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2. Religious Development.

Outline

A. Introduction

- Thesis Statement: Religious extremism breeds a society which is hard to live in, let alone forecasting economic development, due to absence of peace and marginalized governmental policies among others. It needs to be dealt with an iron fist to stop further ^{damage} ~~losses~~.

B. How Religious Extremism is a Threat to Economic Development?

- a. Undemocratic legislation marginalizing certain groups.
- b. Governmental actions targetting minorities and promoting hate
- c. Depromoting science to religious education
- d. War against minority groups rendering no peace.

e. Absence of tourism due to bad image
casted on global arena.

f. Glorification of ascetism^{is} in religion

g. Hate towards technology.

c. Way forward to curb Religious
Extremism

a. Understanding religion's core message
and following ~~concepts~~ moderate demands.

b. Identifying hate-mongering to the
govt. authorities.

c. ~~Way~~ Establishing regulatory framework
for religious seminaries.

d. Harmonizing religious institutions in
mainstream machinery.

e. Prioritizing citizens' interests over
Great Powers'

D. Conclusion

Essay

Religion was revealed on the people for guidance, for transforming the world into a paradise. It was meant for the betterment of the people rather than being the bone of discontent. Things have changed with time and today, unfortunately, it is among the things that have been most exploited. Rather than for collective benefits, it's being progressed for the individual gains of a few leaders. People are made to believe a certain fanatic rhetoric, which ultimately serves their interest: prolonging their rule or consolidating their authority. Whether it is a divine or a man-made religion, all have

met a similar tragedy. Starting from the dawn of Judaism to today, all have witnessed extremism in their own way to mangle the minorities. While other repercussions aside, the aspect most affected by religious extremism is the economic development. It breeds a society which is hard to live in, let alone forecasting economic developments due to absence of peace and marginalized govt policies among others. It needs to be dealt with an iron fist to stop further damage.

Religious extremism is never limited to the society but if present in the society, it will must be represented in the legislature as well since that is the reflection of whole state. This results in

passing of undemocratic legislations or constitutional amendment that marginalizes a certain group on the basis of religion. This becomes the first step towards economic development's threats since the legislation define the whole course of action society shall follow. By this, the real objective of legislature is missed and it becomes engulfed with unnecessary chores.

Its example is second Constitutional Amendment (1971) to the constitution of Pakistan, which declared Ahmedi and Lahori sect of Qadyani as non-muslims, which was beyond the scope of constitution.

We saw its repercussions expressed in society as: اقتصادی سرکوتا
اقتصادی سرکوتا, hampering economic activities. Another example is of inclusion of

articles 62 & 63 in the Constitution. Hence, a wrong course of action by legislature can lead to a threat of economic development on religious lines.

In a religiously extreme society, govt fall prey to populist and evoke certain actions detrimental to citizens' interests, which also target minorities and even spew hatred towards them. One such is banning the food outlets and prohibition to eat or drink in public places during the holy month of Ramzan. Keeping this month in the highest esteem, but fasting is a personal practice and not never to be imposed by the govt.

These practices utterly ignore women, patients, children, and about 20% of our minority citizens. Economic loss of the food outlets is ~~also~~ huge, as well as of all other associated businesses. Hence marginalized actions by govt. targeting minorities causes huge economic loss.

In a religiously extremist society, foreign curriculum is seen as an attack on their tradition. A militant organization in Nigeria named "Boko Haram" literally means prohibition of Western education. This incurs economic loss in a domino effect that without modern education, economy cannot prosper. It was recently witnessed in

Pakistan when a Chinese labor was accused of blasphemy under PPC 295(c) and consequently, all the development work was halted in the area causing a major setback to mega projects in the longer run. "If religious students have no income, likewise, they will have no income and thus they will sell religion", as said by a leading religious figure from Pakistan. Hence, education should not be labelled ~~as~~ ^{with} religions, while every knowledge is useful.

Religious intolerance is usually manifested as a series of conflicts of all against all. The tribal areas of KP ~~are~~ were

particularly affected with it during the severely extremist ~~rule~~ rule of Taliban. Many women products were banned from the markets, no eatables were allowed during Ramadan. In a war or consequently absence of peace, economic activities can never prosper because such a time is detrimental for an investor to invest. ~~hence~~ For tourist valleys like Kalam, Malam Jabba etc; the loss of hotel industry was also huge. Hence, a favourable peace is required for business to flourish.

A region marred with religious extremism sees no tourist inflow due to its bad image on global arena.

Pakistan ~~is~~ has been a witness to it despite having natural bounties across its width. Recently, Commission for Religious Interference has requested US President to ban India due to its marginalized treatment with minorities, particularly Muslims. This ~~will~~^{has} severely impact its global image, to be reflected in its tourist inflows. All the countries with max. annual turn over of tourist (like UAE, Thailand, Singapore), ~~they~~ have adopted a moderate version of religion, that too in private spheres. Hence, economic development is severely affected by the worse image of the country.

Some interpret religions as having promoted asceticism. Particularly Sufism, monasticism, and some leading religious figures of the past (Sufi saints of the Sultantent) are associated with it. In a religiously extremist society, these are imposed on public sphere and hence economic activities thrive in the area due to over emphasis on simplicity. This is a threat to about 180 billion USD cosmetic industry world wide. Some flexibility is always allowed in the religion rather than straight forward rejection while spending money on oneself. Hence promotion of asceticism can be a threat to economic development.

Hate towards technology is also witnessed in religiously extreme societies. This is because technology is seen as unislamic (for Islamic extremism) and a direct cultural invasion.

A couple of years back, a religious leading figure from Islamabad burnt his sofa set in media and told his adherents that he would, from now on, will prefer to sit on ground instead. Hence in this way, when technology's progress is hampered, economy can't progress in the region.

The first step in curbing religious extremism is one's own responsibility to understand the core meaning of the religion.

rather than dogmatic following. Extremism is always fed and never learnt, while self-study usually leads to moderate concept, at least initially. Hence we should follow those clerics who spread love and harmony.

It is the collective responsibility to identify the extremist elements and hate-mongers to the regulatory authorities formed by the govt. In Pakistan, FIA Cyber Crime Cell is performing the task of taking action against the persons spreading hate. Framework is available under Pakistan Penal Code and Prevention of Cyber Crime Act. Hence such things should be reported to the govt.

In developing and third

world countries particularly, there is a dire need to control and steer the religious institutions. Its examples can be found in Turkey, Indonesia, and Egypt etc. where even the Friday sermon is provided by the govt. to the cleric. Hence, govt. should steer religious institutions.

Extremism is usually produced when a community is marginalized. To address this, the students from religious seminaries need to be adjusted in the mainstream machinery, e.g., by issuing grants to the institutions, govt. job quotas, and scholarships to the brilliant and deserving students. Their best examples currently in Pakistan are Madrasah Bait-ul-Islam in Talagang (Chakwal) and

Madrasah Jamia-tul-Rashed
in Karachi. Hence, they should
be harmonized to reduce the
differences.

Govts. should prioritize
the interests of its own citizens
rather than that of great
powers. We have seen its
effects first during the
Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan
(1979) and later in the
War on Terror (2001 onwards),
we still aren't completely
free from its menace. In
democracy, citizens' interests
are supreme. Hence, religious
extremism can be reduced
by granting all rights to
the public.

Summing up, we have
seen how religious extremism

hampers economic growth of the country. Usually, as we have seen, third world and developing countries are its victim due to not granting rights to their citizens now, ~~at~~ the individual and the government alike should come forward to fight this menace by taking the marginalized community on board, including religious scholars. Only this way, we can forecast a better future for us and our coming generations.

————— (THE END) —————