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Topic: Islamophobia: Challenges and ways to combat for the Ummah

Outline:

1) Introduction

Thesis Statement: Since long, the members of Muslim community are faced with hate and torture around the world. The Ummah is entangled with many challenges to address to issue properly. Therefore, serious steps should be taken to resolve this dilemma.

2) What are the challenges in

combating Islamophobia and how to overcome these?

3) Manifestations of Islamophobia

- a. Anti-Muslim legislation
- b. Unequal legal treatment
- c. Bias in the media
- d. Anti-Muslim political rhetoric
- e. Resisting Muslim refugees

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f. Muslim genocide

4) Challenges to combat Islamophobia

- a. Governance ~~problem~~ - Weak OIC
- b. Internal rifts within Muslims
- c. Regional power game
- d. Terrorism causing division
- e. Economic instability of Muslim countries

5) Ways to deal with Islamophobia

- a. Internal cooperation among Muslim countries
- b. Overcoming the ~~les~~ issue of terrorism
- c. Educating the world about real Islam

b) Conclusion

Essay: Islamophobia: Challenges and ways to combat for the Ummah

The world has witnessed so many battles as a result

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of racial discrimination in the recent past. Multitudes of humans lost their lives during the religious and racial homicides such as the nazism, socialism, fascism and the holocaust. In today's world, all the communities seem to have joined hands against Muslims to wipe them out from the surface of the earth. Islam is considered a religion of terrorism while Muslims are stereotyped as terrorists all the world over. The manifestations of Islamophobia are seen in the form of anti-Muslim legislation, unequal legal treatment, bias in the media, anti-Muslim political rhetoric, resisting Muslim refugees, and Muslim genocide. To combat all these

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indicators require some bold steps. However, there are multiple challenges which restrict Muslims from doing so. These include: governance problems + weak OIC, internal rifts within Muslims, regional power game, terrorism causing division, and economic instability of the Muslims. Nevertheless, several steps can be taken which can be of great help. Internal cooperation among Muslim countries, overcoming the issue of terrorism, and educating the world about real Islam can work a great deal. To put in a nutshell, since long, the members of Muslim community are faced with hate and torture around the world. The ummah is entangled with many

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challenges to address the issue properly. Therefore, serious steps should be taken to resolve this dilemma.

There are numerous challenges in dealing once and for all with islamophobia which make the solution a rather difficult task. The Muslim world is squeezed politically, governmentally, economically, socially and educationally which puts threats to the very existence of the concept of Ummah. Muslims are divided internally with there being no leader to sail the ship to a safe harbor. For instance, the division on the sectarian lines is the worst of all. The Shias call the Sunnis infidels and vice versa while Iran calls

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terrorists. What Saudi Arabia calls freedom fighters and the opposite. Put simply, the challenges have made the solution just a fantasy.

There are many manifestations of Islamophobia, the chief one among which is anti-Muslim legislation. The violation of any right begins with the manipulation of the law-making as it is a safeguard of the rights of anyone. Several instances of policy formulation targeting the Muslims can be cited. Examples include, but may not be limited to: the revocation of article 35-A and article 370 in India, Andy's law in America and The Patriot Act, Countering Violent Extremism Programme and

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Executive Order 13769 also in the US (Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, ISPU, Countering Islamophobia, 2022). Concisely, legislation is bent upon making laws contrary to Muslim's interests.

Apart from anti-Muslim legislation, Muslims also face unequal legal treatment. A small offence by a Muslim may invoke the strongest possible response by the legal authorities, but it may go unnoticed in case of others. The ratio of Muslims held accountable for similar offences is far higher as compared to members of Christianity, Hinduism or Judaism. An estimated one in five (20%) of Muslims face discrimination in legal proceedings while 55% Muslims deem it difficult to be

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a Muslim in America after the 9/11 episode (Pew Research Centre, Challenges and Worries, 2020). In short, Muslims are not entitled to equal legal treatment in the non-Muslim world.

Not only the partial legal treatment, another manifestation of Islamophobia is the bias against Muslims in the social media. The followers of Islam are portrayed as extremists and barbarians on the internet and other social media browsers.

Social media is bent upon spreading a perverted face of Islam and those who profess it. In 1990, only 10% Spaniards reject Muslim, while the number increased to 64% by 2006. Currently, an

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an increase of 467.35% has been observed in Islamophobia in America through social media (MPDI, Demonization of Islam through Social Media, 2020). In a word, bias in the media is also an indicator of Islamophobia.

Moving a step further, anti-Muslim political rhetoric is also a sign of hate against Islam and the Muslims. Political talks and discussions revolve around blaming Islam. To attract the vote pool in several countries, political rhetoric against Muslims is used as an effective technique that almost always works. For instance, the BJP in India starts persecuting the Muslims during election campaigns or creates conflicting situations.

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on the Indo-Pak border to get the attention of the people. To put in simple words, political rhetoric against Muslims is a major phenomenon of Islamophobia.

The issue does not stop here, rather, resisting Muslim refugees is also noticed as an outcome of the hate for Muslims. Muslim refugees face discrimination when they try to enter any country with other than a Muslim majority population. They are often repulsed, and not allowed to enter the countries. According to the most recent **European Islamophobia Report** published by AMED and Rutgers in 2021, resistance against Muslim refugees reach 71% up from

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55% in 2017. Similarly crimes against Muslim refugees increased by 23% in Europe. Resistance against refugees from the Muslim world, in short, is an expression of antisemitism.

Even worst of all is seen when it comes to Muslim genocide. Only being a follower of a religion not followed by the perpetrators causes the Muslims to sacrifice their lives. A large number of innocent Muslims have been killed throughout the world as of hate for them and their religion. It is estimated that around 70 Muslims were killed in India in 2021, while others experienced violent attacks which amounted to 937 throughout the same year (ISSI,

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Volum 9, 2022). To summarize Muslims all over the world are killed in the name of extremism and terrorism.

A number of challenges lie ahead when it comes to the solutions; the chief one being governance issue. A huge gap lies among the Muslim countries on the issue of governance.

The prominent ones among the Muslim nations are at logger heads with one another trying to dominate the other. This is also the reason that OIC, which pledged to be a representative of the Muslims, is nearly functionless. Moreover, there is no coordination

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among the Muslim countries some of which are rich with natural resources. In a word; there is a deficiency of governance in the Muslim world which poses a serious challenge to resolution.

Apart from governance issues, there are internal rifts among Muslims. The nations are divided on several grounds which restricts their compatibility with one another. Different religious sects, languages, cultures and approaches to worldly and spiritual affairs move them further apart from one another. The Shias call the Muslims (Sunnis) non-Muslims while the Sunnis call the Shias non-Muslims. ~~about~~ About 23,000 Shias have

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been target killed alone in Pakistan (OHCHR, Anti-Muslim Hatred, 2022). Simply, internal polarization among Muslims also poses a challenge to the solution of the issue.

To dig further into the challenges, regional power game among the Muslim countries also hinders them from responding properly to Islamophobia. The influential members of the OIC run after dominating others and the leadership of the Muslim world. The worst example is seen in the shape of Saudi-Iran rivalry. While the former has developed strong diplomatic ties with Israel, the latter uses its proxies in Lebanon, Egypt and Syria to

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counter its rival. In other words, the leaders are at, more or less, war with one another which consumes their energies to deal with Islamophobia.

Not only scrambling for regional superiority, another challenge that threatens the unity of Muslim Ummah is terrorism that adds fuel to the fire.

The Russo-Afghan war resulted in several extremist organizations that fought the war on the part of Afghanistan. However, these groups have grown into more extremist ones who kill anyone they feel infidel. Only Pakistan, as a result of widespread terrorism witnessed 376 terror attacks in which as many as 533 people were killed while 832 were

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Seriously injured. Moreover, 28% increase was witness during the same period in terrorism. (Breceder, Terrorism, 2022). The same is true of other Muslim countries which has defamed the real identity of Islam.

Along with terrorism, one more challenge is posed by the economic instability of the Muslim countries. The Muslim countries cannot make their ends meet. They are financially dependent on the international money lenders such as IMF and the World Bank. An estimated 32% of the total loans given by IMF goes to the Islamic countries (World Bank, IMF Disbursements, 2022). Due to this economic instability and huge dependency,

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on leaders that are the mouthpieces of the western world, calling Muslim Umma to unite against Islamophobia becomes a difficult task.

Despite all the challenges, the dilemma could be overcome by referring to certain measures which may include international cooperation among Muslims as the chief one. Cooperation is the first step towards performing any onerous task. Since Muslims are already lacking in this quality, it should be the prime focus of any efforts. In this regard, the OIC should play its due role to unite the Muslim world under a single banner. Similarly, diplomatic ties should be strengthened within the Muslim world to enhance intergovern-

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mental cooperation. To put simply, internal cooperation works and should be considered.

After developing cooperation, steps should be taken to overcome the issue of terrorism.

Terrorism is against the very concept of Islam which invites people to eternal peace. Additionally, terrorist outfits have also had a negative impact on the real identity of Islam and its followers. With respect to terrorism, the leaders should come to a single table and explain their viewpoints. They should make pledges to abandon using any kind of proxies against one another. In this way, if terrorism is overcome, Islam will regain its glory and

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True identity.
Finally, the world should be educated about the real Islam about which, they are, rather unaware. The extremists have propagated their own version of the divine commandments which has led to the repugnance of humanity at large. Members of the un-Islamic community are consequently lead into the belief that Islam is all about target killings and expelling all those who do not believe in it. In order to deal with this, Muslim scholars should come together to update the doctrines according to the needs of the new world through Ijtihad and Ijma. In short, propagating the real ideology of Islam can be helpful.

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To conclude, the religion of Islam is faced with many islamophobic entanglements around the globe. Muslims are bullied, tortured and killed as they are believed to be the believers in extremism. The real identity of Islam is perverted with information that are absolutely contrary to the real teachings of Islam. There are many challenges in wiping out all the manifestations put forth by the anti-Islamic sentiments around the world. However, there can be an easy way-out if the Muslims unite together with the true spirit of Islam to solve the issue. Hence, the suggestions should be pondered over to overcome the sad fortune.