

Question:

Discuss Islam's emphasize on tolerance, peace, and inter-faith harmony. Critically analyze the contemporary challenges posed by terrorism and extremism, and outline the Islamic methodology for promoting peace and moderation coexistence in a diverse world.

I. Introduction:

Islam is a complete code of life and in social dealings it emphasizes on tolerance, peace, co-existence, mutual respect and inter-faith harmony.

Islam majoxly comprises two sources: One is Holy Quran and other is the Life of Holy Prophet (PBUH). The Holy Quran accentuates the commonality among Abrahamic faiths, recognizing Jews and Christians as "People of the Book," and calling for peaceful interactions with them. Similarly, the Treaty of Hudaibiyah took place in 6H, was the result of successful inter-faith harmony, peace, and religious tolerance. It is important to mention that for the sake of peace Holy Prophet (PBUH) agreed on ten-year peace treaty

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with the people of other faiths despite being far more powerful than the combined strength of all the non-believers at that time. Islam is a universal religion that not only instructs about prayers, obligations, and Sunnah but also teaches how to deal with day-to-day matters. Quran is a guide and Seerah of Holy Prophet is a practical example of that guide. In Quran, Allah commands justice, compassion, non-coercion, and moral foundations of a peaceful social order.

"There is no compulsion in religion"

(Quran: 2:256)

Prophet (PBUH) further strengthened this ethic through his treaties with non-Muslims:

• Charter of Madinah

• Christian of Najran

Charter of Madinah was based on the principles of unity, peace, mutual respect, non-extremist ideologies where Muslims and non-Muslims were living independently and enjoined full freedom of religion. In the year 10H, many Christians fled from Christian persecution and took refuge in

Madinah and Prophet (PBUH) offered them territorial autonomy and self-government to Christians of Najran. Despite the peaceful foundations of Islam from Holy Prophet to Ottomans and Mughals, modern Muslim societies face the dual threats of terrorism and extremism. The main cause of extremism is misrepresentation of Islamic teachings and detaching the selective quotes from context (asbab al-nuzul).

II. Terrorism and Extremism: Contemporary Challenge for Muslim World

Terrorism refers to any act of violence that intentionally targets innocent people to create fear, instability, and harm. Quran strongly condemns this act as:

"Whoever kills an innocent person, it is as if he killed all of humanity."

(Quran 5:32)

Furthermore, classical scholars of Islam classify terrorism as *Tasād al-fil-ard* (corruption on earth), one of the greatest crimes in Islamic law.

Extremism (Ghuluww) in arabic) refers to going beyond the boundaries set by Allah.

In Quran, Allah warns:

Do not commit excess in your religion. (Quran 4:171)

Islam considers extremism a dangerous deviation from the right path.

a. Contemporary Events of Terrorism and Extremism:

In Pakistan, particularly, terrorism has always been the problem for national security. In the first quarter of 2025, there was 81% increase in terrorism-related activities and fatalities rose in the year-on-year comparison. According to Global Terrorism Index 2025, Pakistan ranked as the 2nd most affected country in terrorist activities.

More precisely, Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP) is described as the fastest-growing terror group with a 90% increase in deaths linked to its attacks. The results have shown that 2025 is a worst year for Pakistan in exposing to terrorism and extremism. As Pakistan created solely on Islamic ideology,

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the recurring cycle of terrorist attacks can weaken its foundations - if not dealt timely.

Globally, other muslim nations have also faced similar rise in terrorism in different forms. The ongoing conflicts in Gaza (since 2023), Yemen, and Syria have created a fertile ground for terrorists - masking political agendas. The evil has worn the digital clothes and extremist narratives now spread globally within few minutes. The EU Report 2024-2025 showed 40% increase in online radical propaganda connected to Middle East conflicts. Moreover, structural factors such as political oppression and human rights abuses, sectarian divide and identity politics create room for extremists to exploit state failures to present themselves as alternative governance failures. They are misguided people and Quran perfectly captures the mindset of extremists and terrorists in modern world as:

"When it is said to them, 'Do not cause corruption on earth'; they say, 'We are only peacemakers'."

(Al-Baqrah : 11-12)

III. Islamic Methodology for promoting peaceful co-existence

Terrorism and Extremism is anti-thetical to Islamic teachings. Islam is a peaceful religion but terrorism and extremism refers to dangerous deviation from peace and moderation.

1. Wasatiyyah (Moderation) as a Quranic Command

The Quran describes Muslims as "justly balanced nation or (المتوسطين)," binding them to avoid both extremism and laxity. Scholars argue that moderation in Islam is not an optional virtue but an obligation in faith, worship, politics, and social conduct.

2. Promotion of Ethical Literacy

Seeking knowledge is an obligatory act in Islam. Knowledge promotes education and education promotes ethical literacy. To counter extremism, there should be practical policies exist in the education system such as curriculum reforms, ethical reasoning,

critical thinking and training of ulema in modern issues. As Islam is not static, it evolves through Ijtihad (reasoned interpretation), Masalah (public interest), and Maqasid al-Shariah. The proper education of these tools can weaken extremist literalism.

3. Strengthening Rule of Law and Justice

Social injustice is a breeding ground for radicalization. Islam demands due process and welfare of people of the state.

Allah commands justice, excellence,
and giving to relatives.

(Quran 16:90)

Justice for every individual no matter what his religion, caste, language, or status is.

The state of Madinah portrays best example of applying rule of law and justice.

Prophet (PBUH) de-politicize the religion, maintain peaceful interactions even with Jews, Christians, and polytheists.

IV. Conclusion:

In sum, Islamic social order is based on justice, peace, co-existence, and

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moderation. On the other hand, terrorism and extremism are violent act and antithetical to Islamic teachings. Quran and sunnah clearly shows that justice, morality, non-coercion, and minority protection are the bedrock of any successful nation. Terrorism, therefore, represent failure of applying Islam teachings in state policies. Hence, muslim societies can cope with terrorism and extremism by returning to original vision of Islam where faith uplifts humanity and diversity becomes a source of mutual enrichment rather than conflict.