

Day: Tuesday

Islamic

Amman 1053
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Q It is the period of basic human rights. What is meant by human rights and what is the western concept of human rights, discuss human rights of Islam in the light of sermon of Hajjatul Widaah. (CSS 2011)

Human Rights, in the events of globalisation, has become one of the most prevalent concept with various groups still struggling to achieve them in ^{different} ~~various~~ parts of the world. Many perceived ^{that} these human rights and their advocacy come from the Western concept of Liberalism. However, ^{apart from} ~~among~~ these other schools of thoughts ^{from} social sciences, the religion of Islam is considered as a great advocate of human rights having with well established domains ~~of~~ regarding the concepts of Human Rights. ^{such as that of} ~~especially~~ in the Last Sermon of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) during his final years. On the other hand, West recently got a hold on the concepts of human rights.

What are Human Rights?

According to United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHCR), Human Rights are moral principles or basic human rights that everyone is entitled to regardless of cast, creed, race, ethnicity or nationality. Another comprehensive definition has been stated by

Amnesty International which states ^{simplifies} that human rights are all the rights we obtain for being human. ~~then~~

Universal and Indivisible rights

Human rights are universal and inalienable. They have been defined by Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 and 1993 Vienna World conference on Human, for example, as universal under various treaties, conventions and declarations. These treaties on human rights have been ratified by all the states at least once. ~~Among~~

Interdependent and Equal rights

Human rights are various in category which are all interdependable. Among ^{them} are economic, social and cultural rights, such as the right to work, education, security, etc.; civil and political rights such as right to vote, right to life, right to free trial, etc. Moreover, these rights apply on all regardless of their sex, race, colour, etc. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights state: "All human being are born free and equal in dignity and rights"

Western Concept of Human Rights

Historical events of Human rights

The well established western civilisation today with great advocacy of Human Rights must be traced back to the chronological historical events involving the factors of Human Rights of history.

In 1215, a document known as Magna Carta was signed between the king of Great Britain and the barons that allowed the protection of some of the rights of the latter. In 1355, a bill was passed by British Parliament that provided protection of life, liberty and land. In 1648, Treaty of Westphalia was signed after 30 years of civil war against which was started in as a protest to exploitative behavior of powerful church. According to the treaty, the rights of human were to be given by state. Moreover, people were free to express their religious freedom - in the form of protestants - resulting in greater religious tolerance.

In 1689, Bill of rights was passed to give people the right to free and fair trial in the court. After one century, French Revolution started in France against the church and the state by the working class with literary slogans of liberty and fraternity. After the WWI, the League of Nations was formed to ensure the protection of the rights of those ^{prisoners} who were captured in WWI. In 1948, Universal Declaration of

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Human rights was passed in the United Nation after the horrors of WWII. Hence, a lot of the effort was laid down into forming the western concept of human rights. There were millions of sacrifices made to make each and every right available. As a result, the West was finally able to obtain these rights.

Despite the historical ongoing efforts of the West in advocating for human rights, it did all it can to exploit the rights of others by establishing colonies in Asian and African parts and subjugating them and denying them any political, social, cultural, economical, etc rights. There are many evident examples. For instance, the 19th and 20th century control of Britain in subcontinents gave Indians a hard time to attain their political, economic and social rights. Moreover, the incident of Jallianwala Bagh in which General Dyer of Britain ordered to open fire on peaceful protestors. Moreover, the fact that Mr. Winston Churchill took the major portion of culpability to Britain during the world war which caused a famine in Bengal. These were among the few events that showed double standards of the West in implementing its efforts of Human Rights.

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Contemporary Human Rights violation and the West

Assuming the role of Human rights advocator, the West ^{itself has done} ~~has done~~ human rights violations.

The war crimes in Afghanistan and Iraq and the torture ~~of~~ prisoners of war in prisons like Guantanamo Bay may indicate ^{now much} on the fundamental rights ^{were} being violated by the West. Moreover, there has been a rise in Islamophobic sentiments and a ban on Hijab in different part of Europe. The

In addition to all of the above, Julian Assange has been detained by the forces of UK for exposing the Human rights violations done by the United States. The most recent of them all is the genocide of Palestine by Israel with the usage of bio-chemical weapons. The killing spree has been indiscriminate with reports of death of children and pregnant women as well. Moreover, attempts were made to block humanitarian aid to Gaza, and the aid by air was purposely thrown into the sea. ~~It~~ On 17 May, the International Court of Justice termed Israel and Hamas leaders as criminals which are to be arrested. The claim was rejected by U.S. All these events are evidently indicating on West's two faced advocacy for Human rights today.

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The Last Sermon of Prophet (SAW)

On 9th Dhul-ul-Hijjah, 10A.H, Prophet (SAW) gave his last sermon on the mount of Arafat, known as Khutbah-e-Hijatul-Widah. It is considered the foremost charter of Human Rights in the history of mankind.

Right to life

Prophet (SAW) said: "Your blood and your property are as sacred as this day and this month."

Right to life is one of the fundamental rights and its ^{sanctity} ~~importance~~ ^{is} greatly emphasised as being sacred. This is also stated in Surah Al-Furqan ~~in the surah state:~~ in the following verse:

"... whoever takes a life, it will be as if he has killed the entire humanity and whoever saves the life, it will be as if they saved all of the humanity"

(SAW)
He ~~instructed~~ instructed people to avoid going astray and killing each other unjustly. He also declared the ~~remission~~ end of blood revenge from the days of ignorance. This shows the value of life to Prophet (SAW), and this is one of the reasons he is considered the ideal role model for peace making. During the war times, he (SAW)

would instruct the soldiers, to not harm the children, women, and those who are fleeing. Such were the examples laid down by Prophet (SAW). The West on the other hand do respect the right to life but on the same time, it is supporting the war crimes of Israel with indiscriminate use of weapons against the innocents under the pretext of collateral damage.

Economic Rights

The Prophet (SAW) forbade usury as it is a blatant violation of economic principles of Islam. This is because it is considered as a sheer exploitation of those in need of cash. It promotes a brotherhood in which it is the right of the borrower to have zero interest payment on borrowing. To facilitate the borrower more, he can receive Zakat ^{is allowed} under the pretext of repaying the debt. On the other

hand, West has promoted the value of capitalism which promotes an interest based economy. It is evident with the ^{For example, the} exploitative nature of IMF as well in lending to loan to certain countries in need of reserves to compensate for shortage of cash.

Right to inheritance has been emphasized and stated clearly in Quran ^{as well as} the laws of division. Islam has made sure that men as well as women gets their due right of inheritance. A concept has recently been introduced in the form of women rights to inheritance in the West.

Social Rights

Prophet (SAW) declared Muslims brethren of each other. He stated that the degree of superiority is based on the element of piety and not a being white, black, Arabic, non-Arabic, etc. Hence, a sense of equality was being promoted. This is also evident in 5 times congregational prayers in which everyone stands shoulder to shoulder with each other regardless of race, gender, class, creed, nationality, ethnicity, etc. On the other hand, there great struggles had were made to end discrimination with black people, by the West. Civil war was fought to abolish slavery

in United States, ~~where~~ ^{whereas} Islam already set those unprecedented standards centuries ago and as a result the cornerstone was put by the West on its liberal view of equality. In addition, Prophet (SAW) ordered us to provide slaves with what you provide your ownself and not treat them harshly. This was the time when slavery existed, and in such times of ignorance, Prophet (SAW) made sure that the slaves were not treated ~~as~~ ^{badly} ~~as~~ ^{well as} the slaves of that time.

During the time of ignorance with maltreatment and negative outlook of woman constructed by man, Prophet (SAW) not only defined their rights in inheritance but also their role as mothers, wives, etc.

In the sermon, Prophet (SAW) specified the rights of husband and wife.

On the other hand, Western liberal concepts of human rights have greatly tarnished the sanctity of marriage with identity crises and unsuitability on the pathway of relationships leading to high divorce rates and extra-marital affairs. Hence, Islamic social standards can set a high level of standard if it is followed properly.

Conclusion

It took Europe 700 years to form a framework of Human rights whereas in Islam, God gifted it 1400 years ago. While the West considers itself the champion on democracy, Queen and the events of history including the sermon of Prophet (SAW) evidently bestowed the Muslims with the social, political, and Economic rights ^{and equality}. Unfortunately, many Muslims have not actually grabbed the essence of these teachings and countries which underwent through colonial era consider everything as a white men's burden and rely on whatever they provide the Muslims to follow.
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