

Q Contemporary challenges of Muslim Ummah and their solutions according to Islam.

### 1) Introduction:

There is no doubt that the ummah faces a ~~persis~~ persistent decline and most of the muslim majority nations are embroiled in many challenges that endanger lives of many and pose a threat to the Ummah as a whole. There are a ~~ple~~ plethora of factors that have contributed towards the downfall of the Ummah and brought it down to where it stands now. These issues are serious and can only be ignored at the great peril to the Ummah.

### 2) Challenges of the Muslim World:

The cotemporary muslim world suffers from innumerable challenges. Following are a few of these problems:

#### 2.1) Political system and incompetent muslim leaders:

##### 2.1.1) Dictatorial Rule:

The ineptitude of muslim leaders and the political system in general, is one of the challenges encountered by the ummah. Many of the muslim nations are under dictatorial rule. These dictators have a strong influence on the country's judiciary and other state institutions, elevating them above the law with zero accountability. This draws attention to theory propounded

by Acton who stated "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely". These muslim dictators possess absolute powers and their quest for more comes at an expense of being oblivious towards major state issues. Such nations are in dire need of capable leadership, however, this is quite unlikely given the current political system of these countries where the monarch's heir will inherit the throne, regardless of their capabilities.

### 2.1.2) Democratic countries:

The so called democratic muslim-majority nations are not far from their dictatorial counterparts. In many of these nations, the established political-parties practice dynastic politics, meaning that the leadership position is passed down to only members of a particular family. These parties, when come in power, have strong influence on the key state institutions such as judiciary.

### 2.2) Increasingly illiterate:

Another challenge that the Ummah faces is ~~the~~ illiteracy and reluctance towards modern education. Knowledge has long been encouraged in islam, a hadith in this regard is as follows

"The ink of a scholar is more

Precious than the blood of the martyr."

The cited hadith emphasises the significance of seeking knowledge in Islam. The contributions of muslims scholars and scientists was imperative in helping Islam reach its peak. Presently, there is a prevailing predominant misconceptions that associates modern education with western culture. As a result many muslims avoid education altogether and therefore are falling behind in many major fields such as technology, medicine etc.

### 2.3) Lack of Unity among the Ummah:

The ummah also suffers from dearth of unity. Many muslim nations around the globe are solely driven by their own interests and gains, completely ignoring the issues of other muslim states. In this way, the key concept of brotherhood taught by Islam is overlooked. In this regard the Holy Quran say:

"And hold firmly to the rope of Allah and do not be divided" [3:103].

There is also a hadith pertaining to the significance of brotherhood and unity in which the prophet <sup>ﷺ</sup> said:

"Verily, the believers are like a structure, each point strengthening the other." and the Prophet <sup>pbuh</sup> clasped his hands with the fingers interlaced (while saying that).

The concept of brotherhood and unity, being rehearsed in the Quran and hadith indicates its importance. Sadly, today the ummah has forsaken this notion, and have placed their own interests above it. The example of Saudi Arabia speaks volumes of this, who, because of its immense investment in India, fails to take a strong stance on the atrocities occurring in Indian occupied Kashmir.

#### 2.4) Sectarianism:

Sectarianism is perhaps the most important factor that hinders the revival of the Ummah. The prime minister of Malaysia has identified sectarianism as the Ummah's curse. Different sects are created when a group of people develop differences in beliefs and practices to such an extent that they demand distinct identities. The underlying cause of sectarianism is the extreme attachment towards religious personalities. The word and opinions of such personalities are considered as the final verdict, and if questioned, it is equated to that of blasphemy. This is why the words of such individuals remain uncontested for years.

The lack of knowledge of other sects is akin to adding fuel to the fire. A child born in such households is compelled to adhere by the beliefs practices by ~~parent~~ parents. Such a child grows a sense of infallibility towards his sect and grows hostility towards other sects. The issue of sectarianism has brought different groups at dagger drawn, and sadly they perceive others as Kafirs. Prophet <sup>Pbuh</sup> has said:

"If a man says to his brother, O Kafir! Then surely one of them is such (Kafir)".

The hadith cited, emphasises the severity of calling other muslims Kafir, but this prevalent practice indicates that muslims have forgotten its consequences. The Holy Quran also condemns sectarianism in the following words:

"And be not as those who divided and differed among themselves...."  
[2: 256]

### 3) Solutions with accordance to Islam:

The Ummah, ~~abbe~~ albeit in decline, can position itself as the thriving force of excellence and as an established

Super power of the world, if it strictly abides by the teachings of Islam. Following are some of the solutions with accordance to the teachings of Islam:

3.1) Change the form of government and restrain the power and authority exercised by muslim leaders:

The current muslim heads of states should take heed from the Islamic way of governance. The rotten practices of dynastic politics and inheritance to the throne should be avoided. Inspiration can be drawn from the how the transfer of power was conducted between the first four caliphs, where despite the caliph having heir, the responsibility of the throne was granted to the most senior and experienced next in line. Additionally, Muslim leaders should not influence the judiciary or other state institutions. They should avoid corrupt practices and should be compelled to be answerable to the people. The incident of H. Umar<sup>R.A</sup> highlights the accountability of muslim leaders, whereby H. Umar<sup>R.A</sup>, despite being the caliph at the time was openly asked about cloth he obtained from Bait-ul-mal. The was quickly resolved when the son of H. Umar<sup>R.A</sup> stepped in and informed that he gave his father the extra cloth.

### 3.2) Revamping of Education system:

Muslim nations need to prioritise their education systems. Steps should be taken to dispell misconceptions of modern education and its association with western culture. The islamic scholars should unanimously decide if any modern day major goes against the teachings of Islam, ~~and conclude at the rest~~. They should also concieve a list of all majors one can persue, and this information should be disseminated in an attempt to encourage muslims to accept modern education. This is a rather slow process and will definetly take time elevate the literary rate among the ummah, however inspiration can be drawn from the exemple of prophet <sup>Pbuh</sup>, who despite having small number of educated muslims in the early years of Islam, was able to establish strong foundation of the education system that empowered the ummah to produce top-notch scholars and scientist for centuries to come.

### 3.3 Strengthening unity among the ummah:

Proper steps should be taken to reinforce the notion of brotherhood. Muslims should set aside their self interests and uphold the concept of unity. This can be achieved if the importance of brotherhood is disseminated

at grass root level. Primarily aimed at children. children, in a bid to create a more vigilant generation, one that is cognisant about the atrocities done on fellow muslims around the globe.

### 3.4) Curing the curse of sectarianism:

Islam is a religion of peace that expects one to follow its practices and fear Allah out of one's own will. The Quran says:

"let there be no compulsion in religion". [2:256].

No one should be coerced into following a particular practice or belief, rather the acceptance should come from the heart. Furthermore, muslims should be receptive to other sects. Also, steps should be taken to arrange frequent debates and discussions in contour of the subtle differences in practices and try to adapt practices supported by strong evidence from Quran.

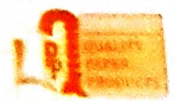


Contemporary challenges faced by the Ummah.

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| <p>Problem #1:<br/>→ Governance System</p> | <p>Problem #2<br/>→ Increasing illiteracy</p> | <p>Problem #3<br/>→ lack of Unity</p> | <p>Problem #4<br/>→ Sectarianism</p> |
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| <p>Solutions #1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ abolish practices of dynastic politics</li> <li>→ next heir to the throne should be selected on experience</li> <li>→ limited Powers granted to muslim leaders</li> <li>→ thorough accountability</li> </ul> | <p>Solutions #2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ dispell misconceptions</li> <li>→ comprehensive list of major that don't contradict Islam</li> <li>→ encouraging youth to persue education.</li> </ul> | <p>Solutions #3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ strengthen concept of brother hood.</li> <li>→ Educate the Youth</li> </ul> | <p>Solutions #4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ receptive</li> <li>→ no coercive steps taken to impose practices</li> <li>→ issues resolved through discussions.</li> </ul> |
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figure: Overview of Problems and solutions discussed.



#### 4) Conclusion:

The ummah's decline can be upended if stern steps are taken. The addressed solutions have the potential to steer out the ummah from the crisis it faces. Inspiration should be taken from the early muslims under the capable leadership of prophet<sup>pbuh</sup>, who navigated through the problems with accordance to the teachings of Islam, and were successfull in positioning themselves as one of the leading global power at the time.