

The Doon School Model United Nations
Conference 2019

Background Guide



Special Convention on Religion and Terror



DSMUN '19

Secretary General

Vikram Jain

President

Nandil B. Sarma

Chairperson

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chair.scrt@doonschool.comwww.dsmun.in**Secretary General's Address**

Dear delegates,

As the Secretary General, It is my honour and privilege to welcome you all to the 13th Doon School Model United Nations Conference. DSMUN has been growing exponentially and actively augmenting the level and intensity of crises, debate and co-operation with each passing year. It is a legacy that we hope to continue and reinforce with this year's conference.

In an ever volatile, dynamic and adaptive international status-quo, it becomes increasingly vital for us as students- and thereby potential actors in the same system of compromise- to deliberate, discuss and formulate the groundwork of bi-lateral and multi-lateral ties that are to be established in the future.

With firm precedence, it would not be wrong to say that delegates, having attended this conference in the past, have developed a deeper and a more empirical understanding of diplomacy, compromise and conflict. While the Viceroy's Executive Council strives to ensure the peaceful transfer of power from the British to the Indian Union in 1946, the NATO contemplates the feasibility of occupying Antarctica. From condemning theocracies to enforcing climate laws, DSMUN will be an invigorating amalgamation of resolving and debating dissidence, dispute and disparity.

Besides whiling away my time watching typical Netflix Rom-coms, I find myself engrossed in reading about the framework and history of international and national politics. I am in- charge of the historical and political society and the editor of various publications in school. Having participated in various MUNs in India and abroad, I have had the opportunity to serve DSMUN in various capacities, and subsequently feel privileged to be given the opportunity to be at the organisational apex of the conference this year.

I eagerly await your presence at Chandbagh.

Warm regards,

Vikram Jain



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chair.scrt@doonschool.comwww.dsmun.in**President's Address**

Greetings!

As the President of the Doon School Model United Nations Society, it gives me immense pleasure to invite you to the 13th Session of the Doon School Model United Nations Conference. Being at the pinnacle of a conference that finds itself amidst the top ranks in the country, both in terms of global outreach and quality, has been an absolute honour. However, we at Doon constantly strive to outdo ourselves and promise that this edition of DSMUN will outdo all of its predecessors be it in terms of organizational skill, quality of debate or participation not just from the South Asian region but from around the world. It is with this vision in mind that I extend my heartiest welcome to each one of you to this year's conference.

The scope of this year's DSMUN will not remain confined to conventional committees. Keeping this in mind, we have expanded DSMUN's committee choices incorporating some bold and new ideas. With the introduction of highly challenging committees such as Lincoln's War Cabinet (1864), Viceroy's Executive Council (1946), Union Council of Ministers (1984) and the Rajya Sabha, we aim to pull off a conference not limited to one's imagination. This year's committees are aimed at developing informative deliberations and solutions to issues: both of global and national significance. Discussions pertaining to context of historical events allows one to explore the multitude of possibilities and find answers to the fundamental question of 'what if'. Having said so, the essential Model UN committees still remain intact providing an interesting challenge in terms of debate, wit and diplomacy to one and all.

As for myself, I am currently surviving the ISC curriculum and hold a keen interest in Politics and History. I deeply enjoy playing sports be it athletics or football. If not on the sports field, you can probably catch me commenting on Tottenham Hotspurs bleak chances of clinching a trophy. I also serve as the School Captain of the Doon School and the Editor-in-Chief of the Yearbook, one of the school's flagship publications.

Looking forward to seeing you all in August.

Warm Regards,

Nandil B. Sarma

Introduction to the committee

UNSCRT (Special Convention on Religion and Terror) is a committee that is indigenous with respect to DSMUN. This committee will require you to think outside the box, compromise and above all co-operate. In such a diverse world to bring together countries as well as religious and political leaders with contrary ideas and theories, and further get them to come to a common consensus for the betterment and prosperity of humanity is the aim of the committee. This year SCRT will be looking into the theocracies of the world, in an attempt to understand the logic and reasoning behind them. Further, the committee aims to establish a world which is not bound by the chains of religion but rather find solace in the everlasting principals and morals that they preach.

The committee aims to produce a document which would allow any citizen of any country to enjoy the right to practice a religion of their choice while also enjoying fundamental rights.

Delegates are expected to research about the various theocracies and find the one with which their nation can sympathize with and follow. Delegates are also expected to find common ground to facilitate discussion on the reformation of the various theocracies to suit humanity as a whole. Delegates are also expected to defend the principals of the theocracies which they align themselves with. They are also expected to follow their foreign policies.

The logo for DSMUN '19 features a large, light blue, stylized number '19' on the right. To the left of the '19', the letters 'DSMUN' are written in a similar light blue, serif font. Above the text, there are several vertical light blue lines of varying heights, resembling a stylized flag or a decorative element.

Agenda

Reformation of the Method of Operation of Theocracies.

A Few Theocracies

Islamic Republic of Iran

The constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran can be described as a “hybrid” of theocratic and democratic elements as it interestingly constitutes of a set of norms from both constitutions. The idea of the constitution was exerted and implemented by Ruhollah Khomeini, the former Supreme Leader of Iran whose reign lasted from 1979 till 1989.

The former Supreme Leader of Iran argued that the government should be run in accordance to the Islamic law and it needed an Islamic jurist – or *faqih* – to overlook the country’s political structure. The constitutional changes following the Islamic Revolution of 1979 were anchored by the concept of *velayat-e-faqih*, or rule of Islamic jurist and aimed to establish a system of government based on the powers of the executive, the judicial and its legislative branches. The primary motive of the establishment of this sort of constitutional government was to restore the Islamic ideology to the Iranian society.

Khomeini did this by turning Shia Islam right on its head. In a series of lectures that were delivered from his exile till the 1970s, Khomeini put repeated emphasis on the absence of the Imam Mahdi – also known as the Hidden Imam or even the Shia faith. He argued that the constitution should only be run by those

whose rank was higher than among various clergies. This concept was rejected by a majority of senior ayatollahs in Iran but seemed to find a willing audience in Qom, Iran’s religious centre and hence formed the theoretical part of the movement that overran the Pahlavi regime that had aimed at promoting secularity and did so before Khomeini gained power. Khomeini had been successful in implementing his ideas by the end of the decade.

Today, Ruhollah Khomeini’s teachings have been modified into a government that combines elements of his Islamic theocracy with bits of democracy here and there. Unlike most constitutions that are present in modern day, the mosque and state are inevitably linked that help to form the political structure of its democracy. Unlike most governments that distribute political influence to a majority of the political sector, the Iranian system focuses on containing it to a group of religious clerics and revolutionary forefathers. A study conducted by the German scholar Wilfried Buchta states that out of the 5000 ayatollahs in Iran in 2000, only 80 participate in the government, which is 1.6%. Another study that was conducted by an American scholar Gregory F Giles states that the “4 rings of power” dominate the political decision-making process and form the primary government structure.

The concept can be described as a system of insiders (*khodee*) and outsiders (*gbeyreh khodee*) that rule the Iranian establishment. Only the insiders are granted the opportunity to comment on the regime of the country, outsiders would be penalized if they speak when they're not spoken to.

The order of governance is as following:

- **The Supreme Leader**
- **President** – is in practice second to the supreme leader
- **An assembly of experts** – an exact 86 member of senior clergymen that also happens to elect the supreme leader and review his work
- **'Majlis'** – a 290-member body of deputies representing all of Iran's provinces
- **Council of Guardians** – 12 theologians appointed by the supreme leader and 6 jurists approved by the Majlis
- **Expediency Council** – the administrative body of clerics and scholars
- **Supreme Court** – the highest judicial body in Iran, its members are chosen by the head of the judiciary, who is appointed by the supreme leader
- **Special Clerical Court** – overseen by the supreme leader, it is used for trying members of the clergy for various crimes.

The theocratic government of Iran has clearly failed to follow the international

theocratic law that governed it, as seen in 2009.

June 12, 2009 was the day of the Islamic Republic of Iran's tenth presidential elections since the 1979 revolution, it seemed for many in Iran and around the world that democracy had finally triumphed over theocracy. By apparently voting to oust President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad- the incumbent leader who had the support of clerical hardliners in the regime, including the Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei – Irani people had evidently managed to display that the theocratic regime had lost its tyrannical grip on their aspirations. After a hard-fought election with the largest turnout of voters in Iranian history, the leader was re-elected to a second term

As people flooded the streets in order to protest the fraud, the regime unleashed the Basin paramilitary forces in order to suppress them. Bearing the brunt of the repression was the Green Movement that revolved around a diverse group of secular politicians like Ayatollah Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Sayed Mohammad Khatami, Seyyed Mehdi Karroubi and Mir Hossein Mousavi.

At first, it seemed as if the mullahs had prevailed, but it was soon clear how narrow the Islamic Republic's victory over the Iranian's actually happened to be and how it was not durable at all. While the disrupted elections shone light to the full extent of citizens' outrage and the

governments legitimacy, it revealed many festering disputes within the regime itself between the political and ideological orientations that constantly collided with one another.

This clash over the aims of the national administration has serious repercussions for the future of this Islamic government within Iran. The revolutionary Shiite ideology of *velayat-e-faqih*, or the rule of a jurist which brought the republic into existence, which no longer happens to hold the clerical establishment together. As seen, it is quite evident that the branches of state continue to attempt to wrest power exclusively for themselves, which may eventually prove the upbringing the demise of this very nation.

Afghanistan

The government of Afghanistan has proven to be one of the purest forms of a theocratic government and is one of the most notable theocratic examples. The country has witnessed many states of governance over the past century. The constitution was eventually modified into a theocratic form in 2003 by Loya Jirga, which was basically a council that was responsible for making big political decisions and deciding the political future of Islam.

One must not fail to understand that Afghanistan is a cross road between the East and the West, it is densely populated with multiple ethnic groups such as

Pashtuns, Tajiks, Shia Hazara and Turkmen. Multiple Pashtun tribes were grouped into one by politically merging them into one ruling group. The Soviet invasion of 1979 in Afghanistan, which led to refugees escaping to Pakistan where they came under the control of the Pakistan security forces. Iran only let the Shia Hazaras form a battle group with the Uzbeks and Turkmen simply left without a patron. Each group was manipulated by their patrons to distrust and sometimes attack each other which has plagued the struggle since.

In 1992, Mujahideen led by Uzbeks and Shia Hazaras ironically took over the capital installing their own government much to the fear of the ISI (Islamic State in Iraq). The dominant group of Pashtun's ultimately gained control of the capital, Kabul. They did not stop there and eventually went on to re-establish Pashtun control all over of Afghanistan. They attempted to gain control in a harsh and brutal fashion creating permanent allies in what became to be the Northern Alliance (Tajiks, Uzbeks, Shia Hazara and Turkmen).

Right after this came the 9/11 attacks and when the Taliban would not give up al-Qaeda, the US attacked with Special forces and air support, the ground forces consisting of the Northern Alliance.

This simply resulted in "transactional" politics. Using the Northern Alliance and minor Pashtuns to defeat the Pashtun

Taliban in the southern part resulted in giving Taliban license to claim they were the only group fighting for Pashtun rights. This move probably fractured any chance of having a credible, effective post-Taliban government.

At the Bonn conference, the Bush administration relied on Pashtun exiles who were English speaking and Western educated with little experience in Afghanistan. The conference's occurrence led to the formation of an Afghan government split by the ethnic group with Hamid Karzai (Pashtun) at the lead and an allocation of cabinet posts among winning ethnic groups. The Bonn accords for all the institutionalized patronage politics and politicization of the level of ethnicity and tribalism in Afghanistan. Karzai simply proceeded to make deals with warlords and attempted to enhance his family's wealth and power as well as marginalizing the Northern Alliance. The NATO and US supported the government (Karzai), which led to the birth of one of the most corrupt regimes in the region and in Afghan history.

Abdullah Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani were 2 political leaders that had an "unsatisfactory" runoff election. The US intervened forcing the formation of a unity government. Already seeing the repercussion of funding a corrupt transactional government in Iraq was not at all beneficial since the Shia government had lacked moral legitimacy and ISI was

easily able route a superior force into Iraq.

Looking back at the past, delegates of this committee must realize that the main form of religious intolerance in this country was forced upon by the military theocracy upon its Muslim citizens. The whole idea of a theocratic government is to base a country's constitution on a religious document that will go on to define its democracy.

The Taliban refer to themselves as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, are a Sunni Islamic fundamentalist political movement and military organization in Afghanistan currently waging war within that country. Throughout the course of time, Afghanistan has literally become a training ground for terrorism that a constant threat to international peace and security. This is violating the very purpose of having a theocratic government and defying the very laws of religion.

It is vital to put emphasis on the fact that Afghanistan has now modified its legal system to a mix of tribal law which has primarily been derived from the Pashtun community's code of *Pashtunwali* and; Islamic legal traditions valued for their universal and unifying characteristics. This committee would like to put emphasis on the fact that the only real reason for a theocracy is oppression of the masses and control because no one dare defy God.

The Afghanis had made a grave mistake by welcoming the Taliban to take control so they would have peace and quiet again. Unfortunately, they became a force to be reckoned with as they murdered people and began to influence the nature of their regime onto the community in a very brutal and harsh manner.

While the Taliban was in power, not only did they destroy the whole of Kabul, they forced residents to live with minimal supplies and in absolute poverty. From randomly firing at religious places to blowing up buildings throughout the city, the Taliban left no one untouched. They created an atmosphere of chaos, creating political and social instability throughout the region. They started to implement many laws and changed the way of life for most women. Women were not allowed to work outside, go out alone and even had their fingers cut off. Hence, the Taliban violated the norms that form the basic structure of a theocratic constitution as it was a threat to peace, which proved to be highly detrimental to the global community and will continue to do so if it goes on.

Mauritania

Mauritania is a small country that is located in the Maghreb region of western North Africa, is an Islamic republic country whose legal system is based on sharia law. The fact that they are bound to their form of governance can be signified by most of its national symbols

as they indirectly or directly represent the incorporate symbols of Islam. The situation changed in the 1980s as Colonel Mohammed Khouna Ould Heydellah, the military head of the country, inclined the country's form of governance towards the Sharia law with the introduction of strict Islamic jurisprudence.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is the holiest place for Islamic worshippers, and its' theocracy is one of the oldest in the world, with rules and laws so tightly entwined with its' holy regulations, going by the Quran. The Islamic state is one of the two biggest theocracies, alongside the Vatican City. The country is home to the holy sites of Mecca and Madina, which are the two major religious venues for Muslims, the Holy Quran and the Sunni School of Islam serve as the country's one and only constitution, which embeds their religious qualities in every person, atheist or not, all have to be lawful in the eyes of the State. The rules regarding the law of the state boldly assert that practicing other religions is banned, but what's worse is every Non-Muslim resident must convert to Islam, and any individual, or ethnic group, which plans to downgrade or in any way insult Islam, will be punished; from exiles, to prison sentences and even death – and that's the legal part.

Saudi worships the Salafi version of Islam, from the 'Sunni' school. The Salafi movement has the original aim of

strengthening the idea of Islam, but a rather different method from what modern Saudis have made it. The Salafi school splits its' followers into three groups – purists, activists and jihadis (Jihadis were supposed to fight the war of righteousness, but the 1990's brought along with them a different version of jihadis.) Purists refrain from all violence and focus on education and the plain and simple laws of Islam and believe in peace-keeping throughout the world. The activists eschew violence; abstaining from all deliberate violence; and see politics as "yet another field in which the Salafi creed has to be applied" in order to safeguard justice and "guarantee that the political rule is based upon the Shari'a"

The Jihadis were supposed to be fighters who would uphold the honor of Islam and work towards a better state of affairs regarding Islam and see to any dirt that may be splashed on the name of Islam without any good reason.

But as is known popularly, Saudi remains to be one of the world's 'hotspots' for crime which includes the likes of theft and trafficking, which goes against the Shari'a law and the 'holy' rules; going to the extent of militant nationalism and extremist violence taking place in the form of terrorism, and not limited to Saudi Arabia, but spreading to neighboring regions as well. While all of this remains to be done, many a spokesperson have come and spoken about how terrorism and general crimes

are going against the law of Islam and 'Our Lord would not want this'. But their ideology has been linked to terrorism, and funding of terrorist organisations from the funds raised by charities. While most public figures relating to the corresponding case reject the use of violence, there have been others who support the use of extreme violence and militant actions. The Egyptian Salafi cleric Mahmoud Shaaban appeared on a religious television channel calling for the deaths of main opposition figures Mohammed El Baradei, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate. This caused massive uproar, but as he would put it, he was speaking for a community, not an individual such as himself.

Now, contradicting their own policies, or laws, perhaps; there have been an ample number of instances that there have been terrible and horrifying terror attacks, and to an extent up to 2004, that allegations questioned the Saudi's governance's worries towards the incidents and feared no effort from Saudi.

With 472 counts of murder in 2015, over a hundred people dead because of car bombings and suicide bombers who claimed to fight the 'higher battle' in order to commit their lives to Jihad.

Yemen

A nation that follows the laws and has a major cultural influence of contemporary Islam. Although it is mainly an Islamic

state, it is a 'semi secular' region, which is tolerant of other religions, and is proud of their ancient heritage. There are ample amounts of proof that shows a confluence of Indian, Chinese, Islamic and various other ethnicities.

Although called 'secular'; it is Islamic at the roots, and respects Islam and there have been instances when the country has seen acts of resistance, or active aggression against other religions. This is due to what can be found at the root of the Yemen Civil War, that being the conflict between the Yemen government, and the Houthi armed group, which is an Islamic group which claims to constitute the government. Yemen, as of today, is called a theocracy for the single reason of the Houthi organization, as it claims to be the leading power and government in Yemen. This conflict between the want of power and the charge of the government has caused the Civil War, which has been catastrophic for the Yemenis people. is an Islamic religious-political-armed movement that emerged from Sa'dah in northern Yemen in the 1990s.

The true element of an extremist theocracy is presented with the Houthi government's slogan, which presents an idea of strong resistance, and develops the idea of hatred and intolerance towards other religions that may co-exist in Yemen; the slogan says - "God is great, death to the US, death to Israel, curse the Jews, and victory for Islam". The

movement's intended goals include combating economic underdevelopment and political marginalization in Yemen while seeking greater autonomy for Houthi-majority regions of the country. They also claim to support a more democratic non-sectarian republic in Yemen.

Will the country bounce back from the Civil War to lighten the burden of violence, or will it prevail as a theocracy and promote extremism and be a breeding ground of hate for generations to come?

The Vatican

The constitution of the Vatican was officially classified as a theocratic government on the 7th June 1929 when it was signed by Italy and the Holy See. The Vatican is a Christian theocracy that was controlled by the Catholic church. The set of norms that dominate the constitution are exactly like any other theocracy.

The Vatican City is presided by the Pope who is the leader of the Roman Catholic Church and the Bishop of Rome who exercises supreme legislative, executive and judicial power over the city. The pope is elected in the Conclave that is composed of all cardinal electors (now limited to all cardinals below 80) after the death or the resignation of the previous Pope. It is held in the Sistine Chapel, where all the electors are locked in until

the election which requires a minimum of two-thirds. Then, the Dean of the Sacred College will ask the newly elected pope to choose a pastoral name of his choice and as soon as the pope is dressed with a white cassock to signify his authority, the Senior Cardinal-Deacon appears on the major balcony of St Peters façade to introduce the freshly elected pope.

It is vital for delegates to understand that the term “Holy See” refers to the composite of the authority, sovereignty and jurisdiction that is vested in the Pope and his advisers to direct the worldwide church. As the Vatican state was created in 1929, through the Lateran treaties between the Holy See and Italy, the Holy See is like the backbone that permits it to enter into treaties as the juridical equal of a state to send and receive diplomatic representatives.

The hierarchy that dominates the city is unique in its own way. It consists of bishops, priests and deacons. It represents the “holy ordering” of the church in order to respect Christ in order to fulfil its primary motive to achieve genuine unity. While bishops have the strongest influence on the hierarchy, priests and deacons serve under them as assistants.

As of 30th December 2014, the Catholic Church consisted of 2998 dioceses or equivalent jurisdictions, each overseen by individual bishops. Dioceses are sub-divided into individual parts called

parishes, each assisted by one or more priests/deacons or even an ecclesial minister. All clergy staff including deacons, priests and bishops may preach, teach, baptize, witness marriages and even inaugurate funeral liturgies. Only priests and bishops can celebrate the sacraments of the Eucharist, Penance, Confirmation and Anointing of the Sick. Only bishops have the authority to administer the sacrament of the Holy Orders, by which men are attained as bishops, priests or deacons.

The Vatican was probably expected to be one of the most “genuine” theocracies out of all 7 and it has managed to defy its constitution in multiple ways that have simply brought shame to its name. From sexual offences and money laundering to baby trafficking dating all the way back to the 20th century, this is one theocracy that simply can’t dodge humiliation.

Crimes such as Sexual Abuse in The Vatican

The Vatican has always been a mysterious place, further, it has been in the wrong several times and the Pope, of the time, has been put under the spotlight several times. The most prominent of these crimes that surface upon reading are those of sexual abuse. From the priests to the Pope himself have been involved the vast and seemingly abysmal history of sexual abuse in the Vatican – with the junior clerics, nuns and several minors being on the receiving end of such abuse

and exploitation. While the older acts of abuse are even more disturbing, the modern case send chills down one's spine because the realization that such horrid crimes take place in modern civilization given the advancement of jurisdiction and law is plain and simple petrifying.

Nonetheless, Pope Francis has got much of the undivided attention when it comes to sexual abuse cases, especially when in 2015, Pope Francis supported a Chilean bishop, who was apparently caught covering up the sexual crimes which took place in the Vatican, and soon this resulted in an investigation and in 2018, there was an investigation launched by Pope Francis himself after he admitted his fault and apologized for his 'grave errors' that led to the exploitation of minors all this while, and admitted the Church was late in responding to sexual crimes. After the investigation the Chilean bishop, Juan Barros and two other Chilean bishops were dismissed after being found guilty of alleged crimes. Some see this act as extremely cynical, since Pope Francis may be in an attempt to make himself seem innocent at the cost of those bishops, and they paid the price by getting dismissed, or was it a purely ethical decision taken by the Pope after a realisation of his mistake?

Pope Francis, in February 2019, publicly announced that he acknowledged the fact that there was sexual abuse taking place in the Vatican and how nurses and nuns were being sexually harassed and abused

by clerics and priests and even by cathedrals and bishops.

There have been cases of sexual abuse galore in the Vatican, but these two religious leaders have faced most of the storm due to their recent reign and also the widespread use of media; on which all the statistics are readily available and can easily be viewed by the global community at large.

Cases of sexual abuse by Catholic priests, nuns and members of religious orders in the 20th and 21st centuries have been quite widespread leading to various allegations, convictions, investigations and even trials by the Church in order to cover up the reported incidents.

- **1966** – Cardinal George Pell was convicted of abusing 2 choir boys in Melbourne. The cardinal was a Vatican treasurer who was viewed as a powerful official. He was convicted in February 2019
- **1970s** – Theodore McCarrick, a former Cardinal sexually abused a teenager.
- **1971-1978** – Francis McDermott abused 6 victims in London, Norwich, High Wycombe and Buckinghamshire throughout the course of these 7 years
- **1996-** Australian Cardinal George Pell was charged in 2017 for sexually assaulting 2 children in St. Patricks Cathedral.
- **2014 – 2016** – Bishop Franco Malakal allegedly raped a nun

that he visited at a convent from May 2014 right till September 2016.

Scandals include-

- (Diocese of Scranton) – a priest raped a girl and when she became pregnant, he arranged for an abortion.
- A priest visited a 7-year-old girl in the hospital after she had undergone a tonsillectomy – and raped her
- A priest abused a 9-year-old and then rinsed his mouth with holy water to “purify” him.

Vatileaks

Vatileaks’ is a not-for-profit media organization headed by Italian journalist Gianluigi Nuzzi who aimed at exposing unnoticed crimes that were committed by the Vatican and continues to do so. The journalist first published letters from Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano which provided evidence for the alleged corruption as he had begged the journalist not to spread the information across social media

The situation has happened to worsen as documents were leaked to various Italian journalists, uncovering the efforts made by the Vatican in order to showcase greater financial transparency and its fight against the international norms that prove them guilty in all sorts of ways. From money laundering and mafia ties to

stealing babies, the Vatican is accountable for defying ‘His’ command.

On January 25th 2012, the Italian television program known as ‘The Untouchables’ first revealed the letters written by Vatican official Monsignor Carla Maria Vigano in which he complained of corruption in Vatican finances. His complaints upset many inside the Roman Curia simply because he was right. In response, the Pope decided to send Vigano to the United State as a nuncio (a herald). In another letter, he told the Pope of how he didn’t want his position to be viewed as a retaliation and also complained of a campaign of defamation held against him as he had earlier begged not to be transferred for having exposed alleged corruption that cost the Holy See millions in higher contract prices. Furthermore, an anonymous document described a conversation with Cardinal Paolo Romeo of Palermo, Sicily, in which he allegedly predicted the pope’s death within the next year.

The very next day, Italian spokesperson Federico Lombardi made a statement expressing his bitterness over the release of the classified documents that could possibly lead to legal action. On the 14th of February is when Father Lombardi first referred to the scandal as ‘Vatileaks’ and the following days were filled with confusion and silence from the Vatican.

By then, Pope Benedict XVI formed an investigative committee on the 24th of April that was headed by Cardinal Julian Harran whose motive was to find out where exactly where these 'leaks' came from and who was involved. The Vatican probe into leaks and worked along several paths as the magistrates pursuing the criminal investigation, headed by the secretariat of state. On May 19th, there was a second round of leaked documents that circulated itself through the means of 'Sue Sanitate- Le', a book that was authored by Nuzzi himself that happened to reveal over 100 confidential documents that came directly from the Pope's desk. Just a few days later, on the 23rd of May the pope's butler, Paolo Gabriele, was arrested by the Vatican police. The police had found a cache of confidential documents inside his house while searching it right after his arrest. After the chain of events that continuously degraded the Vatican's name throughout, the Pope finally addressed the matter himself. Pope Benedict XVI made his direct comments on the scandal saying that the "exaggerated" and "gratuitous" rumours had formed a false image of the Holy See, commenting "The events of recent days about the Curia and my collaborators have brought sadness in my heart...I want to renew my trust in and encouragement of my closest collaborators and all those who every day, with loyalty and a spirit of sacrifice and in silence, help me fulfil my ministry."

According to Lombardi, the Pope held a meeting with the commission of cardinals, the head of the Vatican police, representatives of the secretariat of the state and the judges involved in the case that investigated Gabriele's 'crimes. Piero Antonio Bonnet, the Vatican's judge, had been given instructions to examine the evidence of the case and decide whether it was sufficient enough to proceed to trial. Gabriele eventually faced 8 years in jail for the illegal ownership of documents of a head of state. He was indicted by Vatican magistrates on the 13th of August 2012 for aggravated theft. His trial began on 2nd October 2012. His justification to stealing the documents were to fight the "evil and corruption" and put the Vatican "back on track". The police have seized encrypted documents and confidential papers that the Pope had strictly marked "to be destroyed" when they raided the apartment of his butler. Gabriele was to be found guilty of theft and was sentenced to a reduced sentence of 18 months. However, he served in the Vatican itself due to concerns that he might leak further confidential information.

One of the reasons for the dismissal of Ettore Gott Tedeschi as head of the Vatican Bank was the "failure to provide any formal explanation for the dissemination of documents last known to be in the president's possession".

On the 17th of December 2012, the Pope received a report on "Vatican lobbies"

prepared by Cardinals Julian Harran, Salvatore De Giorgi, a former archbishop of Palermo and Józef Tomko. The very same day, the Pope decided to resign, a decision he made in the month of February next year, becoming the first in 700 years to step down himself.

“Stealing documents is a crime”, Pope Francis said after the books were published. “It is a deplorable act that does not help.” The Pope has approved of a new law that made taking, distributing, and publishing restricted Vatican documents a crime in the Vatican City State.

The “Vatileaks” case was a terrible mistake from the very beginning and it made the Vatican look quite vindictive and foolish. After all , ranging from a scandal that involved accusations of financial corruption, leaks from the Pope’s very own butler and even reports that inevitably provide evidence of links with the mafia , it has been of the most serious scandals that the church has faced in decades and seemed to reveal quite a lot of things that went surprisingly unnoticed.

Important Dates for Money Laundering

1978 – The Bank of Italy uncovered several billion lire in illegally exported funds by Italy’s former largest private bank, Banco Ambrosiano. An ongoing slew of investigations and convictions

slapped the bank’s general manager, Robert Calve with some prison times that was complimented with a hefty fine. By 1982, he had foreseen the financial catastrophe at the heart of his unknown financial connections and fled Italy. In June that year, he fell short of accounting for \$1.5 billion USD and collapsed. A great share of that money had been siphoned through the Vatican Bank itself.

2014 – In January, Italian financial police had arrested yet another man for laundering millions from offshore companies through his Vatican Bank account.

Sharia Law

The Sharia law is the backbone of Islam’s legal system. In accordance to the traditional Muslim view, the norms that govern this law were passed down directly from the Islamic prophet Muhammad without “historical development”, as its emergence goes back to the prophet’s lifetime. It is derived from both the Quran – Islam’s central text and fatwas – the rulings of Islamic scholars. The Sharia law is like a representative that acts as a code for all Muslims to adhere to, including things such as prayers, fasting and even donations to the poor. It aims to help all Muslims to comprehend the fact that they should lead every single aspect of their lives according to God’s wishes.

In terms of practice, the Sharia law helps a Muslim to form the primary framework and basically helps them to decide the very next step in their lives. This law is the backbone of many Islamic constituencies that govern all the Islamic regions in the world and it is equivalent to the Bible of the Muslim Culture.

It is also important to understand that a Muslim can end up facing harsh repercussions for going against the norms of the Sharia law. This law classifies into “hadd” which are usually serious crimes with a heinous set of penalties and “tazir” crimes, where the punishment is left to the discretion of the judge.

The level of discipline that this law has managed to instil can be seen by the fact that it has been able to govern various democracies that originated from the beginning of time and still does, till date.

Briefs for Portfolios

Archbishop Demetrios

This religious leader hails from Greece, and at 91 years of age, has lived a long life; and his experience and knowledge speak for themselves. Born in 1928, he graduated from his study of the School of Theology in 1950, and was formally made a priest in 1964, while he served at churches, he got his first PhD in 1972, followed by his ‘Doctorate of Theology’ in 1977. He spent his years as an auxiliary bishop, a metropolitan bishop and soon, On September 18, 1999, Elder

Archbishop Demetrios was enthroned at the Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity as Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

Ahmed Mohammad Ahmed el-Tayeb

The Grand Imam of the al-Azhar, el-Tayeb hails from Upper Egypt and has a Sufi background. Getting his PhD in Islamic philosophy in 1977, which came after a master’s degree in the same back in 1971. He was the Grand Mufti of Egypt, and the list of his powerful positions and his qualifications goes on. He’s proven his mettle as a leader several times, with real life examples where he’s led from the front, asserting Islam powerfully, and has strictly condemned and has taken actions against other religious groups which have attempted to promote religions other than Islam in the region.

Angelo De Donatis

The Italian leader is a Catholic prelate; the equivalent of a bishop, in the Vatican. His resume also includes the Vicar General of Rome and the Grand Chancellor at the Pontifical Lateran University. He was initially the archbishop, until Pope Francis came along in 2016 and appointed him as a Cardinal in June, 2018. He studied theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University where he attained a ‘Licentiate of Sacred Theology’ in moral theology, a degree that would be of much use in

regard to debate and discussion in context to the topic at hand.

Bernard César Augustin Barsi

Simply known as Bernard Barsi, this religious leader is of French origin, and is the French prelate, and the present archbishop of Monaco. In his early years, he served as a vicar at the parish of Saint-Etienne de Tinée up till 1972. He's been a Vicar General and the administrator to the diocese. Being an archbishop since 2000, he's had a smooth tenure so far, with a few, and rather insignificant bumps along the road; as the media would put it. But not exercising his power doesn't make him any weaker; with a strong Christian country backing him, he holds a great deal of power in his hands.

Ali Khamenei

The 'marja dini' of Iran, translating to the source to follow, is Ali Khamenei, who is the 2nd supreme leader of Iran. He is a political figure, but his country is mainly theocratic, with Khamenei following in the footsteps of his predecessor, Ayatollah Khomeini, who during his authoritarian regime exercised total control and followed the laws of 'Allah'. Khamenei is much like his predecessor, but lives his life through a lens that makes his thoughts and ideologies broader. He has a history of being

incarcerated and being the subject of attempted assassinations. He bases his rule on his version of Islam and says that the people should re-interpret Islam for themselves instead of following the leaders blindly. He's been the subject of attention and holds a lot of legislative power and can completely change national policies, the economy and the military – in whichever way he likes.

Salman of Saudi Arabia

King of Saudi Arabia and custodian of Two Holy Mosques, Salman Al Saud is a very powerful leader who runs a theocracy in today's time and age. His important actions include acts such as the Saudi intervention in the Yemeni Civil War, and a 2017 law which finally allowed and gave the right to the Saudi women to drive. He has a son by the name of Mohammed bin Salman and he too is a very powerful figure in the country who has been a cause of major social reforms. He is stronger than his son in terms of jurisdiction and he has the ultimate say; so to speak, and he can bring about any change of his choice into play in the snap of two fingers.

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