

MUSLIM WORLD AND THE CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Introduction:

The Muslim Ummah, a supra-national political community was established by the Holy Prophet (SAW) some 1440 years ago and now it consists of 57 sovereign Muslim nations with 1.5 billion population. It comprises of one fifth of the world population and one third of the total members of the United Nations. Allah has bestowed upon the Muslim nations abundant natural resources. The whole territory of Muslim Ummah is enriched with resources that is needed for a stable economy. However, in spite of these blessings Muslim Ummah is lagging far behind the western nations. It is because of their own negligence and lack of pragmatic measures. There are multi-dimensional challenges that are being faced by the Muslim Ummah. Some are internal and some are external. The external challenges includes, western domination & colonialism, globalization, and IT. The internal challenges are more lethal and have devastating affect on the Muslim Ummah. The internal challenges includes, disunity among Muslim nations, poor management of resources, fundamentalism and rise of the extremism, middle east crisis etc. These issues need pragmatic solutions and rapid response, so that the Muslims can again witness their golden age.

INTERNAL CHALLENGES:

1. Disunity among the Muslim Ummah:

The looming crisis faced by Muslims is political disunity among themselves. Certainly, sectarian quarrels have weakened the unity of Muslims. The Muslims are now more divide and disarray than ever. The

11/31 for power is prevalent in the Muslim nations. Disappointingly, the personal quarrels have impeded the growth of Muslim Ummah in many ways, which is contrary to the teachings of Islam and Shariat. According to a Hadith, "A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim." Therefore, the Muslim community should resolve their ^{issues of} internal disunity.

b. Rich in resources and poor in management:

Allah has bestowed abundant natural resources on the Muslim Ummah, however, they have not been utilized according to their optimal use, to serve and defend the nation against conspicuously corrupts. The Muslim countries lack in the machinery and need the help of western countries for mineral extraction. On the other hand, the Arab countries are spending recklessly on their extravagant lifestyle without catering the needs of poor.

c. Fundamentalism and rise in extremism:

Islam is a very peaceful religion, even the word Islam means peace and submission. If someone finds it right and doctrine, it is because the interpreter has interpreted it in that way. However, some fundamentalists have drawn a very strict image of Islam which is not true. The Muslim Ummah is under intense pressure by the religious fundamentalists to impose epistemologies of their version of Islam and hence in some ~~cases~~ there has been witness rise in extremism.

d. The conflagration in the middle east:

The middle east, after the sudden outbreak of Arab spring in 2011, has been under conflagration.

The Arab spring has change into Arab autumn with most of the arab countries destabilized. The Arab countries are teetering on the verge of collapse. Libya is destabilized, Syria is bleeding, Iraq is under hegemony of ISIS, Saudi Arabia is attacking its own brethren Yemen, Israel has started genocide against Palastanians after october 7. The ISIS presence in the middle east not only endangers Muslims but it is a problem for the whole globe.

e. Lack in education, science, and technology:

The Muslim Ummah ~~is~~ lags far behind the western countries in terms of education, science and technology. For every new as well as old technology, the Muslim Ummah has to rely on US, China, Japan etc. They don't have their own contribution in the field of technology. There are 8500 universities in India and 5000 universities in USA. Some of ^{Muslim} universities were barely included in top 100 universities in the world. The university standard of the Muslim Ummah is not up to date. They are still relying on the old pedagogies, course.

EXTERNAL CHALLENGES

a. Baggage of western domination:

Colonialism, according to Egyptian President Jamal Abdul Nasser is 'subjugation of a weaker nation by a stronger state. During the heyday of western domination in nineteenth century, the colonialism assaulted Muslim Ummah in two folds. The first was political subjugation and second was assault on ^{Islamic} values and traditions. It injected the germs of superiority complex in the Muslim Ummah. The locals were

considered as an outcast. The deculturation of Muslims has done enormous damage to the values, culture and traditions of the Muslim. Those who followed the foot steps of English masters were considered respectable in the society. They inculcated their education system in their colonies, education system which was ignorant to Islamic principles. The Muslims became westernize, and it developed the concept of an elite class in our society. Hence, a person who copies others, forgets one's own identity.

Globalization: a new colonialism:

Concept of globalization was given by the west. "The interaction with similar and diverse entities through trade is called globalization." No doubt, globalization has changed the world but it has also engendered economy war. Globalization has transformed the world into an arena of economic, where the strongest is the winner and everyone has to consult him in their opinions. The flow of capital from the Muslim countries to the west is the adverse affect of globalization. The Muslim Ummah need to take pragmatic measure in their economic reforms.

Media warfare and information technology:

Some times Media is considered as the fifth pillar of "democracy" and the role of media in forming public opinion cannot be neglected. The western media has always portrayed Muslims as barbaric and fundamentalist. And it has largely effected in lack of tourism in Muslim countries which directly affects the economy. A weak

economy means a weak nation.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MUSLIM UMMAH: NEEDED PRAGMATIC MEASURES:

a. Unified response of Muslim Ummah:

The chasm between Muslim world and non-Muslim world is increasingly day by day. And it is bound to happen due to the clash of civilisation. The Muslim Ummah need to solve their sectarian issues, otherwise they will be doomed as a nation. The Muslim Ummah has to unify itself and send a message across the world that they are united in every sense. The incumbent situation does not need a forceful response but an intellectual comeback. According to Quran "Do hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided" Al Quran.

b. Retrospection; Self-introspection and Rectification:

The Muslim Ummah should stop blaming others for their incumbent situation. They should start self-introspection and rectify their ills. It is high time that Muslims show unity and iron out pragmatic measure in true letter and spirit.

c. Focusing on scientific education and IT:

There is a dire need for the Muslim Ummah to focus on scientific education and information technology. The Muslim Ummah had the ability and psyche in the past and they invented and discovered numerous things. Currently, the Muslim Ummah should develop up to day

education system that incorporates Islamic principles too.

d. The need of Ijtihad:

Islam is not just a religion but deen, a complete code of life. It was not made for just 7th century but for all generations and time. Allah has given us ijma and ijtihad as a secondary source of shariat. Therefore, it is high time that the Muslim Ummah should together and delve in to the matters of 21st century and find practical solutions for the problems of incumbent times.

e. The role of OIC:

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation is an intergovernmental organization consisting of 57 Muslim states. It is high time that the OIC should wake up itself from the sleep of ignorance and work for the progress of Muslim Ummah at large. It is the second largest organization in the world. It has the platform that Muslim Ummah needs to show their unity.

In a nutshell, the 21st century has not been kind with the Muslim Ummah. There are plethora of challenges; internal and external. However, these challenges can be solved with the help of Allah Almighty. The Muslim Ummah just need to be patient and should iron out pragmatic solution in the light of Quran and Sunnah.