

# TOPIC: Religious extremism as a challenge to economic development

## OUTLINE

### 1- INTRODUCTION

Religious extremism has become a challenge for economic development. It promotes instability which in turn causes damage to infrastructure, delays developmental projects, diminishes investments and many other. However, certain measures such as vigilant policies, reforms in education sector would be helped to cope with the impacts of extremist ideologies on economic development.

### 2- Religious extremism: A hurdle in the way of economic development

### 3- Factors which trigger religious extremism.

- a- lack of professional ~~religious~~ religious leaders and misinterpretation of religion
- b- Globalisation and lack of tolerance among haves and have-nots.
- c- unjustifiable policies of major powers.

### 4- How religious extremism is a challenge for economic development?

- a- Delay in economic developmental projects.

- b- Damage to infrastructure
- c- loss of internal as well as external investments.
- d- Gender discrimination which exclude half of world population from developmental process
- e- loss to tourism sector
- f- Opposition to scientific advancement
- g- Rigid mindset impede innovative business techniques
- h- Promote brain drain which result in loss of human resource
- i- Diversify the priorities of policy makers
- j- Opposition to modern health care facilities decreases the productivity of population

5- Measures to restrain religious extremism and to widen the way for economic development.

- a- Single curriculum for all sort of educational systems
- b- Strong policy formulation regarding centremists and extremist institution
- c- State's acknowledgment of its role of training professional religious leaders.
- d- Upgradation of curriculum according to the need of the time

6- Conclusion

\_ \_ \_ : 01

ideological fanaticism, when intertwined with religious extremism can act as a formidable impediment to economic development, hindering the prosperity of nations (Kofi Annan). In these words of Kofi Annan, religious extremism refers to radical interpretation of religious principles which threatens economic development and national integrity. There are multiple factors which trigger religious extremism but lack of professional religious leaders, globalization and biased policies of major powers are most important among them. The fundamentalist ideologies bring forth various challenges to economic expansion. These include instability, delay in economical development and serious damage to infrastructure. In addition, it impedes investments, promotes gender discrimination and cause loss to tourism sector. Furthermore, the rigid

— 1 — 1 — 30

mindset resist. Scientific advancement, modern economic system and advance health care facilities. Although,

religious extremism. Sonorous affect economic growth, still, a few measures would be helpful to restrain ~~religious~~ ~~extremism~~ fundamentalist ideologies.

These include the introduction of single national curriculum and potent policy formulation. Moreover, professional religious leaders and upgrading curriculum according to the need of the time would prove to be influential step to mitigate zealous religious extremism. In a nutshell, religious extremism has become a challenge for economic development. It promotes instability which in turn causes damage to infrastructure, delays developmental projects, diminishes investments, and many others. However, certain measures such as vigilant policies, reforms in education sector

— 1 — 1 — : 05

would be helpful to cope with  
The impacts of extremist ideologies  
on economic development.

Religious extremism has a  
grave consequences on economic  
development. It promotes instability  
which in turn halt economic  
activities in a country. The delayed  
economic projects cause huge  
damage to economy. People with  
rigid mindset instigate crowd on  
minor issues and cause damage  
to infrastructure. Almost every  
country around the globe directly  
or indirectly confronting with this  
menace. The countries like Pakistan,  
Afghanistan, Nigeria, <sup>Somalia</sup> ~~Somalia~~ and  
many other have lost billions of  
dollar and millions of human  
resource due to this threat. There-  
fore, religious extremism is a  
serious challenge for economic  
development.

There are multiple factors which trigger religious extremism, lack of <sup>professional</sup> religious leaders is most important among them. Religious leaders are most valuable asset of any religion. They are greatly followed and respected by people. A single misinterpretation of religious tenets by these guides could lead a brutal violence in the society. Therefore, professional religious leader ~~should~~ <sup>are necessary to</sup> direct the people in right direction. For example due to misconception of "Jihad" among Muslim community several extremist groups ~~are~~ <sup>have</sup> formed. The Tehreek Taliban Pakistan is one of those groups. Hence, lack of professional religious leaders lead to religious extremism.

Similarly, globalization and lack of tolerance among haves and have-nots also promote

religious extremism. Globalisation has transformed the world into a global village. In this ~~village~~ smaller hamlet distribution of resources is not uniform. Some people are living luxurious life with all the facilities of ~~the~~ living. The other group despite ~~great~~ hard work forced to spend miserable time. This unequal ~~distribution~~ division of means arise a feeling of hatred. They express such emotions in the form of religious extremism. The perceived injustice compel individuals to adhere radical ideology which in turn comes out in the form of religious extremism (Cas Muddle, why some people choose the path of violence, 2017)

Thus, ~~globalisation~~ globalisation and lack of tolerance among haves and have-nots foster religious extremism.

Furthermore, unjustifiable policies of major powers coerced people toward radical believes. Major

powers, which share the control of ~~the~~ <sup>global</sup> ~~entire~~ world play a vital role in all ~~economic~~ <sup>global</sup> issues. They set principles and prepare policies for ~~the~~ <sup>of the</sup> rest countries. They formulate and implement those procedure across the globe. The biasness of such authorities create turmoil among individuals. This disturbance intensity with time and take the shape of religious extremism. For example the unjustifiable hegemonic intervention of United State in internal affairs of countries in the name of promoting democracy and protection of human rights instigate violence. This behavior of interference is illegal according to Article-5 of UN-Charter. United States being the major power force other to abide this policy while she herself ignore it. Therefore, unjustifiable policies of major powers give birth to religious extremism.



Above all, religious extremism is a challenge for economic development. It causes delay in economic expansion projects. The stretched schedules of monetary activities make fragile economy. The fundamentalist provoke minor issues and make them a national concern. The nation react <sup>thus the</sup> and peace of the country become compromise. The chaotic condition of the region donot let the project to be completed in their due time. Forexample the delay in CPEC projects in Pakistan due to turmoil inside the country greatly affected its economy. The projects which were supposed to be finished in 2018 took two more years. The Thar coal power project got ~~3~~ Three extra annum, and become functional in 2023. The reason was disorder in Balochistan. Thus religious extremism cause delay in economic projects.

— | — | — | 30

Furthermore, extremist ideology causes damage to infrastructure. The people who adhere extreme principles regarding religion do not accept other's opinion. The points which do not resemble with their believes is against religion according to them. This conservative mindset compel them to be in the mode of violence all the time. They target the peace on minor issues. These people harm all the assets of the state in aggregation including infrastructure. The TTP group believes that everyone who is not under the umbrella of Islam, be titled with death (Amin Khan, Guardian of God, 2018). Thus, religious extremism cause damage to infrastructures

In addition, religious extremism hinder internal as well as external investments. The instability created due to religious extremism impede investor to

— 1 — 1 — 05

choose that particular country for fund allocation. Moreover, the financiers who are the resident of the state leave the country in search of suitable regions. When the process of financial commitment get disturb the graph of economy abruptly goes down. Therefore, extremism severely affect economy. Muhammad Zarkaria <sup>in his</sup> ~~writes in~~ his article **Effect of terrorism on economic growth in Pakistan** writes, one percent increase in terrorism reduces FDI by 0.104 percent domestic investment by 0.0039 percent and economic growth by 0.02 percent. This ~~refers~~ means religious extremism has a direct affect on investments. In a nutshell, religious extremism hinder internal as well as external investments.

Moreover, radical religious believes threat the tourism sector. Tourism ~~sector~~ entails movement of

people inside <sup>the</sup> Country and earn  
 currency for the State. People from  
 various part of the world visit region  
 for joy and exposure. For this purpose  
 they prefer those areas which are  
 either beautiful or have some  
 history behind. When ~~an~~ such territory  
 comes under the influence of religious  
 extremism its peace gets compromised.

This chaotic situation force the  
 tourist to go for an choice. Tourism  
 is an organized activity in Maldives.  
 Since 1972. It forms 28 percent of its  
 total GDP. The Male Sultan Park bomb  
 blast ~~pro~~ in 2007 produced serious  
 security threats to <sup>tourism</sup> ~~tourism sector~~. After  
 this blast various countries canceled  
 their bookings and this sector faced

huge loss. (UNISCI Discussion Paper). Hence  
 religious extremism cause a serious  
 threat to tourism sector.

— 1 — 1 — 6/5

Additionally, fundamentalist ideologies resist scientific advancements. <sup>Empirical</sup> ~~Scientific~~ development plays a vital role in the improvement of economy. It introduces innovative ideas and modern machineries to increase the productivity of industries. Whereas extremists regard it ~~as~~ against nature and create misconception among people. The lack of knowledge about religion and the systematic study compel people to reject this progress. According to a research conducted by PEW RESEARCH CENTER of US the countries with extremist believes still striving with scientific advancement and face severe economic problems. Hence, radical ideologies impede scientific advancement.

Furthermore, the rigid mindset about the modern economic system restrain expansion of economy. People with conservative

\_ \_ \_ 05

religious believes reject advanced business techniques. They declare certain trade methods as forbidden in the religion. ~~These people~~ ~~These people~~ These people not only reject such ideas but also force other. In this way economic growth suffer greatly. Fore example religious extremists say taking profit is forbidden in religion. Keeping this point in front they donot invest their money and donot contribute in the escalation of economy. Therefore the rigid mindset about the modern economic system impede economic expansion.

Besides, radical ideologies promote instability inside a country which divert the priorities of policy makers. In a country where peace become top desire other need ~~to~~ <sup>get</sup> compromised. The chaotic situation in the state stricks policy makers

concentration in one point which is security. In this condition economic progress face a temporary break. This way disorder condition restrain economic expansion. For example Swat terrorist attack in 2012 restrained all the developmental work in the region. The attention of policy maker only remain struck to security concerns. Therefore, religious extremism foster instability due to which economic expansion halt temporarily.

Despite severe religious extremism some measures could be helpful to restrain religious extremism and widen the way for economic developments. The introduction of single curriculum for all sorts of education system is most important among them. The difference in ideas occur due to the way students are

\_ \_ \_ : 02

been taught. Some student get western education via elite education systems. The other received madrasa based education with outdated curriculum. When the two come face to face they present conflict of ideas which foster extremism. In case single curriculum implemented in all educational institute it would mitigate all kinds of fanatic ideologies.

Furthermore, strong policy formulation regarding extremists and extremist institutions would impede radical ideologies. All those people who are responsible for brain washing youth in the name of religion must be brought in state notice.



— 1 — 1 — 305

Moreover, the provision of professional religious leader is state's responsibility. Government select even a primary teacher after several procedure but Imam of a mosque has no selection criteria. The expert pious ~~guide~~ guide the people in right direction. A person with misunderstood knowledge of religion can spread violence and aggression among people. Hence, state should understand its role and set some qualifying method for the selection of religious leaders.

Last but not the least, upgradation of curriculum according to the need of the time would contribute towards escalating economy. The current course program is outdated and donot meet the requirement of the modern world. The integration of advance knowledge in study material would increase student interest. The involvement of students in studies would impede them to follow any extremist ideology.

In this way radical thought would be restrained and the way economic expansion would be widened.

In a nutshell, religious extremism is a serious challenge for economic development. It promotes instability which results in delay in economic projects, <sup>decrease</sup> rise in investments, loss to tourism sector, damage to infrastructure and many other. Although, radical ideologies hamper monetary development, still a few measure would be helpful to restrain it. These includes introduction of single curriculum, strong policy formulation, selecting criteria for religious leaders and many more. Therefore, <sup>no matter how</sup> ~~however~~ big the problem is, a well organized ~~the~~ plan would mitigate it nicely.