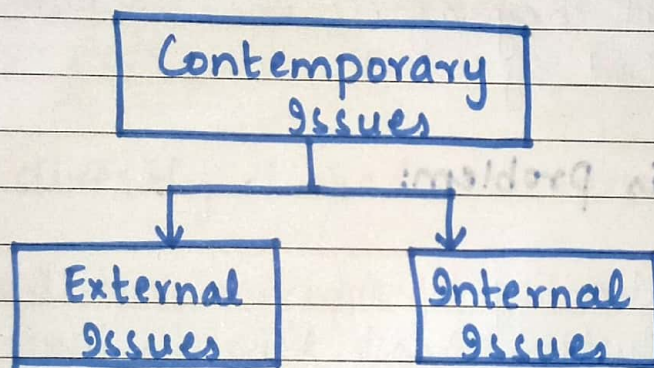


Contemporary Issues of Muslim Ummah and their solutions

Introduction:

For over 13 centuries, Muslim Ummah ruled the world with unmatched prosperity. Muslim countries were ahead of others in every field. All the top class universities and libraries were built by Muslims. Muslim Ummah emerged according to the teachings of Holy Quran, taught by the Holy Prophet (PBUH). "As soon as the Muslims deviated from their true path, they started facing many issues. This was the beginning of their downfall. Today, the Muslim Ummah has become a part of impoverished countries."



1. External Issues:

1.1 - Globalization:

"The growing integration of economies and societies around the world. Globalization is an inevitable phenomenon in human history that has been bringing the world together through the exchange of goods and products, information, knowledge and culture."

(World Bank)

Some scholars are in favour of globalization, while others are against it. Globalization is only

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benefitting the West. Financial institutions like IMF, World Bank and WTO) are fleecing the resources of Muslim countries. The main reason behind this is bad governance and poor economic policies.

Impacts of Globalization on Muslim Ummah:

Joseph Stiglitz, Senior Vice President of World Bank says, "While I was at the World Bank, I saw firsthand the devastating effect that globalisation can have on developing countries, and especially the poor within these countries."

The purpose of globalisation is to enfeeble Muslim countries, so that they agree on the terms and condition implicated by West.

Solution of this problem:

A possible solution of this problem is the establishment of a common Muslim Bank. Muslim countries can invest their money and get interest-free loans.

1.2 - Rapid rise of Extremism and terrorism.

Another major issue confronting the Muslim Ummah is the rapid increase of extremism and terrorism. Their aims differ, some target rulers while others target West, mainly their culture.

"Extremist groups are those who hold a view/position far right or left from the middle ground."

Muslim extremists are a very loud minority which is responding to profound cultural or economic change with violence. Terrorism is directly linked to the

extremism.

Reasons behind the rise:

1- Rapid rise of extremism was seen during Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. To fight with the army of Soviet Union, almost 1000 Madrassas were established along Pakistan and Afghanistan's border. The students were taught radical measures to encourage them to fight with Moscow. The war was won and radical thinking was left behind. As a result, it faced resistance from the local people in the form of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan in 2007, that pointed their weapons at the govt. and desired to replace the un-Islamic Govt. run. Poor governance and failure of Muslim countries to prevent the spread of radical material in the educational institutions.

Is poverty directly linked with terrorism:

Poverty and youth unemployment is directly linked with extremism and terrorism. Young minds get easily manipulated and for the sake of money, they start shedding blood of the innocent people.

Impacts of terrorism on the World:

Due to the rise of terrorism, a negative image of Islam is being portrayed to the world. People are now scared of Islam (Islamophobia) and only link it with extremism. Moreover, the ^{Muslim} students studying in West are facing discrimination because of their religion.

Solution of Extremism and Terrorism:

Islam is a religion of peace and promotes kindness

and mercy. By following the teachings of Quran and Sunnah, we can get rid of it. In Quran, Allah says:

"Whosoever kills an innocent human being, it shall be as if he has killed all mankind, and whosoever saves the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind." (5:32)

1.3. Leadership crisis:

Leadership crisis is one of the major issue faced by Muslim Ummah. Out of 57 member countries of OIC, there is not a single leader who can unite all countries. OIC is also not playing any role to unite Muslim countries. Every country has their own leader. Political leaders are corrupt. According to Transparency International Report, 2021:

"More than half of the Muslim countries were positioned in the 20 of Corruption Perception Index (CPI), 2020 which represents the most corrupt countries."

Islamic values are contrary to corruption. Allah says in the Quran:

"Indeed, the penalty for those who wage war against Allah and his Messenger and strive upon earth [to cause] corruption is none but that they be killed or crucified or that their hands and feet be cut off from opposite sides or that they be exiled from the land."

(5:33)

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2. Internal Issues:

2.1 - Disunity among Muslims:

One of the leading issues faced by Muslims is Disunity or lack of unity among Muslims. There are almost 2 billion Muslims that makes 25% of the world's population. Despite being in such a large number, Muslim countries are fighting with each other e.g. Fight between Iran and Iraq and conflicts between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The only reason behind these conflicts is that one country wants to create impact on the other. Weak status of OIC is also the reason behind it.

i) Problems faced by Muslims due to disunity:

Muslims have become weak, poor, backward, illiterate and are facing severe atrocities and discrimination throughout the world.

ii) How can we get over this problem.

Islam teaches us the concept of equality and brotherhood. Muslim is a brother to another Muslim. Therefore, it is obligatory that Muslim countries support each other. Allah says:

"And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided." (3:103)

2.2 - Lagging behind in Education and Technology:

Muslims have neglected IT, Education, Science a

lot. There is no contribution by the Muslim countries in any of these fields.

"Islam's first generations produced knowledge and wealth that empowered Muslims to rule much of the World. But now almost half of the World's Muslims are illiterate. More books are translated annually from other languages into Spanish than have been translated into Arabic over the past one hundred years. The 15 million citizens of tiny Greece buy more books annually than do all Arabs put together."

(Benazir Bhutto)

The literacy rate is less than 50% in most of the Muslim countries. The bottom six and the most illiterate countries in the world's list belongs to Muslim Ummah.

Why science and technology is on decline in Muslim world:

Muslim countries spent money on constructing buildings and mosques. e.g. Saudi Arabia has constructed world's largest shopping mall and Dubai has constructed world's largest building. Similarly, in the past, while the West was constructing universities like Cambridge and Oxford, Mughals were busy building Taj Mahal. Moreover, Muslim countries spent only 0.2% of GDP on research and development, while West utilizes more than 5% GDP.

Possible solutions:

Muslims can only succeed by making education a top priority. Islam has emphasized Muslims

To seek knowledge. The first word of Quran revealed was "read." Holy Prophet (PBUH) has also encouraged Muslims to read and seek knowledge Allah says in the Quran:

"Read! In the Name of your Lord, who has created (all that exists), Has created man from a clot. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous, who has taught (the Writing) by the pen. Has taught man that which he knew not."
(96:1-5)

2.3 - Sectarianism and Islam:

"The fragmentation of a single, simple and forthright religion resulting in Muslims becoming weak, backward and unable to deal with the multitude of challenges they now face."

There is no connection between Islam and Sectarianism. All Muslims are equal irrespective of caste, colour, creed, ethnicity and social status. Islam has always promoted peace, harmony and concept of universal brotherhood. Former Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr. Mahatir identifies "sectarianism as Ummah's curse."

Reasons between Sectarianism:

One of the main reason is lack of tolerance and unacceptability. People kill who differ from them.

Shia Sunni violence is a practical example. A Shia mosque was bombed in Peshawar on 4 March, 2020, which claimed more than 60 lives. Another reason is blind trust on religious leaders. People believe whatever they say, without consulting Quran and Sunnah. Asking questions is related to Blasphemy.

Similarly, a Sri Lankan factor manager was lynched because he was accused of blasphemy in Punjab's Gialkot district on 3 Dec, 2021. Iranian Revolution, Islamization drive, Iranian and Gulf countries, proxy war in Pakistan are all examples.

Way Forward of Sectarianism:

Islam has always condemned Sectarianism and always advised not to force our views on others. By following Quran and Sunnah, we can understand the true meaning of Islam.

"There is no compulsion in matters of faith." (2:256)

2.4- Socio-economic underdevelopment of Muslims:

Out of 57 OIC member states, 22 are least developed countries where half of the population lives below the poverty line. The reason behind this is the bad governance, weak economic policy and dependency on the west. Muslims should avoid incurring foreign debts. Holy Prophet (PBUH) refused to offer the funeral prayer of a person who died before paying his debt. 75% of the total global oil reserves belongs to Muslims.

Conclusion:

OIC must design new policies to utilize the wealth of Ummah within the Muslim world, and develop the concept of Islamic brotherhood. It is high time, Muslim countries wake up and start working for their progress and development, rather than wasting money on lavishness.