

(Q7) Explain the concept of Public Administration and good governance in Islam. Explain the responsibilities of civil servants in ~~the~~ good governance.

Introduction

Ever since the inception of Islam, governance has been an important factor in the uprising of the muslim Ummah. The Holy prophet (PBUH) is a perfect example for it, and anyone can easily look unto his way of governing in order to ~~can~~ bring peace and development ~~in~~ for a nation. His way of governing was followed by his Caliphs after he passed away and muslims reached their peak by following his example. Islam therefore is an advocate of good governance and public administration.

"They are those whom when we give power in land, establish regular prayer and give regular charity. Enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong".
~ (Surah Hajj)

Islamic Concept of Public Administration and good governance

In Islam ~~the~~ public administration refers to the relation of the governing with the governed and fulfilling the needs of the people being governed. Therefore having a relation between ~~as~~ the ruler and the people

being ruled is a must. Whereas good governance means the efficient use of resources in order to meet the requirements of the people. In both the cases, relation ^{between} the ruler and the ruled is a pivotal.

Principles of Governing in Islam

Allah lays down some principles by which efficient governance can be achieved. These principles are vital for bringing peace and development within the nation.

1- Principle of Hierarchy

It all starts by having a proper order of things. There must be delegation of authority so that power does not concentrate in one's hands. Above all is Allah and therefore the hierarchy starts from the lord and man are his representatives on earth.

2- Principle of division of Labour

The holy prophet (PBUH) emphasized the importance of division of labour according to one's skills and experience. He himself divided the work between different people so that work ~~is done~~ could be done better, faster and more effectively. He used to say,

"When three are on a journey, then they must appoint at least one as their leader"

3- Principle of Trustee (Amana)

Man are God's viceregent on earth and therefore bear a great responsibility. Allah has trusted us to carry out his commands in order to ~~advance~~ bring peace in the society.

"And we did offer the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains but they refused; being afraid thereof. But men understood and took it"

~ (Surah Ahzab)

"Allah doth command you to render back your trusts to those whom they are due"

~ (Surah Nisa)

4- Principle of Accountability

All governors are to be held responsible for his or her doings. They must take decisions free from any kind of biasness which would benefit all. If the decision by any means goes wrong then it will be his duty to compensate the loss and make things right.

5- Principle of Trustworthy

Before any governor is appointed, the citizens must make sure that the person who is to hold the office is strong,

educated, commanding and trustworthy. The Holy prophet (PBUH) said,

"If the offices were assigned to the unworthy people then it would be the end of this world" ~ (Hadith)

Moreover in surah Al-Qasas it is said that,

"Surely the best of man for thee to employ are the ones who are strong and trustworthy" ~ (Surah Al-Qasas)

6. Principle of remuneration

Everyone performing their duties is to be paid immediately after their work is done. The Holy prophet (PBUH) himself used to do labour with his companions and also would pay them as soon as their work is done.

"Pay the labour his wages before his sweat dries" ~ (Hadith)

7. Principle of acceptability

Whoever is appointed the office by lawfull means is to be respected and followed by everyone. His orders are to be carried out by whomsoever he appoints to do for the work.

"O you who believe, obey God and his messenger and those charged with authority among you"
~ (Surah Nisa)

8- Principle of Justice (Adala)

Delivering justice is pivotal. It is the only way man can fulfill his amanah (trust) as viceregent on earth. Justice must be given timely as well.

"And when thou judge, judge with equity for Allah loves the equitable"

~ (Surah Maidah)

"Allah loves those who act Justly"

~ (Surah Hujrat)

9- Principle of adherence to the divine Law

The concept of good governance in Islam is embodied in the term al-siyasah al-shariyah which means government in accordance with the revealed law. It is not possible for the ruler to make law against the divine law or which violates it. All rules or law are to be prepared and implemented in accordance ~~to~~ with Allah's teachings.

"Cooperate with one another in the welfare of humanity and adhere to the

divine law of retribution"

~ (Surah Maidah)

10. Principle of Consultation

It is also necessary that a good governor should involve his companions in decision making. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) used to hear the opinions of his companions before making the final decision. This principle of shura (mutual consent) also helps in making right and timely decisions.

↓ "And their affairs are based on mutual consultation among them"

~ (Surah Shura)

11. Principle of moral conduct

All who hold the office must possess a good moral conduct which means he or she must be honest, truthful, trustworthy, responsible, determinant and ethical. The Holy prophet (PBUH) himself is a perfect example of it.

12. Principle of Planning and Directing

Planning refers to foresightness, which means that a good public administrator must know proper planning. As there is nothing that can be achieved without planning. Hazrat Umar (RA) himself was a strong advocate of

planning. He used to say, "For your worldly affairs, construct your plans based on the assumption that you are going to live forever". The Holy prophet (PBUH) himself used to plan ahead of time.

"There is no wisdom equal to good planning"

~ (Hadith)

Responsibilities of Civil Servants in good Governance

Civil servants in a modern sense for those who hold administrative offices and they are also liable to follow the same principles. It is due to the conduct of them through which good governance is achieved. Therefore, they have certain responsibilities on them.

1- Ensuring accountability, transparency and Fairness

All civil servants must ensure ~~that~~ transparency and accountability in their work. There must be no ~~confidentially~~ act or work hidden from the public and whatever he does must be done with full responsibility as he will be held accountable for it. Hazrat Umar (RA) said, "I would be held responsible even if a dog dies on the street". The Holy Prophet (PBUH) himself ensured fairness and accountability in his governance.

"Each one of you is a guardian and each guardian is responsible for whatever is in their care"

~ (Hadith)

2- Having knowledge and being disciplined

Civil servants must possess the necessary knowledge that can help them achieve the welfare of the society. Islam has laid importance on acquiring knowledge. The first ever words that our beloved prophet (PBUH) heard from angel Jibrael was "read". Knowledge also makes a man disciplined. Therefore all civil servants must possess knowledge to perform his duties perfectly.

"It is obligatory to acquire knowledge for both men and women from cradle to grave"

~ (Hadith)

3- Being justful in their dealings

Civil servants are required to be fair and just in their dealings. They must not be involved in any kind of misconduct which may deteriorate the harmony of the society. They must work only for the benefit of the public as a whole.

"O you who believe be maintainers of justice, bearers of witness for Allah"

whether it be against yourselves, your parents or your near relatives. Whether the case be of a rich man or a poor.

~(Surah Nisa)

4- Maintaining relation with the public

Civil servants are required to have and maintain a sound relation with the public that he or she governs. Having a good relation with the public not only attracts their attention and gain their trust but also helps in making right decisions.

5- Making decisions collectively through mutual consultation

They are also required to consult their fellows when it comes to making decisions. This brings in new ideas and promotes effective decision making.

"Administration by mutual consultation"

~(Surah Shura)

6- Efficiently utilizing available resources

It is the responsibility of Civil servants to efficiently utilize the resources, so that no resource is wasted and the goal is achieved. This requires him to plan ahead of time and ensuring proper implementation of it.

7. Having faith in Allah

No matter what actions a civil servant performs, he must have full trust and faith in Allah and that whatever he is doing will bear fruit and achieve the goals.

"And whenever one makes decisions he should put his trust in Allah, for Allah loves those who put their trust in him"

~ (Surah Al-Imvan)

8. Ensuring timely decision making

Civil servants must have a proactive approach, and make decision on time in order to give justice ~~and~~ or to benefit from an opportunity.

Conclusion

The concept of public administration and good governance is of vital importance in Islam. Muslim Ummah reached its peak when they followed the principles of Islam in governance and when these principles slowly vanished, Muslims became prey to corruption and instability. Therefore, it is crucial that today's civil servants adhere to the principles of Islam in order to tackle today's problems and ensure sound governance for their people.