

Q: What are the contemporary challenges of Muslim Ummah and the solutions according to the teachings of Islam?

Muslims are facing plenty of severe challenges, that may vary in nature but have an everlasting effect on the individual as well as collective life of Muslims. These issues did not emerge overnight. They have also existed during the time of Prophet (PBUH) and the Caliphate reign. These problems included; intruders, colonization, intellectual and cultural threats.

→ Contemporary Challenges faced by Muslim Ummah:

① Lack of Unity:

Lack of unity is one of the major challenges. Once Muslim Ummah was seen as a strong pillar of social cohesion, but now it is fragmented on the basis of multiple differences; that include; different interpretations of the religion, emergence of sects and different cultural practices.

The Shia-Sunni conflict, more specifically, has led to rise in multiple sectarian issues; exacerbating fanatic ideologies and hatred towards each other. Both sides remain intolerable for the other, and emphasize the idea that they are right.

A more recent example is of the ongoing Palestine issue. Due to lack of unity among Muslim Ummah and inclination towards political

and economic interests has left behind Islamic solidarity.

Lack of unity has weakened Ummah's global influence and has emboldened the aggressors. Unity is essential for facing modern challenges and issues.

② Influence of West on Muslim Community:

The concept that Muslims are lagging, perpetuates in the society. The West considers Muslims as inferior beings, due to the inflicted superiority complex of the West. Muslims are considered backwards in modern education and lack of technological advancements.

Western pop culture, that includes, fashion, lifestyle and dominance of western media has led to ^{Muslim} cultural alienation and loss of identity.

One of the example of the West influence includes Westernization of legal systems of Turkey in the 20th century. Turkey replaced many Islamic laws from many areas of governance. They kept religion separate from state and laws.

Allah says in Surah Al-Maidah (5:44)
"And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, are Truly the disbelievers"

③ Misconception regarding Muslims as being terrorists or extremists:

Most modern Nations (West) view Muslims as terrorists or extremists based on the actions of small minority groups that are promoting such activities. The Muslims are wrongly accused and judged on the basis of other fanatic groups, putting aside the vast majority that advocates for co-existence and peace.

A phenomenal example of the present day world is of Palestinian resistance that is seen as 'terrorism' and Israeli aggression is justified as 'self-defence'.

Furthermore, the nationalist or ethnic groups are not given much attention with regard to terrorism, and they are not highlighted by Western media. Thus, the term 'terrorists' is being used disproportionately, even when Non-Muslims/ ~~and~~ secular extremists exist.

Quran rejects terrorism:

Surah Maidah (5:32)

"... whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely."

④ Islamophobia and external Propaganda:

External propaganda spreads stereotypes (Muslims are terrorists), thus, acting as a fuel to Islamophobia in the society which leads to; discrimination, hostility - social, political and professional settings, as well as restrictions on religious practices. The assumptions result in increased scrutiny for Muslims.

A pertinent incident of such outcome is of France and Europe, who banned religious dresses under the banner of 'freedom' and 'secularism'. Thus, depriving Muslims of their basic rights.

⑤ Misunderstanding of Religion:

Understanding Islamic teachings play a crucial role in shaping how Muslims interact globally. Without proper understanding, individuals and communities can not effectively navigate modern day problems, leading to poor decision making in various sectors like; politics.

Without this essential component the Ummah will continue to struggle with progress and development.

→ Solutions to Challenges:

① Strengthening Unity among Muslim Ummah:

It is a must to adhere to the principles of Quran and Sunnah. Its imperative for Muslims to overcome:

↳ Secularism

↳ Ethnic Issues

↳ Regional differences

for cohesive front. Once unity is achieved, among themselves, this would eventually lead to strengthen political and economic alliances between Muslim countries.

Surah Al-Imran (3:103)

"And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided."

② Strengthening the foundations of Organization of Islamic Republic (OIC):

Reforms and organizations (OIC) must be strengthened so that the actual issue and perspective can come forward, Muslim countries can align on one agenda and work together for better cause. The idea of developing stronger mechanisms for conflict resolution, humanitarian aid and political advocacy shall also be in the pipeline.

So due to the presence of a strong, supportive medium, Muslims could unite under it against any potent Western threats.

③ Promoting Islam's message and eliminating misconceptions of terrorism and extremism.

Peaceful message of Islam highlights the true essence of Islam.

Sahih Bukhari:

"The best among you are those who ~~are~~ have the best manners and character."

Embodying the right teachings ~~of~~ and engaging in educational initiative, Muslims can foster understanding and ~~tolerance~~ tolerance, dispelling myths that link religion to violence and extremism. This education should also go to the western world so that they also become aware of the right image.

④ Fostering and Strengthening Islamic Culture:

Cultural identity is crucial for preserving the rich heritage of Muslims for the world to see. There's immediate need of keep our rich global culture alive so that we abstain from increased western influence.

Muslims had contributed in fields of science, culture and art. A prominent example is of Al-Khawarizmi, who laid the foundation for modern world ~~using~~ math theories used worldwide today.

Reclaiming and strengthening Islamic culture is important to preserve richness of Islamic heritage for future generations.

The challenges faced by Muslim Ummah are plenty, which has led to fragmentation due to which other countries can easily induce pressure for their favor. It is essential to gain guidance from Quran and Sunnah and navigate matters precisely so that there is peaceful progress and harmony is maintained with all.