children of Israel that, whoever kills one person without any person having been killed or for creating disturbances on earth, he kills the whole human race, and one who saves a life he saves the whole human race." (Al-Maida:32)

Rioting is abhorrent to the spirit of Islam:

"That house in the other world We have built for those who do not show arrogance, nor do they desire to create disturbances. And the ultimate good is only for the pious." (Al-Qasas:83)

The Islamic view of life indicates that the earth has been made congenial for man by the grace of God, Who has been sending his Prophets to improve the world:

"Do not create disturbances on the earth, after it has been reformed, and pray to God

with fear and expectation. The blessings of God are available to those who are doing good." (Al-Aara'af: 56)

This suggests an ethos of balance in the life of this world, which is not to be disturbed. So it is that those who seek to disturb it by their atrocities may be paid in their own coins and made a deterrent example:

"If you take revenge, do it commensurately with what has been done to you. And, if you keep patience, it is good for you. (Al-Nahl:126)

"If someone has transgressed against you, you may transgress against him, to the extent he has done. But fear God and know that God is with the pious." (Al-Baqarah:194)

Restraint and moderation are thus to be observed in response to all provocation and aggression. It is in this perspective that the Muslims were permitted to fight their enemies and tormentors:

"Those being killed have been permitted to retaliate, as they have been oppressed, and God can certainly help them. They have been

unjustly driven out of their homes, simply because they call God their Lord. (Al-Hajj:39-40)

But this allowance for *Jihad* has been made with a condition for moderation:

“Fight in the way of God those who are fighting you. But do not transgress. God does not like transgressors. (Al-Baqarah: 190)

In spite of the permission for a defensive war, a readiness for peace has also been inculcated:

“If they tend to peace, you also tend to that, and trust God.” (Al-Anfaal:61)

Then, if the enemy commits a breach of trust and breaks peace, a formal declaration should be made to end any international agreement, which is otherwise to be strictly observed:

“If a nation is suspected of breach of trust, declare the end of their agreement.” (Al-Anfal: 58)

These terms of war and peace are, obviously, the noblest, the most reasonable, and the most civilized ones. Fortitude, candour, and equity patently mark these terms. The Islamic war is, really and truly, meant for peace, without any hypocrisy and chicanery, which have been the distinctive features of national and international wars in modern times. The soldiers of God are missionaries rather than mercenaries.

Tolerance in Islam:

Apart from the laws, which would naturally have their own course, Islam asks its followers to

observe maximum tolerance towards others, in their behaviour with the peaceful common people. Religious differences are to be tolerated and respected:

“There is no coercion in religion.” (Al-Baqarah:256)

“Do not abuse those deities they worship other than God.” (Al-Anaam:108)

Even a common point is sought to be adopted by all religionists.

“Tell the people of the Book, come to a point common between us, that we do not worship anyone except God, do not make others share with Him, and do not make someones among us our Lord other than God.” (Aal-i-Imraan:64)

Cooperation with others, despite all differences, even conflicts, has been enjoined:

“Your anger against people, who have stopped you from going to the sacred mosque, should not provoke you to transgress. Cooperate in virtue and piety and do not cooperate in sin and atrocity.” (Al-Maida:2)

Even preaching the way of God is to be done in complete goodwill and a reasonable manner:

“Call people to the way of your Lord with reason and goodwill, and argue with them in the best style.” (Surah An-Nahl, 125)

A defence also is to be made in the most polite fashion:

“Virtue and vice are not equal. Defend in the best way and return evil with good. As a result, your enemy would turn into a bosom friend.” (Haammeem Al-Sajdah: 34)

It is the limit of tolerance in Islam that the faithfuls have to put faith in all the prophets of God:

“All the faithfuls put faith in God, all His angels, all His books, and all His Prophets, with the declaration that they do not distinguish between Prophet and Prophet.” (Al-Baqarah: 285)

It is this cardinal principle of monotheism on which are based all the criteria of honour:

“O, mankind, We have created you from one man and woman, and turned you into groups and communities, for the sake of introduction. Undoubtedly, the noblest among you, in the eyes of God, is the one, who is the most pious and virtuous.” (Al-Hujuraat: 13)

Islamic View of Terrorism:

In view of the above facts, it can be confidently asserted that Islam wants to eradicate terrorism from the society and free it from all sorts of intimidation and subversion. That is why the Qur'an declares the faithful to be the most deserving of peace, which they have to uphold and maintain, without letting any atrocity mix with it. Pure faith thus implies undiluted peace:

“Who between the faithfuls and the unbelieving is more deserving of peace? Those who put faith in God and do not mix their

belief with atrocity, they alone are entitled to peace, and they are on the right path.” (Al-Anaam: 81-82)

Hence the Qur'an has dubbed disturbance as something worse than murder:

“Disturbance is a great evil than murder.” (Al-Baqarah: 217)

Therefore, terrorists are to be dealt with severely, under the Islamic law, once it is proved that they have really terrorized innocent people, for their personal gains or mundane interests.

They are the pests of which the society is to be cleared. Selfish tyrants, holding mankind to ransom, cannot be tolerated. They are like cancer in the body politic of the world and must be excised.

The thirty third verse of the Chapter *Al-Maidah* in the Quran suggests that the rioters, if captured before repentance, should be either put to sword or banished by the Islamic state.

Criminal Law In Islam:

The criminal law in Islam seeks just to codify the natural law of retribution. Justice, according to the Islamic perception of things, must run its normal course, without any hindrance or diversion or distortion, on extra-constitutional considerations. All men and women are equal in the eyes of the law. Those perpetrating atrocities are not be spared, on any plea whatsoever. Then the punishments for the crimes, once taken cognizance of and proved, ought to be deterrent. Hence these should be harsh and serve as a stern

warning to all potential culprits. The society must be purged of all pollutants and purified of the contagious dirt likely to affect the moral health of the common man. This is meant to keep the peace of the society intact and immune to all menace. But the law of evidence is very strict in Islam. A culprit can be convicted only on unimpeachable evidence, duly verified and established beyond any possibility of refutation. Hence it is no easy to punish criminals, unless they are conclusively proved to have really committed the crime, after which no mercy is shown to them:

“We made it obligatory for them in the Torah that life be taken for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, all wounds thus avenged. Then, if someone forgives, it would be an expiation for him. But those who do not judge by divine injunctions are oppressors.” (Al-Maida: 45)

“O, the faithfuls, compensatory killing has been made obligatory for you, in cases of murder: freeman for freeman, slave for slave, woman for woman. But, if someone is forgiven by his brother in faith, the blood-money should be fixed and paid, in the normal course and rightly. This is a relief and mercy from your Lord. If someone transgress, after this, he would be grievously damned. There is life for you in compensatory killing, O, the wise men. It is expected of you to desist from defying the law.” (Al-Baqarah: 178-79)

Thus the criminal laws devised by Islam combine justice with mercy. The criminal is not to be shown any mercy by the law-court, which has only to pass its verdict, strictly in accordance with the statutes. Then the complainant, after his plaint has been vindicated, may relent, if he so likes, of his own free will, and relax the punishment, provided that he is duly compensated for his magnanimity. In this judicious and balanced manner, the criminal is brought to book and the loss of the aggrieved is made good, to his satisfaction. Both the requirements of equality before the law and fraternity and among the faithfuls are, consequently, simultaneously fulfilled.

This idea of Islamic justice is quite distinguished from the present and prevalent practice of the Western system of law, which has been encouraging and pampering criminals, by its constant relaxations in punishments, in the name of liberal reforms. The very prisons of the so-called civilized and developed countries have been turned into health resorts and luxury houses. This hypocrisy violates all tenets of justice and ignores the realities of human nature. That is why crimes are rampant in the Western countries and the Westernised societies, whereas the Islamic states, where Shariat is being fully enforced, are largely free from crimes. The Islamic criminal laws ought to be viewed as a part and parcel of the general Islamic system of life, that makes for total peace in the society, doing away with the very temptations to vice and curbing criminal tendencies at the source.

ISLAM LEADS US TO EVERLASTING PEACE

By Shahnaz Begum

What is peace? In a world where everything today seems so topsy turvy, a world torn asunder by power, a world kow-towing before the killers of humanity as if this power is the Supreme God- one stands aghast, wondering whether this was not exactly what the angels had in mind when they told God in answer to His proposal that He wanted to create Man on earth. The Holy Quran Says: *Just think when your Lord said to the angels: "Lo! I am about to place a vicegerent on earth, "they said: "Will You place on it one who will spread mischief and shed blood while we celebrate Your glory and extol Your holiness? He said: "Surely I know what you do not know" (Al-Quran, 2:30)*

People who know Islam superficially wonder at what Islam has to do with killing innocent lives. On the other hand, those who have their own axe to grind, to win something on earth that would give them the winning edge, for dominance over other weaker nations around the globe, know the truth but hide it styly. Those who wish to malign Islam also know that the best way to stop the spread of Islam is to present Muslims either as terrorists or as an obsolete set of people bent

upon establishing an outdated system of human governance which is akin to madness. They even sell the idea, in their words, the Islamic fundamentalism can be followed by none but barbarians. They propagate fervently that under Shariah rules, people are subjugated to lead a life of misery, specially women. These are some of the tools they employ through media for spreading hostility and hatred against a religion that claims to guarantee equilibrium and justice upon earth which ultimately leads to establishment of peace.

Islam etymologically means peace and surrender. To whom does one surrender to achieve this peace? To no human being, to no earthly power but to the Supreme God, the Creator of the Universe. This is a remarkable thing. It negates all kinds of surrender to any other power and thus puts an end to the age old tradition of subjugation and enslavement of man by man. This submission to God is not only on the individual plan, but also in the collective life, so that the society which surrenders to the one supreme God must act in full agreement with all the rules, and commandments of the Supreme Power. Islam claims that peace is not

unattainable. It is an attainable ideal and can dominate our lives if we wish to, provided we work on all planes to establish its rule over us.

Individually, Islam develops in each person a conscience which stands humbled before its God. This conscience realizes strongly the covenant that it makes when it declares that it has surrendered to the Will of God. It realizes that the individual, the family, the community, the country and the world all depend upon this realization of peace within each individual.

Since the individual is the basic unit of society, hence the first and foremost target is the individual and Islam inculcates within each individual his own status in the Creator's eye. Naturally enough, where each individual strives to inculcate the preconditions whereby peace may be established in society, it will certainly bear fruits. In this regard, the most remarkable point is that Islam is a simple religion and has nothing superficial or ritualistic about it. An individual who professes to be a Muslim worships and obeys God, who is Unique, Who is the creator and Sustainer of the world and Whose authority extends over the entire universe.

Islam teaches both the individual and the society to surrender before the Will of the Divine Creator who guarantees man freedom from subjugation, oppression, chaos and disharmony. This great religion provides a balance between man's material and spiritual requirements. It presents life as a test through which man will have to pass, with scores of challenges coming in his way. But a man who successfully passes

through these tribulations is guaranteed rewards, not only in this world, but also in the Hereafter. The concept of peace and its establishment is not just temporal in Islam. It is everlasting peace, extending to the next world. This building of a strong concept of Hereafter as found in the Holy Quran and the preaching of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may blessings and peace be upon him) is unique in Islam, found nowhere else. All man's activities, his thoughts, words and deeds are riveted to this attainment. Any person who wants to attain success in the Hereafter must live the life of this world and enjoy its pleasure, within the limits set by God. For this, Islam does not ask the individuals to renounce the world. The world and its responsibilities are to be honestly accepted. The pleasures of life when enjoyed within the prescribed limits of God and the way recommended by His Prophet are not sin but worship. The only thing that Islam does not allow is excess. Transgressing limits can lead to disturbance and this is the main cause of disharmony and loss of peace. God says in the Holy Quran: *"Then We fulfilled the promise We made to them, delivering them and all those We willed, and destroyed the transgressors."* (Al-Quran, 21:9)

Islam denounces all the causes that can normally generate hatred and war. Discrimination on the basis of birth is the main cause of hatred. For example, caste, colour, sex are the basis of discrimination. Where people wish to subjugate other people they find it easy to take the excuse on this premises. Islam recognizes this basic cause and eliminates all sorts of inequality

between man and man with one blow. The Holy Quran States: *“O mankind! We created you from a male and female, and made you in nations and tribes that you may know one another. Verily, the most honoured of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you” ... (Al-Quran, 49:13)*

Prophet Muhammad (may blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) has declared that all people regardless of their colour, or race, or parentage are equal; An Arab is not better than a non-Arab, and a non-Arab is not better than an Arab, a white man is not better than a black man and a black one is not better than a white one, except through righteousness and good deeds, All people are from Adam and Adam was created from dust.

Together with this, Islam teaches its followers to respect people as persons and not according to their worldly status. All care is taken to put into practice these teachings so that racial discrimination is eliminated. The practical aspect is best symbolized in five time prayer of Muslims in which all the brethren in-faith line shoulder to shoulder in presence of their-Lord the white beside the black and the rich beside the poor.

Islam protects the rights of each individual and promises absolute equality upholders of justice, and bearers of witness to truth for the sake of God, even though it may either be against yourselves or against your parents and kinsmen, or the rich or the poor. For God is more concerned with their well-being than you are. Do not then, follow your own desires best you

keep away from justice. If you twist or turn away from (the truth), know that God is well aware of all that you do”. (Al-Quran, 4:135)

Justice is one of the attributes of God and to stand out for justice is to be a witness to God, even though our own interests or the interests of our near ones may suffer for this.

Islam establishes justice multidimensionally in the individual, collective as well as international sphere. It holds in condemnation all that is unjust and despotic. It exhorts believers to eliminate wrongs from their society and makes it obligatory upon them to defend the weaker sections of society who are not able to defend themselves or uphold their rights oppression of every kind is abhorred in Islam and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has said: *“The best type of Jihad (Struggle for God) is a truthful word before an unjust ruler”* When oppression become excessive, injustice and insecurity climb high, war becomes a necessity to eliminate such instances of oppression, terror and coercion. Islam allows war for self-defence, against aggression and exploitation. But even while in Jihad, transgression is strictly disallowed. God says: *“Fight against those who fight against you in the way of God, but do not transgress, for God does not love transgressors”*. (Al-Quran, 2:190)

Islam also takes the utmost care for the rights of civilians during war. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) of Islam gave strict instructions to the Muslim army not to kill the old men women or children.

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ISLAM AND WORLD PEACE

By Dr. Shahid Athar

The basic question is, if Islam is peace or for peace then why is there so much unrest in the Muslim world? The second question is, if Islam can offer peace to a world, which is not at peace in general or to man who is neither at peace with himself nor with his surroundings? The word Islam is from the Arabic root word Salama which has two meanings peace and surrender-meaning to achieve peace within and without by surrendering our will to the will of God. This is not easy in this world as there are forces within us and around us to disturb the peace.

Man's quest for peace is as old as his craving for disturbing the peace from time to time. Peace is not an absence of war or having peace through means of war. By peace we do not mean tranquility in the graveyard where the soldiers of war lie in peace but we mean peace in the flower garden filled with birds singing and children singing and peace in our hearts with ourselves, our Creator and fellow human beings.

Everyone likes to pray for peace and nations sign documents agreeing for peace but unless such prayers are answered by God and unless such documents have the blessing of God, it will not bring peace because such peace will not be for God's pleasure but for territorial rights.

The next question one may ask is why do we need to bring God into this? Why can't men have peace among themselves without God's involvement? One of the attributes of God in Islam is *As-Salam* meaning, the Giver of Peace. Thus, when we Muslims say *As-Salamu alaikum* (peace be upon you) to someone else, we are not only wishing peace but assuring him of peace as well. By this we mean that words of peace alone are not enough. It has to be followed by peaceful actions. Any thing that disturbs the peace by words of our tongue, through the actions of our hands or the weapons of war can not assure or ensure peace.

Man is neither at peace with himself nor with his surroundings. This is manifested not only in the manifestation of war and its devastation in terms of human life and suffering but also the war at home in terms of drug addition, homicide, violence and abuses. This unrest or an individual level affects the whole society. On political scenes, injustices bring out more hostility. Children and human living is sub-human conditions in refugee camps or the caves will not be at peace and therefore they look upon those who caused their present state as oppressive and will do anything to get back. So, the only way to change their mentality is to

become their benefactor and change their fate of plight.

Another attribute of God in Islam is *Al-Adil*, the force of Justice. Thus Justice and peace is always combined. Even the Jewish scripture Talmud says “more justice, more peace.” Dr. Martin Luther King said: “Peace is not merely the absence of tension but presence of injustice”. He also said, “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. “Thus, unless we have peace with justice, we can not have peace. Our compassion to others should include not only those who do good to us but also those who wrong us. We must become as compassionate as trees. When a tree extends its shade to a tired traveler, it does not ask where did she come from and where is she going? But we humans ask these questions of a fellow human being before we give him a place in our hearts.

The Holy Quran says “*You were enemies but God put love in the heart of the believer and gave you the gift of brotherhood*”. Thus the forces of wrong incite us to do hatred but forces of God invite us to do love, peace and justice. Islam does offer peace to fellow humans and to the world but wishes that the same is also offered to Islam and Muslims in return. Thus, the Islamic view of world peace is peace with justice, peace with honour, peace with the creator and peace with surrender. I end this with a prayer of peace as taught to us by Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) “*Our Lord! You are Peace, from You comes peace. Make us live in peace make us enter into the abode of peace*”.

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They are not burn or cut down trees bearing fruits. They are not break any promises or terms of treaty. They are not to disturb people engaged in worship in monasteries, or destroy their monasteries. The Muslim army is strictly forbidden to disfigure the corpse of the enemy.

In view of this teachings, all that is being said in the world today is part of the great conspiracy against Islam. It is not for the first time that Muslims are being condemned for acts of bloodshed and killing of innocents. If viewed neutrally, a man is not a Muslim if he resorts to unreasonable bloodshed or terrorizes people for ulterior motives. Acts of terrorism, coercion and aggression are strongly condemned in the Holy Quran and the perpetrators are warned of unimaginable punishment. But at the same time the Muslim cannot bend down meekly before any power that seeks to establish the doctrine of might is right. At such moments of oppression a true Muslim community will come out openly to condemn the oppressor. Not only this it will further take positive action and interfere to settle the dispute and to extricate the weak from the clutches of the strong. If the Muslims do not do so they will be considered weak of faith. But if there is unjust attack against a Muslim country or the Muslim people, the whole Muslim Ummah worldwide is bound by duty to stand against the aggressor and fight till the rights of the wronged party are restored. God promises these upholders of justice Heavenly rewards everlasting bounty because it is the annihilation of oppression, aggression and coercion that can ensure a peaceful world.



ISLAM – THE RELIGION OF PEACE

By Dr. Malika B. Mistry

After the 11th September attacks on the World Trade center, New York, the prejudices against Islam and Muslims have further deepened and in ignorance, people have started associating Islam with terrorism. Therefore it becomes the duty of the educated and informed Muslims to let the world know that Islam is the religion of peace. The method used is to quote revelations from the Holy Quran, the Holy Book revealed for all mankind for guidance, and the events from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) life itself.

The Arabic root of Islam, “silm” means peace. The greeting a Muslim offers to another Muslim, before he says anything else is “*Assalamo Alaikum*” (May peace be upon you)! and the reply to this is “*Wa-alaikums-Salam* (And may peace be upon you too!) Further whenever a Muslim takes the name of any of the Prophets, it is obligatory for him/her to say “*Peace be upon him*”. Muslims believe that God showers merit on them whenever they offer “Salam” to fellow-beings and also to the Holy Prophets. A Muslim never discriminates against any Prophet. He honestly respects all Prophets. He will not say

Jesus or Moses without adding” May peace be upon him”.

Do we need any more proof to show that Islam is the religion of peace? But lets continue the discussion.

Revelations from the Holy Quran:

According to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), a believer is one with whom one can trust one’s life and property. This is because Islam is the religion of peace. The Holy Quran calls its way “the Paths of peace (Chapter 5:16). It describes reconciliation as the best policy (Chapter 4:128) and states quite plainly that God abhors disturbance of the peace (chapter 2:205). Islam desires that peace should prevail in the world. It enjoins “*And do not corrupt the land after it has been set in order*” (Chapter 7:85)

At another place, Holy Quran states: *God does not like fasad fil Ardh* i.e. violence in the land. (Chapter 2:205). The Holy Quran explains fasad as that action which results in disruption of the social system, causing huge losses in terms of lives and property. “*Peace is also one of the names of God*”. (Chapter 59:23). Further those

who seek to please God will be guided to the paths of *peace* (Chapter 16:5). Paradise which is the reward for all those who please God, is described as” *the home of peace*” (Chapter 89:30). According to one tradition of the Holy Prophet: God grants to *rifq* (gentleness) what he does not grant to *unf* (violence). (Sunan Abu Daud, 4/255)

It is easier to unite people for peace when we are told that we all have the same ancestors. It also enables to ensure equality. How beautifully Islam upholds this fundamental truth!

“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, that, you may know and cooperate with one another” (Chapter 49:13)

“O mankind! Reverence your guardian Lord, who created you from a single person; Who created the first person’s mate of like nature, Who created. Who created from them twain all men and women on earth” (Chapter 4:1)

Islam conceives God as Omniscient and Omnipotent. He is not only the Creator of the universe but also its Sustainer and Protector. It is He who controls the world and determines the fortunes of created beings. His power is unlimited and His law is supreme.

God deputed a number of apostles to guide mankind to the right path and preach the divine religion through out the length and breadth of the world. The Holy Quran makes mention of a

few prophets only. The First Prophet was the first man i.e. Prophet Adam (PBUH) and the last Prophet was Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be upon him)

Therefore, Muslims must believe in all the apostle of God without any discrimination what so ever, as all of them were deputed by God Almighty to preach the same religion. As such Muslims believe that there is no place on earth which has not received a prophet. This belief increases the feeling of oneness with people of other faiths.

Also Islam preaches inter-religious harmony. The Holy Quran states: *“Believers, Jews, Christians and Sabeans whoever believe in God and the Last Day and does what is right shall be rewarded by their Lord; they have nothing to fear or to regret” (Chapter 2:62)*

Islam does not believe in compulsion in religion: *“there shall be no compulsion in religion” (Chapter 2:256)*. Further it declares: *“To You is your religion and to me mine” (Chapter 109:6)*

In order to perpetuate the atmosphere of mutual harmony, the Holy Quran commands the Muslims in their dealings with un-believers not to “revile (the idols) which they invoke besides God, lest in their ignorance, they should spitefully revile God.” It is reported that the Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings be upon him) used to hold conferences of the three religions i.e. Islam, Christianity, and Judaism in his own mosque in

Madinah to uphold inter-religious harmony. (Haykal, 1976)

There is some misunderstanding regarding the meaning of Kafir. A well known Islamic Scholar clarifies: "According to the Holy Quran, we do not have the right to call anyone Kafir which is the situation which emerges when the Muslims see the non-Muslims as the "other". To call people Kafir just because they do not claim to be Muslim is to violate God's injunctions. Kafir literally means Munkir as translated by Shah Abdul Qadir, Munkir is one who rejects or conceals the truth. If the message has never been presented to a people then they cannot be called Munkir let alone kafir. Therefore, all races and peoples of the world should be viewed as human beings who are potential allies, allies of Muslims against unbelief. And they should be presented with the theory as well as the practice of Islam" (Khan, 167, 1999)

Now let us study the incidents from the Holy Prophet (PBUH) life to prove our arguments.

Events from the Prophet's Life

All the great successes of the first phase of Islam as well as the succeeding periods were achieved by non-violent methods. Of the twenty-three years period of the prophethood, the initial thirteen years were spent by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) in Makkah. The Holy Prophet fully adopted the way of pacifism or non-violence during the time. The Holy Prophet in his entire prophetic life engaged in war only on three occasions. All other incidents described as

incidence of battles were really examples of avoidance of war and not instances of involvement in battle.

In Makkah when the Quraish leaders were set to wage war against the Holy Prophet (PBUH), instead of retaliating violently and causing bloodshed, he silently migrated to Madina. Afterwards when his antagonists forced upon him the bloody encounters of Badr and Uhad, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) made a ten-year peace-treaty viz. *Sullah-al-Hudaibiyya*, by accepting all the conditions of his opponents, one of which was humiliating to the Muslims.

The height of the Prophets tolerance and peace-loving nature becomes evident from the following incident; The Holy Prophet (PBUH) ordered to begin draft of the treaty of Hudaibiyya with '*Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Raheem* but Sahail bin Amr, the representative of Quraish objected that they did not know what is Rahman and Raheem and the draft should begin with the customary "Bi-ismika-Allahumma" The Holy Prophet then agreed and dictated that the agreement was concluded between Muhammad, the Prophet of God, and Suhail bin Amr to which again Suhail objected and said that if they had acknowledged him as the Prophet of God, they would not have taken arms against him. The Holy Prophet conceded to this too, and although Sayyadna Ali had already written Muhammad the Prophet of God and did not want to scrape out these words, the Holy Prophet himself took the document and erased these words in place

of which Muhammad bin Abdullah was written. The companions of the Holy Prophet were engaged at the hostility of Suhail but out of respect for the Holy Prophet they kept silent. (Siddiqui, p.216, 1997)

Another incident which bears apt testimony to the peace loving nature of Prophet Muhammad is as follows: After the treaty of Hudaibiyya, news of brewing trouble came from Juhaina territory and Usama bin Zaid was sent to deal with it. After some preliminary talks there was a clash and the enemy fled.

After the bloodless conquest of Makkah, large crowds waited outside the Holy Kaabah to know their fate. These were the same people who had oppressed him and his familiar associates, ridiculed him, thrown filth on him, strewed thorns on his way, imprisoned him, made attempts on his life, exiled him and then took up sword against him in the battles during the last 13 years. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the mercy sent to mankind, rather than punishing them, which would have been correct according to laws of justice, showered mercy on them and set them free, by declaring *“there is no charge against you today. Go, you all are free”* He also proclaimed: *“Today is the day of generosity”*.

This action of him speaks volumes about his peace loving nature and non-violent ways through which he conquered human hearts.

During the few wars he fought, he asked his followers to follow the code of conduct for war laid down by the Holy Quran.

“Who-so-ever kills a human being for other than manslaughter or corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he has killed all mankind, and who-so-ever saves the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind”. (Chapter 5:32)

He also commanded his followers: “A believer remains within the scope of his religion as long as he does not kill another person illegally”.

A renowned religious leader elaborates the code of conduct during a war for Muslims: “Even in times of war, Muslims are not allowed to kill anybody save the one who is indulging in face to face confrontation with them. They are not allowed to kill women, old persons, children, or even a monk in his religious seclusion” (Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradhawi in Tharola, p.21, 2001)

To conclude, to a large extent, people because of their ignorance are associating Islam with terrorism. So the true Muslims should take this opportunity to guide the people to the true path. Also Muslims should develop cordial relations with such brothers and sisters even within India, so that through our actions, they learn how very peace-loving people Muslims are! We should tell them in humility that a few actions, of some misguided Muslim youth cannot represent the entire Muslim population or the great faith of Islam.

MAINTENANCE OF WORLD PEACE AND SECURITY

By Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

What is Peace: Peace is a certain quality of existence which has been sought after, yet seldom found in a long enduring form, since time immemorial. In a behavioral sense, peace is generally understood to be a lack of conflict and freedom from fear of violence between heterogenous social groups. Throughout history benevolent leaders have often exhibited a certain type of behavioral or political restraint, which in turn has often resulted in the establishment of regional peace or economic growth through various forms of agreement or peace treaties. Such behavioral restraint has often resulted in the de-escalation of conflicts, or in multilateral or bilateral peace talks. The avoidance of war or violent hostility is after the result of compromise, and is often initiated with thoughtful active listening and communication, which may tend to enable a greater genuine mutual understanding.

In a psychological sense, peace is perhaps less well defined but at least of an equal value to, or of a greater value than, "behavioral peace". Peaceful behaviour has often been found to have been the result of certain type of a peaceful inner disposition "on the part of some. Some have

expressed the belief that peace is a certain quality of a peaceful inner tranquility which does not depend upon the uncertainties of daily life for its existence. The acquisitions of such a "peaceful internal disposition" would seem to possibly be a valuable asset, capable of assisting in the resolution of otherwise seemingly irreconcilable competing interests.

Some individuals are sometimes known to de-escalate conflicts or to improve emotions through compliments or generosity. Small gestures of generosity that are reciprocated may be followed with even more gestures. Benevolent generosity can eventually become a pattern that may become a lasting basis for improved relations. Peace talk often start without preconditions and preconceived notions because they are more than just negotiating opportunities. Peace talks are sometimes also uniquely important learning opportunities for the individuals or parties involved. A peace must be seen at least in two forms:

- (a) A simple silence of arms,
- (b) Absence of war accompanied by particular requirements of the mutual settlement of relations, which are characterized by terms

such as justice, mutual respect, respect for law and good will.

NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE

Nonviolent resistance (NVR or nonviolent action) is the practice of achieving goals such as social change through symbolic protests, civil disobedience, economic or political noncooperation, satyagraha, or other methods, while being non-violent. This type of action highlight the desires of an individual or group that feels that something needs to change to improve the current condition of the resisting person or group. Many movements which promote philosophies of nonviolence or pacifism have pragmatically adopted the methods of nonviolent action as an effective way to warfare, picketing, marches, leaf letting, lobbying, civil disobedience, boycotts principled refusal of awards/honours and general strikes.

SELF-ORGANIZED PEACE

World peace has been depicted as a consequence of local, self-determined behaviours that inhibit the institutionalization of power and ensuing violence. The solution is not so much based on an agreed agenda, or investment in higher authority whether divine or political, but rather a self-organised network of mutually supportive mechanisms, resulting in a viable politico-economic, social fabric. The principal technique for inducing convergence is thout experiment, namely backcasting, enabling anyone to participate no matter what cultural background, religious doctrine, political affiliation or age demographic.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

The International Day of Peace, sometimes, unofficially known as World Peace Day, is observed annually on 21 September. It is dedicated to peace and specifically the absences of war and violence, such as might be occasioned by a temporary ceasefire in a combat zone for humanitarian aid access. The day was first celebrated in 1982, and is kept by many nations, political groups, military groups and peoples. In 2013, for the first time, the Day has been dedicated to peace education, i.e by the key preventive means to reduce war sustainably.

PEACE IN ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY

Hammudah Abdulati writes:

“To appreciate how Islam approaches the question of peace, one has only to consider a few elementary facts about Islam. Peace and Islam are derived from the same root and may be considered synonymous. One of God’s names is peace. The concluding words of the daily prayers of every Muslim are words of peace. The greeting of the Muslims where they return to God is peace. The daily salutations among the Muslims are expressions of peace. The Heaven in Islam is the abode of peace. The adjective “Muslims means, in a sense, peaceful.

This is how fundamental and dominant the theme of peace is in Islam. The individual who approaches God through Islam cannot fail to be at peace with god, with himself, and with his fellow men. Taking all these values together, putting man in his proper place in the cosmos, and viewing life in the Islamic perspective, men

of good faith and principles can not fail to make our world a better world, to regain human dignity, to achieve equality, to enjoy universal brotherhood, and to build a lasting peace.”

When God gives life to man, it is not in vain that He endows him with unique qualities and great abilities. God means to help man to fulfil the purpose of life and realize the goal of existence.

He means to help him to learn the creative art of living and enjoy the good taste of life according to the Divine guidance. Life is a trust from God, and man is a trustee who should handle his trust with honesty and skill, with mindfulness of God and with consciousness of responsibility to Him. Islam has laid down a complete system of regulations and principles to show man how to live it, and what to take, what to leave, what to do and what to shun, and so on.

Lets take the example of Equality of man. One basic element in the value system of Islam is the principle of equality or, better yet, equity. Islam teaches that, in the sight of God, all men are equal, but they are not necessarily identical. There are differences of abilities, potentials, ambitions, wealth and so on. Yet none of these differences can by itself establish a status of superiority of one man or race to another. The stock of man, the colour of his skin, the amount of wealth he has, and the degree of prestige he enjoys have no bearing on the character and personality of the individual as far as God is concerned. The only distinction which God recognizes is the distinction in piety, and the only criterion which God applies is the criterion of

goodness and spiritual excellence. In the Holy Quran God says:

“O mankind, verily We have created you from a single (pair) of male and a female, and have made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other. Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is the most righteous”. (Surah Al-Hujarat, 49:13)

The differences of race, colour, or social status are only accidental. They do not affect the true stature of man in the sight of God. Again, the value of equality is not simply a matter of constitutional rights or gentlemen’s agreement or condescending charity. The foundations of this Islamic value of equality are deeply rooted in the structure of Islam. It stems from basic principles such as the following: (1) All men are created by One and the Same Eternal God, the Supreme Lord of all (2) All mankind belong to the human race and share equally in the common parentage of Adam and Eve (3) God is just and kind to all His creatures. He is not partial to any race, age or religion. The whole universe is His dominion and all people are His creatures. (4) All people are born equal in the sense that none brings any possession with him, and they die equal in the sense that they take back nothing of their worldly belongings (5) God judges every person on the basis of his own merits and according to his own deeds. (6) God has conferred on man, man as such, a little of honour and dignity.

Such are some of the principles behind the value of equality in Islam. When this concept is fully

utilized, it will leave no place for prejudice or persecutions. And when this Divine ordinance is fully implemented, there will be no room for oppression or suppression.

Another fundamental element in the value system of Islam is the value of human brotherhood. This value is founded on the same principles which have been discussed in connection with equality. Besides those forgoing principles, human brotherhood in Islam is based on an un-shakable belief in the Oneness and Universality of God the worshipped, the unity of mankind the worshippers, and the unity of religion the medium of worship. For the Muslim, God is One, Eternal and Universal. He is the Creator of all men, the Provider for all men, To Him, social status, national supermanship, and racial origin are insignificant. Before Him, all men are equal and bothers of one another.

The Muslim believes in the unity of mankind with regard to the source of creation, the original parentage, and the final destiny. The source of creation is God Himself. The original common parentage is that of Adam and Eve. To this first parentage, every human being belongs and of it he partakes. As for the final destiny, there is no doubt in the Muslims mind that it will be to God, the Creator, to Whom all men shall return.

The Muslims believes in the unity of God's religion. This means that God does not confine His religion or favour to any particular nation, race, or age. It further means that there can be no contradiction or fundamental differences in the Religion of God. When all this is interpreted

properly, it will leave no ground for pretended supremacy or presumptuous exclusivity. And when it is imparted into the human, it will provide man with a clear concept and a solid basis of human brotherhood. Because the Muslim believes in the Oneness of God, the unity of mankind, and the unity of religion, he believes in all the Messengers and Revelations of God without discrimination."

To restore Peace in society and world as a whole Islam teaches certain principles. Hammudah Abdalati explains it in an excellent writing:

"The dimensions of morality in Islam are numerous, far-reaching, and comprehensive. The Islamic morals deal with the relationship between man and God, man and his fellow men, man and the other elements and creatures of the universe, man and his innermost self. The Muslim has to guard his external behaviour and his manifest deeds, his words and his thoughts, his feelings and intentions. In a general sense, his role is to champion what is right and fight what is wrong, seek what is true and abandon what is false, cherish what is indecent and wholesome and avoid what is indecent. Truth and simplicity, courtesy and compassion, are his second nature. To him, arrogance and vanity, harshness and indifference, are distasteful, offensive, and displeasing to God.

More specifically, the Muslim's relationship with God is one of love and obedience, complete trust and thoughtfulness, peace and appreciation,
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TOWARDS MAINTAINING PEACE AND INSTILLING HUMANITY

By. Firasha Sheikh

The present state of our country is un-doubtedly one of great concern. Every where there is economic, political and social turmoil. Our law and justice system has become slow. Every single day one gets to read about some our other case of communal tension in one part of the country or the other. The outrageous and condemnable atrocities against Dalits and Muslims in the name of “law protection,” the rising number of gruesome murder and rape cases; all these things are having an adverse effect on our polity and social fabric.

But why should we be concerned? What do we do when we come across things like this? What is our thought process, our reaction and our attitude? Let’s face it whenever we see these sorts of disturbing news on the TV or read about it on social media, we tut-tut and carry on some of us might experience great discomfort within ourselves and express our feelings or share our thoughts with others.

We consign ourselves to a state of helplessness and take to blaming the government and the system. But let’s not forget who is responsible for placing the government where it is? Who

elected them in the first place? Aren’t we ourselves indirectly responsible for the system that is existing?

If you glance at history: you will notice that any uprising or revolution for freedom whether it was the French Revolution, Indian Independence Movement, the Arab spring and more recently Turkey coup the struggles, the sacrifices, the strong stand for justice for all human beings all these things were brought about by the people; the youth in particular. Civilians, ordinary citizens like you and me. The reason our country could come out of the yoke of imperialism is because our elders worked together tirelessly for independent and the youth of that time played a crucial role. Instead of focusing on the differences that divided them, they focused on their ultimate goal an India independent of oppression and injustice. Is not this very idea the crying need of the hour?

Coming to our previous point, many people complain that the current ruling dispensation in fanning the flames of communalism. The reasons why the communalists are having a field day is because the people that respect the rule of law

and those who are proponents of unity and communal harmony, although in great numbers are apprehensive and not active in promoting love and compassion between communities. An elementary requirement of restoring communal harmony is to build channels of communication between communities. This process of dialogue must be institutionalized and regular interaction is bound to remove the misconceptions and misunderstanding about each other.

Communalism does not respect the rule of law and this fact is in ample display as we see almost on a daily basis the growing incidents of mob justice and religious vigilante groups openly advocating the complete annihilation of an entire community with the law and order machinery remaining a mute spectator to this macabre demonstration of jingoism and xenophobia. This breakdown of the social fabric and the ascendancy of hate and violence have destroyed many a nation in recent times and our countrymen must realize that this monster of fascism and bigotry must be tamed before it destroys all our dreams and decimates our nations.

So from where will the alternative come? Who will speak out against the politicians who are dividing people in the name of religion and trying to evade the wrath of people for failing to fulfil their poll promises? Who bring the defaulters to book? Of course the citizens and once again the youth citizens on whose shoulders the entire future of the nation lies. The role of youth citizens in nation building can no be underestimated. It

is pivotal and extremely necessary for the development and holistic progress of a society. This also calls for building a new narrative that acts as an antidote to the fascist propaganda of cleansing the country of religious minorities and relegating them to the status of a second class citizen. But this new narrative can only see the light of the day when misconceptions and unfounded prejudices are removed. This involves a steady and regular process of dialogue. The task of building sustainable bridges of communication is the order of the day. Any shackness on this front of developing people to people contact or intercommunity dialogue will have serious consequences for our nation. Forume like “Sadbhavna March” need to be strengthened and institutionalized.

Sensing the clear and present danger of communalism, fascism, terrorism, extremism and hate destroying the social fabric of this nation and in a bid to safeguard the composite culture and democratic and tolerant ethos of India, Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth Hind is organizing a two-day conference on the Restoration of World Peace and Protection of Humanity on 9-10th March 2018 in order to restore and strengthen the erstwhile and centuries old tradition of mutual love, understanding and communal harmony. It is time for all to join hands and herald positive change through this conference. Editor)



GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN RIGHTS

By. Dr Parvez Mandiwala

What are Human Rights?

Human Rights are the basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are considered entitled: the right to life, liberty, freedom of thought and expression, and equal treatment before the law, among others. These rights represent entitlements of the individual or groups vis-B-vis the government, as well as responsibilities.

Such rights are ascribed "naturally," which means that they are not earned and cannot be denied on the basis of race, creed, ethnicity or gender. These rights are often advanced as legal rights and protected by the rule of law. However, they are distinct from and prior to law, and can be used as standards for formulating or criticizing both local and international law.

Various "basic" rights that can not be violated under any circumstances are set forth in international human rights documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Pights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

To protect human rights is to ensure that

people receive some degree of decent, human treatment. Because political systems that protect human rights are thought to reduce the threat of world conflict, all nations have a stake in promoting worldwide respect for human rights.

Responsibility to protect human rights resides first and foremost with the states themselves. However, in many cases public authorities and government officials institute policies that violate basic human rights. Such abuses of power by political leaders and state authorities have devastating effects, including genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. However, there is growing consensus that the protection of human rights is important for the resolution of conflict and to the rebuilding process afterward. To achieve these goals, Islam has provided some guidelines to bring an end to human rights abuses and to establish an environment in which they will be respected. (Editor)

Man is a social being who is unique in Allah's realm of creation by virtue of having been given the freedom to exercise his own free will. However, history is witness that this free will has often been misused to usurp the rights of other men, causing untold disorder and misery.

There thus arose a need to specify what rights man has and what is the scope of his freedom.

The Constitution of the India, in the year 1950, laid down certain Fundamental Rights for every citizen of India. A year earlier, shocked by the enormous number of casualties in World War II, the Geneva Convention had enlisted the rights of Prisoners of War and Rules of Warfare to be followed by all signatory countries. Going still back, we have the French Revolution from 1789-1799 and the resultant Declaration of Rights of Man which speaks of Sovereignty of Man, Liberty, Equality, Right to Vote, Trial by Jury, etc. We may also add the Magna Carta of 1215 here which essentially was a truce between the British Emperor and his Barons but is also widely counted as Human Right Declaration.

And long before these self-proclaimed 'noble declarations' were written down or even though of, Islam gave to man all the Fundamental, Civil and Moral Rights he ought of be entitled to, in order to lead a dignified and peaceful life on earth. The Constitution of the Islamic State is derived from the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of His messenger; Prophet Muhammad (May peace and blessings of Allah be to him). Its President is the Caliph (Allah's vicegerent on earth) who is entrusted with the responsibility of executing 'Allah's commands in the State after due consultation with the *shoora* (advisory council).

This concept is amply reflected and elucidated in the first speech that the first Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq (May Allah be pleased with him) delivered upon being nominated head of the Islamic State. He said, "O People! I have been chosen to lead you, despite not being the best among you. If I

do well, help me; and if I do wrong, correct me. Truth is a trust and lying is a breach of trust. The weak among you are strong in my sight, until I have ensured that they have their rights. The strong among you are weak in my sight, until I have ensured right and justice. Obey me as long as I obey Allah and His messenger. If I disobey them, I forfeit every claim to your obedience".

Let us now discuss some of the rights an Islamic state offers, and indeed guarantees, all people under its jurisdiction. For ease of understanding, allow me to classify them as under;

A. JUSTICE

Irrespective of one's social, economic or political position, every person is treated equally before the law and every person is entitled to seek justice from the court of law. The judges are instructed to deliver justice without favour or prejudice as mentioned in Surah an-Nisa ayat 135 and Surah al-Maidah ayat 8. So we have the Messenger of Allah (May peace and blessings of Allah be to him) telling a gathering that even the hands of his beloved daughter Fatima (May Allah be pleased with her) would be severed if she were to commit a theft and we have Caliph Ali (May Allah be pleased with him), who had to appear before a judge in the capacity of an ordinary petitioner to claim back his stolen armour from an ordinary citizen who happened to be a Jew!

Some basic rights under this heading are:

1. The Right to Life

Following the narration of Abel's murder by his brother Cain in Surah al-Maidah, the Quran avers that the murder of one innocent person is equivalent to the murder of the entire humanity

and saving the life of open person is equivalent to saving the life of all mankind. Life of every person has been declared sacred and the Islamic state can reward capital punishment only under two circumstances as a punishment for murder or for spreading *fasaad* (corruption) in the land. (Surah al-Maidah, ayat 32)

2. The Right to Appeal and the Right to Habeas Corpus.

3. Protection from Prosecution for someone else's crime.

Surah al-An'am ayat 164 says, '*And every soul earns not (blame) except against itself, and no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another....*' In Surah al-Baqarah ayat 178 it is clearly said that a free man would be punished for his sins, a slave for his and a woman for her alone.

4. The right to be treated as innocent, unless proven guilty.

Caliph Umar's (May Allah be pleased with him) golden statement would always be remembered in the history of jurisprudence that 'A 100 criminals may be erroneously acquitted, but not even a single innocent should be convicted.

5. Right to refrain from Sin/Crime.

The Prophet had proclaimed that there is no obedience to the created if it implies disobedience to the Creator. This gives each person the right to deny any order which involves a sin or a crime and the state would support it in this decision of his.

B. EQUALITY

The thirteenth ayat of Surah Al-Hujrat and the

Final Address of the Prophet on the plains of Arafat are equivocal in laying down the principle that all men are equal before their Lord and distinction between them would be based only on his/her level of piety.

Thus, in an Islamic State, there is no bias on the basis of nationality, colour, race, creed, profession or gender. Every one is entitled to equal opportunity and has the liberty to choose one's profession, regardless of the profession of his father.

Women's Rights

At a time when the European clergy was immersed in a debate on whether a woman even has a soul or not, Islam had already given equal rights to women and firm steps have been taken towards its realization. For example:

Men have been asked to live with women in kindness. (Surah an-Nisa ayat 19 and Surah al-Baqarah ayat 231)

They have been given the right to initiate divorce in the form of *Khula*.

They have been given a fixed share in the inheritance of their husbands, parents, children and siblings. (Surah an-Nisa)

They have the right to accept or deny a matrimonial proposal.

They are entitled to receive a gracious *mehr* upon being married. (Surah an-Nisa ayat 4)

Right to remarry upon being divorced or widowed.

They are not to be com-pelled to share their

earnings with anyone.

Political equality is also a gem of Islam. The head of the state is neither chosen on the basis of family hierarchy nor from any elite priestly class. The general rule is that the best person available should be democratically chosen Caliph by common consensus. Caliph Umar used to recollect his earlier days and remark that 'There was a time when I could not even tend camels properly and today Allah has elevated me to such a high position that there is no one in authority between me and my Lord.

C. SECULARISM

Secularism can be vaguely defined as Equal Treatment of All Religious by the State. This can mean different things to different countries. In the USA, there is separation of Religion and State and all men come under the ambit of a common civil law. In France, any overt expression of religious symbols is banned by law, whereas in Communist countries, religion itself is banned altogether. In India, all religions are equally respected by the state and the individuals are allowed to follow their personal religious laws.

Although based on religious ideology, the Islamic state is secular in the sense that it does not interfere with the personal religious choice of any individual.

1. Right to practise one's faith

Every individual is free to follow his/her religion under the Quranic injunctions of '*There shall be no compulsion in religion and To you your*

religion, and to me mine' (Surah al-Baqrah ayat 256 and Surah al-Kafiroon ayat 6 respectively)

2. Right to Protection from religious insult

It is explicitly mentioned in Surah Al-Anam ayat 108 that, '*And do not insult those they invoke other than Allah.....*' This injunction provides the non-Muslims with complete protection against religious insult.

3. Rights of Zimmis

The non-Muslim residents of an Islamic state are entitled to the same civil rights and liberties as their Muslim countrymen. They are only required to pay a small tax called *Jizya* in lieu of which they are exempted from military duty and the state takes the *zimma/zimmedari* or responsibility of their welfare. This tax is not an additional tax because the Islamic state is essentially a welfare state and no other taxes are levied. This *jizya* is often far less than the *zakat* and *ushra* paid by the Muslims and even that is forgiven if the *zimmi* is unable to afford it.

D. Freedom of Speech and Expression

Contrary to the Western concept of Freedom to Say Anything about Anyone, the Islamic concept of Freedom of Speech and Expression is far more responsible and productive. It entails.

1. The Freedom to Speak up for the right and against evil

The famous Quranic injunctions of *amr bil ma aruf and nahi anil munkar* are self-explanatory. Islam gives each person the right, or should I

say encourages every person to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. (Surah Ale-Imran ayaat 104 and 110)

2. Right to protest against injustice

The Prophet has instructed us that if we happen to witness some wrongdoing, we should stop it with our hands, or with our speech or at least detest it in our hearts, this being the lowest level of faith.

3. Right to organize and gather, albeit unarmed

4. Protection from vilification and defamation

Freedom of Speech and Expression is not the freedom to defame and libel. It should not be exercised at the expense of someone's honour. Surah Al-Hujurat ayaat 11 and 12 strictly prohibit ridiculing someone, insulting, calling nicknames, unwarranted suspicion, spying and backbiting. Slandering chaste women has been emphatically prohibited in the 23rd ayat of Surah An-Noor.

1. Right to hold divergent views

Caliph Ali had allowed his enemies, the Khawarij to propagate their views publicly despite being opposed to them. The only condition was that they should not forcefully compel anyone to subscribe to their views. We know that it was this very group that was responsible for his assassination a few months later. This tolerance showed by Caliph Ali is a guiding light for all of us in all such cases till the end of time. May Allah be pleased with him.

E. Principles of War

In Islam, wars are not fought to annex kingdoms or to plunder wealth, but to establish justice. The Geneva Convention is merely a piece of paper which is hardly enforced. In sharp contrast, Islamic war principles were scrupulously adhered to during the reign of the rightly guided Caliphs.

Non-combatants including women, children, the elderly, the sick and the injured were not to be harmed.

Those who were engaged in worship in their churches and synagogues or temples were not to be harmed.

Those inclined towards peace were not to be harmed.

Prisoners of War were to be treated with dignity. Surah Ad-Dahr ayat 8 even speaks of the virtues of feeding the captives from one's own food!

Lady prisoners of war were distributed among the soldiers by the state authority for their welfare and upkeep and were not considered a part of war booty.

The general amnesty declared by Prophet Muhammad (May peace and blessings of Allah be to him) after the fall of Makkah in the year 8 AH is unparalleled in human history and even his staunchest enemies have wholeheartedly appreciated this magnanimous gesture of his.

F. General Civil Rights

The Islamic State is essentially a Welfare State and it assumes the responsibility of providing each resident with food, clothing and medicines. So principled was this system that once when

the city of Madinah was gripped with famine, Caliph Umar suspended the punishment for theft because the state could not longer provide food for the citizens and consequently, if anyone was compelled to steal out of hunger, he was forgiven!

The state would support a good cause and not support a bad cause.

The state is also required to arrange for the education of all children.

G. Moral Rights

The Islamic state is responsible for the moral health of the society. Hence, rights of Parents, Children, Siblings, Spouse, Relatives, Fellow travelers, Neighbours and mutual rights of fellow citizens have also been constituted in the light of numerous injunctions mentioned in the Quran and Hadith and the state encourages their implementation.

All these rights are guaranteed to each and every human soul residing under the jurisdiction of an Islamic state, whether he is a Muslim or a non-Muslim and whether he is a friend or a foe. We need to realize that these rights were declared and enforced by the erstwhile Islamic state 1400 years ago when the very concept of Human Rights was elusive. Even today, while a lot has been written about Human Rights in various State Constitutions around the world, they are hardly heeded to. In sharp contrast, the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs was a personification and epitome of Justice, Equality, Secularism, Democracy, Freedom and Fraternity in the true sense of the terms and these are the very Guiding Principles which are required to be followed by every Islamic State in any part of the world.

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steadfastness and active service. This high-level morality will, undoubtedly, nourish and re-inforce morality at the human level. For in his relationship with his fellow men, the Muslim must show kindness to the kin and concern for the neighbour, respect for the elderly and compassion for the young, care for the sick and support for the needy, sympathy for the grieved and cheer for the depressed, joy with the blessed and patience with the misguided, tolerance toward the ignorant and forgiveness of the helpless, disapproval of the wrong and rise above the trivial. Moreover, he must respect the legitimate rights of others as much as he does his own. His mind must be occupied with constructive ideas and serious pursuits; his heart must beat with compassionate feelings and good will, his soul must radiate with peace and serenity; his counsel must be sincere and courteous.

The Muslims moral obligation is to be a vivid example of honesty and perfection, fulfill his commitment and perform his tasks well, seek knowledge and virtue by all possible means, correct his mistakes and repent his sins, develop a good sense of social consciousness and nourish a feeling of human response, provide for his dependents generously without any extravagance and meet their legitimate needs” As a responsible agent of God and a conscientious trustee, he must always be mindful of others who share the world with him and who will succeed him in the future.

MUSLIMS AND HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

Dr. Haniel Banna

Since the dawn of human life on earth, Allah sent Messengers and Prophets to arrange for humankind a stable and prosperous life. In spite of their different times and places, Allah entrusted Prophets with a tri-dimensional mission to people: to worship Allah, the Lord of everything, to put their trust in Allah and to enjoy the blessings Allah has given them in this world and to work righteous deeds to enjoy eternal bliss in the life to come. All messages including the final message of Islam exhorted people to seek sublime values, but at the same time to work for a well-balanced life in this world.

We find many of the needy children, women and old men among refugees who look for help. A Christian woman in the refugee camp on the Chechnyan border was so moved to know that Muslims were helping her and another Russian woman cried to know that Muslims were looking after her.

Allah called on all human beings of all races to know each others, to consult each other and to exchange advice, information and knowledge among each other: *“O Mankind! Indeed, We have created you from a single pair of male and female and made you into peoples and tribes that you may know each other. Verily, the best among you are those who are the*

most pious.” (49:13) As it is clear, the message is not only addressed to Muslims but also to all humankind at all times and places.

Allah calls on human beings to seek ways to know each other in order for them to create amity and hence friendship and co-existence in spite of their different beliefs, tongues and values. Coexistence here means the original amicable relationship that should be established among human beings through different interactions that bring about positive competition in building the universe rather than involving in conflicts which only lead to wars and destruction.

In this context, Allah reminds us in meaning of competition which makes our lives more fruitful and secure. These verses clearly stress free and honest competition to reform humanity, correct false beliefs and build real useful life in this world.

Allah has also explained the meaning of cooperation on which civilizations are built, cultures made to grow and the rights of communities made to prosper. He says, *“Help one another in righteousness and piety.” (5:2)*

The Prophet (S.A.W.) also made international appeals that fit every time and place: “Allah will help a slave as long as that slave helps his brother.” The concept of slavery covers all creatures and the concept of fraternity also covers

human beings. In this context, all human beings are of the same origin and destiny.

Duties of Muslims toward International Humanitarian Relief:

1. The Islamic Concept of Life

The Prophet (S.A.W.) taught us that this life is a temporary passage to an eternal, more stable and secure life. Muslims are required to consider their lives in this world as a farm where to cultivate to harvest the fruits they wish to have when they meet with their Lord. Therefore, every Muslim seeks to make his life in this world as fruitful as possible through helping the needy, caring for the orphans and alleviating the agonies of those who suffer. It is for this role that we have been created, as many sayings of the Prophet (S.A.W.) clearly indicate. By fulfilling this duty, Muslims will have the right to lead other nations: *“You are the best nation produced (as an example) for mankind.” (3:110)* Our belief in fate and our trust in Allah make us capable of shouldering the more difficult responsibilities toward humanity at large.

2. Muslims Humanitarian Duty toward Humankind

The Prophet (S.A.W.) taught us that we have a duty toward all creatures: “In every wet liver there is a reward”. As such, a Muslim’s charity covers all that exists on earth. The wide doors opened for Muslims to help others through *Zakat* are numerous and the various forms of charity they can do are windows of opportunity for them to express their sympathy with the poor regardless of their religions and races.

We find many of the needy children, women and old men among refugees who look for help. A

Christian woman in the refugee camp on the Chechnyan borders was moved to know that Muslims were helping her and another Russian woman cried to know that Muslims were looking after her. Many others in different countries expressed their gratitude to Muslim philanthropist who fed them and provided them with the necessary means to lead a better life.

Therefore, we need to shoulder our responsibilities assigned to us by Allah toward other human beings of all faiths and races to fit Allah’s description “the best nation produced (as an example) to mankind”.

***President of the International Islamic Relief Organization:**

Saudi Arabia is among the first countries in the world to develop global programs for providing humanitarian aid of relief to communities stricken by natural and man-made disasters or regions severely impacted by catastrophic wars.

Saudi Arabia plays significant and active roles in providing humanitarian aid and relief assistance to impoverished communities, particularly during and after critical and catastrophic natural disasters or other extreme exigencies. Due to its humanitarian support and achievement, Saudi Arabia has been deservedly called “Kingdom of humanity”.

Islamic Relief of America, Islamic Aid of Australia, Prince Saltan Charitable Foundation Reyazdh, Sultan Foundation For peace and Development Kaduna, Nigeria are some other Muslim humanitarian aid and belief Organisations helping people in hour of need.



COMMUNAL HARMONY AND ISLAMIC TEACHINGS

By Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

WHAT IS COMMUNAL HARMONY?

“Communal Harmony” refers to the harmony, acceptance and love among the people of various communities belonging to different races, castes and religion.

“Communal Harmony” refers to the principle that different peoples within a community or society must live together peacefully and in pursuit of mutual goals. Disharmony, therefore, is the product of alienation of groups from one another based on differences. In addition to this general definition, the term “Communal Harmony” has taken on special meaning in the nation of India, where it represents an overcoming of traditional separations within society based on religion and caste.

IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNAL HARMONY IN INDIA

India has set an important example of communal harmony to the world. India is the only country of the world where people of all religion and beliefs have been living peacefully for a long time. It is important to note that even during the reign of British, there was no tension among the various religious people.

India, a multi-religious, multilingual and multi-racial country, has always enjoyed the essential unity of culture amidst diversities that kept her people united. After independence, narrow religious, regional and communal feelings attracted the country. The apparently mindless communal tensions and bloody riots that take place occasionally create a sense of mistrust among the two principal religious communities involved in clashes. The country pays a heavy price for such disturbances through the loss of life and property.

India is a vast country where people of different religions and communities live side by side. India was divided into two countries in 1947, but our national leaders were very particular about this and took great care to establish a secular state.

India has witnessed a great diversity of faith and religion from the earliest times, but this has not interfered with the peaceful pursuit of the ways of life of different sections. Christians and Jews who came to India in the first century of the Christian era found hospitable reception here. After several centuries, the Parsis and Muslims received equal reception. Ever since then, India has been marked by the prosperity of

communities belonging to different religions. The people of India values the importance of Communal Harmony.

The dictum of catholicity of Indian culture “live and let live,” have been forged through ages, different religions, races and cultures of the vast country into a united concept of oneness that is India. It was this inherent unity and communal harmony which enabled India to fight against the British might as one man for freedom.

What Constitution Says?

The Preamble to the Constitution described India as Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic and Secures to all citizens liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship.

Articles 25 to 30, in particular, guarantee to everyone the right of freedom of religion, freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion.

The Constitution of India have granted to all its citizens irrespective of religious beliefs, equal rights of speech, movement etc. It has recognized that the Hindus have as much right to the temple, as Muslims to the Mosques, Sikhs to the Gurudwaras and Christians to the Churches. All are equal in the eyes of the Indian Law and all feel equal and free on the Indian soil. No wonders, there is a sense of peace, harmony and universal brotherhood in India. The Hindus look upon the Muslims, the Sikhs upon the Christians, the Buddhists upon the Jains as brothers, not as enemies but friends.

In India, there is complete communal harmony and peaceful co-existence of people belonging to different ethnicity, caste, creed, race and religion. India offers unity in diversity. She is committed to peace. People from all corners of the world come and commune with each other in this vast land.

Indians speak different languages, wear different dresses, and subscribe to different religious beliefs. There are Hindus, Buiddhists, Jains, Sikhs, Muslims, Christians and Parsis. From time immemorial, they have lived peacefully in friendship and harmony, forgetting their petty differences of castes, creed, colour and colloquial medium.

Unfortunately, this traditionally peace loving country is sometimes plagued by communal problems. It all happens as some anti-social elements indulge in torturing the people of other religion. The alarming rise of fundamentalism is a great concern to the nation. Almost all the states of our country suffer owing to religious intolerance. Inter-communal relationship suffers a breach in this vitiated atmosphere. Our unity, integrity and solidarity is now at stake. It hampers the growth of the nation at every step. If the nation wishes to make sound progress in the socio-economic, political and scientific spheres, communal harmony has to be ensured as a permanent feature of life. Evil forces trying to destroy this should be crushed at any cost. It is also our duty to spread the message of importance of communal harmony.

The pious and noble men in India have always preached the lesson of love, peace, harmony, cooperation and respect for each other's sentiments. If we follow them in letter and spirit, we shall love all religions equally well and there will not arise any occasion for conflict.

No doubt God has created mankind. But He has not divided mankind into different religions. Men have divided themselves into different religions. In spite of this, people of all religions can still live in peace if they worship God in different ways, yet they should try to realize the underlying spirit in each religion and that is to serve mankind. It is very sad that in our country often communal riots take place.

The people need some awakening and joint efforts by enlightened people of all communities, as peace is good for all and strife is harmful to everybody.

We must understand that India is constitutionally a secular country where people of all religions, castes and creeds can live enjoying equal rights and opportunities for progress and have the same stake in the welfare of the nation.

The fissiparous tendencies like aggressive communalism, regionalism, linguism, religious bigotry and casteism are threatening the natural integration. Let us therefore, study the genesis and forms of operation of these tendencies, so that concrete steps may be taken to eliminate these trends from our society. The foremost danger to National Integration is rapid communalism.

Communalism's ugliest manifest is communal riots which occur in this country with a disconcerting frequency.

Admittedly, there is no doubt that the communal question was nurtured and grew to menacing proportions with the politically motivated encouragement given by British rulers. The expectations of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru did not come into reality. The spurt of communal riots in the past independence years is as a reminder of the harsh reality and proved that communalism has now deeper roots than before. Now, steps should therefore, be taken to strengthen the feeling of National Integration and Unity and Communal Harmony.

Linguism is yet another problem and sectarian sentiment which has been granulated in the recent past. The reorganization of states on linguistic basis is considered to have given impetus to linguism. Again, the adoption of Hindi as the official language of India roused linguistic sentiments.

Casteism constitutes yet another potential threat to the Communal Harmony and National Integration in India. Now it is one of the great problems of our society. Casteism might have done well but at the moment it endangers our national unity.

So, it is the sacred duty of all of us to inject the importance of communal harmony in our mind and hearts. The danger of communalism can be averted if the self-defeating and suicide slogans like my state, my language, my caste and after all my religion are supreme, give way to the noble

sentiments of India always. Then the slogan “unity in diversity” will be true and be our hopes and aspirations.

Let us all forget our petty religious differences, if any and live like brothers, take care of others and join others in their sorrow and joy.

ISLAMIC TEACHINGS

Islam is the religion of the entire universe, which never differentiates between people on the basis of ethnic background, race, language, and nationality.

Islam seeks to establish justice, equality, harmony, peace, brotherhood and love among mankind, enunciating environmental health, keeping away from all kinds of tyranny, and deprivation. The laws enunciated and bestowed by Islam on mankind basically aim at honouring and maintaining the dignity of mankind as well as removing tyranny, exploitation and oppression. Islamic principles are in conformity with human nature for the welfare of human societies.

Islamic law guarantees protection of the individual’s life, property and honour, securing his livelihood and prohibiting injustice to him. Islam gives guidelines for a balanced attitude towards women as well as safeguarding her dignity and rights to inheritance, ownership of property, education, participation in the promotion of virtues, defending the society and determination of their role in building a happy family, which is the nucleus of the Society. Islam teaches tolerance and equity towards non-

Muslims living in the Islamic societies. It has guarantees security and safety.

God called on all human beings of all races to know each other, to consult each other and to exchange advice, information and knowledge among each other:

“O Mankind! Indeed, *We have created you from a single pair of male and female and made you into peoples and tribes that you may know each other. Verily, the best among you are those who are the most pious*”.
(*Surah Al-Hujarat, 49:13*)

As it is clear, the message is not only addressed to Muslims but also to all humankind at all times and places.

God calls on human beings to seek ways to know each other in order for them to create amity and friendship and co-existence in spite of their different beliefs, tongues and values. Co-existence here means the original amicable relationship that should be established among human beings through different interactions that bring about positive competition in building the universe rather than involving in conflicts which only lead to wars and destruction.

In this context, God reminds us in many verses of the Holy Quran of the meaning of competition which makes our lives more fruitful and secure. These verses clearly stress free and honest competition to reform humanity, correct false beliefs and build real useful live in the world.

God has also explained the meaning of cooperation on which civilizations are built,

cultures made to grow and the rights of communities made to prosper. He says, “*Help one another in righteousness and piety, and do not help one another in sin and transgression*”. (Surah Al-Mai’dah, 5:2)

“Passing from the immediate event to general principle, we not retaliate or return evil for evil. The hatred of the wicked does not justify hostility on our part. We have to help each other in righteousness and piety, not in perpetuating feuds of hatred enmity. We have to fight and put down evil, but never in a spirit of malice or hatred,” but always in a spirit of justice and righteousness” (Abdullah Yusuf Ali).

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) also made international appeals that fit every time and place: “God will help a slave as long as that slave helps his brother.” The concept of slavery covers all creatures and the concept of fraternity also covers human beings. In this context, all human beings are of the same origin and destiny.

DUTIES OF MUSLIM TOWARDS OTHER HUMAN BEINGS (SPECIALLY NON-MUSLIMS)

“When we contemplate summarizing the Islamic teachings concerning dealings with non-Muslims, we find that the following two verses of the Holy Quran are sufficient, for they provide comprehensive guidelines in this matter.

“God does not forbid you, with regard to those who do not fight you on account of your religion nor drive you out of your homes, to treat them with goodness and to be just to them; truly God loves those who are just.

Indeed, God forbids you (only) with regard to those who fight you on account of religion and drive you out of your homes, and assist (others) in driving you out, that you turn to them (in friendship); and whoever turns to them (in friendship), they are wrong doers” (Surah Al-Mumtahinah; 60:8-9)

These two verses not only call for justice and fairness in dealing with non-Muslims who neither fight Muslims on religious grounds nor drive them out of their homes- that is those who are neither at war with, nor hostile to, Muslims-but also urges Muslims to be kind to them. The word *Birr* or “goodness” which is used in this verse is a very comprehensive term signifying that kindness and generosity which is over and above justice; it is the same word which is used to describe the Muslims duty to his parents.

We have said that this verse calls for justice; as God says, God loves those who are just,” (60:8) and the Believer always tries his best to do what God loves. Now there is no contradiction between God’s saying, “*God does not forbid you*” (60:8) which is rather mild does not prohibit kindness to non-Muslims in general but only to those who are at war with, and hostile to, the Muslims.

Special Consideration for the People of the Book

While Islam does not prohibit Muslims to be kind and generous to people of other religions, even if they are idolators and polytheists, as for example, the polytheists of Arabia, concerning whom the above verses were revealed, it looks upon the People of the Book, that is, Jews and

Christians, with special regard, whether they reside in a Muslim society or outside it.

The Holy Quran never addresses them without saying, “O people of the Book,” or “O you who have been given the Book,” indicating that they were originally people of a revealed religion. For this reason there exists a relationship of mercy and spiritual kinship between them and the Muslims, all having in common the principles of the one true religion sent by God through his prophets (peace be on all of them):

“He has ordained for (the Muslims) the same religion which He enjoined on Noah, and that which We have revealed to you (Muhammad) and that which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: that you should remain steadfast in Faith and make no divisions therein...” (Surah, As-Shura, 42:13)

Muslims are required to believe in all the Books revealed by God and in all the prophets sent by Him; otherwise they are not Believers.

“Say: We (Muslims) believe in God and in what He has revealed to us, and in what He revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes (of Israel), and in what was given to Moses and Jesus, and in what was given to (all) the Prophets by their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him do we submit” (Surah Al-Baqra, 2:136)

Consequently, if the People of the Book read the Holy Quran, they will find in it praise for their Books, messengers, and Prophets. If Muslims hold discussions with the People of the

Book, they should avoid such approaches as cause bitterness or arouse hostility.

“And don’t dispute with the People of the Book except by (the way) which is best, unless it be with such of them as transgress, and say, “We believe in what has been sent down to us and sent down to you, and our God and Your God is one, and to Him do we submit”. (Surah Al-Ankabut, 29:46)

NON-MUSLIM RESIDENTS OF AN ISLAMIC STATE

The above injunctions include all people of the Book wherever they may be. However, those people who live under the protection of an Islamic government enjoy special privileges. They are referred to as “The Protected People” (*ahlau-al-dhimmah* or *dhimmis*), meaning that God, His Messenger (S.A.W.), and the community of Muslims have made a covenant with them that they may live in safety and security under the Islamic government.

In modern terminology, *dhimmies* are “citizens” of the Islamic state. From the earliest period of Islam to the present day, Muslims are in unanimous agreement that they enjoy the same rights and carry the same responsibilities as Muslims themselves, while being free to practice their own faiths.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) emphasized the duties of Muslims towards *dhimmies*, threatening anyone who violates them with the wrath and punishment of God. He said:

1. He who hurts a dhimmi, hurts me, and who hurts me annoys God”. (*al-Tabarani in al-awsat on good authority*)

2. “Whoever hurts a *dhimmi*, I am his adversary, and I shall be an adversary to him on the Day of Resurrection” (*al-Khatib on good authority*)”

3. On the Day of Resurrection I shall dispute with anyone who oppresses a person from among the People of the Covenant, or infringes on his right, or puts a responsibility on him which is beyond his strength, or takes something from him against his will. (*Abu Daaud*).

The successor of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), the caliphs, safeguarded these rights and sanctities of non-Muslim citizens, and the jurists of Islam, in spite of the variation of their opinions regarding many other matters, are unanimous in emphasizing these rights and sanctities.

No one should get impression that the life of a non-Muslim is not safe in a Muslim society, for God has declared the life of every human being to be sacred, and He has safeguarded it. This applies as long as the non-Muslim does not fight against the Muslims; However, if the non Muslim is of a people with whom there is a treaty or if he is a *dhimmi*, his life is sacred, and it is unlawful for the Muslim to attack him. In this regard the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) has said:

“Anyone who kills a person from among the people with whom there is a treaty will not smell the fragrance of the Garden, although its

fragrance reaches to a walking distance of forty years.” (*Saheeh Bukhari*).

In another hadith the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: “Anyone who kills a *dhimmi* will not smell the fragrance of the Garden” (*Al-Nisai*)

MEANING OF FRIENDSHIP WITH NON-MUSLIMS

The Holy Quran did not dismiss the hope that some day there might be a reconciliation; if did not declare utter disappointment in them but encouraged the Muslims to entertain the hope of better circumstances and improved relationships, for in the chapter 60 God says:

“It may be that God will bring about affection between you and those who are your enemies from among them. And God is All-Powerful, and God is Forgiving, Merciful” (Surah Al-Mumtahinah: 60:7)

Apparent religious hatred or enmity or persecution may be due to ignorance or overzeal in a soul, which God will forgive and use eventually in His service, as happened in the case of Sayyadna ‘Umar bin Khattab, who was a different man before and after his conversion.

The enemies of God are enemies of the righteous, and they hate the righteous. Therefore the righteous must cut themselves off eternally from them, unless they repent and comeback to God. In that case they receive God’s mercy and are entitled to all the rights, love and brotherhood. This shows that our detestation is for evil, not for men as such so long-there is a chance for

repentance. But we must give no chance to Evil on our Brotherhood at any time.

SEEKING HELP FROM NON-MUSLIMS

There is no harm done if Muslims, at either the private or government level, seek help from non-Muslims in technical matters which have no connection with the religion for example, in medicine, industry or agriculture. At the same time it is of course extremely desirable that Muslims become self-sufficient in all such fields.

We see from the life of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) that he employed Abdullah bin Uraiqit, a polytheist to be his guide on his flight (hijra) from Makkah to Madinah. Scholars have concluded from this that a person's unbelief does not mean that he is basically untrustworthy, for what could be more risky than depending on a guide to show the route, particularly in fleeing from Makkah to Madinah?

Going considerably beyond this, scholars say that it is permissible for the leader of the Muslims to seek help from non-Muslims, especially the people of the Book, in military matters, and to give them an equal share of spoils with the Muslims. The condition for seeking help from a non-Muslim is that he be trusted by the Muslims; otherwise, help may not be sought from him. Since it is prohibited to seek help from unreliable Muslims, such as those who spread rumors and anxieties, this is the more true in the case of non-believers.

The Muslim is permitted to give gifts to non-Muslims and to accept right from them. It is sufficient here to mention that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) accepted gifts from non-Muslim kings. Scholars of Ahadith state that there are many ahadith which report that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) accepted gifts from non-Muslims and Umme Salmah, a wife of the Holy Prophet narrated that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) told her:

I have sent al-Najashi a robe and some silk”

Indeed, Islam respects a human being only because he is human, how much the more then, if he is from the People of the Book and still more if he is a *dhimmi*” Once a funeral procession passed by the Prophet (S.A.W.) and he stood up. Thereupon someone remarked, “O Messenger of God, it is the funeral of a Jew”. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) replied, “Was he not a soul?”

Thus, truly in Islam every human being has a dignity and a place.

Islam has made human life sacred and has safeguarded its preservation. According to its teachings, aggression against human life is the second greatest sin in the sight of God, second only to denial of Him. The Holy Quran declares: “.....*If any one killed a person- for any reason other than for (the killing of) a person or for spreading mischief in the land, it will be as if he had killed the whole of mankind. And if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole mankind...*” (Surah Al-Maidah, 5:35)

Because the human race constitutes a single family, an offense against one of its members is in fact an offense against the whole of humanity.

In short, every Muslim has been made responsible to unhesitatingly employ good manners with his neighbours, countrymen, Muslims and non-Muslims. Good qualities as charity, keeping one's promise, tolerance, decency, generosity and cooperation to be exercised in dealings with Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

Islam has commanded us to deal justly and fairly even if the opponent is a wrong-doer or a non-Muslim. God's Messenger (S.A.W.) said, "The prayer of the oppressed is answered. If he is wicked and a wrong-doer, its ill effects will go against him." (Ahmad). In another Hadith it is stated "Even if the oppressed person is a non-Muslim, there is no obstruction between his/her prayer and its answer. Give up doubtful things and adopt those matters in which there may be no doubt" In the light of these instructions and the commands, Islam advises its followers not to maltreat their ideological and religious opponents.

In connection with the insistence on treating the followers of the other religions kindly, there is one more hadith: Ibn 'Umar said that a goat had been slaughtered in his house. When he came home he asked his servants if some of the meat had been sent as a gift to a neighbouring Jews? He added "I had heard the Messenger of God as saying that Jibril had been regularly insisting that one should treat his neighbours kindly,

indeed, so much so, that I surmised the neighbour should be nearly made a recipient of the inheritance" (Saheeh Bukhari).

(Benefited from The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam by Yusuf Al-Qardawi)

NEED FOR PEACE AND HARMONY IN INDIA

If there is peace and harmony in India only then, India as a nation can go forward. The law and order situation in the country will improve. If there is casteism and communalism in the country, then situation within the country will not allow political stability and economic betterment. If there is an atmosphere of suspicious, distrust, of fear and aggressiveness, it is not possible to think of constructive progress.

Only one section of the people should not be taken care of. Interests of all the sections must be kept in mind, all the religions should flourish and all the languages should be encouraged. Till everyone gets a fair deal people cannot be prosperous and powerful. By fair deal we mean that weaker and the backward should get special help and others should be able to lead a very stable life.

Sometimes, peace and harmony becomes the victim of political manipulation. Opposition parties start obstructing rather than helping progress. Correctly speaking the task of opposition should be to build itself and to oppose. The opposition has responsibility to allow the government to function. They start

exploiting the situation and creating problems for the government.

Peace and harmony demands that we (all citizens of India) should meet the challenges. As a responsible citizen of the country, the Muslims also must be mindful of others who share the country with them. The Muslims must be exemplary. They must set the highest standards of performance and be the reference point for others. There is a need of unity and commitment not to a party, not to a particular person, follower of a particular religion, but to the nation as a whole. At this time, it is necessary that we should culminate national attitude towards India as a united country.

Conclusion:

- The human race constitutes a single family, an offense one of its members is in fact an offense against the whole of humanity.
- Islam advises its followers not to maltreat their ideological and religious opponents.
- The Muslims must be mindful of others who share the country, region or society with them. They must set the highest standards of performance and be the references point for others. There is a need of unity and commitment not to a party, not to a particular person, follower of a particular religion, but to the nation as a whole. It is necessary that we should culminate national attitude towards India as a united country. Because it is the unity of hearts that matters.

- We must not start hostility or aggression but we should try to turn an enemy into a friend. The Holy Quran teaches us:

“Nor can Goodness and Evil be equal. Repel (Evil) with what is better. Then will he between whom and you was hatred become as if he were your friend and intimate”.
(Surah Fusilat: 41:34)

You do not return good for evil, for there is no equality or comparison between the two. You repel or destroy evil with something which is far better, just as an antidote is better than poison. You fail hatred with love. You repel ignorance with knowledge, folly and wickedness with the friendly message of Revelation. The man who was in the bondage of sin, you not only liberate from sin, but make him your greatest friend and helper in the cause of God. Such is the alchemy of the word of God.

- Islam advocates social cooperation and urges the Muslims to help the Muslims and non-Muslims alike. It also calls for visiting the non-Muslims when they become sick, to show kindness, love, mercy and good feelings. As regards offering condolences to non-Muslims, Muslim scholars have permitted offering condolences to the non-Muslims for it will serve the humanitarian interests.

In short, we will never attain dignity and happiness unless we love our beloved country, extend helping hands to countrymen, cooperate with each other. Let us join hands and pledge to contribute, serve and make India a better place to live in.

THE SOCIAL INTERACTION OF A BELIEVER WITH NON-MUSLIMS

By. Jamal-al-Din Zaraboza

Obviously, Muslims and non-Muslims are following very different paths. A Muslim's life revolves entirely around the proper belief in God. A Muslim's attitude toward other is likewise determined by the other's attitude toward God. A Muslim could not possibly feel complete affinity and love toward someone who has turned his back on God, refuses to submit to God or ridicule belief in God. It is simply not natural for there to be complete love between two such people. However, even given this possible negative feeling in the heart, a Muslim must deal with non-Muslims on the basis of just principles. This applies to all non-Muslims-many non-Muslims are not antagonistic at all toward Muslim while others exhibit clear and unequivocal scorn and hatred toward Muslims.

One of the basic principles of behaviour toward non-belligerent, non Muslim is found in the following verse of the Holy Quran: *"God forbids you not to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion and drove you not out from your homes. Verily, God loves those who deal with equity"* (Holy Quran, Surah Al-Mumtahinah, 60:8)

Additionally, a Muslim has very clear

responsibilities towards non-Muslims. First, he must call them to the way of God. It is part of a believers attempt to bring good to all people and to the world as a whole that he thereby actively calls other people to Islam. (This is not based on an evil intent in the heart of the Muslim, as some contemporaries try to distort the issue. In fact, a Muslim would never try to force another person to become a Muslim. Christians speak about Christianity throughout the Muslim world and yet virtually no one in the West takes this as a negative statement. In fact, many today are trying to spread democracy throughout the world because they believe in the inherent goodness of democracy. God alone knows how such people would react if the Muslims of today were to try to impose Islam on non-Muslims in the way that some of these people are trying to impose. "democracy" on the Muslims.) The desire to see others know and worship God fills the heart of the true believer. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), of course, set the best example. God describes in more than one place in the Holy Quran how the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) grieved over the fact that many refused to become believers. God says, for example, *"Perhaps, you, would kill yourself (O Muhammad in grief, over their footsteps (for their turning*

away from you), because they believe not in this narration (the Holy Quran)” (Holy Quran, Surah Al-Kahaf, 18:6)

In fact, although the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) suffered so much harm from the disbelievers of Makkah, when the angel came to him to give him the option of brining the mountains of Makkah down upon those people, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) refused the offer and said: “I hope that from their descendants there will come a people who will worship God alone while not ascribe any partners to Him” (*Bukhari and Muslim*) Calling to the religion of God is truly the path of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) and the path of the believers. God Says, “Say (O Muhammad); *“This is my way; I invite unto God with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me (also must invite others to God) with sure knowledge”* (Holy Quran, Surah Yusuf, 12:108) This is truly the greatest and best good deed that one could do toward his fellow citizen.

A second obligation towards disbelievers is proper and just treatment. This is described by Sheikh ibn Baaz who said: “(the Muslims) may not wrong the other person with respect to his life, wealth or honour, if the non-Muslim is a citizen of the Islamic state or has attained other protection. He must fulfill the other’s rights. He may not wrong him with respect to his wealth by stealing from him, deceiving him or cheating him. He cannot harm him. His protection from the state guarantees his safety from such things. A Muslim can interact with non-Muslims buying, selling or renting from them, for example. Even on a social level, there can be interaction, such

as coming together for meals and the like. However, such interactions are, by nature, going to be limited. The different views of reality between a Muslim and a non-Muslim easily leads to disagreements. On a religious level, there is definitely going to be a feeling of discontent or disappointment with people of other faiths. However, in addition, the differences in a Muslims outlook and actions are going to prevent him from truly participating and being close friends with non-Muslims. A Muslim, for example does not drink alcohol, not to speak of drugs and other activities. A Muslim must be very restrictive in his/her interaction with the opposite sex, which creates barriers for social interaction. Even among the members of the same sex, a Muslim does not engage in inappropriate speech about the members of the opposite sex, a very common practice in social settings these days. Perhaps one could say that the Muslim’s ultimate goal in his relations with non-Muslims is to bring them to Islam, thereby opening the door for there to be a complete relationship of love and brotherhood between them. Even if the non-Muslim is antagonistic and impolite, the Muslim knows that he should repel his evil with goodness. God says: *“The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with (a deed) that is better. (If you do that) then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend and intimate”* (Holy Quran, Surah Fusilat; 41:34)

In sum, as ibn Baaz wrote: “It is obligatory upon Muslims to deal with disbelievers in an Islamic fashion with proper behaviour,

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THE POSITIVE ROLE OF A MUSLIM IN SOCIETY

By. Jamal-al-Din Zaraboza

When a Muslim accepts to live in a certain society, he is in essence, making a pact that with that country that he will abide by the laws of that state. He does not have the right to violate the laws of that state simply because he is the Muslim and the state is not an Islamic state. Thus, all of the principles of proper behavior apply to a Muslim living wherever he may be living. In most countries today, many things may be legal that are forbidden to a Muslim. These legal things a Muslim simply avoids. He should also demand his legal rights to ensure that he is not forced to do any thing forbidden is Islam. Overall though, he should be from among the law-abiding citizens.

In addition to that, a Muslim should be a plus for any society he is living in. He should be a model citizen in many ways. He should be a good neighbour. He has the obligation to encourage what is good and prevent evil wherever he may be living. In addition, he must avoid and oppose what most societies see as the greatest crimes, such as murder, robbery, extortion and so forth. Furthermore, he must steer clear of alcohol or drug use, thus not burdening society as a whole with his personal weakness and addictions. Finally, he must be

just and fair in all of his dealings with the other members of society.

Even though Muslims should play a positive role in any society, in many countries of the West today, a Muslim's loyalty and patriotism is being questioned. Obviously, a Muslim is not going to have the same feelings towards a secular government as that, however, does not mean that he is going to work against his government or seek to harm the country he is living in. In fact, the recent debates in the United States demonstrate that many Christians groups are displeased with their government (and with the Supreme Court in particular). Many a democrat in the United States, for example, does not feel complete loyalty for Republican administrations and vice-versa. However, no one seems to be questioning their loyalty and patriotism.

If patriotism means to simply follow and support what one's government is saying and be gung-ho in such blind allegiance, no intelligent person would be patriotic as all governments are known to lie and deceive at one time or another. On the other hand, if patriotism means to wish what is best for one's country, then the problem is that everyone differs as to what they see is best

for their country. Some feel that they have the right to speak on behalf of all, but their “right” to do so may be questioned.

Islam recognizes the fact that it is natural for an individual to love his country, and to have an affinity for that land in which he grew up. When the Muslims were forced to migrate from Makkah, which was under the control of the polytheists, many of them expressed for Muslims to develop a love for whatever land they happen to be in, even if the country is not an Islamic State. It is also natural for Muslims to desire what is best for their homeland. But, again, unfortunately, their idea as to what is best may not be shared or appreciated by others. For example, the Muslims may wish to see an end to gambling, prostitution and pornography. The Muslims believe that this is what is best for all the people concerned, Muslims as well as non-Muslims. However, many non-Muslims will not share this feeling. Therein lies the problem. Theoretically speaking, though, in contemporary “free” societies, this should not be a problem. Muslims should be able to hold on to their values and customs without bringing harm to others while the others follow the dominant culture in non-Muslim Lands. If the “free” countries are not willing to give the Muslims that much, it means that they are not willing to live up to their own ideals. It is not that Muslims are trying to cause them harm, they are simply trying to be good citizens while living a different lifestyle than the dominant culture.



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as long as they are not fighting the Muslims. One must fulfill one’s trusts to them, must not deceive them, must not betray them or lie to them. If there is a discussion or debate between them, one must argue with them in the best manner and be just with them in the dispute. This is in obedience to God’s command, *“And dispute you not with the people of the Book except in the best way, unless it be with those of them who do wrong”* (Surah Al-Ankabut, 29:46)

“It is sanctioned for the Muslim to invite them to the good, to advise them and to be patient with them at the same time being neighborly and polite with them. This is so because God has stated, *“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom (of the Holy Quran) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better”* (Holy Quran, Surah An-Nahl; 16:125) God has also said: *“speak good to people”* (Holy Quran, Surah Al-Baqrah, 2:83)

Finally, a Muslim may even give charity to non-Muslims. The Permanent Committee of Islamic Research (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia) has stated:

It is permissible for a Muslim to assist his non-Muslim neighbour by giving him some meat from his sacrificed animal.....”

It is allowed for us to give food to the disbelievers living under the Islamic State and wayfarers from the meat of the sacrificed animal. It is allowed to give to them on the basis of their poverty, blood relation, being a neighbour or to sooth their hearts. However, one should not give such meat to a harbi. (Someone who is fighting against the Muslim State).

THE HUMAN CHARACTER AND ISLAM

By: Shamim A. Siddiqi

For centuries together humanity is in search of peace and harmonious growth but it is nowhere visible. Man has become extremely self-centred and is busy day in and day out in raising his standard of living by hook or by crook. All nations are involved too in the same pursuit as a whole. People want to control the limited material resources of this world for the benefit of fortunate few of developed societies. As a result, exploitation of the meagre resources of the poor nations is going on unabated even in the so-called enlightened modern age. It has resulted only in chaos and uneasiness all around, culminating in regional wars and skirmishes, racial cleansing, economic slavery and global hegemony. People of poor countries are crying but there is none to come to their help except offering further loans by the world financial bodies and institutions, thereby increasing their debt and economic dependence. It is going on in an unending chain. It is so because man has become selfish, greedy and very much materialistic in his approach. He wages every thing in terms of money and economic gains. This abnormal love for materialistic ends has caused his character to reach its lowest ebb and the nations comprising such characters are augmenting this chain of socio-economic-political slavery and exploitation to new heights. Man has simply become an eco-

nomie annual. He measures everything in terms of material gains or losses. Moral values have become commercial values and human values have little or no place in the process of market economy. As a consequence, the human character has lost its beauty, charm and the paramount sense of service to humanity. The Holy Qura'n describes this state of humans as: "*Then We reduced him to the lowest of the low.*" (Al-Qura'n: 95:5) and no Khair (good) is left either in the individuals or in the national characters. This situation further exasperates when man thinks that he is the master of all that he surveys and possesses. This is the only life and there is life after death. So he must maximize his personal pleasure and comfort even at the cost of others. He feels that he is responsible to none. As such, he has every right to lead a life as per his or her wishes, desires and caprices.

The materialistic attitude of life only adds fuel to the fire. It promotes values that breed selfishness, greed, unrestricted personal freedom and maximization of personal profits. If the man-made systems are allowed to control the destiny of man in this millennium any more, humanity will soon meet a catastrophic end. The entire edifice of human society is at stake. The existing selfish and irresponsible character of men and women and the nations as we see around

us, must change and be rebuilt on some high and dependable moral basis. That is the greatest need of 21st century. How can we do it? This is a billion dollar question before us. It is a challenge and we have to face it.

REBUILDING THE HUMAN CHARACTER:

It is only Islam that provides the alternative. Man can behave with responsibility only if he is ever conscious of the fact that he is accountable for all that he does on earth. Such a person fears the Supreme authority of one who is his Creator and Sustainer. He feels that nothing belongs to him. Every thing that he has is a trust in his hands and he is to use it in the way his Supreme Master ordains. He feels, that his Creator is watching him all the times, wherever he may be. He even knows what lies in his heart, mind and feelings. It is He Who comes to man's help when he calls Him in distress. He holds this firm belief and conviction that no one can deliver him any relief, do any good or cause any harm except his Almighty Lord. Only an all time consciousness of such an Omnipotent God, can help in reshaping the character of man. Such a man is expected to behave with responsibility and prove to be trustworthy and dependable under different situation that human society creates, offers or promotes. These concepts are missing from the ranks and files of our materialistic societies and hence what we see around us in selfishness, greed, exploitation, reckless behaviour and discrimination of every sort.

The contrary Islam elevates the human character to the highest level of benediction for self, family and society. Let us examine in brief how Islam produces such responsible characters that love and care for the fellow-beings as an as-

signment from their Lord.

CHARACTER THAT ISLAM BUILDS:

1. Allah ordains to Muslims to enter into Islam in totality, not even ninety-nine point nine percent. *"Allah does not accept partial obedience at all."* (Al-Qura'n, 2:208)

2. The believer makes no associate with Him in any form. Allah abhors *Shirk* (making partners with Him) in all its forms and shapes. *"You worship none save Him."* (Al-Qura'n, 17:23) *"O my dear son, Ascribe no partners with Allah."* (Al-Qura'n, 31:13). It would be tremendously wrong to make partners with Him.

3. Whatever he possesses is a trust in his hands from the Creator and he will be accountable for that. *"He may try you by (the test of) that which He has given you."* (Al-Qura'n, 6:165) *"They are faithful to their trusts and to their pledges."* (Al-Qura'n, 23:8) *"On that day (of judgement) you will most surely be called to account for (what you did with) the boons of life."* (Al-Quran, 102:8)

4. *"The believers are certain of the (life) Hereafter."* (Al-Qura'n, 2:5). They say: *"We have heard, and we pay heed. Grant us Your forgiveness, O our Sustainer, for with You (our) journey ends."* (Al-Qura'n, 2:285) And to those who do not believe in the Hereafter, the Holy Qura'n warns: *"As for those who will not believe in the life to come behold, goodly have We made their own doings appear unto them, and so they stumble blindly to and fro."*

It is they whom the worst of suffering awaits; for it is they, who in the life to come shall be the greatest losers! What a disastrous consequence a disbeliever in the Hereafter will face! These are the fundamental believes of all the three

Abrahamic faith of Islam, Christianity and Judaism. If all have been practicing the ruler of these great relations, the world have been quite different from what it looks today.

Unfortunately, both the Christians and the Jews have polluted these basic concepts of their *Deen* so much so that they have lost their effectiveness altogether and look like lifeless dogmas. Jews have coined their own God: "God of Israel and Christians have made Prophet Jesus as the Son of God." America declares: In God we trust." But the entire conduct of the USA only negates it. Thus, the Western societies that predominantly believe in Christianity or Judaism are leading a secular life with materialistic character, facing all the disastrous consequences that I have discussed above. The polytheistic world of India and the Far East is no better than the Western societies and hence are suffering from the evil consequences of the same materialistic attitude of life as that of the western countries.

In the midst of this desperate situation, only Islam offers the ray of hope and the process to develop the character that is dependable, and benevolent for mankind. Islam helps in nurturing such characters. It needs a bit of elaboration.

HOW ISLAM DEVELOPS MODEL HUMAN CHARACTER?

Islam recommends a life pattern that constantly reminds follower to live by the aforesaid Abrahamic beliefs and concepts as an integral part of their life. Rather, Islam polished them further to new heights. It follows as under:

1. A Muslim, whatever he does, starts it with the name of Allah: *Bismillah hir Rahmanir Raheem*. Thus he makes Him his companion in

his work or undertakings and is sure to get His blessings for it.

2. Whenever a Muslim gets anything, he thanks Allah by saying *Alhamdu lillah* (All praise and thanks are for Allah) and whenever he loses anything or somebody dies or some calamity falls upon him, he recites: *Inna lillahi wa Inna Ilaihe Rajeeo 'n* (Vereily, unto God do we belong and, verily, unto Him we shall return). He forbears it with *Sabr* (patience). Thus his life becomes a symbol of *Sabr* and *Shukr*. Whether it is a tragedy or the moments of happiness, he remains connected with his Lord.

3. His dependence (Tawakkul) is only on Allah. A Muslim knows very well that all the troubles and worries and the happiness and pleasures come from Allah. He, thus, gets contentment in life (howsoever poor he is) that otherwise cannot be attained in the struggle for the materialistic ends (irrespective of the fact howsoever one is rich).

Under all circumstances, a Muslim says: *Hasbunallah wa Ni'mal Wakeel; Nimal Maula wa Nimal Naseer* (Allah is sufficient for us! Most Excellent is He in Whom we trust Al-Quran, 3:173), "*A blessed Patron and blessed Helper!*" (Al-Qura'n 22:78) The mightiest power cannot force him to side with it and billions of dollars cannot purchase his conscience. His total dependence on Allah makes his soul indomitable and unbendable.

4. Whenever a Muslim eats or drinks he begins with the name of Allah and at the end he makes his prayer: All the praise in for that (Allah) Who provides food and drinks for me and (out of this infinite mercy), He gave me Tawfeeq to be the Muslim (obedient to Him). A Muslim be-

believes that the provision (Rizq) only comes from Allah. What He has destined for him no one can take it back and what He has not allotted to him, he will not get it, even if the entire world endeavours for it. This makes a Muslim courageous. He struggles for honest means of livings and whatever he earns, he is contented with it.

5. Daily at least seventeen times a day, a Muslim in his obligatory Salah declares his commitment to his Allah whom he worships.

6. Observing continuous fasting for one month, a Muslim practices day in and day out to bring his physical urges for food/water, rest and sex (that lead to materialistic man to go astray and commit sins and crimes against humanity as he is controlled and dictated by his natural instincts) under his control. A Muslim gradually becomes master of his urges through Sawm. It helps him in developing a habit of God consciousness (Taqwah, fear of Allah) that keeps him away from all that Allah has prohibited and inclines to do good and serve the suffering humanity with all that he possesses. This month long fasting during Ramadhan creates an environment of piety, care and concern for others, especially for the poor, the needy and the destitute. What a marvelous character, the provision of sawm inculcates in a Muslim.

7. *Muslims spend on others out of what We provide for them as sustenance (Al-Baqrah, 2:3) They spend their possessions (for the sake of Allah) by night and by day, secretly and openly, shall have their reward with their Sustainer (Al-Imran:274) and give their wealth for love of Him, to kins, folk and to orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and those who ask, and to set slaves free (Al-*

Baqrah:177). And in their wealth: There is a right acknowledged for the beggar and the destitute (Al-Qura'n, 70:24-25). Thus, every Muslim who is a man of means and has the resources, is not a miser, does not hold and multiply his wealth on interest bearing transactions but spends it on the poor and the needy, and pays Zakah on the accumulated wealth, if any left at the end of the year, thereby maintaining a constant natural flow of wealth from the haves to the have-nots. Is it not the most ideal welfare system that Islam introduces on voluntary basis and prepares the character that automatically takes care of deprived people? Such benevolent people that Islam produces are the boon for mankind.

8. **THE MODEL CHARACTER:** The life pattern of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is the most gracious model and the most perfect exemplary character of every Muslim man and woman to follow in its minutest details in every walk of life. Rasullullah (S.A.W.) was the greatest champion of human rights, family values, taking care of the needy, the poor, the orphans, the widows, and the wayfarers and standing only for justice, fair play to others. He (S.A.W.) was the most kind and merciful to womanfolk, children, the working class, the oppressed and the down trodden. He (S.A.W.) always stood for the rights of minorities and fulfilled commitments that he made in his life time. Every Muslim and Muslimah follows Rasulullah (S.A.W.) as the paramount part of his or her life and tries his or her best to imitate and produce that character in its most perfect format. The model of the prophets character elevates the character of Muslims to such heights that the materialistic life pattern or the pagan world cannot even think to attain.

ISLAM, MUSLIMS AND NATURAL WORLD

Muslims believe that the Holy Quran is the word of God as revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). It serves as the source of the Muslims worldview together with the Hadith and Sunnah and contains all the information needed to lead a good, true Muslim life, from the basic tenets of Islam to laws governing Muslim societies.

The Holy Quran describes the special status of humans in creation, and is another piece of evidence of Allah's existence. The word like the Holy Quran, is considered irrefutable proof of Allah's existence, and Nature is usually referred to as "the second book" of Allah.

A STORY OF CREATION

Islam's story of creation is narrated in the Holy Quran, and the purpose of creation was for Allah to be known and worshipped. He created the universe and everything in it with a single command; "*Creator of the heavens and the earth; when He decrees a matter, He only says to it, "Be" and it is*" (Al-Baqarah, 2:117).

However, this is not a haphazard or whimsical creation. Rather, it demonstrates Allah's infinite power and capability, "*It was not in sport that we created the heaven and the earth and all that lies between them*" (Al-Anbiyaa, 21:16)

Laws were set for the functioning of Allah's universe, and it is in the Holy Quran all creation submits to Allah's will; "Islam is thus not limited to humans, but is applied to the whole universe and to every thing in it."

NATURE AND THE ORIGIN OF HUMANITY:

The story of the origin of man in Islam is similar to that in the teachings of Judaism and Christianity; Allah created Adam from clay. Allah then breathed His spirit into man, thus favouring him over all of His other creations. Humanity was appointed Allah's Khaleefah (generation of man succeeding another) on earth because of this; "the status of man is definitely higher than the place of non-living objects, plants and animals because the number of attributes of God in man is much greater than in other creatures".

Mankind's elevated status in the world, therefore, gave humanity two major privileges not afforded to other creatures.

(1) freedom of choice, and (2) specialized knowledge, or "creative knowledge"

The world being humanity's gift and legacy from Allah (humanity does not assume ownership, the ownership of the universe belongs to Allah,) humans are merely "caretakers" has resulted in two prevailing attitudes about the natural world. The first is that because Allah placed His creation in the hands of humanity, it became a trust and according to the laws of Islam, was to be protected and maintained (in accordance with His commands). The second is that since man holds a special place in the world, which is a gift to mankind, then all environmental concerns can be addressed with the sentiment of "Allah, in His infinite Mercy and Generosity."

Ideally, the presence of the former attitude would provide a greater regard for the natural world. The second attitude stems from a blind faith in divine intervention and a general sense of arrogance and irresponsibility. However, the majority of the world's population, remain in a state of inactivity, unaware of the threats to the planet and its inhabitants.

Muslims believe that when Allah created the universe in submission to His will, He made every thing with great care and measure and then left

it to its own devices, governed by the laws he gave.

(He is) the cleaver of daybreak and has made the night for rest, the sun and the moon for calculation. Such is the measure appointed by Him, the Exalted in Might, the Knowing". (Al-Anam, 6:96).

Every thing was created in balance and left for mankind to look after the earth was made rich in bounties and gifts that humanity was invited to discover and use to its benefit. Because of negligence and irresponsibility, however, the delicate balance of nature has been disturbed with negative consequences.

EVERY LIVING THING FROM WATER

According to some Muslim Scholars, the natural world can be divided into three main components: The first being water, the source of all life; second, the atmosphere; and finally, the plant and animal kingdoms. The teachings of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) contain guide lines on how to interact with these components of the natural world.

Water is the source of all living things in more ways than one "We made every living thing from water" (*Al-Anbiya; 21:30*) and is essential for their survival. Because of the importance and necessity of water, under the Islamic law all living beings are granted equal

privileges and equal access to water as a right. In this case no distinction is made between humans and any other creature.

In addition to being a source of drinking and irrigation, water plays another as a life-giving substance; aquatic ecosystems sustain a rich array of living creatures, and water's value as a life vessel is twofold.

As we have come to discover all over the world, water shortages make conservation and preservation of freshwater resources crucial, at least until a more viable method of *desalination* is produced.

Islamic law also designates protocol and guidelines for water use in a way to minimize dispute over what is considered to be an inalienable right.

THE AIR, THE PLANTS, THE ANIMALS

The atmospheres in this case including oxygen required for breathing as well as air movements- is also a creation of Allah that is in our best interests to protect. Emissions and toxic waste released into atmosphere taint Allah's creation, causing global warming, and exposing all living creatures to toxins. Islam teaches responsibility for ensuring that our actions do not negatively affect others, yet the effects of air pollution are global.

In Islam, greenery is loved and gardens are considered to hold properties similar to Paradise.

Planting trees is a virtuous act, earning favour from Allah.

As mentioned earlier, mankind was given special status and elevated above the rest of creation. However, because all living creatures are considered by definition Muslims, as Muslims believe that all creation submits to God, and they all have designated roles in the universe. Islam forbids the harming of any creature. The Holy Quran reminds humanity that animals and plants also have their purpose in life and fulfil roles assigned to them by Allah.

Each human being has a responsibility for preservation and protection of self and all others. This is represented in the teachings of Islam by the prohibition of substances that many pollute the mind or body, such as narcotics, alcohol, or any thing that may cause potential harm.

MANKIND'S RESPONSIBILITY

Humanity has a duty to protect and take responsibility for the well-being of Allah's creation. The world and every thing in it provides for needs of mankind.

However, the utilization of this creation should be done in a respectful and responsible manner, all the while recognizing the generosity of Allah. Muslims believe in accountability, and cruelty to Allah's creation and lack of respect for the natural world will be one of the bases for judgements.

The religious duties of Muslims that are relevant to dealings with the environment are as follows:

- * No extravagance, excessive use or over-utilization;
- * No illegitimate or unlawful attempt at destroying the natural resources;
- * No damage, abuse or distortion of the natural environment in any way;
- * Construction and development of the earth, its resources, elements and phenomena through the improvement and betterment of natural resources, the protection and conservation of all existing forms of life, the cultivating of land and the reclamation and cleansing of the soil, earth and water.

In Shariah, or Islamic Law, there are regulations and guidelines on how we are supposed to treat the natural world. This ranges from the prohibition of cruelty to animals, which includes overworking them or causing them under stress, to the allocation of water resources, as well as the process behind land designation.

Cruelty to living creatures is absolutely forbidden. A variety of stories and anecdotes exist in Islamic teachings regarding the evil of those who mistreated animals, and the virtue of those who went out of their way to demonstrate kindness to animals. It is forbidden in Islam to kill animals without necessity. The slaughtering of animals for consumption provides food and

clothing, while hunting for sports is considered unnecessary cruelty.

It is also prohibited to cut down trees without just cause. Damage to the natural environment and all living things is a criminal offence and laws do exist for protection, assigning punishments to those who oppose the law.

The punishment of crimes against nature, as well as the duty to protect and conserve Allah's creation, makes Islam very much in tune with the needs of the environment.

LET THERE BE LIGHT:

Knowledge is light, and one of Islam's strongest themes is the pursuit of knowledge. Only with knowledge can humans discover the extent of Allah's creation, and be left with no other recourse than to submit to His worship. Following this principle, educating people about issues affecting the environment, and how the consequences of their actions and behaviours can have positive or negative effects on their surroundings should ideally lead to a more favourable relationship with the environment.

Islamic law needs to be applied in environment cases. For everything ranging from animal rights violations to large-scale pollution, the *Shariah* provides a detailed and comprehensive method to approaching the environment and its resources.



PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF BASIC NATURAL RESOURCES

Throughout the universe, the Divine care for all things and all pervading wisdom in the elements of creation may be perceived, attesting to the All-Wise Maker. The Glorious Quran has made it clear that each thing and every creature in the universe, whether known to man or not, performs two major functions: a religious function in so far as it evidences the Maker's presence and infinite wisdom, power, and grace; and a social function in the service of man and other created beings.

God's wisdom has ordained that His creatures shall be of service to one another. The Divinely appointed measurement and distribution of all elements and creatures, each performing its ordained role and all of them valuable, makes up the dynamic balance by which the creation is maintained. Over exploitation, abuse, misuse, destruction and pollution of natural resources are all transgression against the Divine scheme. Because narrow sighted self-interest is always likely to tempt men to disrupt the dynamic equilibrium set by God, the protection of all natural resources from abuse is a mandatory duty.

In the Divine scheme by which all creatures are made to be of service to one another, God's

wisdom has made all things of service to mankind. But nowhere has God indicated that they are created only to serve human beings. On the contrary, Muslim legal scholars have maintained that the service of man is not the only purpose for which they have been created.

"And He has made the ships to be of service unto you, that they may sail the sea by His command, and the rivers He has made of service unto you. And He has made the sun and the moon, constant in their course, to be of service unto you, and He has made of service unto you the night and day. And He gives you all you seek of Him: If you would count the bounty of God, you could never reckon it."

Similar verses in which God declares that He created His creations for the children of Adam. It is well known that God in His great wisdom has exalted purposes in them other than the service of man, and greater than the service of man. However, He makes clear to the children of Adam what benefits there are in these creatures and what bounty He has bestowed upon mankind.

Vitally important, as the social functions of all things are, the primary function of all created

beings as signs of their Creator constitutes the soundest legal basis for conservation of the environment. It is not possible to base the protection of our environment. It is not possible to base the protection of our environment on our need for its services alone since these services are but a supporting value and reason. Because we can not be aware of the beneficial functions of all things, to base our efforts at conservation solely on the environmental benefits to man would lead inevitably to distortion of the dynamic equilibrium set by God and misuse of His creation, thereby impairing these same environmental benefits. However, when we base the conservation and protection of the environment on its value as the signs of its Creator, we cannot omit anything, for every element and species has its individual and unique role to play in glorifying God, and in bringing man to know and understand his Creator by showing him God's infinite power, wisdom, and mercy. It is impossible to countenance the willful ruin and loss of any of the basic elements and species of the creation, or to think that the continued existence of the remainder is sufficient to lead us to contemplate the glory, wisdom, and might of God in all the aspects that are intended, because species differ in their special qualities, and each evidences God's glory in ways unique to it alone.

Furthermore, all human beings, and indeed livestock and wildlife as well,, enjoy the right to share in the resources of the earth. Man's abuse of any resource is forbidden, and the best use of all resources, both living and lifeless, is prescribed. The following is a discussion of the basic natural elements:

Water:

God has made water the basis and origin of life. God says, *And "We made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe"* Plants, animals, and man all depend on water for their existence and for the continuation of their lives.

God says, *"Verily.. in the rain that God sends down from heaven, thereby giving life to the earth after its death...."*

He says, *"It is He Who sends down water from the sky; and thereby We have brought forth the plants of every kind."* *And you see the earth barren and lifeless, but when We pour down rain upon it, it stirs and swells, and puts forth growth of every resplendent kind"*.

The Quran also says, *"And We send down pure water from the sky, thereby to bring to life a dead land and slake the thirst of that which We have created cattle and men in multitudes."*

God has called on man to appreciate the value of this so essential source of life: *"Have you seen the water which you drink? Was it you who sent down from the rain cloud, or did We send it? Were it Our will, We could have made it bitter, why then do you not give thanks?"*

And He has reminded us, "Say: Have you considered, if your water were one morning to have seeped away, who then could bring you clear-flowing water?"

In addition to this vital function, water has another socio religious function to perform,

which is purification of the body and clothing from all dirt, impurities and defilement so that man may encounter God clean and pure. God has said in the Glorious Quran, *“And He caused rain to descend on you from heaven to cleanse you therewith.”*

God has also shown us other functions of lake, sea, and ocean water. He has made it the habitat of many created beings, which play vital roles in the perpetuation of life and the development of this world. God has said, *“It is He Who has made the sea of service, that you may eat thereof flesh that is fresh and tender, and that you may bring froth from it ornaments to wear, and you see the ships therein that plough the waves, that you may seek of His bounty,”* He also says, *“Lawful to you is the pursuit of water game and its use for food a provision for you, and for those who travel.”*

There is no doubt that conservation of this vital element is fundamental to the preservation and continuation of life in its various forms, plant, animal, and human. It is therefore obligatory, in Islamic law, whatever is indispensable to fulfil the imperative obligation of preserving life is itself obligatory. Any action that obstruct or impairs the biological and social functions of this element, whether by destroying it or by polluting it with any substance that would make it an unsuitable environment for living things or otherwise impair its functions as the basis of life. Any such action necessarily leads to the impairment or ruin of life itself, and the juristic principle is, *“What leads to the prohibited is itself prohibited”*.

Owing to the importance of water as the basis of life, God has made its use the common right of all living beings and all human beings. All are entitled to use it without monopoly, usurpation, despoilment, wastage, or abuse. God commanded with regard to the people of Thamud and their camel, *“And tell them that the water shall be shared between that the water shall be shared between them”*, and the Prophet, upon him be blessings and peace, said, *“Muslims are to share in these three things: water, pasture, and fire,”* Extravagance in using water is forbidden; this applies to private use as well as public, and whether the water is scarce or abundant. It is related that the Prophet, upon him be blessings and peace, passed by his companion Saad, who was washing for prayer, and said, *“What is this wastage, O Saad,? “Is there wastage even in washing for prayer?”* asked Saad; and he said, *“Yes, even if you are by a flowing river?”*

The long experience of Muslim jurists in the allocation of water rights in arid lands has given rise to an outstanding example of the sustainable use of a scarce resource; an example of which is of increasing relevance in a world where resources were once abundant are becoming progressively more scarce.

Air:

This element is no less important than water for the perpetuation and preservation of life. Nearly all terrestrial creatures are utterly dependent on the air they breathe. The air also has other functions which may be less apparent to men but which God has created for definite purposes, as we have been made aware of by the Glori-

ous Quran such as the vitally important role of the winds in pollination. God says, *“And we send the fertilizing winds”* The winds are also clear evidence of God’s Omnipotence and grace, and the perfection of design in His creation. He says, *“Verily in the creation of the heavens and the earth; in the alternation of night and day in the alternation of right and day in the change of the winds, and the clouds compelled between heaven and earth surely there are signs for a people who have sense”*.

“And He it is Who sends the winds as tidings heralding His grace: until when they have raised a heavyladen cloud, We drive it to a dead land and cause the rain to descend upon it, and thereby bring forth fruits of every kind.”

Since the atmosphere performs all these biological and social functions, its conservation, pure and unpolluted, is an essential aspect of the conservation of life itself, which is one of the fundamental objectives of Islamic law. Again, whatever is indispensable to fulfil this imperative obligation is imperative obligation is itself obligatory, Therefore any activity which pollutes it and ruins or impairs its function is an attempt to thwart and obstruct God’s wisdom toward His creation. This must likewise be considered an obstruction of some aspects of the human role in the development of this world.

The land and Soil:

Like air and water, the land and soil are essential for the perpetuation of our lives and the lives of other creatures. God has declared in the Quran. *“And the earth He has established for living creatures”* From the minerals of the earth

are made the solid constituents of our bodies, as well as those of all the living animals and plants. God has said in the Quran, *“And among His signs is that He has created you from dust; then behold you are humans scattered widely.”* He has also made the land our home and the home of all terrestrial beings. *“And God has made you grow, as a plant from the earth; then to it He returns you, and He will bring you forth a new...”*

And as our home, the land has value as open space: *“and God has made the earth a wide expanse, that you may traverse its open ways.”*

God has made the land a source of sustenance and livelihood for us and other living creatures: He has made the soil fertile to grow the vegetation upon which all animal life and we depend. He has made the mountains to catch and store the rain and to perform a role in stabilizing the crust of the earth, as He has shown us in the Glorious Quran: *“Have We not made the earth a vessel to hold the living and the dead? And We have made in it lofty mountains and provided you sweet water to drink”*.

“And the earth, after that He has spread it out; from it He has brought forth its waters and its pastures, and He has made fast the mountains, a provision for you and for your cattle”.

“And the earth, We have spread it out, and made in it mountains standing firm, and grown in it every thing in balance. And We have provided in it sustenance for you, and for those whom you do not support”.

And a sign for them is the lifeless earth: We bring it to life and bring forth from it grain of which they eat. And we have made therein gardens of palms and vines.

Finally, the Prophet Muhammad God's blessing and peace be upon him, declared that "The whole earth has been created as a place of worship for me, pure and clean." Accordingly, we are charged with treating it with the respect due to a place of worship, and with keeping it pure and undefiled.

Plants and Animals:

There is no denying the importance of plants and animals as living resources of enormous benefits, without which neither man nor other species could survive. God-be He exalted- has not made any of His creatures worthless; every single form of life is the product of a special and intricate development by God, and warrants special respect. As a living genetic resource, each species and variety is unique and irreplaceable. Once lost, it is lost forever.

By virtue of their unique function of producing food from the energy of the sun, plants constitute the basic source of sustenance for animal and human life on earth. God has said, "Then let man consider his nourishment: that we pour down the rain in showers, and we split the earth in fragments, and therein make the grain to grow, and vines and herbs, and olives and palms, and gardens of dense foliage, and fruits and fodder- provision for you and your cattle."

In addition to their importance as nourishment, plants enrich the soil and protect it from erosion by wind and water. They conserve the water by

detaining its runoff: they moderate the climate and produce the oxygen, which we breathe. They are also of immense value as medicines, oils, perfumes, waxes, fibers, timber, and fuel. God has said in the Glorious Quran, "Have you seen the fire you kindle? Was it you who grew its timber or did We grow it)? We have made it a reminder, and a comfort for the desert dwellers."

Animals in turn provide sustenance for plants, for one another, and for man. Their dung and their bodies enrich the soil and the seas. They contribute to the atmosphere by respiration and by their movements and migrations contribute to the distribution of plants. They provide food for one another and provide mankind with leather, hair and wool, medicines and perfumes, and means of conveyance, as well as meat, milk and honey. And for their highly developed senses and perceptions and their social inter relationships, animals are accorded special regard in Islam. For God considers them living societies exactly like mankind. God has declared in the Glorious Quran, "There is not an animal on the earth, nor any being that wings its flight, but is a people like unto you".

Islam emphasizes all measures for the survival and perpetuation of these creatures so that they can fully perform the functions assigned to them. The absolute destruction of any species of animals or plant by man can in no way be justified: nor should any be harvested at a rate in excess of its natural regeneration. This applies to hunting and fishing, forestry and woodcutting for timber and fuel, grazing, and all other utilization of living resources. It is imperative that the genetic diversity of living beings be preserved both for the good of mankind and all other creatures.

(Courtesy: Monthly Youth, July, 2003)

ON BEING HUMAN

Professor Muhammad Rafat

Human beings are always concerned about their emotions, feelings, thoughts and actions and they constantly ask themselves whether these vital aspects of their personality are good or bad. This concern is probably unique to the human species and certainly constitutes a key element of the human essence. There could conceivably be many ways to study this human trait, but perhaps the easiest way is to analyse this aspect of human behaviour in the context of relations. Such a mode of inquiry has the advantage that it is concrete rather than abstract, because relations are visible and are available for observation and scrutiny.

MATRIX OF RELATIONS

Human beings have four dimensions of relationships which may be enumerated as:

- (a) Relation with the Creator
- (b) Relation with self
- (c) Relation with other human beings
- (d) Relation with things.

It is helpful to note that the above scheme implicitly assumes different "levels of being". Most human beings instinctively perceive the existence

of such levels and an intrinsic hierarchy which characterize them. On the most basic level, one realizes the separate existence of the Creator God and His creatures. In turn, among the creatures, there are two distinct and separate orders of beings namely persons and things. Among persons, one is obviously most intimately acquainted with one's own self. The above matrix of relations is therefore well supported by human intuition and most human beings base their attitudes and activities on such a frame.

RELATION WITH THE CREATOR

The reference of human values is the Creator, because after all human beings are intrinsically at an equal footing. In principle, none of them has any claim to superior status or authority. Notwithstanding the actual domination of some human beings over others due to wealth, power or talent, the fact remains that no justification has ever been provided nor can conceivably be provided for such dominance. In such a situation, appeal to the authority of God is natural.

There are five aspects which invite the attention of an observer of man-God relationship:

- (a) Worship of God

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- (b) Obedience of God
 - (c) God as model
 - (d) God as guardian
 - (e) God as focus of worldview
 - (f) Without the Creator, the universe would appear to be meaningless, void and empty. It is He Who bestows and imparts meaning to life. The richness of existence is unimaginable without God. To being with, God alone is to be worshipped. This is acknowledgement of the fact that the Creator is kind and benevolent, and worship is thanksgiving to Him. The worshipper also recognizes the immense grand attributes of the Creator and bows down in humility. In worshipping and in prostration, his human dignity is manifested as a basic human quality, as is the ability to recognize excellence and beauty. None other than the Creator is worthy of worship, because the attributes of Creator are not shared by other beings.

Secondly, the kind and merciful Creator provides guidance for mankind. This is done in a number of ways. The primary guidance is in the existence of human conscience, which constantly urges man towards righteousness. It is supplemented by human intuition which helps the rational mind in resolving intricate moral dilemmas. A further source of guidance is the innate sense of values shared by humanity. Human beings tend to agree on definition of good conduct and vice versa. Guidance also exists in human traditions which mark out the acceptable path and deviations from it are regarded as unacceptable.

The most vital source of guidance is revelation through the agency of messengers. The golden chain of messengers conveys the guidance and provides actual model in concrete historical settings. Existence of guidance automatically implies accountability before God.

Thirdly, human beings are fallible while the Creator is not. He therefore is the ideal towards which man may aspire. He may never reach there but the ideal serves its purpose. Man's conduct receives the noblest possible motive namely the quest of endless excellence. The realization of Creator's attributes at the human level is a programme, which everyone can join. There are no rivalries here; indeed, all aspirants cooperate with one another because the goal is cherished by them all.

Fourthly, the Creator is the guardian towards which man instinctively turns in hour of need or distress. The guardian is aware of all human needs, potentialities, weaknesses and strengths. His bounty is unlimited and unsurpassed. He is always available and listens to prayers and responds to them. With such a guardian, human beings don't need false gods. They can put absolute trust in Him and seek His blessings. In an uncertain world, the mercy of the Creator is very reassuring and gives the believers a strong basis for confidence. They may remain steadfast on the path of truth while they enjoy this unique blessing.

Finally, the world is a mystery unless one recognizes the existence of God. The design, the order, the beauty, the harmony and the compassion are visible on such a grand scale that

they overwhelm the observer. The worldview with God as Creator makes sense and satisfies the human desire for understanding. The world becomes sensible and meaningful when one recognizes God. A coherent worldview is an intellectual and emotional need of mankind. Any discourse on any aspect of reality will remain unintelligible unless the Creator's role is acknowledged.

RELATION WITH SELF

The potentialities in man are immense and are multidimensional. They are intellectual and rational, as well as practical and physical. The growth and development of self is an obvious goal. But enlightened thought puts two conditions on it: a) the condition of ethical limits; and, b) the condition of letting others also grow and develop.

The relation with God automatically ensures that these twin conditions are met. An individual who is obedient to God will abide by ethical limits. Similarly, such an individual will extend cooperation and radiate sympathy, because sincere worship of God inculcates such virtues.

Human potentialities, regarded in abstract, appear to be contradictory. Human beings are pulled in various directions by their human disposition and by circumstances. A person is required to exercise control over subordinates but simultaneously also required to give them a measure of freedom. One must get annoyed with unacceptable behaviour but at the same time anger needs to be controlled. While mercy is desirable, injustice should not go unpunished.

Similarly, while one must be magnanimous and tolerant, a degree of intolerance towards oppression is indeed required.

These opposite tendencies and requirements need to be reconciled. The need for justice and balance is not merely external, it must exist in the inner life of emotions and feelings as well. The proper self development of man is indeed based on justice to all aspects of human personality.

The notion of justice and balance is sometimes wrongly associated with stagnation. A concern for getting things right may indeed degenerate into inertia. Instead of taking the risk of transgression, one merely sits back and does nothing. Obviously, this is not the growth of self, because human beings, in the nature of things, are required to act. The solution lies in recognizing both ethical limits and human duties and sense of mission. The latter keep the individual active while a commitment to ethical boundaries ensures that the individual's journey is along acceptable lines.

RELATION WITH OTHER HUMAN BEINGS

Human duties are mentioned as a necessary condition for self development. An elaboration of duties could be very detailed. But, in essence, these duties are only two: a) sincere worship of God (which implies unconditional obedience to Him as well); and (b) being good to human beings. The latter duty is so important, that in an emergency, it takes precedence over the former.

What is "being good"? It involves three elements:

a) genuine respect for people; b) sympathy, cooperation and help in times of need; and c) good advice. One needs to relate to other human beings on these three planes. It is obvious that such a set of relations may emerge only when one has healthy relationship with one's own self and when one has sincerely surrendered to the Creator God.

Genuine respect towards all human beings is imperative irrespective of status, wealth, power, gender, affiliation, age, race and nationality. Human beings are intrinsically honourable and their poverty or youth does not deprive them of their human dignity. A movement for human dignity must begin by reforming the personal attitude. Legal and systemic reforms are indeed needed but are secondary. The primary focus must be on attitude.

Human beings by nature exhibit empathy and sympathy. They tend to extend cooperation and help. This innate trait needs to be developed and put on firm footings. It must cross the boundaries of race and nation. It must not be ruined by uncharitable feelings wherein one seeks fame, power or reward. The humanitarian behaviour, almost by definition, should be selfless.

The third element of good behavior is tendering good advice to others. The advice should be available if sought. It should also be available as a basic human duty. To put the concept on a concrete basis, the duty is called "enjoining the good" and "forbidding the evil". This task ensures the moral vitality of society. If the spirit behind this duty is missing then the collective conscience becomes dead. To ensure ethical health of the society, active moral sense must

prevail. It should manifest itself in formal and informal efforts to keep the society on right tracks.

RELATION WITH THINGS

Human beings are equal among themselves but they can't be reduced to things. On the other hand, the bounties of the world are for all people to use. But proper use requires the following:

(a) First, human beings should be grateful to the Creator for His bounties. They must use the things with a sense of gratitude. This gratitude should be heartfelt and must be expressed verbally as well. Human beings are not merely consumers. They are grateful users of gifts of God.

(b) Human beings should use the material objects within ethical boundaries. This implies in particular that due thought should be given to consequences of various possible modes of use.

(c) The things should be used in a manner that no harm is caused to the human agent nor to other human beings nor to the things themselves. If in extreme necessity, a measure of harm becomes inevitable, it should be minimized.

A proper cultivation of relations with the Creator, with one's own self, with other human beings and with material objects is the necessary requirement of the healthy growth of individuals and society. We all have to ensure that we recognize the essence of our humanity and seek to safeguard it and nurture it. If we succeed in being human, even seemingly minor actions of ours would achieve greatness and would make the world better place.

QUALITIES OF A GOOD CITIZEN FOR COMMUNAL HARMONY

By Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

Man is a social animal. By nature he dreads solitude and craves for society. In the society which he lives in, he expects others to be good to him. It is possible only if he himself becomes a good member of the society. Societies have grown into nations and men have become citizens of one or the other country. Hence, there is the need for defining the qualities of a good citizen. To quote an author, "citizenship is the status of a citizen with its rights and duties". Good citizens are an asset to every state or country and it is the duty of the state to create suitable conditions for promotion of good citizenship. Civic life is essentially a matter of social give and take. Rights and duties, privileges and responsibilities always go hand in hand. If a citizen has a right of personal progress and protection, he has an obligation to subserve the interests of his government by his implicit obedience to law and allegiance to the state.

A citizen who performs his duties honestly and scrupulously is called good citizen. But he cannot be called a good citizen simply because he enjoys his rights well. He must also possess some specific qualities, which he must display from

time to time according to the need of the occasion before he can be placed in that country.

The future of a country mainly depends upon its citizens as they are the pillars of society. If they are basically cultured and educated, they can do a lot for the country. Only people blessed with intellectual and physical vigour can contribute to the general good of society to which they belong. A man who does not care the welfare of others and hits their feelings is not a good citizen.

The first basic quality of a good citizen is that he must be loyal and faithful to the state and play a leading role to establish the communal harmony in the country. If a situation arises in which the existence of the state or its territorial integrity or unity is endangered, a good citizen is bound to protect the state by rendering all kinds of services including military service. He should act as a soldier and saviour of the nation during war and a watch dog of the nation during war and a watch dog of moral values of its rulers during peace.

A good citizen should place his entire wealth,

intellect and energy at the service of the country. He should stand up for the larger ideals and should cherish a humanitarian approach to all problems. He should promote friendliness and understanding among people of different lands. A good citizen will not keep waiting for the government to take up some work of public good which it identifies as requiring urgent action. It is a wrong attitude on the part of citizens to look up to the government for all works of public welfare. If there is any shortcoming any where, he should make it up by personal or collective effort using his initiative. He should take the lead in directing and channelising the energies of young people to do constructive work. He should be more responsive to new ideas promoting peace and equality. If each citizen contributes even a small part of his time and energy towards the service of the country, a miracle can be achieved in the progress of the country. To be ready and willing at all times to render social service is one of the essential qualities of a good citizen because social service has an elevating influence. It takes citizens out of the narrow groove of their selfish pursuits into wider field of activity. Social service is an anti-dote to individualism. In fact, it is hard for a person, who does not perform some-degree of social service in some field or the other, to deserve to be called a good citizen.

The more a citizen inculcates this habit of doing something for the general good, the more will

he be contributing towards the advancement of the society.

It must be remembered that to devote oneself to the service of the society to which one belongs, is not merely a moral duty enjoined upon man by human institutions but is a patent biological fact, which is quite inseparable from man's inherent nature.

In relation to other nations, a good citizen must inculcate a fair and just attitude while being always vigilant and watchful of one's own national interest. One must have an objective approach to the acts and aspirations of other nations which is essential for world peace. As a matter of fact, a good citizen will strike a judicious balance between the national, international, local, family and personal interests.

A man may be highly educated, a profound scholar and yet he may be lacking in civil sense and be far from being a good citizen.

There is need for us to translate these ideals in our day-to-day social conduct and transform the mode of our relationship with those among whom we move and live.

The above stated qualities of a citizen are undoubtedly the excellent qualities for promoting communal harmony.

(Extract from Advanced Essays by Dr. A.M. Malhotra)



THE EXEMPLARY JUSTICE OF THE HOLY PROPHET (S.A.W.)

By Harun Yahya

With the rules he imposed on Muslims, his just and tolerant attitude towards those of other religions, languages, races, and tribes, and his way of not discriminating between rich and poor, but treating everybody equally. Allah's Messenger (S.A.W.) is a great example to all mankind.

Allah says this to His Prophet (S.A.W.) in one verse, *"They are people who listen to lies and consume ill-gotten gains. If they come to you, you can either judge between them or turn away from them. If you turn away from them, they cannot harm you in any way. But if you do judge, judge between them justly. Allah loves the just"*. (Surah Al-Maidah, 5:42)

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) abided by Allah's commands, even with such difficult people, and never made any concessions in his implementation of justice. He became an example for all time with the words "My Lord has commanded justice". (Surah Al-Anfal, 8:29)

A number of incidents testify to the Holy Prophet's justice. He leaved in a place where people of different religions, languages, races and

tribes all coexisted. It was very difficult for those societies to live together in peace and security and cheek those who sought to spread dissension. One group could become aggressive towards and even attack another over the slightest word or action. Yet, the justice of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was a source of peace and security for those other communities, just as much as it was for Muslims. During the time of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), Christians, Jews, and pagans were all treated equally. The Holy Prophet abided by the verse *"There is no compulsion where the religion is concerned, (Surah Al-Baqrah, 2:256)*, explaining the true religion to everyone, but leaving them free to make up their own minds.

In another verse, Allah revealed to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) the kind of justice and conciliation he needed to adopt towards those of other religions: *"So call and go straight as you have been ordered to. Do not follow their whims and desires but say, "I believe in a Book sent by Allah and I am ordered to be just between you. Allah is our Lord and your. We have our actions and you have your actions. There is no debate between us and*

you. Allah will gather us all together. He is our final destination. (Sura As-Shura, 42:15)

This noble attitude of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), being in total harmony with the morality of the Holy Quran, should be taken as an example of how members of different religions today should be treated.

The Holy Prophet's justice brought about understanding between people of different races. In many of his addresses, even in his final sermon, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) stated that superiority lay not in race, but in godliness, as Allah states in the verse: *“Mankind! We created you from a male and female, and made you into people and tribes so that you might come to know each other. The noblest among you in Allah’s sight is that one of you who best performs his duty. Allah is All-knowing, All-Aware”.* (Surah Al-Hujarat: 49:13)

Two Hadiths report that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: “You are sons of Adam, and Adam came from dust. Let the people cease to boast about their ancestors” (Abu Dawud).

These genealogies of yours are not a reason to revile anyone. You are all children of Adam. No one has any superiority over another except in religion and taqwa. (Ahmad)

During his final sermon, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) called on Muslims in the following terms: “There is no superiority for an Arab over a non-Arab and for a non-Arab over an Arab; or for white over the black or for the black over

the white except in piety. Verily the noblest among you is he who is the most pious”.

The agreement that was made with the Christians of Najran in the south of the Arabian peninsula was another fine example of the justice of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), One of the articles in the agreement reads:

The lives of the people of Najran and its surrounding area, their religion, their land, property, cattle and those of them who are present or absent, their messengers and their place of worship are under the protection of Allah and guardianship of His Prophet.

The compact of Madinah, signed by the Muslim immigrants from Makkah, the indigenous Muslims of Madinah, and the Jews of Madinah is another important example of Justice. As a result of this constitution, which established justice between communities with differing beliefs and ensured the protection of their various interests, long years of enmity were brought to end. One of the most outstanding features of the treaty is the freedom of belief it established. The relevant article reads, “The Jews of Banu Awf are one nation with the Muslims; the Jews have their religion and the Muslims have theirs”.

Article 16 of the treaty reads: “The Jew who follows us is surely entitled to our support and the same equal rights as any one of us. He shall not be wronged nor his enemy be assisted”.

The Holy Prophet’s Companions remained true to that article in the treaty, even after his death,

(Cont on Page No. 133)

THE WOMAN TODAY!

The male sponsored and thoroughly organized tyranny against woman is spread over millennia, opines Dr. S. Ausaf Saied Vasfi

Is anybody out there to listen to her cries and echo of her cries? Is anybody out there to observe her oppression and the conspiracy of silence over her plight? Is anybody out there to pay heed to her protest and the popular insensitivity to her agony? Is anybody out there to sympathetically consider her impassioned pleas for her proper place in the society?

Quagmire

The equilibrium of human society depends upon two things: one of them is the nature of relationship between man and woman. The moment you disturb it, the society goes off the rails. And there is no bottom of the pit in which the disequilibriumed society falls headlong. It turns out to be a quagmire, the more she tries to come up, the more she goes down.

Initially neither it was she, nor even today it is she, who can be held responsible for the unenviable position. The chief culprit is man. It is he who has, destroyed her individuality, her persona and her uniqueness. The beauty of this "genocide" is that either she has no idea inveigled into believing that she has attained, or is soon going to attain, the ultimate glory. In the process, the predator has mauled rather brutalized her. In today's so-called civilized world, she happens

to be the most oppressed, the most exploited and the most bullied lot.

Difficult Question

As far as examples or data are concerned, one, in fact, does not know from where to begin, and from which continent or country. The male sponsored and thoroughly organized tyranny against woman is spread over millennia.

Let us, to be precise, concentrate on our own country which claims that civilization dates back to centuries and centuries before the birth of Christ (be Allah's blessings upon him).

Here is a brief catalogue of crimes against the poor, defenceless creature. And there is nothing new in it. In fact you can, if you like, update this catalogue on yearly, nay monthly, nay weekly, nay daily basis. Are we exaggerating?

In our country exceptions apart - speaking in general terms, every effort is made to prevent the birth of a girl child. The educated do so. If this effort does not succeed, in which her mother or father is supposed to play a major role, she is fed, clothed and educated less than her brother. Because of her suitors' peculiar trait of greed, she is supposed to bring enormous dowry. If her parents fail, she runs the risk of being torched alive. As a divorcee or a widow,

her future is as dark as ink. An old ailing and widow mother is religiously sent to the holy places by her rich sons (and sons-in laws). For the sake of filling her tummy, she has to beg or clean utensils of the well-to-do in these sacred cities. As a widow she is considered inauspicious even to participate in her own son's or daughter's marriage. There are, then, cases when she has been married to gods. In some cases she is also sacrificed at the alter of gods by her father. She is pawned also. Also she is sold in the market. That she is, sometimes, killed after rape is not the news. She is gangraped also. She is raped as a retaliatory measure for the crime committed by her father or mother. Then he tries to legitimize that prostitution by pleading to legalise it. No holds are barred if she happens to belong to a lower caste. Lynching or hacking to death is sure if she dares to marry a boy of higher caste. That even in posh localities of metropolitan cities, she is abused and beaten up by her educated, rich and forward looking husband is equally true. As bigamy is prohibited and even looked down upon among our brethren belonging to sometimes, either simply killed or got liquidated through hired assassins. All this amidst the claim that "woman is worshipped in Bharat"!

Glimpses of Worship

According to the *Rigved*, the foremost of all the four *Vedas*, women are not worthy of friendship their hearts are like those of the wolves. (10-95-15) Also see *Shat Path Brahmin* (11-5-1-9).

"Women are the army of slaves and their armaments." (*Rigveda*: 5-30-9)

"There is to be found in woman, shudra, dog and cow falsehood, sin and darkness." (*Shat Path Brahm*, 14-1-31)

"Women have no share in will or inheritance. Nor in the (recital of) Vedic mantras." (*Boudhayam Dharm Sutra* 5-2-53 and *Manu Smriti* 9-18)

"Woman is Anrit that is the incarnation of Falsehood." (*Maitrayani Samhita* 1-10-11)

"Women are lacking in strength. They have no share in property. They talk in a weaker manner than the obstinate." (*Tattriya Samhita*: (6-5-8-2)

Following are the traits of women as enumerated in *Anushashan Purv*: "Lying, working unthoughtfully, foolhardiness, deep greed, impunity, mercilessness, stone-hearted". According to *Ramayana, Amya Kand*, (45:29, 30) women are seducers, naughty, tyrants and separators.

"In the religion of women, there is no God except the husband." (*Ram Gharit Manas; Bal Kand*: 125:27) "No woman is worthy of listening to the Ram Katha, for women are by nature less prudent, lack knowledge, unclean". (*Ram Charit Manas* (133:1, 143:2).

"Woman is a torch leading to the Hell; says *Hem Chandra*.

According to *Mahabharat's Anushashan Parv women are liars* (19-6)

"Nothing else is worse than the women. They are the blade of a razor, poison, snake and fire." (*Mahabhart's Anushashan Parv*: 28:12, 29).

"There is hardly one *pativarta* (obedient to her husband) among hundreds or thousands of

women” (ibid 19:93). “Women deserve harsh treatment. They possess the deceitfulness of *Rakshasas* (evil spirits), *Shamber*, *Namuchi* and others. They have a tendency to attract men towards them. The well-to-do therefore, are cautious in talking to them. The virgins however mislead all whether well-to-do or not.” (ibid 38:16, 48:37-38)

In the *Anyodhya Kand of Ramayana* (47-4) it is said: “The learned have written correctly about women’s temperaments. Their cunning and deceit are not comprehensible and it is impossible to reach to their depth.

One may even grapple with his shadow, but it is difficult to get the right clue of her conduct and character:”

In the *Sundar Kand of Ramacharitmanas* it is said, “drum, fool, shudra, animals and women they all deserve tyranny and oppression.”

For further details about the status of women in a Hindu society Tulsidas’ *Hindu Samaj ke Path Bhrashtak* edited by Vishvanath may be referred to. “*Asian Age*” September 25, 95.

Ground Realities

Here is a November 73 story reported in June 98. For the past 23 years, she has been living in the twilight zone. Indeed, for, Aruna Shanbag, the day begins and ends in the metal bed or ward No. 4 of the King Edward Memorial (KEM) Hospital in Central Mumbai. Crippled forever, Aruna lives just for the sake of living. The cold metal bed in Ward No.4 has been the centre of her life since 1973. It was not as if she never had a different life. Her world crumbled on November 23, 1973, for no fault of hers. On

that fateful day, Aruna who was just 20 and working as a nurse was preparing to leave after a hard day. Throughout the day she had been nursing a group of school children who were admitted to the hospital due to food poisoning. After being through with her duties, in the wee hours of the next day, Aruna went to the changing room of nurses in order to freshen up before leaving for home, but unfortunately she could never make it. For lying in wait, was ward boy who had been carefully monitoring her movements that night. Finding an opportune moment, he trapped her, choking her with a leather leash, which cut off the oxygen supply to her brain; he brutally raped her. The hapless Aruna was discovered next morning in an unconscious condition. The damage had already been done. Despite all efforts, there was little that the doctors could do to bring her back to normalcy. Since that fateful day, Aruna Shanbag has been in what the doctors call a ‘vegetable’ state. Though the ward boy was caught later, but shockingly he was let off for want of evidence.

A December ’99 Story

Here is a story that dates back to December 99.

Three brothers raped a 16 year-old Dalit girl and then burnt her to death at Geejgarh village in Dausa district on December 14 evening. A Dalit couple, employed as labourers at a stone mine, had gone out for work while their three daughters were at home. Three sons of an influential Dalit, belonging to another caste, intruded into their houses beat up the younger two girls and told them to go away. Then they raped the eldest girl. Even as she cried for help, they poured kerosene over her and set her afire.

Books after books can be compiled having just newspaper reports. Because each and every regional or national newspaper carries such stories on a daily basis. The only highlight point of these stories is the because of the frequency of the cases, they have ceased to stir us.

Below we give another cause in which father raped his daughter. Her mother colluded with her tormentor. So did her brothers and sisters. The said case was reported in October 79:

Incest & Murder

It is a tale of the murder of a young girl. A middle aged father sexually abuses his teenage daughter for over a year. She becomes pregnant. The father then tries to absolve himself of responsibility and accuses the girl of being involved with a boy from the neighbourhood. The girls suffers silently for several moths but subsequently, reveals the true identity of the father of her child. Desperate, the father then colludes with his wife to try and stop the girl from talking. Fearing social humiliation and ostracisaton, they decide to do away with their pregnant daughter and poison her. She dies in Safdarjung hospital, after suffering from acute nausea and brain fever.

In March 98, it was made known officially that cases of rape involving fathers, uncles or step fathers were rising in the National Capital. In the North East district, 62 cases of rape were reported in 1997 against 49 cases in 1996. Of these, 79 per cent of rape were committed by persons known to the victims. While 15 per cent of the crime were committed by unknown persons, six per cent were committed by father/uncles/step-fathers.

Words Begger Description

The Indian women's plight can, perhaps, never be delineated through words. Because they begger description. To underscore our point, we reproduce a few lines from an editorial of *The Asian Age* (November 15, 99)

“The Rajput Kings used to quietly watch, in fact enthusiastically approve and applaud, women who would burn themselves in the fire of *jauhar* rather than fall into “enemy hands” once their men died. Some school text books insist on telling young children about how (the text books add the give away “It is said” before the story) Rani Padmini, with allegedly 16, 000 women for company, preferred walking into fire at Chittorgarh as the menfolk engaged in a last-ditch battle of survival. Forty-odd-year old Charan Shah, who first dressed herself in a bridal finery and then immolated herself after her husband died of tuberculosis a few days ago may or may not have read or heard all this medieval claptrap. But even if she had, and believed in what essentially is nothing but the crime of suicide, she should not be the only one to be blamed. After all, the social system allows such ghastly practices to take place in these times.”

The said edit was done after reports that hundreds of people were visiting with reverence that sati site, Satpurwan in Mohoba (UP). They wanted it declared as “Sati asthal”. What is glorious in burning a widow passes our understanding. And by the way, our RSS-BJP brethren hold brief for what in the language of law is considered a crime. What Mrs. Vijayaraje Scindia stated on the subject is sufficient to silence the Saffronite who try to deny that fact.

Not long ago, to be exact, on March 8, another Woman's Day went by. There were symposium, seminars, edits and resolutions and demands for women quota in Parliament. The backdrop in which this Day was observed, deserves notice:

The crimes against women steadily increase from 1, 15, 723 in 1996 to 1,31, 338 in 1998 as the latest National Crime Records Bureau's report states. Whether it was kidnapping and abduction, which rose from 14, 877 in 1996 to 16, 381 in 1998, or molestation, which rose from 35, 246 to 31, 046 in the same period, things have only deteriorated. Of the states, Uttar Pradesh notched the highest number of cases followed by Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Delhi, despite accounting for only 1.3 per cent of the national population, reported the third highest rate of such crimes. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report, rapes registered a two per cent decline in 1998 from the 1997 figure, although the total number of incidents stood at the high number of 15, 0341. Of these, 55 percent of cases involved women in the age group of 16-30 years, 22.8 per cent were in the age group of 10 to 16 years. Children below 10 accounted for 4.2 per cent of total rape committed in 1998.

She is Sold

We said about women are sold in our country. Read the following in the December 4 issue of *The Indian Express*. The report is by G. Ranganath: "The crowd is growing and the voices raising. In the dusty Andhra Pradesh town of Eluru, the auctioneer opens the bidding. "Look at this beautiful one. This looks spicy and attractive. Pay Rs. 5, 000 and it's yours". The bid begins at Rs. 5, 000," a bidder shouts. Others

join the race. The price is going up till it reaches Rs. 9,000 sometimes even much more and the object of auction, a young woman, is handed over to the highest bidder. In an auction at Eluru a few days ago, eight young women in the age group of 16-30 years were up for grabs. Shocking? Not in this part of the country".

She is Pawned

We said woman in our country is pawned. *The Pioneer* of July 13, 97 carried a 2-columning the brother of a minister in the Shankersinh Vagela Government, have been arrested for forcing a hotel employee to "mortgage" his wife for Rs. 20, 000. The incident has shades of the Mahabharata where Yudhishtir ended up losing Draupadi after staking her in a game of *chaupad*. The only difference in this real life enactment of the ancient epic is the rescue act-a la Krishna - performed by the judiciary.

The story was by R.K. Misra datelined Gandhinagar.

She is Sacrificed

We said woman is sacrificed in our country: Kosu Ganga Kaveri, of the village of Nunepalli which comes under this mandal, says her father wanted to sacrifice her to propitiate a local deity. Ganga Kaveri says her father, Kosu Bapiraju, was intent on offering her life to Bapanamma, a "hill deity" to whom he had already "offered" her brother. Bapiraju kept her and her sister, Surya Kumari, in house to prevent them from running away, Ganga says. But, both escaped from the house when their mother inadvertently opened the door. They then trekked six kilometers down the hills of Nunepalli and reached Seethapalli village.

The story was carried by *The Indian Express* by its correspondent Rampa Chandaran in its March 8 issues of 98.

Female Foeticide

We said about female foeticide in our country. A report in *The Asian Age* in March last year, said: Law and ethical values always take a backseat when it comes to desire for a male child. As more and more reports of the girl child facing an unsafe and shaky future in the city pour in, experts say that a change in the mindset of couples is the only solution that can prevent the practice of female foeticide, infanticide and gender specific conceptions in favour of a male child. Mostly, it is the woman who under pressure from her in-laws undergo the test and go for an abortion if it is a female foetus. Moreover, since the agreement is between the doctor and the patient, there are no papers to prove. It is double victimization of the victim. Even the MTP Act is violated many times putting the mother at risk, she added.

“Baraat” After 110 Years

Due to this, inexplicable crime, there are townships in our country which rarely receive baraat. The September 17 issue of *The Times of India* carried the following story last year: It's not as if Devra hadn't seen baraats that went out of the village. So, when it received one earlier this year, history was made. It was the first in 110 years. For a century and 10 years this remote village in Barmer district of Rajasthan did not receive single baraat. And simply because it was ensured that no girl born in this village survived after birth. A girl child does not live here very long. In fact, she is killed immediately after birth either drowned in a tub

of milk or fed opium (opium) or simply smothered with a pillow. The story was by Yashwant Raj.

Varanasi, Mathura Widows

About the plight of widow in Varanasi, Ritu Menon in *The Hindu*, (February 20) this year:

Let us take widows of Varanasi first. Kaushal Kishore Misra, spokesman of the Kashi Shankriti Rasksha Sangharsh Samiti, has said that *Water* depicts Varansi as a “cultural hell with widows’ brothels, debauched rich citizens, polluted Ganga, *Pandits* engaged in rationalizing every social ill, and silent gods and goddesses”. Well, what's so surprising about that? It may be shocking, but everybody knows about the desperate and miserable plight of widows-33 million of them in our twice born country, whether in Banaras or Brindavan or anywhere else. Can it be hidden? Can any discussion of it be forbidden? Should we then expect to be told that we cannot oppose Sati, female genital mutilation (far more prevalent than anyone is willing to admit) and every other inhuman “customary” practice because they are part of somebody's idea of “tradition”? Even more outrageous: are we supposed to defend “debauched rich citizens” and condone the rationalizations of pundits and godmen?

The widows of Mathura and Varanasi, have nothing to look forward except death. After hours of Bhajan, the princely sum they earn is Rs. 2. How are they exploited. To quote Virinda Gopinath *The Indian Express* (Feb. 5): If it is not the tehsildar who refuses to fill their forms for pension, it's the bank clerk who forges their signature, or the landlord who takes funeral expenses before renting out the room or the

priest or householder who has sexually exploited them and kept them as cheap labour.”

Here description of widows is equally pathetic: Wrapped in yellowing cotton saris, the elderly, frail women carry the crushing weight of widowhood: Years of deprivation, exploitation, poverty and hunger, fathers and brothers, even husbands, they flock to Kashi and Mathura, looking for shelter and solace. They arrive in trains and buses from far-flung Bengal, Assam, Tripura, Manipur, Nepal and Bangladesh following their “Pandas and gurus” who bring them here.

Childless Widows

What Surendra K. Datta Ray reveals *The Asian Age* (February 23) is equally disquieting: An estimated 3.5, million childless widows are traditionally shunned as doubly inauspicious because they have neither husband nor son. Once widows were burned alive on the husband’s funeral pyre. That still happens occasionally in Rajasthan, land of kings and orthodoxy’s last bastion. Elsewhere, especially in West Bengal, widows are more commonly turned out into the street to fend for themselves. With the cropped head that is the sign in widowhood, draped only in a white cotton sari without colour or ornament, many of these women take refuge in place of pilgrimage along the upper Ganges about 1,600 kilometers (1,000 miles) away. Some are paid the equivalent of 8 cents to chant for seven or eight hours a day in temples and Ashrams. Others are sucked into vice, including drug trafficking and prostitution.

It is not that there is any dearth of laws to protect the widows or the harassed wives, who are

beaten up also. There are Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act, Matrimonial Homes Act, Married Women’s Property Act, Matrimonial Causes Act, Inheritance (Provision for Family and Dependent Act, etc. etc.

Married to God

We said girls, infants married to gods in our country. Read the first two paragraphs of a report in *The Indian Express* (February 20): In cyber savvy Pune, kids of her age are being prepared for school, with parents making them parrot that C stands for computer and M for mouse. But 50 km south of the city, in the temple town of Jejuri, three-year old Sunanda merrily jingles bells and swings to the pitch of folk songs. The village children titter and elders stare, while little Sunanda immerses herself in a daily ritual. She has known no other life from the time her parents abandoned her at the temple of Khandoba. Nor will she know any other life. Because Sunanda, who was left on the temple steps when she was just 60-day-old, is to be wedded to the lord of Jejuri.

In the same paper, Leela Maran said on February 24: A survey has revealed rampant child prostitution in Ernakulam, Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode cities of Kerala. Children even below the age of 14 are involved in the trade. While 40 to 45 per cent of them are boys, girls comprise 55 to 60 per cent. Again at least 53 per cent of them end up pregnant, with 32 per cent of them resorting to abortions in hospitals. In Ernakulam, street children confessed to aborting pregnancies using pills under instructions from adult prostitutes or peers, or using herbal medicines. Around 27 per cent admitted to used of oral contraceptives. Here it would not be inappropriate to speak

about abortions.

Our country tops in (illegal) abortions in the world. It was revealed in August 1998 that according to official information, four million abortions take place in Bharat every year as against 15 million taking place in the rest of the world. Estimates reveal that in 1991, against the 25 million births in the country, 11 million were abortions.

As reported earlier, quite stringent laws are there. The rape law was amended in 1983. Cruelty against women was made crime in 1984. In 1986, the offence of dowry death was introduced. But there are no convictions.

Easy Abortion

How easy has our government made rape, fornication and adultery, can be imagined from the fact that now cheap clinics are available for abortion. There are special packages for students. This is being advertised in newspapers. Now “without any questions” one can have one’s foetus aborted for a song and go from hospital to her home happily just after two hours! Add to it just a few years in jail for a “proved” rape. Then see the “safe-sex” methods. Does it not provide encouragement?

What Is The Limit?

You may ask what is the limit to which promiscuity, extra marital and pre-marital sex is being promoted by our guardians of administration? One recalls that former Union Minister Renuka Chaudhry of erstwhile United Front Government had announced that ‘we do not care who is sleeping with whom, but we care whether they are using condoms or not?’ The truth is that we too are simply ignorant about

this question.

What we, however, know is how Islam tackles the question pertaining to man-woman relationship, the bedrock and the sheet anchor of any society’s poise and equilibrium.

Islam stipulates different duties and rights to man and woman. For a clear-cut position, it draws a quite pronounced line of demarcation, so that no sex steps on the toes of the other. Their respective roles too have been defined in unambiguous terminology. This demarcation rules out the question of high or low and equality and inequality. There is no discrimination on the basis of sex. The penal code, the civil code, the criminal procedure codes are same for both the sexes. She can inherit, earn and own property as much as she likes.

Restrictive or Permissive?

Islam is, as in other aspects, positive on polygamy. It is not at all apologetic about it. Before taking exception to this “audacity” of ours, note carefully that Islamic laws on polygamy are not permissive but restrictive. Islam does not encourage the institution, but restricts and regulates it. See this in the historical backdrop. To quote a historic case:

“Among all eastern nations of antiquity, polygamy was a recognized institution. Its practice by royalty, which every where bore the insignia of divinity, sanctified its observance to the people.” Polygamy was practiced among the Modes, Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians and Hindus with no restriction as to the number of women one might wed. Similarly it existed among that Israelites, Persians, Syro-phoenician races and Athenians. The Spartans forbid polygamy but,

on the other hand, permitted polyandry.

It is History

It is a matter of history that “The wives, with the exception of the one first married, laboured under severe disabilities. Without rights and without any of the safeguards which the law threw around the favoured first one, they were slaves of every caprice and whim of their husbands. Their children were stigmatized as bastards, precluded from all share in the inheritance of their father and treated as outcasts from society”.

To quote Zeenat Shaukat Ali (*The Empowerment of Woman in Islam*) “It is essential to understand that Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) did not introduce polygamy into his legal system as is commonly and conveniently believed. He found himself amidst a system where polygamy was a common feature not only among the Arabs but the Persians and Jews as well. The persecution of women on the social and sexual scale can be determined by the history of the time when Arabs buried their daughters alive and widows were inherited as an integral part of the property of the heirs. Christianity considered them soulless and burnt them as condemned witches, while Jews sold their minor daughters at a price they thought fit. Women had no status in the eyes of the law in any legal system of the world in that era.”

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) introduced rights and privileges for women that other legal systems voluntarily adopted with the influx of time. He curtailed and restricted polygamy unions, insisted on perfect equality between the sexes in the exercise of all legal powers and functions.

He restrained polygamy by limiting and insisting on *Adl* (justice) not only in the form of physical requisites and domestic comforts but also in matters of respect and love thereby giving a completely new outlook to the degraded status of women. The verse from the Qur’an reads: “*If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, marry women of your choice, two or three, or four; but if ye fear ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one.*” (*Holy Quran 4:3*)

Islamic Family

In the family conceptualized by the Quran and Sunnah, the male partner is head and the female partner is manager, charged not only with social and moral but also financial responsibility. It is a simple division of spheres.

How Islam plugs all the loopholes of sexual turpitude, which therein is a cardinal sin, cannot be understood without fully appreciating the stress put by the Quran and Sunnah on chastity, purity and fidelity on the part of both male and female.

Look how in the light of Qur’anic verses and the Holy Traditions, Islam creates chaste, faithful couples and how a model Muslim deals, or ought to deal with woman as a daughter, as a wife, or as a mother:

In the society, envisioned by Islam, there shall not be ogling, chasing women, enticing them or fiddling with them in anyway. They are, and shall be, respectable, responsible citizens. Doors of justice shall remain open to them round the clock.

(We know, and admit that some Muslims have also been misbehaving with her reprehensible impunity. She is being divorced without

sufficient moral or legal justification. In some cases, she is being denied inheritance. Her dower is also not being paid in times. Many Muslim families are broken due to this apathy.

Islam claims, it does, and can restore to her, her lost, ideal position. First of all, the Muslims shall have to start behaving with his spouse. They should remember what the Holy Quran sasys: "Among His signs is (the fact) that He has created spouses for you from among yourselves so that you may console yourselves with them. He has planted love and mercy between you. In that are signs for people who reflect" (30:21) The Holy Quran again says: "Live with them in kindness; even if you dislike them, perhaps you dislike something in which God has placed much good". (4:19)

In a sermon on the eve of Hajjataul Widaa' the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) enjoined upon the Muslim Ummah: "O people! Listen! Behave well towards women, for they are like captive with you. You have no right to give them harsh treatment save in the case when they show open disobedience. If they are guilty of disobedience, keep away from them in the bedroom. In case, you punish them, take care not to cause them severe injury. When they come round and obey your will, do not find pretexts to harass them. Listen carefully! You have rights over your wives and your wives have some rights over you ... And listen, you owe a duty to them to feed them well, and provide good clothing to them".

Is anybody out there to sympathetically consider her impassioned pleas for her proper place in society.?)

(Editor)

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and they even practiced it with regard to Berbers, Budhists, Brahmans, and people of the other belifes.

One of the main reasons why the golden age of Islam was one of peace and security was the Prophet's just attitude, itself a reflection of Quranic morality.

The justice of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) also awoke feelings of confidence in non-Muslims, and many, including Polytheists, asked to be taken under his protection. Allah revealed the following request from the polytheists in the Holy Quran, and also told the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) of the attitude he should adopt towards such people. "If any of the idolaters ask you for protection, give them protection until they have heard the words of Allah. Then convey them to a place where they are safe. That is because they are a people who do not know. How could any of the idolaters possibly have a treaty with Allah and with His Messenger, except for those you made a treaty with at the Masjid al Haram? As long as they are straight with you; be straight with them. Allah loves those who do their duty"? (Surah Al-Tawbah 9:6-7)

In our day, the only solution to the fighting and conflict going on all over the world is to adopt the morality of the Holy Quran, and, like the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), never to depart from the path of justice, making no distinction between different religions, languages, or races.

THE SIN OF KILLING A HUMAN BEING

By Dr. Noorul Hassan

Killing a human being or homicide is a major sin in Islam. After ascribing partners to Allah, there is no other major sin comparable in gravity to killing a believer. It is reported by Abdullah Ibn Masood that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said that after ascribing partners to Allah, there is no other major sin but to kill a human being. *(Saheeh Muslim)*

It is also reported by Anas Ibn Malik that the Noble Prophet (S.A.W.) said that among the mortal sins the major ones are to ascribe partners to Allah; to kill a human being; to disobey one's parents; to tell a lie or to tender false evidence.

The soul of a believer is the most sacrosanct in the sight of Allah. Imam Nesai quotes a Hadith from Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Al-Aas that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said; "By Him in Whose possession is my soul, indeed the taking away of the soul of a believer is more serious in the sight of Allah than the destruction of the world."

As the soul of the believer is the most valuable subject to Allah than the whole world and whatever it contains, deterrent punishments have been prescribed for those who kills a Muslim.

Regarding the punishment prescribed for a murderer in the world, the Holy Quran states:

"O you who believe! The law of equality (Qisas) is prescribed for you in cases of murder: the freeman for the freeman, and slave for the slave, and the female for the female" (Surah Al-Baqrah; 2:178)

It is also stated elsewhere:

"And We prescribed for them therein: Life for life, eye for eye, and nose for nose, ear for ear, and tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal". (Surah Al-Maidah, 5:45)

As regard the punishment in the Hereafter, it has been stated:

"Whoso kills a believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell to abide therein for ever. The wrath and the curse of Allah are upon him and a dreadful chastisement is prepared for him". (Surah An-Nisa, 4:93)

He who kills a believer intentionally, he will neither be forgiven by Allah, nor his prayers will be accepted. In Ibn Hibban it is reported by Abu Daud that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said that Allah may forgive all sins, but He will not

forgive those, who ascribe partners unto Him and those who kill a believer intentionally.

And it is reported by Obadah Ibn As-Samit that the Holy Prophet (S.A. W.) stated that he who kills a believer knowingly, Allah will not accept his any supererogatory and obligatory prayers. (Abu Daud)

ABORTION OR FOETICIDE

Being unaware of the above punishments, an individual kills another individual for a petty cause. Killing of the foetus or abortion has also become a common occurrence today. It is, perhaps, not considered a sin when, in fact, it is also an act of killing. Those who commit it will be considered as murderers and will also be awarded the above prescribed punishments.

Foeticide or abortion is absolutely unlawful in Islam but people advance various arguments to make it lawful.

To make it lawful some say that the development of foetus takes place in the early phase of pregnancy. Some talk about the geriatric health. Some justify abortion saying that the mother had a pregnancy a short while ago and the last child is still too young. Some others cite the problem of bringing up a large number of children. But these arguments cannot make foeticide or abortion lawful.

As the creation possess of the human being commences just after the fertilization, the abortion can not be lawful even in the early phase of pregnancy. The Holy Quran sates in this respect;

“Man, We did create from a quintessence (of clay); then We placed him as (a drop of) sperm in a place of rest, firmly fixed: then We made the sperm into a clot of congealed blood: Then We made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed out of it another creature. So blessed be Allah, the best to create”. (Surah 12:14)

These verses indicate that the creation process -of human being in the womb begins just after the fertilization. This process of creation is also verified by the modern medical science. Therefore, abortion even in the early pregnancy is unlawful.

Those who cite the difficulties of raising a large of children to justify abortion, should study the following verse of the Holy Quran.

“And that you slay not your children on a plea of want” (Surah Al-Maidah, 5:151)

Dear readers, it is evident that abortion and foetal killing are absolutely forbidden in Islam that is why those, who perform abortion and those who get the foetus aborted, will be considered as murderers and will be given the same punishment as are prescribed for the murderers. Therefore, we should always abstain from committing this heinous crime. May Allah protect all of us from the crime of killing a human being.



SECULARISM, COMMUNAL HARMONY AND NATIONAL UNITY

By Nawab Mohammad Abdul Ali

The demolition of a place of worship is totally opposed to Gandhiji's vision, an affront to everything that generations of freedom fighters stood for. The failure to protect a historical 16th Century mosque from destruction has been catastrophic in terms of secularism and constitutional democratic values and in sheer human terms.

We honour the supreme sacrifice of Gandhiji, who laid down his life in the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity and communal harmony.

On January 23-1948 a week before his assassination Gandhiji said: "It would spell the ruin of both the Hindu religion and the majority community if the latter, in the intoxication of power, entertains the belief that it can crush the minority community and establish a purely Hindu Rashtra".

Today the forces of pseudo-nationalism, parading themselves as patriots, are mobilizing people to destroy secularism, communal harmony and national unity. They openly repudiate our Constitution, the rule of law and the goal of modern civilized nationhood which inspired our glorious freedom struggle.

India is a secular state, not a theocracy. It has no preferred religion. Our Constitution lays down the principles of liberty of conscience and equal rights for all citizens.

This is part of the basic structure of our constitution and is non-negotiable.

India's history has been a confluence of many streams. Aryans, Dravidians, Mongols, Kushans, Parsees, Arabs, Persians, Turks and numerous others have enriched its multifaceted and many hued civilization.

India today is a diverse and Pluralistic Society multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi religious and multi-cultural. That is its great strength. It must be preserved. We are a part of humanity with all its rich diversity of religious, languages, cultures, traditions, and experiences and India forms a large microcosm of the contemporary world.

Communalism is a malignant disease that is upon us. It is politically organized. It seeks to defile, destroy or forcibly alter the status of places of worship, although it is prohibited by Indian Law and is against all canons of contemporary civilization. It distracts attention from efforts to

meet the basic needs of the people. It brings death, destruction and horror in an expanding way, as witnessed in Mumbai in the past.

Communalism stands opposed to civilized, modern nationhood and all that is worthwhile in the pluralistic Indian experience, including the tradition of Buddha, Mahavir, Kabir, Tiruvalluvar and the Tamil Saints, Sufis, Swamivivekananda, Guru Nanak, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Mother Teresa and various others.

Pseudo-nationalism denies the many-streamed character of India. It is communalism's political mobilization strategy. It is a disguise adopted by those who reject the constitution and the rule of law. Its votaries wantonly and cold-bloodedly demolish places of worship, distort history, and preside on the destruction of thousands of human lives and property during communal riots. Pseudonationalism seeks to return to the politics of revenge and reprisals, and to rewrite history for cynical political ends.

Secularism is the oxygen without which India Cannot survive. It means equal rights for citizens belonging to all faiths, in other words, no discrimination against anyone on grounds of religions. It also means that religion shall not be mixed up with politics. A secular state is not aligned with any religion.

Constitution and the rule of law mandate that matters of faith relating to public issues cannot be "above" the jurisdiction of the courts, Parliament and other secular democratic institutions. Indian law specifically prohibits

communalism and the promotion of disharmony, enmity and ill will between different religious communities and the exploitation of religion for communal and electoral purposes.

Have minorities been "appeased" and are they a "pampered" lot? The protection of minorities guaranteed under our Constitution is not a matter of "appeasement" (as the votaries of pseudo nationalism allege) but demands of justice and fair play. No society can call itself democratic and modern, unless it defends and protects its minorities religious, linguistic or any other.

To describe India's Muslims as "pampered" is to make reality stand on its head. While poverty prevails among people of all communities, it prevails to a greater extent among the majority of Muslims, as data compiled by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) makes clear. In educational terms, Indian Muslims have *en masse* lacked adequate opportunities to advance. India's religious minorities over all, and Muslims in particular, are grossly under-represented in professions, government as well as private sector employment and educational institutions, according to official statistics.

We should promote the spirit of tolerance and national integrations; not give any quarter to communalism and pseudonationalism; resist all attempts to exploit religious sentiments for political purposes; join hands and stand up for communal amity, secularism, fraternity and human solidarity. This way we can build a strong, united, **(Cont. on Page No. 141)**

HOW ISLAM SOLVES THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF DALITS

By Jamil Farooqui

Islam is an egalitarian system that regulates and guides all aspects of human life. It is based on equity and justice and tries to maintain human dignity at all levels and in every sphere. At the very outset Islam condemns division of human beings into high and low, superior and inferior, privileged and unprivileged groups. Islam treats all human beings equal as they are the creatures of Allah the Lord of the universe and the progeny of the same father and mother. The Prophet said: "All of mankind is (like) the family of God. The dearest among them in the sight of God is the one who is the most helpful to His family (mankind)". All persons, rich and poor, king and pauper stand together shoulder to shoulder for prayers. Islam tries to unite the entire humanity into one ideological community, which is dedicated and committed to the Divine order and tries to establish it on the earth. Thus, Islam roots out the source of the emergence of inequality in general and of dalits in particular in society. There is no possibility of the emergence of a group, which may be characterised as dalit or may be subject to such condemnation in an Islamic society. The Quran, the holy book of Islam, categorically instructs people not to make any derogatory remark to others or consider

them inferior because they are brethren and have to respect one another. In an Islamic set-up. It is the duty of society in general and of the government in particular to maintain and safeguard the dignity and honour of individuals and groups. If these organizations fail to perform their duties they have to face punishment from the Lord Almighty.

Poverty, backwardness and social disability are not the result of the past life of individuals. They are also not considered hereditary in Islam. As such they do not attach any stigma to the incumbent. They are the products of unjust system and inefficient planning as well as of human nature of grabbing all privileges and social problems, which can be solved by sincere efforts, restraint on human desires and ambitions, adequate planning, proper measures, mutual help and developing a distinct attitude among the people. Islam sets up a system where everyone has right to live, grow and survive according to his/her own choice. In this process no one is permitted to suppress and exploit others for his/her own sake or interest. It is a sin for which he/she will be accountable before the Lord. Instead, it is the duty of each individual to take care of the needs of others and extend all possible

material and spiritual help to them to live adequately and survive meaningfully. A person earns merit and award by doing this act. In this way Islam creates an environment based on harmony, peace and tranquility where humans through love, sympathy, mutual understanding and help meaningfully interact with one another, materialize the purpose for which they are created and perform their role on earth.

Islam by its ideological bases removes the conditions that create groups like dalits in a society. It is against its basic principles and as such it never allows such conditions that deprive individuals or groups of individuals from their basic right of existence and development. However, if there exists a group which is poor, downtrodden, undeveloped or backward, Islam guides, helps and brings it to the mainstream through three subsystems; social, economic and political.

Social system provides adequate and sound guidelines according to which one has to live in this world along with other fellow human beings. The problem is to determine the nature and purpose of human operation in this world. How one has to interact. With animate and inanimate objects and establish relation with them? Generally most of us interested and busy in meeting biological needs. Humans are so much engaged in this act that they consider it the sole purpose of life and want to attain as much material gain and comfort as possible even at the cost of others. In this attempt they forget their basic duties as human beings and often go wild. They do not hesitate even to shed the blood

of their own brethren, deny them their basic rights and make their lives miserable. The result is the division of society into privileged and unprivileged sections or groups. The privileged one manoeuvres the entire situation in its favour, grabs all power and privileges and subjugates the other. The one becomes more and more powerful and the other weaker and weaker day by day, and reaches the lowest ebb of society. Islam stops this process and impresses upon human beings that the satisfaction of human needs is not the purpose of human life but is the means to attain the most noble and sublime purpose of human life but is the means to attain the most noble and sublime purpose that is to lead life according to the guidance of Allah, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe as well as to establish His order on the earth. Grabbing power and privileges cannot give one contentment and peace of mind because there is no limit of these substances, the more one has the more one wants and ultimately develops lust and greed. Moreover, the excess of these things corrupts a person and damages his human quality. Islam keeps a tight rein of human desires and ambitions and directs human beings to lead a righteous, virtuous and moral life. Humans have to give the same right of existence to others as they enjoy themselves. They have right to live but at the same time should also let others live.

Human relation in Islam is not based on give-and take principle. It is based on the relation of human with the Creator. A human being has to establish relation with others not to get one's pleasure of to satisfy one's ego or to get some kind of benefit or advantage but to seek the

pleasure of Allah, which is the most auspicious act. This principle determines the entire gamut of human relations and actions in this world. Islam encourages humans to live in peace and harmony, join together and cooperate with each other in good faith and with goodwill to follow the Divine guidance and implement it on the earth. The social life that emerges through this process is based on the fear of Allah and, thus, full of love, sympathy and understanding. It is devoid of suppression, exploitation and oppression. There is in no room for discrimination. Humankind is a large family where all have to struggle jointly to fulfill the purpose of their creation.

Islam is not a religion restricted only to certain acts of worship or performance of certain rituals. It is a comprehensive system encompassing all aspects of human existence. It is a way of life and tells us how one has to live and make one's stay more beneficial and comfortable in this world. It lays down guidelines in whose light one has to earn subsistence, perform economic activities and initiate economic transactions. Human beings have to generate means of subsistence within a particular framework. Economic activities are not determined by the availability of goods and the nature of demands with a view to earning maximum profit but by the benefit and welfare of people and society at large. As such no one is allowed to extract undue advantage and benefit from the critical situation as well as from the weakness and helplessness of others. Hoarding and unnecessary rise in prices are condemnable acts. Economic transactions should be made in the larger interest

of society and in judicious way. Proper wages should be given to the workers, preferably immediately after the end of the work. Those who have enough resources should take care of the needs of others and extend all possible help to them. Before taking meal one has to provide it to neighbour if he/she is hungry. These principles stop economic exploitation and enable weaker sections to share the joy and privileges of life with others. Further, the institution of zakat checks the hoarding of wealth and creates a proper avenue to help the needy. Moreover, these provisions help to remove poverty voluntarily.

Most of the problems relating to the low status of people are due to the unequal treatment of the government, which, by and large, tilts towards its constituent elements and serves their interest in one or the other way. The government neglects those who are unable to play a determinant role in its formation. The government does not pay much attention towards the progress and development of such groups. Sometimes the government intentionally formulates such policies as do not permit such groups to change their condition and achieve high status. In the political structure of Islam power rests with Allah. Humans are only representatives who have to execute His Will and administer the affairs of the state according to His laws. Thus no question of domination of a group arises. Those who are in charge of the administration face wrath of Allah if they fail to discharge their duties, or do injustice and discriminate people on any ground. In Islamic system sovereignty lies in God and not in state

or in people. God in Islam is not a parochial or racial deity but the Lord of the universe and master and Saviour of all mankind. He does not want that persons who execute His laws deprive any section of its basic rights.

It is foremost duty of the state in Islam to take care of the people and cater to their needs. The state provides social security to its citizens irrespective of caste, creed and color. Caliph Umar used to go round the city to know the welfare of the citizens, and at the time of need supply the necessary materials. The protection of life and property as well as welfare of citizens falls under basic responsibilities of the state. The preponderance of Islamic law assures the safety and welfare of citizens including minorities and minimizes the possibility of suppression, repression, exploitation, discrimination and injustice. It is evident from the annals of history that caliphs and administrators fully safeguarded even the minorities during their reign. Khalid ibn Walid during the caliphate of Abu Bakr assured Christian population that no harm would be done to the churches and cathedrals and granted them full religious freedom to practice their religion particularly ringing of church bells. Similarly Amr ibn al-A'as during the caliphate of Umar allowed Christians to possess all properties of churches and used them as they liked. The government in Islam is the government of Allah, which, cutting across all human barriers, assures overall development and welfare of humankind in this world and in the hereafter. The fact is that there is no concept of dalit in Islam as all human beings are the creatures of Allah and deserve His benevolence and bounties.



(From Page No. 137)

democratic, just and prosperous India and show the world that India is one, Indians are one.

We must support and supplement Governments effort at maintaining and promoting harmony and strengthening Secularism. We must try to meet the aspirations of thousands of men and women for a better world, for a world of harmony and peace. We must also try to take all possible steps to avert situations which may lead to communal disharmony. Also we must seek the assistance of the government and the concerned authorities in this connection.

We as Indians should aim at creating an awareness among the general public on the need for religious tolerance, unity and fraternal solidarity among people belonging to all communities. We must seek the support and cooperation of various leaders, including religious leaders to spread the message of peace and oneness.

We must plan to propagate the message of harmony among younger generation, particularly the students, by arranging competitions by way of debates, essays and paintings on the theme of communal peace and national integration.

(Courtesy: Radiance New Delhi, 22 May, 2004)



ISLAMIC VIEW ON ALCOHOL

By Sahib Mustaqim Bleher

THE FACTS:

Alcohol is a bigger problem than we tend to admit, and it starts at an early age. According to the government publications on the state of public health (1993) 20% of 9 to 15 year olds have had their first alcoholic drink by the age of 8, and 89% by the age of 15. 12% (more than one tenth) of 11 to 15 year olds are regular drinkers.

And according to "Social Trends" (HMSO1994), almost a third of the males living in Britain consume alcohol above sensible limits (consumption above sensible limits is lower in women with 11% of the total).

Besides clear convictions for drunkenness or drink driving, courts are kept busy with numerous offenses committed under the influence of alcohol, from domestic violence (including child battering to serious vandalism or grievous bodily harms).

The government's health and safety executive jointly with the health departments and departments of employment had to publish polities on the "problem drinker at work", and the National Health Service Spends large amount of scarce resources on illnesses caused or exacerbated by Alcohol.

Every Christmas there is a nationwide campaign against drink driving. Governments representatives lament the State of the nation's health and drinking habits, but they don't do much more: There is a great deal of tax revenue in the sale of alcoholic beverages.

THE ISLAMIC VIEW

Islam takes a different view. It values the moral and spiritual health of a nation as much as its physical well-being. It Considers anything that interferes with the normal working of the mind, numbours senses, thereby reducing our level of shame or responsibility, or clouds or perceptions as harmful (This includes alcohol as well as other drugs altering the mind).

And recognizing that different people react quite differently to the same stimulant, it does not leave judgement, as to how much is acceptable to them. Too many people thought they had control over their drinking habit, yet ended up having "one glass too many".

Islam categorically states that if a substance can destroy the clarity of the mind in large quantities, it is harmful even in minute quantities. Islam, therefore, advocates a total prohibition of narcotic drugs, including alcohol. It forbids the use, not just the abuse of these substances.

ANOTHER PROHIBITION:

Many would by now point to the prohibition period in America and how it utterly failed by driving the habit underground. As God is aware of human nature. Islam acknowledges how entrenched such habits can be in people and that they cannot be changed overnight. The gradual prohibition of alcohol has to go hand in hand with an educational campaign to build a moral awareness and spiritual identity in our society. When Islam was first established over fourteen centuries ago in Arabia, continuing the Judeo-Christian tradition of prophets from Abraham over Moses, Jesus to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon them), the harm that alcohol caused was with well recognized, but it was not immediately eradicated.

In a first revelations, the Holy Quran acknowledged the benefits of alcohol but pointed out that its harms out weighed those benefits by far.

Next, it forbade believers from praying whilst under the influence of alcohol, thus making it clear that spirituality and drunkenness don't mix.

Finally, many years later, was altogether prohibited as the handiwork of the devil. By the early Muslims who had lived through the spiritual and moral teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) had realized the harms of the drug and alcohol as well as the benefits of the Islamic system of values as the foundation of a strong and caring society.

The happily spilled whatever alcoholic beverages was left in their possession, and

the streets of Madinah were reported as having been awash with the stuff.

SAVING SOCIETY:

Modern society has come a long way since those days. We pride ourselves of great technical achievements. Yet we have also fallen back into the evils of drunkenness and the harm it does to so many people, because we have lost our moral conscience and sense of direction.

We forgot that there is more to human civilization than material advancement. Drained of true humanity, many seek escape and consolation in drink and drugs.

However, this situation is not irreversible. Whilst the hypocritical approach of the American prohibition, where the law enforcement agencies collided with gangster syndicates, was bound to fail. Islam shows the way how a pure and content society can be built which need not be ashamed of its darker side and need not numb its senses in guilt and desperation.

Next time, before you tend to drown your worries in another glass, to be followed by another and yet another, put it down and find out about the Islamic alternative.

(Sahib Mustaqim Bleher was born in Germany into a Protestant Christian family, and took a career in journalism and book publishing. He embraced Islam in 1980, and later moved to Britain. Currently he holds the position of general secretary of the Islamic Party of Britain).

(Courtesy: The Muslim youth, Riyadh, March 2003)

DRUGS: THE SCOURGE OF SOCIETY

By. Ahmad Adam

Definition:

“O you who believe! Intoxicants and gambling (dedication of) stones and (divination by) arrows are an abomination of Satan’s handiwork. Avoid (Such abominations) that you may prosper” (Surah Al Maidah, 5:90)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) said: “Every intoxicant is khamar, and every khamer is haram”.

Intoxicate:

To produce a state ranging from euphoria to stupor to stimulate, to excite: to poison.

We can draw the following conclusions from the above:

(1) An intoxicant is any substance which may be a liquid, solid or gas, that is voluntarily taken into the body by swallowing, injection, inhaling or ingesting, which produces an effect on the brain resulting in a change of mood of the individual;

(2) Examples of intoxicants (*Khamar*) are alcohol, wine, beer, spirits, home made alcoholic

brews, all forms of drugs such as cocaine, heroin, dagga etc;

(3) All intoxicants are totally forbidden and Haram irrespective of the quantity that is used; even one drop of alcohol is Haram; similarly, even one puff of dagga is Haram; it is not the quantity that is important the substance itself is Haram.

(4) Anyone who associates in any way with any aspect of the intoxicants (whether alcohol or drugs) such as the person who uses it, or sells it, or makes it, or delivers it, is a partner with Satan, Since all intoxicants are the handiwork of Satan.

Getting hooked:

Youngsters are very gullible and vulnerable to influences of society, their friends, TV, adults and those that appear to be fashionable in the music and fashion industries. Hence, a youngster may find that all his friends have experimented with drugs and now he is feeling left out because everyone else appears to be having a good time, and all his friends tease him that he is a chicken.

This unsuspecting youth then decides to experiment only once, just to try it out". "Furthermore, if he does not have money to buy the drugs, someone may even offer it to him for free. What he does not realize, is that his first weakness, to please his friends, is the biggest mistake that he can make. The strategy of the drug pushes is to get as many customers as possible. Some drug dealers are so ruthless that they give out free sweets containing drugs to school children. The trick that they use is to give free drugs to unsuspecting people. Once a person becomes addicted ("hooked") he is now a customer for life. The addicted person will then beg, borrow, steal, and prostitute themselves, just to make sure that they have money to buy drugs for their new next fix. It is a vicious cycles of crime, prostitution, family breakdown, social breakdown, and community breakdown. It is for this reason that *Khamr* is known as the mother of all evils".

TYPES OF DRUGS

There are many types of drugs available in the market. The general effect of all drugs is basically very similar, though they differ in their speed of action as well as the severity of the harm on the body. All drugs directly affect the brain, since this is the only way of causing mood changes. Some examples of drugs are as follows:

(a) **Herion:** highly addictive opiate; gives very high rush, followed by many hours of fogginess: the addict lives day to day for the next

fix;

(b) **Marijuana:** affects the parts of the brain that deals with emotion and memory.

(c) **Alcohol:** impairs judgements, memory lapses and blackouts;

(d) **Cocaine:** whether in powder form or crack, it is a highly addictive stimulant; addict loses interest in school, family, work etc.

(e) **Inhalants:** (glue, petrol, hair spray; paint thinners etc.), destroy the protective layers around the brain cells.

(f) **Ecstasy:** powerful amphetamine that causes problems in concentration and causes the person to find difficulty in knowing the different between fantasy and reality.

(g) **LSD:** gives a distorted view of time and space; causes paramonia, confusion, and panic attacks.

(h) **Steroids:** used by body builders to gain muscles; causes mood changes and permanently impairs learning and memory.

(i) **Various:** "date rape prescription drugs" causes short-term memory loss, colorless, odorless and tasteless, inserted into the cool-drinks of girls at parties, the girls is drugged, semi-conscious and is then raped.

HARMFUL EFFECTS OF DRUGS

(1) **Body:** the main effect of drugs is on the brain. However, other body organs that are damaged

include the following:

- (a) Damaged nasal septum (through snorting the drugs)
- (b) Collapsed and clotted veins
- (c) Kidney, liver and lung failure to various degrees.
- (d) damage to the brain
- (e) infected needles causes Hepatitis infection and HIV/AIDs

(2) Social:

The person displays anti-social behaviour such as:

- (a) stays away from home
- (b) stealing crime
- (c) job loss
- (d) withdrawal from community
- (e) embarrassing behaviour in public
- (f) deterioration in relationship with parents or wife or children.

(3) Brain:

The most harmful effect of drugs is on the brain. The brain is the most dedicate and powerful computer-it is an amazing organ, with virtually limitless potential-it is a gift from Allah; it has to be protected and cherished and its full potential must be utilized. The moment any person takes a drug into the body/either by nose, mouth or vein) the drug enters the blood stream and goes

directly to the brain, crosses the blood brain barrier (BBB) and occupies various receptor sites in the brain. This leads to alteration in the chemical and electrical neuronal functioning of the brain which also leads to eventual organic damage to this delicate, yet powerful organ. These changes in the brain is what causes the state of “addiction”-eventually, the body automatically starts craving for the damaging drug leading to a vicious cycle of abuse and further damage.

(4) Body Addicts:

Some mothers who are pregnant sometimes take drugs. These drugs enter the brain of their unborn baby, so that the baby becomes addicted even before birth. When these babies are born, they show withdrawal symptoms and will develop with various learning disabilities. This is a crime against the innocent unborn child.

Symptoms of Drug Abuse:

Some of the symptoms that indicate whether a person in your family, or a friend is addicted to drugs are the following:

- (a) Sudden mood changes;
- (b) Unexplained weight loss and loss of appetite;
- (c) no interest in school, work or life;
- (d) no longer any interest in themselves; no longer caring about personal hygiene, clothing and dressing, always looking disheveled.

-
- (e) frequent prescription of medication;
 - (f) depression and mood swings.

Why Forward and Suggestions:

If there is someone in your family or close friend, who you suspect has a problem with drugs, then it is your duty to assist them in any way possible some suggestions are as follows:

- (1) **Communicate:** Don't pretend that the problem will go away or that it cannot be happening in your own family. Parents and families must learn the art of healthy, open communication and discuss issues in an open, frank and friendly atmosphere. Even if things get heated in a discussion, it is better to talk now rather than wait until your loved one is dead.
- (2) **Show sympathy:** Even if it is to a stranger. The person who is addicted has a disease. He/She needs our help. There may have been a family problem that led the person to experiment. Or the person may have thought that it will be "fun" just to try it out. No one deliberately says "I want to be a drug addict". What they don't realize is, that after the first taste of the drug, "you are hooked. "Instead of condemning them, offer counseling, moral support, send to drug rehabilitation center and offer words of encouragement.
- (3) Imams must speak out against this evil from the Mimbers and discuss the devastating effects of drugs on the individual, his family as well as on society.

(4) Muslim communities must provide alternative forms of recreation for our youth; these could be community centers, sports, youth camps etc. Where the youth can socialize in an Islamic environment and are then not tempted to experiment out of boredom.

(5) The addicted youth should be encouraged to turn to Islam. There have been many examples of heavily addicted Muslim youth, who have been rehabilitated by turning to Islam. Today they are speaking from the mimber about their experiences and are totally devoted to Islam. Allah accepts sincere repentance and an intention to give up the way of Satan and rather follow the Straight Path.

(6) Mothers have a very important role to play in the upbringing of their children. Mothers have to take charge and even go on marches against the drug dealers in a community. The whole community must work actively to rid society of drugs. Only a mother knows the pain and sorrow of seeing her beloved child being a slave to the evils of drugs. Every mother has hopes for her child, hopes that he/she will be healthy, get a job, get married, have children and lead a happy life. Drugs destroy the dreams of every mother.

(7) Make du'a for all the Muslim youth in our community, and throughout the world. We have a responsibility to look after our youth and protect them from the dangers of society. Our youth are our future. Ameen!

HOW TO DEFUSE HATE MENTALITY

By. Samiha Siddiqua

Hate is not an isolated emotion. It is inter-twined with fear, anger and suffering. Whatever the starting point, it is a perilous path for a civilized society to tread upon. As Mark Karbin says, it 'leads a nation to its basest inclinations, which self-immolates itself "rather than harnessing the promise of its collective strength". And no matter which form it takes, it tears society along racial, ethnic, gender or religious lines.

What is more threatening and often proves to be a physical blow to the health of a pluralistic society is that hate is seldom recognized as hate unless it resorts to a violent nature. So if it is buttered in apparently civilized words and actions, it is not hate, but some "reasoned" emotion. This brings us to another sidelined fact that hate does not survive on barren land. It needs receptive ground infused with prejudice, bigotry, and tension. And this is how most hate groups function. They sow seeds of division, of racial or religious hostility, and allow them to grow on the already existing bias, fear and misinformation, further misguiding and colouring our perceptions of one another.

There are two factors at the germ of hatred; our ideology and the tendentious urge to "devalue" others. Both not only affect our feelings and perception, but even the standards that guide our behaviour (Navarro et al (2013). These,

though ugly as it may sound, are also important determinants of a society when people *en masse* identify with leaders and their deified ideology, allowing real control over institutions that are meant to protect and represent us but instead insinuate and perpetuate institutionalized intolerance and phobia. This is perhaps also why after several attempts to combat this unfairness, very few gain little sense of peace. Many a time the blame is put on the victim or some sections of the society as to why they have a "low approval rating in the country, but keeping in mind this carefully planned execution of hate policies, it seems like a moot point. That, however, does not mean that our response to critical situations imbued with phobias has barely any consequence. In reality, they have equal capacity to steer us towards a catastrophic end.

Crises should be dealt with well thought positive responses unlike apathy and fear, which is seldom the case. Apathy is harsh and in the wake of hate, it hints at mere acceptance of the injustice inflicted or of the perpetrators themselves. Sitting home with virtue does little good to one self let alone others. Moving from prayer to action would be a wise thing to do because being a part of a community, one's virtue is needed equally on the outside. Hate or any sort of discrimination must be exposed and denounced at all times, wherever it happens but

must be countered with better speech and action. Getting involved with the people around facilitates human connection and interaction and fosters sympathy for the victims.

Unfortunately, the idea of judging others has scaled up to abominable heights, creating a hurdle for positive tolerance and inclusion. Many a time prejudice resides not on the outside but in a tiny corner in our own hearts. Weeding it out helps in developing a healthy attitude and respect through good remarks and actions. Fencing or walling off oneself creates conceit and hypocrisy to fight hate it is necessary to pop ones comfort bubble and meet people at the level of their hearts with an open heart of our own despite disagreement and conflict. This would seem like a herculean task but with some religious motivation and spirituality of our own, it will seem quite not impossible. When the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) preached his message of peace, he stood by his objectives despite pressure from all sides. Choosing for others what he chose for himself, he demonstrated that level of love and affection, where despite existing prejudices and division, his words and actions touched hearts across racial, ethnic, cultural and religious boundaries drawing attention away from hate and towards unity. Making an ideal of a religious figure may seem unnecessary but if we wish to save ourselves from the profanity of this modern life and direct ourselves from the profanity of this modern life and direct ourselves to some genuine goodness it certainly helps.

To engage in community or social activities is not enough if it lacks a certain level of sociological mindfulness. Negative tolerance makes one espouse disconnection and carefully camouflage disrespect. What is needed is to establish dialogue, while acknowledging differences and

acting out of conscience and love. Making space for the uniqueness of everyone and allowing discussions promotes inclusion and fairness with long-lasting effects. Miles Adcox puts it beautifully.

“Love is born from inclusion, empathy, understanding, and grace. Not the kind of inclusion and love practiced within our likeminded communities and comfort zones, but that which is lived out everywhere with everyone. We are all in this together and are all part of the problem and solution”.

It isn't just apathy, fear, and judgement that play havoc with our perceptions. Worst of all is being ignorant and misinformed. They say the best defence to hate is an “informed and unified community”. Being aware and looking critically at stereotypes portrayed by the media helps defuse prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory conduct. Building prejudice-free home and education helps mould young minds towards acceptance and living harmonious with others. If hate multiplied to campus-wide levels prepares easy ground for division and hostility, so does creating an environment conducive to change and acceptance contribute equally or perhaps more to a society.

Personal changes go long way in promoting love and unity. We need to refocus our energies away from superficial matters, away from our comfort zones, towards recognizing unfairness level, and the dangers of doing nothing in the face of hate itself. A healthy positive perception, stripped of apathy and fear, can build that place of healing where everyone with differing views finds safety, empathy and understanding.

As Martin Luther King, Jr. said:

“Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that”.

ISLAM FOR REFORMATION OF SOCIETY

Prof. Abdul Moghni

The root word of Islam, *silm* literally means peace. Islam, as a faith, connotes obedience to God, who is the Lord, Sustainer and Guardian of this universe. The Islamic definition of God is given in the very first chapter, *Al-Fatiha*. It begins with the verse "All praise is for the Lord of the universe". The following verse explains that God is Benevolent and Merciful.

These are epithets of God with which a Muslim has to start every work. In Islam the etiquette of greeting is: "*Peace be upon you*". Here also a word drawn from *silm* (peace) has been used. God tells the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) We have sent you simply as a blessing for the universe". (*Al Anbiya: 107*)

Thus "peace" is the essence and motif of Islam and the Islamic society. On a universal plane, it is meant for the whole mankind.

ISLAM PREVENTS CATASTROPHE

The teachings of Islam are meant to prevent any kind of Catastrophe in the society, in order to ensure prosperity and progress in the world. For this purpose, the Holy Quran has spelt out definite precepts. The following verses indicate the attitude and behaviour Islam wants to

develop among its followers. *My beneficence encompasses all things (Al-Araaf: 156)*

He has made benevolence obligatory for himself. (Al-Anaam: 12)

That house in the other world We have built for those who do not show arrogance, nor do they desire to create disturbances. And the ultimate good is only for the pious (Al-Qusas; 83)

"Do not create disturbances on the earth, after it has been reformed, and pray to God with fear and hope. The blessings of God are available to those who are doing good. (Al-Aaraf: 56)

"There is no coercion in religion (Al-Baqrah: 256)

"Call people to the way of your Lord with reason and good will, and argue with them in the best style" (Al-Nahl: 125)

"Virtue and evil are not equal. Defend in the best way and return evil with good" (Haammeem Al-Sajdah: 34)

"Mischievous is a greater evil than murder" (Al-Baqrah: 217)

These directions are enough to suggest that Islam does not permit activities causing disaster. Any kind of subversion, engendering harm and loss, has been denounced and prohibited by God. Violence is not at all cherished in the Islamic scheme of things. Terrorism, has been condemned by the Holy Quran. Tyranny and atrocity is a sin. Oppression is a crime Innocent people are to be protected by Muslims, who have been deputed on earth to eradicate injustice and propagate justice. The kingdom of God, according to Islam, is to be established on earth and in the life of this world itself. As such, there is no scope for lawlessness and rioting in Islam.

The history of the Islamic society and state at Medina, during the period of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and his upright four caliphs, for about half a century, is an example of the Islamic model of life, to be followed by the whole world, even today. No better state or society, ensuring peace, justice prosperity, and progress, was and has been established ever before and thereafter, in the whole history of mankind.

ISLAM FOR REFORMATION OF SOCIETY

In view of the above facts, it may be confidently asserted that, for the reformation and renascence of the society in the modern world as well as the olden times, Islam provides. The one ideology required for the human race on the globe. It alone can bring about the human integration that the United Nations, like the League of Nations, has failed to achieve. Equality, Liberty and fraternity are the universal

concepts spelt out and enforced by Islam, much earlier than either the French Revolution or American Independence of the late 18th century.

The following instructions of the Holy Quran ought to be duly considered by the men and women of our times.

“Whoever does an iota of goodness would get it, and whoever does an iota of evil would get it” (Surah Al-Zilzal. 7-8)

We made it obligatory for them in the *Torah* that life be taken for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, all wounds thus avenged. Then, if someone forgives, it would be an expiation for him. *But those who do not judge by divine injunctions are oppressors. (Al-Maidah:45)*

For this we made it obligatory for the children of Israel that, whoever kills one person without any person having been killed or for creating disturbances on earth, he kills the whole human race, and one who saves a life he saves the whole human race”. (Surah Maidah; 32)

“If you take revenge, do it in proportion to the wrong done to you. And, if you keep patience, it is good for you (Surah Al-Nahl: 126)

“If someone has transgressed against you, you may transgress against him, to the extent he has done. But fear God and know that God is with the pious. (Surah Al-Baqrah:194)

“Fight in the way of God those who are fighting you. But do not transgress. God does not like transgressors (Surah Al-Baqrah: 190)

“If they tend to peace, you tend to that, and trust God” (Surah Al-Anfal:61)

“Do not abuse those deities they worship other than God” (Surah Al-Anaam: 108)

“Your anger against people, who have stopped you from going to the sacred mosque, should not provoke you to transgress. Cooperate in virtue and piety, and do not cooperate in sin and atrocity. (Surah Al-Maidah:2)

“O mankind, We have created you from one man and one woman, and turned you into groups and communities, for the sake of introduction. Undoubtedly, the noblest among you, in the sight of God is the one who is the most pious. (Surah Al-Hujarat: 13)

“For you is your religion and for me is my religion” (Surah Al-Kafiroon:6)

A tradition of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) should be added to the aforesaid: *“All creatures are family of God so God loves him most who treats His family best.”*

The above injunctions of God and matching counsels of the last prophet of Islam, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), were literally and fully carried out, in the age of medieval obscurantism, during the 7th century which was as brutal and barbarous as the 20-21st centuries. Hence, the advent of the page of Enlightenment, that continued for more than a millennium, up to the Industrial Revolution, that ushered in the eve of atheist-materialist science and technology. In order to realize this fact of history, one should compare the peace pacts of the Holy Prophet with the

infidels, Jews, and Christians, as they were strictly observed, in letter and spirit, with international accords and national covenants of our days, which are signed to be broken and are blatantly shattered. The atrocities perpetrated by Europe and America on people, from Palestine to Afghanistan, are worst outrages against humanity, justice as they had been in Hiroshima and Vietnam. So is the demolition of Babri Masjid at Ayodhya, the perpetrators whereof are preaching against terrorism from the highest seat of power, without even restraining the members of their militants; Chauvinist and jingoist parivar.

On the contrary, the teachings of Islam for the reformation of society and polity suggest: (1) Tolerance, (2) Moderation; (3) Justice; (4) Cooperation (5) Peace based upon egalitarianism:

Therefore, the Holy Quran calls the Islamic Ummah a “Community of the middle path”, raised for mankind to “Bid for virtue and forbid vice” at all time and clime, perpetually and universally, (Surah, Al-Baqrah: 143)

ANNOUNCEMENT

This issue of The Simple Truth consists of two months .i.e. March and April, 2018. The next issue will appear in the month of May, 2018. Kindly bear with us.

(Editor)

MARKAZI JAMIAT AHLE HADEETH, HIND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND ITS CONTRIBUTIONS

AHLE HADEETHS – THEIR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Ahle Hadeeth or the Salafis, popularly but contemptuously referred to as the Wahabis, are a constituent group of Sunni Muslims. They adhere to the pristine teachings of Islam as enshrined in the Holy Quran and Sunnah (the precepts, practices and approvals of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and reject what has not been enjoined by the Islamic Shariah. The Ahle Hadeeths or the Salafis believe in pristine Monotheism (Tauheed Khalis), turn to Allah seeking His Mercy. They do not stick to any of the Sectarian Jurisprudence (fiqh) although they are given due respect. Since they adhere to the pristine teachings of the Holy Quran and Sunnah, they have their distinct identity among Muslims.

- ❖ The Salafis interpret Quranic Verses with an anthropomorphic reference literally;
- ❖ They elucidate the message of Islam to all mankind and clarify the truth of pure Islamic monotheism (Towheed) according to the Quran and Sunnah;
- ❖ They propagate and publicise the Islamic principles, values, culture and ideas to all mankind according to the accepted path

of righteous Salaf;

- ❖ They oppose polytheism, innovations in religious matters, (bid'at) blind imitations and reject many practices prevalent among the mystics (Sufiyas) of this day as un-Islamic accretions.
- ❖ They teach the principles of mutual benevolence, unity, peace, brotherhood, love of the country and respect of human values rejecting the causes of conflict and disunity;
- ❖ They believe in Ijtihad and not Taqleed. However, the four Imams are given due respect;
- ❖ They do not believe forced conversion as the Holy Qura'n has declared: "*There is no coercion (in the matter of) religion;*" (Surah Al-Baqrah; 2:256)
- ❖ They condemn terrorists and terrorism as Islam is the religion of peace.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Ahle Hadeeths exist with the existence of Islam. In every part of the world wherever is Muslim population. They exist in India from time Muslims came to the country. In India their estimated population is about 25-30 millions. Markazi Jamiat AhleHadeeth is their represen-

tative organisation founded in December, 1906. It has 21 branches at state levels, more than 200 branches at district levels and forty thousand at local levels. It has thousands of its followers all over the country who are playing a great role in the development of the country. Their representation in education, industries, agriculture, politics and defence has been recognized and appreciated.

Since its inception it has been serving Islam, Muslims and the country. No any religious and social organisation of Muslim Community existed prior to this Jamaat in India.

Among those who were Ahle Hadeeths in India were Muhammad Bin Tughluq (1325-1351), Maulana Shams-al-Din ibn al_Haweri, Mualan 'Alam al_Din (grandson of Sheikh Baha al-Din Zakariyya of Multan), Shah Wali Allah (1702-1763), Maulana Abdul Aziz Muhaddith Dehlavi, Shah Muhammad Ismail Shaheed, Maulana Walayat Ali Azeem Abadi, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), Nawab Muhammad Siddiq Hasan Khan (1832-1890), Shiekh Abdul Haqq Muhaddis of Benaras, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958) (Freedom fighter and first Education Minister of India) etc.

There is circumstantial evidence of Balban (1266-1287) and Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316) as they were Ahle Hadeeth too.

Abdul Haleem Sharar, Maulana Altaf Husain Hali (great poet), Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, (Editor Zamindar), Maulana Abdul Majeed Hariri (former Indian Ambassador to Saudi Arabia), Maulana Hasrat Mohani and Maulana Abdul Wahab Arvi were some prominent Ahle Hadeeths.

Ahle Hadeeth or Salafis were in the forefront to fight the British rule. Maulana Abdullah martyrdom of Andaman and Maulana Walayat Ali Sadiqpuri (Azeem Abad) were great freedom fighters from the Salafi ideological lineage. "The Wahabi (Salafi) movement gave a number of towering personalities to the nation. Shah Ismail, Syed Ahmad, Wilayat Ali, Inayat Ali, Mian Syed Nazir Hussain, Nawab Siddique Hasan Khan of Bhopal, Sir Syed, Mualana Sanaullah Amratsari and Abul Kalam Azad. This galaxy forms the brightest chapter of our freedom struggle. The first commander of the patriot warriors of the pioneer movement was the great Wahabi (Ahle Hadeeth) leader Shah Ismail Shaheed and when the movement reached its point of culmination, it was again a great Wahabi (Ahle Hadeeth) leader (Abul Kalam Azad) who negotiated the transfer of power with the British." (The Salafis, P.204-205, A.Q.Naqvi, Al Kitab Int. New Delhi, 2001). The freedom fighter from Jamate Ahle Hadeeth like Maulana Abdul Qayyum Rahmani is still alive.

SERVICES

Jamiate Ahle Hadeeth Hind is of course the oldest Muslim Jamiat (Organisation in India. From 1906 to 1947 (41 years) this organisation contributed a lot to regain the intellectual and cultural identity of the Ummah and fought for the principles of humanity and brotherhood rejecting the causes of conflict and disunity among the Muslims. Maulana Sanaullah Amratsari was the sole leader of the same. Almost all religious circles of India hailed the Maulana's endeavours in this regard.

The Jamiat has seen a lot of transformation in the last 17 years. The Jamiat is on its way to becoming one of the best organisation in providing highly developed organization, INSHALLAH!. This development is determined by honesty, integrity, and commitment. We value our members the most and strive hard to maintain the high standard of office discipline that we have set for ourselves.

Jamiat has also been in the news by organising the Jamate Ahle Hadeeth Conference at Pakorh, in Jharkhand in 2004. Then there are a host of prestigious projects initiated that make Ahle Hadeeths one of the most talked about milli activities in the media and religious circles of India.

These endeavours of Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth are a clear indication of the accelerated growth on different fronts.

As parts of its efforts to raise the quality of education to level that meets the needs of society in the new era, Jamiat has in recent years introduced a variety of projects to upgrade the quality of Islamic training and education as well as educational programme for teachers, instructors, Dawah workers, Muftis and *Islamic jurists*, Al-Mahad Al-‘Alee has been established in Okhla, New Delhi with new syllabus.

The central aim of Al-M‘ahad is to provide a quality education for all its students based on their particular needs, ages, abilities and aptitudes and that its graduates will be bilingual in Arabic and English. When the Al-Mahad was founded, it took over the existing building of Ahle Hadeeth Complex, which were completely modernized and refurbished and now form the

premises of Ahle Hadeeth Complex, Okhla New Delhi. With a 3 story Jama Masjid hostels, guest rooms, reading room, library and office. The Al-Mahad, at present, cannot accommodate all pupils who apply for admission, as its intake is restricted owing to financial constraint on hostel, food, electricity and other scholarships.

At – present, the Muslim parents are struggling hard to find a judicious balance between secular education and Islamic studies for its young ones. They are striving to give their children the best education in Science and Social studies as well as impart instruction in Islamic Faith. Keeping its cultural and social moorings intact. They also want their children to be educated in an Islamic environment.

For this purpose the Jamiat has prepared a new syllabus for Madarsas and English medium schools covering all secular subjects from primary to standard 5th. The same has been printed and published by Maktaba Tarjuman, Delhi under the auspices of Jamiate Ahle Hadeeth, Hind. The necessary books according to stated syllabus are being prepared by a panel of educationists. Ahle Hadeeth Madarsas have been alerted to include modern subjects in their syllabus along with Islamic subjects.

The present situation makes it incumbent on Muslims to present the message of Islam through all available means, i.e. mass media, Islamic books, folders, and strengthen relations with different communities and cultures in order to dispel doubts and misunderstandings about Islam and Muslims.

In this regard Jamiat has offered 550 Holy Quran in English to India Tourism Development

Corporation Ltd., New Delhi for each and every room of Ashoka Hotel and 1600 Holy Quran for hotels under its possession all over India. A long awaited book, "History of Jamate Ahle Hadeeth (comprising of 731 pages) written by Dr. Bahauddin has been published.

THE PUBLICATION SERVICES OF JAMIAT AHLE HADEETH, HIND

Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth, Hind is predominantly a da'wa and reformation movement which is struggling to wipe out the non-Islamic concepts and tradition that have crept into the Aqeeda of the Muslim community and replace it with the pure Islamic monotheism and culture. It has been playing an active role in correcting the Aqeeda of the believers for more than one and half century. Publication is one of the crucial means for an ideological organization to spread its ideas. Therefore the Jamiat had set up publication department since from the very beginning. It has contributed in Urdu language precious books on Islamic beliefs, history, ibaadat, comparative studies on different madhahib (Islamic schools of thoughts) in Islam and other issues related to Muslims and Islam in general. Beside Urdu, it has been publishing books in English, Arabic and Hindi as well. Due to pressing demand of Islamic books, the last five years saw a stupendous increase in the publication of books on the part of the Jamiat and some of them are research works which are significant for reference purposes. Many important books were also translated and published in Urdu, English and Hindi languages. Here is a bird-eye view of some of the publications that Markazi Jamiat has revived.

1. *Muttahida Hindustan ke Ulama-e-Islam ka Awwaleen Mutaffiq Faisla* (The first joint legal verdict of ulama of United Indian Subcontinent). The book is compilation of fatawas of the prominent Islamic scholars of Indian Subcontinent refuting and denouncing Qadyaniyat. Pages: 188 Price: Rs. 60.

2. *The Holy Quran* with translation of the meaning of the Quran in Hindi by Maulana Daud Raz Dehlvi, with simple and authentic commentary for the convenient of the common readers. The translation has been well-received by the readers and thousands of copies sold. Now the fourth edition is in the press. Pages: 1444 Hadiya: Rs. 300.

3. *Commentary of Sahih Bukhari* in Urdu language written by Maulana Daud Raz Dehlvi. The need to understand Sahih Bukhari more deeply has been felt by Urdu readers since long. It was colossal work to publish a book comprising of 5389 pages and in eight volumes but by the mercy and help of Allah (SWT) and cooperation of our sympathizers we were able to finalize its publication. The hadiya has been subsidized by Markazi Jamiat. Pages: 5389 Hadiya: Rs. 1800 Volumes: 8.

4. *Quran Majeed* with translation of its meaning in Urdu by Maulana Mohammad Junagadhi with commentary by Hafiz Salahuddin Yusuf. It is a well-received translation with short commentary and a unique contribution from Markazi Jamiat. Pages: 1440 Hadiya: 150.

5. *Maslae Rafa'ayadain m'a Ameen bil Jeher* – Pages: 40.

6. *Tauheed Kya Hai* – Pages: 48.

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7. *Mohre Nabuwwat* – Pages: 40.
 8. *Dhaeef wa Maudhu'a Ahadees* – 182.
 9. *Yassarnal Quran* – Pages: 48.
 10. *Sirate Mustaqeem aur Ikhtelafe Ummat* – Pages: 324.
 11. *Khilafat wa Malukiyat ki Tareekhi wa Sharaee Haisiyat* – Pages 624.
 12. *Qabar Parasti ek Haqiqat Pasandana Jaiza* – Pages 210.
 13. *Hayate Sahabah ke Darakshan Pehlu* – Pages 507.

These are the books that have been republished. There are also a good number of books that have been newly introduced by the Markazi Jamiat. Here is the list of some of them:

1. *Namaze Nabavi* – Pages 172.
2. *Sue Haram* – Pages 366.
3. *Haq Prakash bajawab Satyarth Prakash* – Pages 299.
4. *Turke Islam bajawab Tarke Islam* – Pages 210.
5. *Dua't ke Liye Mansooba Saazi aur Waqt ki Ahmiyat* – Pages 126.
6. *Qayamat ki Nishaniyan* – Pages 468.
7. *Khwab hai Rasool* – 68.
8. *Fatawa Sanaiya* – Pages 1606 Volumes: 2
9. *Islam ki Betiyaan* – Pages 600.
10. *Aham Deeni Masa'el* – Pages 64.
11. *Al Furqaan* – Pages 210.

12. *Alhizbul Maqbool min Ahadeesir Rasool* – Pages 128.
13. *Riyazus Saliheen* (in Bengali) – Pages 951.
14. *Ruyate Hilal* – Pages 348.
15. *Tehreek Khatme Nabuwwat*, 24 Volumes.
16. *Madaris-e-Ahle Hadees Delhi*,
17. *Tareekhe Ahle Hadees*, 7 Volumes.
18. *Naqad ke Deeni Usool* – Pages 36.
19. *Quran Majeed Mu'arra in English*.

Attention has been paid on publishing some of the books which were either written or translated by some devoted sympathizers of the Jamiat. These are *Kitabul Janaiz* (in Arabic) pages: 160 and *Nisabe Taleem barae Primary Darjaat* (Urdu) pages: 154.

A souvenir on the occasion of Ahle Hadees Conference held in Pakorh, 2004, was also published which has been appreciated by scholars like Allama Mohammad Ishaq Bhatti (Pakistan) and Dr. Bahauddin Mohammad Suleiman (London). This souvenir has glimpses of the history and achievement of the Jamiat along with short biographical articles on former Ameer and Secretaries of the Jamiat and other related informations.

The educational books have been revived with new composing and beautiful cover designs like *Chamane Islam Qaieda*, part 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Due consideration is being taken to avoid the shortage of the books for the convenient of the readers. Every year Maktaba Tarjuman publishes an appealing yearly Islamic Calendar. On some special occasions pamphlets and folders

based on Islamic teachings are also published and distributed free of cost.

A directory of madarsas of Ahle Hadees has also been published comprising of 650 pages. It would serve a good reference book for the students of history.

There are some valuable books in waiting for publication. They are going through different publication process and will be out soon, *inshaAllha*. A few of them are *Fatawae Sanaiyya*, *Fatwa Sheikhul Hadees Obaidullah Rahmani*, *Fatawa Aiemma fi Nawazil Madalhama*, *Maqalate Taleemi Seminar ba moqa' Ulamae Ahle Hadees Convention 2006* and seven volumes of *Tareekhe Ahle Hadees by Dr. Bahauddin Mohammad Sulaiman*. Other nine volumes of *Tareekhe Ahle Hadees* are expected to be published within coming two years.

Firstly, all credits for these achievements and development is to Allah (subhanahu wa ta'la) and after that humble efforts of the office bearers and the sympathizers of the Jamiat is commendable.

Jamiat has been publishing its organ in four languages i.e. monthly journal "*The Simple Truth*" in English, *Al Istiqama* in Arabic, *Islahe Samaj* in Hindi, and fortnightly *Jarida Tarjuman* in Urdu.

JAMIAT'S DAWAH AND ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES COULD BE SURFED ON INTERNET

The boom of knowledge in the modern world is because of the boon of information technology.

The means of communication, prominently internet, has acquired an unimaginable wider scope and made it easier to access the masses. The one who is not utilizing these means is considered to be legged behind and also losing a good opportunity to have an easy approach to a good number of people for propagation of his ideas or selling of his products. No area of work that is related to human kind has escaped utilizing the internet facility today.

The Da'ee-e-haq also should not leg behind in exploiting this boon of the modern era in propagating the truth of Islam. Keeping this in view the Jamiat Ahle Hadith Hind had launched its website in 2004 (www.ahlehadees.org) informing about the aims and objective of the Jamiat. Now the Jamiat has revived it into a whole portal of the Jamiat where readers can acquaint themselves with the activities and achievements of the Jamiat on frequent basis. It will be an easy way to know about the dawah activities of Jamiat in the country and its works related to welfare, educational research, and its publications. It will also serve as a direct means of communication with readers where they could put their queries regarding the activities of the Jamiat and on Islamic issues.

There is also a good news for much of the convenient of the readers who are interested in reading the organs of the Jamiat online. They could do so by just at one click of the mouse. Jamiat has been publishing its organ in four languages i.e. monthly journals *The Simple Truth* in English, *Al Istiqama* in Arabic, *Islahe Samaj* in Hindi; and fortnightly *Jarida Tarjuman* in Urdu. Now you can also access the online cop-

ies our journals completely free.

For the information of the readers and sympathizers of the Jamiat we are presenting introduction and the short history of the Jamiat, the relevant information about the office-bearers at state level, press release issued from time to time, publications of the Jamiat and services rendered and welfare activities organized by it. There is also a news section programmed at the website which is presenting national and zonal news of the activities of the Jamiat which would include the official visits of the General Secretary for da'wa purposes and press conferences organized by the Jamiat.

Another important feature of this website is that it is available in four languages i.e. English, Arabic, Hindi, Urdu. Thus it would be easier for a large number of people to understand the ideology of the Jamait.

It is pleasing that hundreds of internet user visit our website everyday and we are getting lots of response through email. Suggestions are solicited to make our website more better. Sympathizers are requested to cooperate in propagating about our website www.ahlehadees.org. We also seek their financial assistance to enhance our services through this means. For further queries please send an email to the following address:
Jamiatahledeeshind@hotmail.com

REFRESHER AND ORIENTATION COURSE

Jamiate Ahle Hadeeth Hind needs active and trained teachers/du'at/muftis and responsible organizers. Moreover, it is extending full support

to the cause of education. Considering this, the Refresher and Orientation Course for graduates of Madarsas, office bearers of state and district units, du'at, muftis, social workers is being organised annually. So that they could be trained in modern concepts of teachings and da'awah works etc.

JAMIAT AHLE HADEETH CONDEMNS TERRORISM

Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth, Hind condemns all sorts of Terrorism and terrorists. Islam is the religion of peace. It aims to establish peace. All the organisations that are involved in terrorist acts and destruction of public and private properties in the name of Islam can not be called Mujahid nor their activities as Jihad.

Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth opines that such activities have no Islamic injunctions. Islam forbids abusing the deities of other religions. It forbids its followers to assault the worshipping places of other religions as well.

Academic and Social Activities

Thousands of educational and social institutes and welfare societies, Madarsas, Schools, Colleges, Tibiya Colleges are run by members of this Jamiat.

Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth, Hind had organised a symposium on "Terrorism: A curse in Modern Times" on March 19, 2006 in Ansari Auditorium, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi attended by Maulana Ahmad Bukhari, eminent scholars, religious personalaties and academicians.

Maulana Asghar Imam Mahadi Salafi, the General Secretary, Jamiat AHle Hadeeth, Hind said:

“Terrorism was the greatest threat to the whole of mankind in the present days. He cautioned the crying need of the hour was that the whole humanity has to rise above individual positions or parties or religions and join hands to curb the evil which was eating vitals of our society which is needed to be addressed on war footing. He clarified that Islam did not permit any kind of terrorism in whatever form it may be and, in fact, Islam had the distinction of being peace loving religion and torchbearer for universal brotherhood. He further said that Jamiate Ahle Hadeeth, Hind, having units and territorial establishments all over India, had responded to the call of the time and organized programmes to promote peace and tranquility. He, however, cautioned that certain prejudiced forces were for their dirty designs trying to paint Islam as the fountain of terrorism, which is not only far from the truth but is also highly condemnable by one and all having faith in equality, fair play and justice.

A two day All India ‘Ulama-e- Ahle Hadeeth convention, Seminar and Symposium on Education, Madarsas, and Terrorism was organised on July 23-24, 2006 at Ahle Hadeeth Complex, Okhla attended by former prime minister, Mr. V.P. Singh, Mr. Shivraj Patel Union Home Minister, Govt. of India; Mr. E. Ahmad, Minister of State (External Affairs), Mr. Shoib Iqbla, Deputy Speaker, Delhi Assembly; Mr. Imran Qidwai, Chairman AICC Minorities Cell; Syed Athar Delhavi, President Minhajur Rasool, Delhi, Representatives State Unites of jamiat Ahle Hadeeth, eminent scholars, Ulama and freedom fighter Maulana Abdul Qayyum.

Speaking at the Symposium, “Are Madarsas

viable seats of Social Service or Breeding Ground of terrorism” the Chief Guest Mr. Shivraj Patel Said: “We believe that Madarsas are seats of Social Service. They are not the center of terrorism.”

Trying to dispel doubts about Madarsas, often accused of being breeding of militancy, Union Home Minister Shivraj Patel Said: “We believe that Madrasas are Seats of Social Service and centers of terrorism. Madarsas, where knowledge of humanism is being imparted and where human values are being taught, could only be termed as “Servants of humanity”, we are not ready to accept that they are the breeding ground of terrorism.” (The Times of India, July 24, 2006)

The symposium was given courage by 56 national dailies and weeklies.

The ‘Ulama’s convention on education was historic one. The ‘Ulama of 28 States presented their treatises on different topics related to education and Madarsas. They were of the view that Madarsas are solid fortresses of the basic education of Islam and centres of Islamic identity. Some topics like *teaching Method of Islamic Madarsas; Uniformity of Curriculum in Indian Madarsas; Madarsa Board – Necessity, Importance and Methodology, Characteristics of Islamic Madarsas in Secular State; Importance of Implementation of Counselling System in Madarsas; Role of Teachers in Personality development of students; Teaching problems in Girls Madarsas; Islamic Madarsas – Terrorism and Media; Secular Education in Madarsas and Short Term Professional Courses in Islamic*

Madarsas were of high standard.

ALL INDIA AHLE HADEETH CONFERENCE

Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth, Hind is planning to celebrate All India Ahle Hadeeth Conference in 2008 in Delhi with full enthusiasm. The Jamiat aims at blending tradition with modernity, presenting history, culture, development, and services rendered in various fields. A number of books, so History of Jama'ate Ahle Hadeeth, Book on Role of Ahle Hadeeth Salafis in Independent Movement are expected to be released. Jamiat would felicitate its scholars, teachers, Du'at, Social Scientists for their outstanding performances in various fields.

NAMES OF SUCCESSIVE PRESIDENTS/AMEERS SINCE 1947

- (1) Alhaj Muhammad Salih (1944 – 1952);
- (2) Maulana Abdul Wahhab Arvi (1972);
- (3) Dr. Syed Abdul Hafeez Salafi (1972– 1979);
- (4) Maulana Abdul Waheed Salafi (1979-1989);
- (5) Maulana Mukhtar Ahmad Nadvi (1990 – 1997);
- (6) Maulana Safiur Rahman Mubarkpuri (1998 -2000);
- (7) Hafiz Muhammad Yahya Dehlvi (2001-2017)

SUSSESSIVE GENERAL SECRETARIES SINCE 1947

- (1) Maulana Sanallah Amratsari (1906– 1947)
- (2) Hafiz Hamidullah Dehlvi (1947-1950)

(3) Hafiz Muhammad Salih Alijan (1950– 1956)

(4) Maulana Abdul Jaleel Rahmani (1956– 1960)

(5) Maulana Daud Raz (1960 -1971)

(6) Maulana Abdul Hamid Rahmani (1971– 1975)

(7) Maulana Abdus Salam Rahmani (1975– 1978)

(8) Maulana Aatur Rahman Madani (1978– 1982)

(9) Maulana Aneesur Rahman Azmi (1982– 1985)

(10) Maulana Abdul Wahhab Khilji (1987– 1990)

(Acting G. Secretary)

(11) Maulana Abdul Wahhab Khilji (1990 – 2001)

(12) Maulana Asghar Ali Imam Mahadi Slafi (2001-2017)

ALL INDIA AHLEHADEETH CONFERENCES SINCE 1947

So far 28 All India Ahle Hadeeth Conferences took place since its inception in 1906. However, there were, 4 conferences of All India level since 1947.

1. Nau Garh (Basti) 16 – 19 November, 1961 under the chair of Maulana Abdul Wahhab Arvi.

2. Bangalore 5 – 6 May, 1985 under the chair of Maulana Abdul Waheed Salafi;

3. Mau 14 – 16 April, 1995, under the chair of Maulana Mukhtar Ahmad Nadvi;

4. Pakurh 13 – 15 March 2004, under the chair of Hafiz Muhammad Yahya Delhvi.

TANZEEMI TRAINING

A Tanzeemi Convention held on where detailed guidelines on the implementation of Jamiate Ahle Hadeeth's aims and objects and future programmes had been issued. In order to ensure proper and timely implementation of the programmes with greater transparency, better monitoring, faster implementation and more accountability the same had been widened by including state, district and block level trainings. In this regard almost 20 Organizational training took place across the country in the year 2007.

PUBLICATIONS

Maktaba Tarjuman, a publication division of Markazi Jamiate Ahle Hadeeth has reprinted the following books in 2007:

1. Tafseer Ahsanul Bayan (Urdu)
2. Tarjuma Thanaee (Translation of Holy Quran) in Hindi
3. Reyazus Saliheen (Bengali)
4. Bukhari Shareef (Urdu)
5. Chamane Islam (I – IV) several editions
6. Islamic Calendar for 2007 (16000 in numbers) with English/Islamic dates and historical knowledge.
7. History of Jama'at Ahle Hadeeth Vol I by Dr. Bhauddin has been published and the remaining a volumes would come out in due course of time. Compilation and typing of the same is under way.

8. The Speeches and Treatises presented at Jamaate Ahle Hadeeth Conference at Pakurh in 2004 is about to be printed in a book form. The delay was due to financial strain.

9. Ahle Hadeeths are known for its historical sacrifices and struggle against the colonialist for the sake of the country and faced the brunt of their rage and oppression during independence struggle. A book on the services rendered by Ahle Hadeeths freedom fighters is under preparation. The Markazi Jamiat's organ "The Simple Truth" would bring special issues on the same in near future.

10. *Directory of Indian Libraries* having manuscripts / rare books of religious, academic and cultural values as well as farmans of Muslim rulers in India, beneficial to research scholars and intellectuals is under compilation.

11. Directory of Ahle Hadeeth Mosques in India is under preparation to reactivate its religious and cultural activities bringing them under the fold of Markazi Jamiate Ahle Hadeeth.

12. All India Census of Ahle Hadeeth Muslims is vital for mutual cooperation and close coordination. Preparation in this direction is under way. It is expected to have names, addresses and contact Nos of State, district and block level members of Ahle Hadeeth Brothers.

DAWATI PROGRAMMES AND VISITS IN 2007.

Dawati programmes took palce in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Karnataka, Kerala (under the auspices of Nadwatul Mujahedeen, Kerala), Rajasthan, Mumbai, Tamil Nadu and Pondecherry.

State jamiat Ahle Hadeeth of Mumbai organized a seminar on “Independent Movement and Ahle Hadeeth in India” on December 30, 2007.

State Jamiate Ahle Hadeeth Tamil Nadu and Pondecherry organised a Conference on “Fikre Akhirat” on 27th January, 2007.

Apart from above stated programmes, other Dawati Programmes such as “Ahyae Sunnat Conference” took place on March 17, 2007 at Bartala, “Murabbi Aazam Ka Tarbiyyati Uswah” at Islamic Information Centre, Andheri; Conference on “Protection of Humanity” at Bhivandi, “Deen Rahmat Confernce” at Siddarth Nagar took place where Markazi Jamiat’s representation was visible. The General Secretary, Maulana Asghar Ali Imam Mahadi Salafi and Deputy General Secretary, Maulana Muqem Faizi paid dawati visits to Basti, Gonda, Siddarth Nagar, Deoria, Mau, Lucknow, Aligarh, Patna, Coimbtore, Hisur, Umarabad and Pernam Batt etc.

IFTA AND RESEARCH DIVISION

A large number of religious Fatawa issued by the Ifta and Research Division get attention of the scholars and the academicians in the country. Therefore, the Markazi Jamiat has decided to publish them in the form of a book. Apart from the stated Fatawa a number of other books of Fatawa such as “Fatawa Allama Ubaidullah Rahmani Mubrarakpuri”, Al – Fatawa Al – Muhimmah fn Nawazile Al – Mudlahimmah (in Hindi) are ready for print. Moreover “Collection of Islamic Laws” compiled and distributed by All India Muslim Personal Law Board, covering Hanafi School of Thought, does not cover

others views. After several criticism raised by Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth the Muslim Personal Law Board has given its consent to include the Salafi views on certain issues. Compilation of the same is under way by Ifta and Research Division of Markazi Jamiat.

ALL INDIA REFRESHER COURSE FOR MADARSA TEACHERS, DUAAT, IMAMS AND JURISTS

Markazi Jamiat organizes 10 – days refresher course each year for Madarsa teachers, dua‘at, Imams, and jurists to infuse in them modern approach to teaching, preaching, developing leadership qualities as well as activating their skills. The same was organised on 18 – 26 August 2007 at Ahle Haddeth Complex, New Delhi with 32 participants from across the country, lectured by eminent scholars, lecturers, journalists and dedicated experts of Quran, Hadeeth, media, law, Indian constitution, Ilme Fara‘ez, Education, Seerah, Indian religions, and literature etc. The Refresher Course is organized at different venues each year.

ALL INDIA COMPETITION OF HIFZE WA TAJWEED WA TAFSEERE QURAN

The eighth two – days All India Competition of Hifz, wa Tajweed wa Tafseere – Quran took place in Delhi at Ahle Hadeeth Complex from 7 – 8th July, 2007 with 200 participants from across the country.

AL – MA ‘AHAD AL – ‘AALI LIT – TAKHASSUS FID –DARASAT AL – ISLAMIYYAH

Al – M‘aahad al – ‘Aali, with dynamic and de-

voted teaching staff, established for special courses and higher training in Tafseer, Hadeeth, Fiqah, Ifta, Islamic culture, Ilme Meerath and training for Shariah Courts, has completed its two years of existence. Its first batch graduated in 2007. Two of its graduates have been engaged by Markazi Jamiat to take care of monthly "Istiqamat", deliver Juma Khutba and give their services for organizational activities.

SYED NAZEER HUSSAIN MUHADDITH DEHLI LIBRARY

Markazi Jamiat has a library by the name of Syed Nazeer Hussain Muhaddith Dehli consisting of two thousand books on various subjects. Recently a large number of books have been purchased from the Book Fair.

MEDIA CELL

To catch the views and reader's attention, media (electro and print media both) adopts cheap gimmicks. A community is harassed, the name of a particular maslak is framed and tarnished in several crimes. A section of media carries fabricated stories. For this reason Markazi Jamiat has established a media cell to check the growing negative influence of the media by issuing press releases, keeping the clippings of news, views (database and documentation) for preservation and reference, filing of newspapers of national and international dailies as well as magazines, writing letters to the editors and calling press conferences on important issues etc.

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES AND

ACHIEVEMENTS:

Jamat Ahle Hadeeth is the organization that mobilised public opinion against the Adoption Bill tabled in Parliament in 1972. Adoption is a religious need of Hindus but Islamic Shariah does not approve of it. Ahle Hadeeth across the country along with other like-minded Jam'ats protested against the Adoption Bill. As a result of this, the Government withdrew the Bill in 1978 and Muslims were exempted from the provision of the Bill in 1980.

In 1978 the Lucknow bench of Allahabad High court pronounced a verdict whereby the Government was declared entitled to acquire mosque and graveyards. Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth raised a movement against it. As a result, the Govt. of Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan withdrew these orders to acquire such lands.

In 1986 the Jamat Ahle Hadeeth launched a countrywide campaign against the Supreme Court verdict in the Shah Bano case along with other organisations. It was the result of this campaign that at last the Parliament in an extraordinary session adopted the Protection of Muslims Women Bill. This law was enacted to annul the Supreme Court verdict in Shah Bano case.

Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth, Hind use to send relief and rehabilitation materials to help alleviate the sufferings of the people during riots and natural calamities. Last year the Kosi Flood has caused unbearable damage to people in Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. Jamiat extended its helping hand to victims and provided food, shelter, boats, and other humanitarian aids.

Jamiat has marked an achievement in yet another field. It has prepared a new syllabus for English medium schools and Madarsas covering science, social studies and other secular subjects including Arabic and Islamiyat from primary to standard 5th. The books according to stated syllabus are being prepared.

In recent past to mould the general Muslim's mind to implement the provisions of Shariah in individual and family life in letter and spirit, Jamiat got books published on different aspects of Shariah according to Quran and Hadeeth. Jamiat has published "Noble Quran" with English translation. It has offered 550 Holy Quran to India Tourism Development Corp. Ltd. New Delhi for each and every room of Ashoka Hotel and 1600 Holy Quran for hotels under its possession all over India. *Tafseer Ahasanul Bayan* (Urdu translation of Holy Quran); *Tarjuma Thana'ee* (Hindi Translation of Holy Quran) were also printed. *Tareekh Khatame Nabawwat* in 25 volumes and *History of Jam'aate Ahle Hadeeth* in 8 volumes by Dr. Bahauddin as well as *Directory of Ahle Hadeeth Madaris, Dabistane Nazeeria, Tarajim (Life history) of 'Ulama-Ahle Hadeeth* and *Commentary of Sahih Bukhari* in Urdu by Maulana Daud Raz were also published. *Fatawa Sheikhul Hadith Maulana 'Ubaidullah Rahmani*" is about to be published. Apart from stated publications there are at least 17 previous publications and others are soon to be out. Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth had organised a symposium on "Terrorism: A curse in Modern Times" on March 19, 2006 appealing to crores of justice-loving citizens to join

in stopping the elements who were misleading the public opinion for associating terrorism with Islam. Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth, Hind condemns all sorts of terrorism and terrorists.

Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth, Hind had organised a convention, seminar and Symposium on *Education and Terrorism* on July 23-24, 2006 in Delhi and made it clear with that Madarsas are centres of religion and ethical learning. They have nothing to do terrorism. Mr. Shivraj Patel, then Union Home Minister, appreciated the services of Madarsas and its role in nation building during the meet.

The 29th All India Ahle Hadeeth Conference, held in Delhi on 28th October, 2008 reasserted its pledge that we will live in our beloved country India according to the principles of Holy Quran and Sunnah, that is based on universal qualities like Tawheed (Oneness of God), unity of humanity, justice, peace, unity, purity and modesty, gentlemanliness, honesty and rationality and thoughtfulness. We pledge to continue our endeavour to call people, with distinction towards love and amity and wean them away from evil.

Jamiat Ahle hadeeth organises the *refresher and oriental course* for graduates of Madarsas, du'aat, Islamic workers, Imams, Muftis, and teachers, annually acquainting them with modern concepts of teachings and daawa, etc.

The Jamiat has in recent years introduced a variety of projects to upgrade the quality of Islamic training, Ifta and jurisprudence. For this purpose *Al-M'ahad al-'Alee lit-takhassus fid-Darasat al-Islamia* (Higher Institute with spe-

ciality for Islamic Training) was established to provide a quality education bilingual in Arabic and English infusing in them modern approach to teaching, preaching, developing leadership qualities as well as activating their skills.

Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth believes, and rightly believes, that the best way to assure the protection of Islamic Shariah in India is that Muslims get all their disputes solved in strict accordance with the Holy Quran and Sunnah. Jamiat Ahle Hadeeth has a *panel of Muftis* at headquarter Delhi and state -level- Jamiat in the country to issue fatawa and solve individual and family disputes.

Jamiat has a number of *preachers* visiting different places striving hard to see that the message of Tawheed, (Oneness of God) Risalat, (Prophethood), Yaumul Akhirat (Day of Judgment) and combating social evils reaches every household. They teach people to shun un-Islamic customs, stop demanding dowry and other useless expenditures. The Muslim women are advised to set an example of purity and humility in India and pay special attention to training their children in Islamic knowledge and belief as well as ethics.

Jamiat has been publishing its organ monthly Journals in four languages,, "*The Simple Truth*" in English; (2) *Al-Istiqamah* in Arabic; (3) *Islahe-Samaj* (Hindi) and *Fortnightly Jareeda Tarjuman* in Urdu.

Jamiat Cooperates with other Jam'aats, Organisations and NGOs to serve Islam, humanity, minorities and the country.

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