

"Subjective"

Part-II :-

Q#2: Fasting: The "Islamic Perspective"

Introduction :-

In the Western societies, and particularly in the field of medicine, fasting means refraining from food and calorie dense fluids during fixed window frames. It is for the individual himself and is aimed at individualistic goal like weight loss. On the contrary, fasting in Islam is a selfless phenomena where the individual leaves not only

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Food and drink, but also other carnal desires like sexual intercourse not for one's own self, but for the pleasure of the Almighty.

“Fasting is for Me, and I will give the reward for it”
[Bukhari]

The concept of fasting is clear : refraining from both halal as well as haram activities for an entire month from ~~dawn~~^{Sunrise} till dawn for Allah's pleasure. The impacts, hence, also touch spiritual, moral, physical and communal aspects of a society impacting both individual and society.

(A) Concept of Fasting in Islam:

(1) The Literary Meaning:
Fasting, in its literal sense, means to refrain / abstain.

(2) Terminological Meaning:-

In its terminological sense, fasting refers to leaving or refraining from food, drink and sexual pleasures along with other bad habits (backbiting) ^{til} from sunset ~~til~~ for an entire month.

(B) Importance of Fasting in Islam:

(1) Legacy of Islam:

"O you who believe, Fasting is prescribed upon you as it was prescribed to those before you"

[Surah Baqarah]

The importance of fasting is evident from this verse. Allah (SWT) has always prescribed it upon nations He revealed Islam to.

(2) (4th) 4th Pillar of Islam:

Islam has been built on 5 pillars: to testify that there is no one worthy of worship except Allah and Muhammad (SAW) is His Messenger, establishing Salah, paying Zakat, fasting in Ramazan and making Hajj [Bukhari] / Muslim

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Fasting derives its importance from the fact that it occupies the position of 4th pillar of the edifice of Islam, affirmed by our truthful Prophet (SAW).-

(3) Highest Rewards and pleasure of Allah for a fasting person:

"Fasting is for Me and I will give the reward for it as the fasting person leaves his food drink and sexual desire for Me. These are two pleasures for a fasting person: one at the time of breaking his fast and the other at the time of meeting his Lord"

[Bukhari]

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(4) "Source of Acceptance
of Supplication"

(5)

"There are three whose
supplication is not rejected
: a just ruler, a fasting
person when he breaks
his fast and the supplication
of the oppressed. Allah raises
it above the clouds and opens
the gates of heavens to it
and says "By My Might
I shall Surely aid you
, even if it be after a
while"

[Tirmidhi]

Hence, fasting raises the
prospects of acceptance of
Supplication.

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(5) "Shield From Hell-Fire and Sins"

"Whoever among you has the means, let him get married, for it is more effective in lowering the gaze and guarding one's chastity. Whoever cannot, then fasting will be a screen ^{for} him"

[Nassai]

Fasting is important to ensure abstinence from major and minor sins and hence it is a shield from hell-fire.

(B) Impacts of Fasting:

The impacts of fasting can be bifurcated into individual as well as societal:-

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Individual	Societal
Instills patience	Increases Charities
Spiritual Elevation	Fosters Unity
Health benefits	Healthy Communities

(I) Individual Level: Impacts

(I.1) Instills Patience:

Leaving "halal" for the sake of Allah helps leave "haram"

Fasting instills patience by encouraging a believer to abandon halal activities (food, drink) and hence by increased self-control leaving haram. Abandonment of anger, intolerance and other impatient traits pave the way for a patient personality which proves beneficial in the long run as Imam Ghazali said:

"Patience makes Kings out of Slaves and slaves out of Kings". [Imam Ghazali]

(1.2) Spiritual Elevation:-

Fasting for Allah's pleasure helps instill God-consciousness (Taqwa) and righteousness. Fasting is an act of pure love from a believer to Allah (SWT) and the believer is in a state of humility. Constant Tauba and expiation of sins elevates the individual spiritually.

(1.3) Physical Benefits:

Caloric deficit, detoxification and release of growth hormone combat various health issues such as:

- (1) Obesity
- (2) Hypertension
- (3) Fatty liver

(2) Societal Impacts:

(2.1) Understanding the plight of the poor: "Charities"

Fasting gives a firsthand experience of the daily struggles of the poor and underprivileged sections of society. This encourages believers to spend their wealth in Allah's way through voluntary as well as involuntary charities. Hence, Ramzan fulfills the basic needs of the society by encouraging the rich to donate throughout the year.

(2.2) Unites Global Muslim Community:

The shared beliefs, practices and aspects of fasting unites various Muslims throughout the world rendering political borders obsolete.

(3.3) Kind and Moral Society:-

According to Holy Quran, the primary purpose of Za fasting is to instill "piety". By discouraging unhealthy behaviors such as backbiting and lying and encouraging kindness, forgiveness and tolerance, fasting eradicates various social evils and immorality fostering a pious community.

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Conclusion:

The impacts of fasting are so profound, that their legacy extends beyond Ramadan as well as borders. Fasting is a key to a morally upright, healthy and kind society.

Q# 4:-

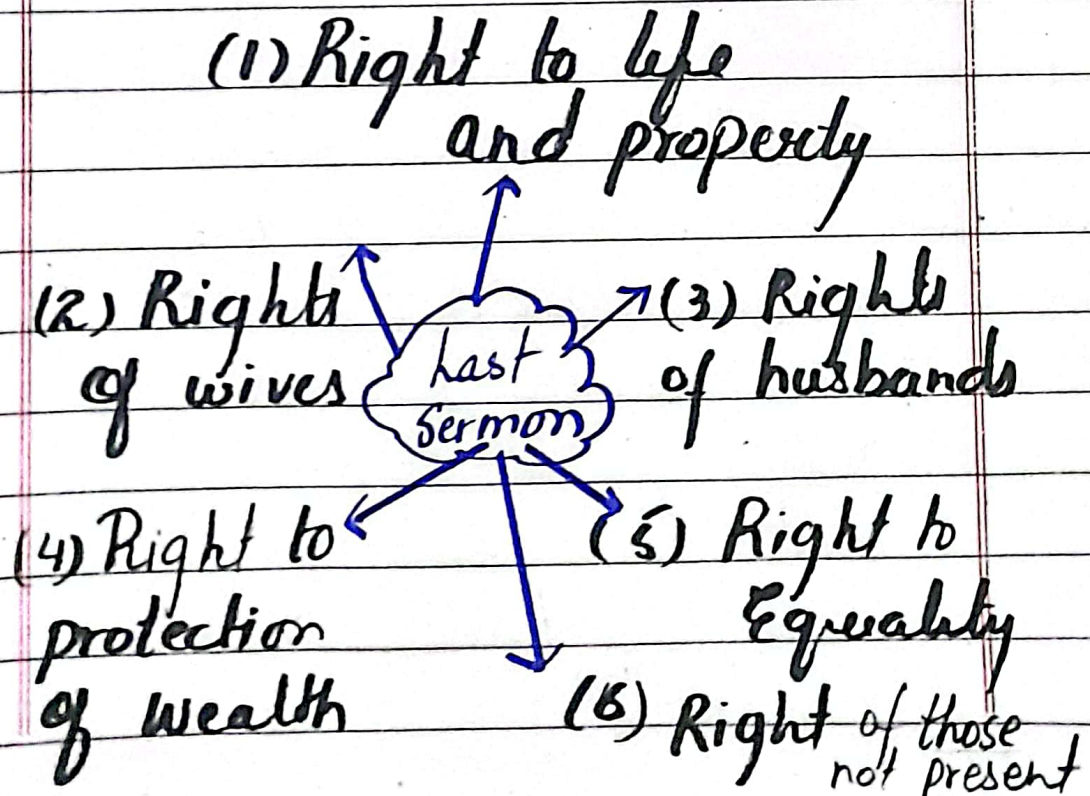
“last sermon”

Introduction:-

The rights given by Islam are evident in the last sermon of Prophet (SAW). These rights are not given by any leader, ruler or king, but by Allah (SWT) Himself, and hence these rights

are un-commendable, final and inviolable. The last sermon upheld human sanctity of life, property and granted both women and men their due rights. It dismantled notions of superiority, upholding the right of equality irrespective of race, colour and creed. It protected the wealth, and the rights of those not present.

(A) Human Rights



(1) Right to life and Property:

"Your property and your life are as sacred as are this Day this Month and this City"

The Prophet (SAW) hence elucidated the following rights:

(1) Prohibition of Murder:

This right is the reflection of the Quranic verse:

"Killing a man is as if he has killed whole of humanity and whoever saves a person is as if has saved the whole of 'humanity'"

[Quran: 51]

(2) The prohibition of unjust/illicit consumption of wealth:

"O people! do not usurp each other's wealth illicitly but by trade and mutual consent"

[Al-Quran: Nisa]

(2) Right of Wives:-

"O people, fear Allah concerning women, verily you have taken them on the security of Allah and made their persons lawful unto you by words of Allah. And if your wives are faithful to you and refrain from impropriety, then feed and clothe them suitably".

The Quran gives women the

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right to be provided and
the Prophet's sermon
has upheld it too.

"Men are the care-takers
of women"

[Al-Quran: Nisa]

(3) Rights of Husbands:

"It is incumbent upon wives to
honour their conjugal rights,
which if they do, you have
the right to chastise them,
yet not severely"

The last sermon upholds the
right of men to get sincerity
and pleasure from their wives
and obliges women to honour
these rights.

(4) Right to Protection of Wealth:

"God condemns you to take usury".

By ensuring usury is not practiced, Islam in Prophet's last sermon makes sure the distribution of wealth to each segment of society by preventing its concentration in a few hands.

(5) Right to Equality and zero discrimination:

"No Arab has superiority over a non-Arab and no non-Arab has superiority over an Arab. White has no superiority over Black and black has no superiority over white. None has superiority

over the other except for piety".

The Prophet (SAW) in his last sermon dismantled all notions of superiority. No Arab can evade law or discriminate against a Black over superiority and vice versa. The Quran in this regard says:

"O people! We made you from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. The best among you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous" [Al-Auran]

Hence, Prophet's last sermon is the forebearer of this verse and this right.

(6) Rights of those not present

“Those of you present should pass on my words to others and they to others”.

The Prophet (SAW) ensured that each individual should know the rights granted to them by their Lord which is ~~the~~ a right itself: “the right to know your rights”.

Conclusion:-

The Prophet's last sermon is a human rights charter covering various aspects such as life, property, marriage, wealth and equality. It ensures the well-being, prosperity, safety and dignity of all humans

irrespective of gender, race
and creed.

Q# 5:

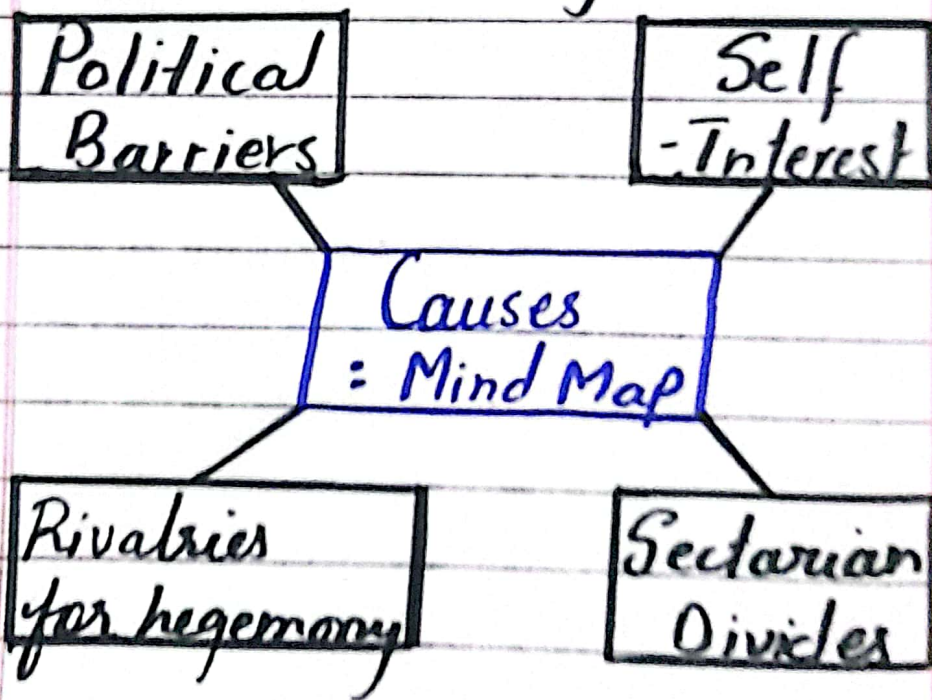
Disunity and Muslim World:

Introduction :-

The Muslim world from Pakistan in South-Asia to Iran and Saudi in the middle East are unable to stand the destabilizing sectarian, ideological, political and economic winds. Self-interest, political borders, sectarian divides and divergent perspectives fuel this division. Shedding rivalries for hegemony, economic,

political and regional integration along with re-invigorating OIC and re-affirmation of common grounds can bridge disunity in the Muslim world.

(A) Causes of Dis-Unity:-



(i) Political

Barriers:

(a) Nation-State and Self-Interest:-

According to Dr. TSTARI, the division of the Muslim world into nation-states and the ultimate division of interests (national-interests) divided the Muslim world on various lines. Saudi's alignment with U.S.A (America) despite America's relentless sanctioning and attacks on Iran and Iraq are manifestation of this political divide along the lines of nation-state system.

“United We Stand
“Divided We fall”

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Another example of this is the Israel-Palestine issue. The meekness and lip-service of the Muslim world is due to fear of repercussions and "threat to national security".

(ii) Rivalries for hegemony:

(a) Saudi-Iran divide over Syria:

The quest for hegemony in middle East has caused Saudi and Iran to play proxy conflicts in Syria and Yemen resulting in a divided and destabilised Muslim world.

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(b) Afghanistan - Pakistan:

"Afghanistan's desire to expand"

The territorial divisions of the Muslim world and the quest to gain more territory, enhance national posture and ethnic nationalism (Pashtun nationalism) has caused Pak-Afghan skirmishes over Durand line.

(B) Way Forward:

"Uniting Muslim World"

(1) Shedding Political Borders:

"Ummah over:

(1.1) Nation State"

The Muslims should uphold the

principles of "Ummah"

"All Muslims are Brothers"

[Bukhari]

"You are the best
Ummah ever raised for
mankind, you bid the
fair and forbid the
unfair, and you believe
in Allah"

[Surah Baqarah]

The Quran and Hadith have
dismantled all notions of "nation-
state" system and hence Muslims
should struggle for a more
politically unified world.

(1.2) Muslim Nationalism
over Ethnic Nationalism:

The conflicts between Pak-Afghan
can be resolved only when

ethnic, linguistic and national narratives are dismantled in favour of Muslim nationalism. This would settle down border disputes and bridge gaps.

(2) Economic Integrations:-

(2-1) Muslim Economic Bloc and Barter System :-

A Muslim bloc like BRICS where economic, intellectual and technological resources are pooled together. Can promote interdependence, cooperation and trust in the Muslim world.

The use of a Muslim banking system or currency or a barter system can aid sanctioned and war torn nations and like Iran, Iraq, Yemen and Syria.

Conclusion:-

Concluding it all, with dedication, political will and Islamic teachings, Muslim world can emerge as a powerful and most resilient bloc against the West and Israel. Imagine if 25% of 1.8 billion people in the world, under God's teachings, bridge their gaps and stand together, no power, except Allah can shatter them.
