

**Current Social, Moral and Political Challenges of Muslims and
Their Solution in the Light of Islamic Teachings**

Strengths and Weaknesses of Muslim Ummah and Their Solution.



ISLAMIAT PROJECT.

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Abstract

In this millennium, Muslim Ummah is faced with diverse challenges both strategically as well as tactically in the inner and outer circles. At strategic level, the main challenge is colonization, in-effective Islamic Organizations, media blitz and information war propagating negative and un-realistic image of Islam.

Whereas, on the inner front Muslim Ummah is faced with the worst type of disunity, total distrust amongst Muslim countries over regional and Sectarian issues, lowest levels of literacy, lack of technological capacity and worst of all moral and intellectual bankruptcy.

A true manifestation of present state of Muslim Ummah was the protocol given to President Trump during his visit to Saudia Arab in 2018 and his negative influence over Qatar crisis.

Indeed, Muslim Ummah is not following the true teachings of Islam, Sunnah and Holy Quran. Islam is the religion which emphasis on education more than any other religion, it demands justice, effective role of women, equality and above all tolerance. On one hand, these traits are found missing in Muslim world and on the other same are widely in practice in the Non-Muslim world. Another major challenge for the Muslim Ummah has been deficit of World Class leadership during this century, it has resulted into dismemberment of Muslim Ummah into small regional and Sectarian groups totally divergent from the very concept of Global Muslim Ummah. Moreover, in the Muslim world very few countries have modern armies and in most cases are dependent on the military technology and army of Non-Muslim countries. This research paper discusses the challenges of Muslim Ummah in this age, presents a deep down analysis along with a pragmatic way forward to address these issues.

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Their Solution.***

Introduction

Today, the Islamic world is threatened with many challenges. Some of these challenges have gathered over past eras and others are collateral consequences of the revolutions experienced by the world at the current stage. Others yet grew out of specific factors intrinsic to the approaches adopted in tackling these critical issues.

The gravity of these problems has deteriorated to such extent as to constitute a serious source of panic, in the absence of a suitable resolution applied with strength of mind, clear vision and a realistic approach that takes understanding of all elements and can examine to the core of matters while steering clear of the illusions and delusions that result from lack of civilized vision and a weak understanding of the nature of all these challenges.

Today, the Islamic world has chosen to tackle the challenges of a millennium that is observing an increased obligation of states in the combat against economic, social and developmental crises at all levels. This calls for total mobilization in the different fields of joint Islamic action, for conjoining well-coordinated and courteous efforts and solidarity to overcome a difficult interval where the available resources are too miserable to bring to fruition the great

Islamic civilizational project considering the insignificant impact of the Islamic solidarity contrivances adopted thus far, despite the lapsing of more than four decades since the inauguration of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The Islamic world is standing at a crossings today, besieged by difficulties from all sides and fielding traps from all fronts, yet it is struggling to forge ahead as it fights the pressures of world superpowers to keep it in the manacles of helplessness, hesitation and vulnerability, unable to set out in the right path and board on a new civilized cycle that would link the present to the past and lay the foundations of the future.

Part I - Strengths of Muslim Ummah

- **Spiritual Power**

A incredible desire was given to the Muslim community to explore life and the world around them (life and world created for a purpose) to spread the word of Allah, as such, the early Muslim argued Muhammad Iqbal(1985) realized the importance of Ejtiihad or exercising human understanding that is allowed by Islam, they started to swim in the various field of Knowledge that later contributed to the rise of the Islamic

civilization, bearing in mind that the first revelation to prophet Muhammad (S.A) is strongly urging Muslims to seek knowledge.

- **Quran a Complete Code of Life**

According to Imam al-Gazzali(1993) character or ethic is an established state (of the soul) from which actions advance easily without any need for reflection or planning. One of the Uniqueness of the holy Quran is that, it is a book of principles and moral values. In fact, it is a source of ethical values and morals, as such, early Muslims used to follow the teaching of al-Quran closely, they used to transform the hypothetical message of Quran into practical one, hence, they took into account the importance of hard-work, perseverance, naturalness, honesty, patience and love of understanding for the sake of Allah.

- **Intellectual freedom**

Freeing human intellect from superstitions, as argued by Iqbal (2010) and existence of ijtiḥad and productive creativity were some of the factors behind the rise of Islamic civilization. There was a sense of teaching people to think critically and creatively (prohibition of imitation without sound

evidence). i.e research environment was so conducive and motivative, especially searching the claim of revelation in the natural phenomenon and return to the revelation in case of any obstacle or any hindrance in their study of physical world. The opening of Bait al- Hikmah by Harun al-Rashid(al- abbasi) for research and innovative purpose was a such example that prove intellectual freedom in the early stage of Islamic civilization.

- **Political Freedom**

According to Ibn Khaldun (1986) Injustice, despotism and tyranny are the clear sign of the downfall of any state. Perhaps, the early Muslims realize the above fact that any sort of oppression especially, between the ruled and the rulers will affect their unique civilization, whose civilization is rooted from tawhid and Qur'an. Therefore, the early Muslims maintain the sense of justice, and equality between the ruler and the ruled, Mutual consultation was also taken into account as well as freedom of speech and expression which is highlighted by the shariah (Islamic law) was highly respected, along with the sense of reciprocity between the ruled and the rulers for the sake mutual beneficial relationship. This attitude of Muslims has contributed immensely to the development and rise of Islamic civilization.

- **Openness**

Openness here means ability to learn from human experience, regardless to people of different races and ethnicities. Initially, Muslim civilization was a joint endeavor of Muslims from different peoples and races. It was not the military power which enabled early Muslims to dominate half of the world. It was their righteousness and their humanity. Moreover, the Muslims intermarried freely with local people and became part of them.

- **The spirit of seeking knowledge**

According to the education of Quran: “Say: are those alike. Those who identify and those who do not know?” (Qur’an, 39:9). Obviously, the above ayah was asking question without providing an answer, with the belief that human being is given faculty intellect by Allah, that can help him to reach logical conclusion. Indeed, rationally speaking, the answer of the above question is negative, because there is no way to balance between the knowledgeable people and ignorant individuals. Perhaps, most of the rulers of Banu Ummayah and the first two centuries of al-‘Abbasiyyin dynasties realized the above Quranic question, as such, they were educated

and scholars. They encouraged learning and scientific enquiry and they used to spend on it generously (the House of Wisdom) that was found by Harun Rashid was such an example that prove the existence of the spirit of seeking International Journal of Business, Economics and Law, Vol. 9, Issue 5 (Apr.) ISSN 2289-1552 2016 183 knowledge in various dimensions, writes Abdul Rauf (n.d) as such great Muslim scholars emerged in these centuries, such as Jabir Hayyan in the field of chemistry, Khawarizmi, in the field of mathematics, Ibn Sina in the field of medicine, Ibn Haytham in the field of optometry, Bairuni in the field of science and religion and ibn Khaldun in the field of Sociology, civilization and history. These scholars said Hamidullah (1989) have also contributed to the western civilization. Notably, Islamic civilization had strongly contributed to the world civilization that is because it was not hegemonous civilization but, it was homogenous that considered not only the well-being of Muslim ummah alone, but, it also considered the progress of humanity at large.

Part II - Challenges faced by Muslim World

Some of the main problems confronted by Muslims today are as under:-

- **Lack of unity**

Success of any nation is hidden in the mutual unity and concord between its members. A strongly united nation becomes an unbeatable force and overcomes every hindrance which comes in their way.

No one dares to confront such a tide and stout nation. Without any doubt, unity and harmony has a unbelievable role in developing a nation and achieving their higher goals.

Muslim's unity is a major and irrefutable problem of the time. The increasing sectarian ethnocentrism has spattered and blemished the essential Islamic teachings.

Today's Muslims are suffering from frequent problems, and the basic reasons for their plight are i.e. sectarian hatred, creed biases, lust for power, bigotry and many other materialistic interests. All these things have collected to confirm falling for Muslims, which deprived them of their integrity, self-esteem and power. On the

other hand the adversaries of Muslim are united and they are fully aware that their strength lies in the weakness of Muslims. Hence they are engaged in making plans to divide Muslims. Historically, it is proved that spreading seeds of disunity and disintegration among Muslims has been a very old and an effective tool of Jews and Christians.

Whereas the Holy Quran warns us to be united and to remain detached from them. God also orders Muslims to observe patience and maintain unity among them by following the principles of devotion and brotherhood. It is possible only when Muslims are involved in "society" with broadmindedness. At the same time, it remains the main responsibility of the Muslim leaders to play their role in this association.

- **Illiteracy: An impediment to Development**

Looking at the challenges facing the Islamic world today and undermining its potentialities and improvement plans, we find that illiteracy, is the main problem throughout all Muslim nation, comes at the topmost of all these challenges. It is indeed the mother of all miseries afflicting Muslim societies.

According to data collected by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, ISESCO's statistics and to the annual human development reports drawn up by international organizations, illiteracy rates in Islamic countries range between 45% of all males and 65% of females . These rates are higher by almost 10% in rural areas and drop to 30% in a few countries. A very small proportion of Islamic countries have achieved significant progress in eradicating illiteracy with rates in these countries dropping to 1%.

Unfortunately, illiteracy continues to hold a low importance on the agenda of most Islamic countries which continue to consider it as a purely scholastic and moral issue and not an economic, social, developmental and political issue.

In some Islamic countries, illiteracy rates have scaled to problematic levels and become a treacherous social phenomenon, surpassing in its gravity the phenomena of poverty, ignorance, disease, instability and the disorder of peace and stability in many Islamic countries. In fact, illiteracy lies behind many of these portents which in turn hinder growth and weigh down societies despite their

efforts to overcome these obstacles and lay the foundations of a globally viable development that can radically change these societies. One of the factors behind poverty is illiteracy, ignorance is the outcome of illiteracy, and one of the causes of ill health is illiteracy.

- **Educational conditions in the Islamic world**

Islamic countries around the globe are failing to simplify primary education, improve the quality of secondary education and transform university education. This failure affects the scientific research which is struggling to grow to the status it deserves within adopted action plans and policies. ISESCO's reports, which concur in their findings with UNESCO's, show that budget percentages allocated to scientific research in Islamic nation is below 1% of each country's GDP when scientific research in advanced nations benefits from financing that exceeds 3% of the GDP. Although ISESCO devised a **Strategy for Sciences, Technology and Innovation** which was approved by the Islamic Summit meeting(OIC), this strategy, similar to the other sixteen strategies developed by ISESCO, falls short of execution which remains restricted upon a strong and efficient

political willpower that is capable of restructuring, development and modernization.

Statistical data on sciences and technology indicate that the percentage of GDP spending on scientific research in Islamic countries remains extremely little. In some countries, this percentage drops below 0.1%, and more than half of the OIC Member States do not apportion any GDP percentage whatsoever to scientific research. The peak rates of spending on scientific research is in the following countries:

- Tunisian Republic: 0.73%
- Republic of Turkey: 0.69%
- Kingdom of Morocco: 0.60%
- Islamic Republic of Iran: 0.59%
- Malaysia: 0.59%
- Kingdom of Jordan: 0.34%
- Republic of Azerbaijan: 0.30%
- Islamic Republic of Pakistan: 0.24%

With such dismal figures, we are facing miserable prospects of scientific regression which prevails in the pseudo majority of Islamic States and produces weak economies, stumbling progress,

aggravated economic crises and social problems that hamper the fulfillment of the goals set out in global justifiable development plans.

- **External Challenges**

The boisterous crises spellbinding the Islamic world today as a result of mounting conflicts and multiple disputes cannot always be attributed to external factors. considering the Palestinian issue for example, already more than 65 years old (since 1948) and the result of Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands, the crimes of war and crimes against humankind committed by Israel against the Palestinian public, the slaughter perpetrated by Israel's cruel regimes, and all the criminal acts and oppressive practices that have damaged the greater Islamic society and stuck negatively on the Muslims' present reality.

Part III - The Way Forward

- **Strategic Measures**

- Active International/ Regional Islamic organizations for conflict resolve and nurturing harmony within Muslim Ummah.
- Inspire countries for development of capable militaries and establishment of a combined Islamic army for responding to international wars imposed over suppressed and oppressed Muslim countries.
- Efforts for projecting positive and realistic image of Islam through effective media campaigns and capable leadership.
- Establishment of International Economic fund for supporting deprived/ poor countries.
- Effective measures for countering colonization; establishment of small block away of Muslim countries under total control of Non-Muslim countries due to their weak infrastructure. Such countries allow open religion and possess no specific culture. Such regions

scattered all over the world serve as launching pads for Non-Muslim countries seeking foothold in specific Muslim dominated regions such as Middle East.

- Focused efforts for improving literacy rate and imposition of educational emergency for complete Muslim World and provision of funds to improve the Budgetary Allocation for developing Muslim countries.

- **Unity Amongst Muslim Ummah**

- **Commitment to Toheed**

The beliefs of a state can play an important role in people's association, solidarity between individuals of a nation. Particularly when it based on the belief in God's oneness and the whole ummah uphold it in all walks of life. Qur'an invites believers, to be united on Toheed. In the sight of Holy Quran the philosophy of Visionary Mission has been to invite people and to compete fashioned colonialists and imperialists, on the ground of Toheed, who caused split and separation among the nations. As Allah Almighty says in the

Holy Quran. "And verily, we have sent a messenger for every time so worship God and keep them detached from the contumacies.

- **To Avoid Takfir**

Although Takfiri trend has nothing to do with Islamic traditions and practices, there was no concept of "Takfir" in life time of the Messenger of Allah (saw). But it became a contrivance to get personal interest on the basis of envy, hatred and biases. The reasons of conflict between Muslims are not the basic principles but are the social and religious biases. Because Islamic teachings are against some so-called Islamic fractions which teach Muslims to prevent takfir and resolve their disputes, preserving unity love and patience. The Khawarij was the first group in Islamic history who introduced the Takfir of the Muslims. After them many others kept doing this thing .

According all religious school of thoughts the person admits verbally the principle of Toheed and all other principles of faith is Muslim. their life, wealth and honor are respected. On the basis of

non-academic arguments one cannot be declared an defector or infidel nor he/she can be killed.

- **Identification of Common Enemy**

All Muslim scholars, intellects should be aware of any risk from common enemy and should distinguish such elements. Today Muslim Ummah faces serious threats in the terms of politics, economics and culture. The enemies are trying to create uncertainties in beliefs of Muslim youth by cultural invasion.

- **Focus on Common Issues**

A significant issue that may lead to the unity of the Muslims is that the Muslim community should focus on their mutual issues and problems. Because their collective issues are too high and there are very few variances, common beliefs and principles have been completely ignored. Toheed, Prophet Hood, Hereafter, Prayer, Fasting, Zakat, Hajj, Qibla, Jihad, Quran and many other subjects are common to Muslims. Such common things can lead to the unity of the Ummah.

- **Adherence to Islamic Brother Hood**

Islam declares all believers as comrades, as Holy Prophet said:

"All followers are brother of each other".

Every Muslim is a brother to another; every Muslim should be aware of the condition of his brother and should take part in his pain and sorrow. They need to have propensity to grow a sense of sympathy and to promote the idea that we're one nation will help to unify the Ummah. Muslim world is one unit however on geographic and political terms dispersed in many countries. All Muslims must work together to change the fate of the Muslims around the world. Followers of colonialism are trying to shake the foundation of our "brotherhood" and to weaken the Muslim faith, soul and future. To declare someone "KAFIR" Racism between Muslims in the world today is nothing else but a satanic scheme.

We should be aware of it and our success is possible only when we are in the commitment to the Islamic instruction and brotherhood. At the time of Migration, Holy Prophet said to the Muslims: "O, Muslim!" verily God invites you towards brotherhood and He has called it for you the homemade of peace. Today it is shocking situation for us in the world that more than a half billion

Muslims are living in the world, But they still are not able to solve the problem of Holy "BAIT ul MAQADAS."

If the present situation of Muslims remains same then enemies will attack not only on Muslim countries but openly attack on our sanctity and the sanctified places.

Responsibilities of Muslim Governments

Muslim governments should play role to uphold brotherhood among Muslim countries, particularly the following steps should be taken by them:

- **Information Technology and Media Watch**

Muslim governments should monitor their media so that they do not air or do not communicate anything that spread hatred among different religious Sects and religions. Uncontrolled media is too much harmful to the unity of Muslim Ummah. The present, so called independent media does not follow any principle especially so in campaigns against Muslim. All matters to remain within the scope of check & balance and how this important field of society could be excluded from the scope of check &

balance? Freedom of expression does not mean unrestrained comment at anything.

So our governments should control this important sector instead of being influenced by that apparently terrible and horrible philosophy of freedom. It is demanded directly from the media stake holders to build strategy of "Freedom of Media" on real grounds too. So that our religious, ideological, domestic and cultural aims must be met seriously. Just to follow everything and to answer every call coming from west, recklessly without any deep consideration will cause us severe damage.

- **Role of Intelligentsia**

The second step is to keep an eye on authors and writers. It is the duty of scholars, and writers of Islamic society to aware the nation about the sectarian provoking acts of enemies. Intellectuals and writers feeling obligation should avoid personally from the conflictive issues while they write their articles, essays and books, they should work in favor of unity and the national interest of the Muslim Ummah. However research on religious issue must be limited to intelligentsias only and the general public should be kept away from the complex academic discussions, otherwise,

they will get confusion. Government needs to plan mainly in this connection.

- **Monitoring of Imams**

It is the responsibility of our governments to monitor the Imams and sermons of the mosques because they are directly connected to the society and their sayings/ speeches are the most effective means of communication for the people. Some people of this field are also a big hand to create extremism in the society. Government should plan training sessions in this regard at large for the people of this field after having discussion with senior Ulema and scholars. Muslim jurists, scholars and Imams are the religious leaders of the people and there is great esteem and trust between them. It is their responsibility that they should guide and train people through their Friday sermons and other religious events and to build their characters rather than to complicate them into disparity matters. In fact all these things are outside the logical frame work of common people and relate only to high caliber Ulema and scholars. Dais and arcades are not the proper places to discuss these contradictory problems. It required special forums of highly religious intellectuals. Common people

must not be involved into these issues of religious contradiction; they only need their religious training and character building.

- **Special Focus on Education Sector and Educational Syllabus**

It is also duty of the government to focus on educational sector and the curriculums. This area is highly demanding, We should plan our educational syllabus from the grass root level in such a manner that we can be successful to develop tolerance, perseverance, fraternity and broadmindedness in minds of our youth, inculcating in national harmony in our societies. Our enemies want to terminate our education system and try to develop rift between the students and their teachers in many aspects. We should aware of such conspiracies in the name of educational. Because in future it will harm us.

Conclusion

This paper makes an attempt to highlight some areas which merit immediate attention of the Muslim Ummah to tackle the challenges posed on internal and external fronts. Implementation of the proposals enunciated in the paper will go along way towards making improvement and strengthening the Muslim world in this age.

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