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G20 Interfaith Forum reflects KSA efforts to promote moderation and counter extremism values



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SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE MUSLIM WORLD LEAGUE AND PRESIDENT OF THE ORGANISATION OF MUSLIM SCHOLARS



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Muslim World League and its Humanitarian Initiatives

// The G20 Interfaith Forum is an event aimed at raising awareness about the role of religious organizations and turning eyes to the positive impact of religion and values on the world's development and safety.

Leaders, experts, representatives of religions and high-ranking religious personalities participated in the forum. They tackled important issues including the role of religion in building bridges of peace and resolving conflicts, the corona pandemic, empowerment of women and youth, and the efforts of religious institutions to face climate threats and protect the planet.

His Excellency the Secretary General of the Muslim World League Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa delivered a speech in the opening session of the Forum conveying significant meanings as follows:

- We all share moderate voices and love for all and reject all forms of hatred, racism, discrimination and marginalization.
- Expressing gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques for inculcating the values of moderation and combating extremism and terrorism, as well as the global human services and historical actions that, by the grace of Allah, have turned into a global source of inspiration, including the major global platforms to confront the extremist ideology, and the initiative and sponsorship of the most important document in Islamic history after the Constitution of Madinah, which is the Makkah Document.
- The story and making true peace does not come by mere words, illogical theories, calls and slogans that complicate matters or

dialogues that are not preceded by sincere and faithful intentions, but rather the tangible impact that actively contributes to the benefit of humanity by preserving its security, coexistence and cooperation and enhancing its brotherhood.

- All followers of religions and cultures are our brothers in humanity, and we will deepen unity to make more real peace efforts.
 - The MWL's Islamic and human positions are the core of the Islamic and moral duty towards building peaceful, secure and conscious societies to promote the culture of love and respect especially for future generations.
 - An example is the MWL's response to the Sri Lankan President's request for help to end tension and mutual hatred among followers of religions after the terrorist bombings in the capital, Colombo, and the positive results achieved.
 - The MWL has launched effective initiatives to confront all forms of racism and hatred, and the marginalization of the role of women around the world.
 - The MWL has been working on facing poverty around the globe as it is deemed the greatest threat to human security, and providing humanitarian aid to millions of individuals, families, widows and orphans around the globe, without discrimination, and enhancing this aid under the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Thus, the humanitarian positions of the MWL continue through its urgent relief programs, religious diplomacy through mediation and good offices, and its efforts to establish dialogue and understanding between followers of religions and intellectuals, and to raise the banner of solidarity, coexistence and human unity.





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SG of MWL:

G20 Interfaith Forum reflects KSA efforts to promote moderation and counter extremism values

Makkah - MWL

🗨️ ***His Excellency the Secretary General of the Muslim World League (MWL), Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa affirmed that the Islamic world shares unity with the human world, stressing that “We all share moderate voices and love for all and reject all forms of hatred, racism, discrimination and marginalization”.***



“All followers of religions and cultures are our brothers in humanity, and we will deepen this brotherhood to make more real peace efforts with it”

This came in the context of the speech delivered by Dr. Al-Issa at the opening session of the G20 Interfaith Forum 2020, hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Forum was organized by the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) and the Global Partnership Alliance (GPA). In his speech, His Excellency thanked Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman - may Allah protect them - for their global efforts to promote the values of moderation and combat extremism and terrorism, as well as their global human services. Sheikh Al-Issa said their efforts have turned into a global source of inspiration, including the major

global platforms to confront the extremist ideology, and their initiative and sponsorship of the most important document in Islamic history after the Constitution of Medina, which is the Makkah Document.

The Secretary General clarified that making of true peace does not come by mere words, illogical theories, calls and slogans that complicate matters or dialogues that are not preceded by sincere and faithful intentions, but rather the tangible impact that actively contributes to the benefit of humanity by preserving its security, coexistence and cooperation and enhancing its brotherhood, indicating, “All followers of religions and cultures are our brothers in humanity, and we will deepen this brotherhood to make more real peace efforts with it”.

Dr. Al-Issa highlighted some

of the MWL’s Islamic and human positions which he considered to be the core of the Islamic and moral duty towards building peaceful, secure and conscious societies to promote the culture of love and respect especially for future generations, including his response to the Sri Lankan President’s request for help to end tension and mutual hatred among followers of religions after the terrorist bombings in the capital, Colombo. He pointed to the positive results that came out after efforts and lengthy discussions and dialogues, which were praised by everyone in a historic celebration in the presence of diverse religious and political leaders. Dr. Al-Issa talked about the MWL’s effective initiatives to confront all forms of racism and hatred, and the marginalization of the role of women around the world. He also highlighted the MWL’s work in the face of poverty around the world as it is deemed the greatest threat to human security, and its humanitarian aid to millions of individuals, families, widows and orphans around the globe, without discrimination, and enhancement of this aid under the Covid-19 pandemic.

MWL Secretary General

denounces extremists in response to Macron's 'Islamist separatism' speech

Makkah - MWL

The Muslim World League Secretary General Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa has responded to plans in France for tougher laws to tackle "Islamist separatism."

In a speech earlier this month, President Emmanuel Macron announced new laws that he said would tackle "a counter-society." He said they would defend France's secular values against Islamist radicalism. Macron also said Islam is a religion that is in crisis all over the world.

Asked about Macron's comments, Sheikh Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, the MWL Secretary General, said extremists had harmed Islam's reputation.

"There are people who are falsely considered Muslims," Al-Issa said in an interview on MBC television. "These have harmed Islam's reputation with their radicalism and extremism – and sometimes, their violence, including their terrorism.

"These do not represent Islam at all, and if we defend them – whether directly or indirectly, (that would mean) we are exactly like them."

When asked about Macron's references to



Sheikh Al-Issa: Extremists had harmed Islam's reputation

separatism and isolationism, Al-Issa said extremists and terrorists "were the first to isolate themselves from Islamic society." He said the 2019 Makkah Declaration, which was signed by thousands of clerics and Islamic scholars from around the world, emphasized the need to respect the constitutions, laws, and cultures of countries. The declaration called for anti-extremism, religious and cultural diversity, and legislation against hate and violence.

Sheikh Al-Issa has previously said it is his "mission" to wipe out extremist ideology and he has spearheaded efforts to tackle radicalization.

In his speech, Macron said France would seek to "liberate" Islam in France from foreign influences.

He previously hit out at "political Islam" in February and singled out the Muslim Brotherhood.

MWL condemns Paris terror attack and describes it as a horrific crime

Makkah - MWL

The Secretary General of the Muslim World League (MWL) Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa described the tragic beheading crime of a teacher at the suburb of Conflans-Sainte-Honorine as horrific and horrendous.

He pointed out that this crime, which took place on October 16th, 2020, represents nothing but the evil terrorist tendency of its perpetrator.

The Secretary General stressed that the practices of violence and terrorism are criminalized in all divine laws and classified as the highest degrees of criminal assault.

Dr. Al-Issa emphasized that more concerted efforts should be exerted to eradicate terrorism and defeat its extremist ideology that motivates such crimes.

He affirmed his confidence that the French with their diversity that formed their strength and unity will



continue their efforts to eliminate all forms of violence and terrorism. He emphasized the importance of the unity of the French people who should stand together in the face of such atrocities and any attempt that tries to undermine their security and stability.

His Excellency expressed his sincere condolences to the teacher's family, students, friends and the friendly French people.

MWL: Our Islamic awareness makes us deal more wisely with any attempt of insult



Makkah - MWL

🗨️ *The Muslim World League (MWL) has condemned once again all forms of insults to the followers of religions including religious symbols. Islam forbids such insults, the MWL stressed, noting that Muslim scholars say returning an insult with an insult is inadvisable because it tempts the offender to respond with more insults, which is pointless and useless.*

The MWL reiterated that the principle of “freedom of expression” must be governed by human values that are based on respect for others’ feelings. When such freedom departs from these values, it undermines the moral meaning of freedoms as well as constitutional and legal legislation that uphold the right to express one’s opinion in a legitimate way. Such legislation does not intend to incite hatred and racism under the pretext of freedom of expression nor does it seek to provoke a culture and civilization conflict between nations and peoples. In a statement, the MWL pointed out that the blame for such actions should be put on the perpetrators not on peoples who share bonds of love and respect with one another. “We, at the Muslim World League, wish nothing but goodness for all peoples including followers of religions. We will return an evil deed with a good deed because Allah the Almighty says ‘The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better.’”

Insulting Islamic religious symbols is tantamount to offending the sentiments of over 1.8 billion Muslims, the statement said. However, Islam will never respond to an insult with another, rather, it will clarify the truth to those who are oblivious to it. Islam denounces any form of escalation on the part of any party and considers such escalation an insult to the religious values which came as a mercy to the worlds and to complement high moral values. Moreover, of-

fending religious symbols is against the constitutional values of civilized countries, besides, the founders say these constitutions promote human values including the larger ethical meaning of legitimate freedoms under which fall the concepts of respect and spread of love among all.

The statement, made by the MWL Secretary General Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, pointed out that the motive for exacerbating religious sentiments and offending religious symbols is to provoke feelings and make material advantages.

Allah the Almighty has, according to the statement, commanded Muslims to say in such situations: “And when they hear ill speech, they turn away from it and say, ‘For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds. Peace will be upon you; we seek not the ignorant.’”

Allah Almighty also says, “And be patient, [O Muhammad], and your patience is not but through Allah. And do not grieve over them and do not be in distress over what they conspire. Indeed, Allah is with those who fear Him and those who are doers of good.” These words reflect the supreme morals of Islam, which should be adopted when responding to every offender, regardless of the causes of the offense. Islam is great and its message is sublime, and no ignorant can ever undermine its greatness, power and truth.

The message of Islam, the statement noted, began with a great man, our noble



We have reiterated several times that the MWL is against anything that undermines the national unity

Prophet Mohammad, peace and blessings be upon him. Today, the number of Muslims has reached more than one billion and eight hundred million. The Holy Qur'an said the Prophet's morals were great. The Prophet was described as follows, "He was not obscene, nor uttering obscenities, nor screaming in the markets, he would not return an evil with an evil, but rather he was pardoning and forgiving".

Our Islamic awareness makes us deal more wisely with any attempt of insult and offense, and our Islamic consciousness realizes that many of the offenders bet - as we have indicated several times - on an unwise response in order to make personal gains.

Such offenders want to add value, importance and universality to their offense. There are many unknown newspaper cartoonists who became famous and made quick profits from reactions of people who did not think twice before reacting in that way. These reactions made some people have a mistaken perception that Islam is so weak and does not tolerate any type of arguments when, in fact, Islam is greater and stronger.

We are fully certain of Allah Almighty's promise to our Prophet as He says: "And Allah will protect you from the people." Allah Almighty also says: "Truly! We will suffice you against the scoffers." Allah Almighty kept His noble Prophet safe from being affected by these arguments and protected him.

In response to the cartoons published by some French newspapers, the MWL stressed that these cartoons, if anything, represent the feelings and opinions of the cartoonists who drew them and do not reflect the feelings of the diverse French people nor reflect how the French people feel towards other peoples, nations, religions and ideas.

We have seen nothing but love, appreciation and respect from the friendly French people, and this fact reflects the true French values. We share the same feelings with them and have close friendships with them, including senior religious leaders and a number of great thinkers, parliamentarians, government officials and media figures. We are also proud that there are Muslims among the united French population who have made sacrifices for their country, France. We saw the names of those great men written on the wall of the Great Mosque of Paris.

The statement went on: "We have reiterated several times that the Muslim World League is against anything that undermines the national unity and cohesion of a country. We condemn any calls for isolation and segregation from national unity. Anyone who lives in a country

must respect its constitution, laws and values. Demanding to practice one's religion should be made through constitutional and legal ways. We have underscored the danger of hate speech and cultural and civilizational conflict and clash, which benefit only the enemies of peace and harmony and those who have no place in their hearts for others."

The statement emphasized that the cartoons that attempt to insult our noble Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, will never have a negative impact on the Prophet because he is greater and more sacred, although these cartoons offend us as Muslims and hurt our feelings. However, we will deal with them more wisely and we will not make generalizations. This way we will not give a chance for those who drew them to make any personal advantage.

The statement stressed also that the MWL is not against legitimate freedoms, rather, it is against their material use that is detrimental to their great moral concept, which results in sowing hatred and racism instead of love and harmony between nations and peoples.

The MWL, the statement added, is always against any method of violence under any pretext. We will not allow the values of freedoms to be a bridge of hatred and a pretext to insult others. Allowing that constitutes undoubtedly an insult to these values and is tantamount to manipulating the noble meaning of these values. This fact manifests itself when the values of freedom deviate from their purpose. We must, based on our hu-



***We make no distinction
between any of
His messengers***

man brotherhood and our shared values, not teach our children these misconceptions. We must not spoil their natural instincts and pure hearts or else they will harbor hate in their hearts.

The statement concluded: "We always reiterate that we do not tolerate any offense at all to any of the symbols of followers of other religions. For us, any attempt to offend any of the prophets of Allah the Almighty means an attempt to offend the rest of the prophets and messengers, including our Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. We make no distinction between any of His messengers, as Allah Almighty says, "Say (O Muslims), 'We believe in Allah and that which has been sent down to us and that which has been sent down to Ibrahim (Abraham), Isma'il (Ishmael), Ishaque (Isaac), Ya'qub (Jacob), and to Al-Asbat [the twelve sons of Ya'qub (Jacob)], and that which has been given to Musa (Moses) and 'Iesa (Jesus), and that which has been given to the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we have submitted (in Islam)'".



Branch of Prophet's Biography Museum launched in Indonesia

Riyadh - MWL

🗨️ ***The Muslim World League (MWL) and the Prophet's Biography Foundation in the Republic of Indonesia signed an agreement to launch the Museum of Prophet's Biography and Islamic Civilization branch in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta.***



The agreement was signed in the presence of His Excellency the Secretary General of the Muslim World League, Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, and former Indonesian Vice President, Mr. Yusuf Kalla.

This will be on an area of land of more than one hundred thousand square meters (with accompanying facilities) in the most prominent beach tourism sites in Jakarta. That area was granted by Indonesia in recognition of this historical Islamic work. The project agree-

ment was signed earlier in the initials, followed by the foundation stone ceremony.

The exhibits will include all scenes of the Prophet's biography,

which will be displayed using the latest technology, in addition to the distribution of more than two hundred encyclopedias and books on the Prophet's biography prepared



Indonesian officials: The Muslim world will never forget MWL's venerable service to the Prophet's Biography



by MWL during the past three years in several languages. It is considered the largest diverse scientific service for the Prophet's biography.

Indonesia is the first to have a branch of the Museum of Prophet's Biography and Islamic Civilization, which is headquartered in Al-Madinah.

The Indonesian government was the first to

request hosting branches of the Museum of Prophet's Biography and Islamic Civilization among more than 24 Islamic countries that requested this earlier. Besides, Indonesia is counted as the largest Islamic country in terms of population and one of the most important global tourist and cultural destinations. There are great aspirations and hopes for the

global success of this branch.

It should be noted that the Museum of Prophet's Biography and Islamic Civilization started its first experience in Al-Madinah with a Ramadan exhibition in 1440 AH and was sponsored and inaugurated by His Royal Highness Prince Faisal bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, Governor of Al-Madinah, in the presence



In a historical work ... releasing the most comprehensive encyclopedias and books of the Prophet's Biography of 200 titles

of his deputy His Royal Highness Prince Saud bin Khalid Al-Faisal and senior Islamic personalities.

Muslim scholars emphasized that this launch from Al-Madinah reflects the great merit of this blessed spot, which, as an immigration destination of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, represents the second and important stage of the spread of Islam, which came as a mercy to the worlds and perfected the ideal morals.

They added, "That is why the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been merited to be the pioneer of the Islamic world

and its spiritual reference, and the destination for the hearts of scholars and thinkers of the Islamic world and all Islamic peoples, as the protector of their sanctities and the country given the honor to serve the Two Holy Mosques and all issues and affairs of the Islamic nation".

The Museum of Prophet's Biography and Islamic Civilization will witness periodic activities on a number of topics related to the values of the Prophet's Biography and Islamic civilization. The Madinah Document that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him drew up, and the Makkah Document,

which has been endorsed by more than 1200 muftis and scholars and more than 4,500 Muslim thinkers, will constitute main themes in those events.

The Indonesian activists also emphasized that the Islamic world will not forget MWL's service to the Prophet's Biography, as well as its great global efforts in favor of the image of Islam and Muslims, noting that this is tangible and a source of pride. They stressed that the MWL's headquarters in Makkah, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, enhances the weight of MWL, its impact and the importance of being aware of its responsibilities that it has carried out to the fullest. This great historical edifice, whose launch agreement was signed as the first branch of the Museum of Prophet's Biography and Islamic Civilization, as well as the huge encyclopedia of the Prophet's Biography, indicates the level of care for the biography of our beloved Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him.



Islamophobia... a new name for old enmities

Dr. Al-Issa continues his efforts to portray the true image of Islam



Nizar Abdulbagi Ahmed

“ **Islamophobia has become one of the most important issues for those who are concerned with Islamic affairs and issues of Muslims with cultural specificity in the West, due to the clear threat it poses on international peace and security. This increases the need to confront such phenomenon and dry up the sources of racial discrimination against Muslims in order to prevent the revival of terrorist organizations, many of which are about to disappear and fade, but they derive their existence from terrorist acts that occur against Muslims in the West. Extremist groups exploit the situation to justify their aggressive actions and the recruitment of followers who are motivated by passion and enthusiasm, claiming to defend Islam and Muslims.**

The Secretary-General of the Muslim World League, Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, pays great importance to tackling Islamophobia, and warns on all occasions in which he participates against its danger and a war of terminology used by some people with a private agenda. They try to link Islam with terrorism in the term “Islamic terrorism”, which is a huge mistake, explaining that terrorism is a scourge all human societies have been afflicted with since the beginning of human life, and it is not related to a specific religion or society.

Besides, it is rejected by all laws and religions. Sheikh Dr. Al-Issa called for adopting a moderate approach and strengthening the values of tolerance, moderation, and coexistence in the hearts of youth from early years. He stressed the importance of incorporating this as a part of the school curricula, noting that this approach is one of the high values of Islam.

The barbarism of extremism

In his speech during the “Dialogue of International Security” conference held in



“The error of diagnosis and the mistake of treatment leads to a new historical chapter of civilized clash. If our world were to call for a remunerative measure to preserve its consciousness of living, to realize that positive recognition of natural differences between humans is conducive to faith in the Creator’s will of difference, diversity and pluralism.”

**Secretary-General of the MWL
Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin
Abdulkarim Al-Issa**

Malaysia, 2018, the MWL Secretary General said that counter-extremism towards Muslims, represented by the phenomenon of Islamophobia, is betting on the “barbarism of religious extremism”, and the only argument in Islam is in the Noble Qur’an and Sunnah. He stressed that the values of moderation in Islam “were largely absent from the concepts of extremism, whether

extremism calculated falsely on Islam, or counter-extremism represented by the phenomenon of Islamophobia, resulting in conflicts and acts of violence and terrorism, each of which bears its responsibility, bearing in mind that both are beneficiaries of the other”. He also said, “Counter-extremism bets a lot on the barbarism of religious extremism in order to delude others to the validity of its hatred theory against Islam and Muslims and then pass its allegations. The MWL statistics reports indicate that only one out of every 200,000 Muslims may be followers of hardline thought”.

Counter-extremism

In his speech to a conference on peace held by Al-Azhar in April 2017, Sheikh Dr. Al-Issa emphasized that peace is a main aim in the religion of Islam and cannot be achieved by merely theories or transient dialogues that are managed from time to time, mostly in the context of aspirations and allegations. He said, “there must be a real impact, preceded by a sincere and effective work that is not only by the true conditions of peace, from the love of welfare to humanity, and avoiding all meanings of selfishness and materialistic ambitions, devoid of the true meaning of human entitlement, distinguish a human being from other creatures”. Sheikh Dr. Al-Issa said, “The doom of terrorist extremism met counter-extremism, which produced the Islamophobia, and dealt randomly with one billion and six hundred million Muslims, with the guilt of what amounted to one out of two hundred thousand people are guided by moderation, ignorant or ignoring that extremism in all religions has painful historical facts that are present and absent in the ebb and flow from time to time.



Recruiting the naïve youth

Sheikh Dr. Al-Issa pointed out that, “The error of diagnosis and the mistake of treatment leads to a new historical chapter of civilized clash. If our world were to call for a remunerative measure to preserve its consciousness of living, to realize that positive recognition of natural differences between humans is conducive to faith in the Creator’s will of difference, diversity and pluralism. This faith is at the forefront of the components of peace and the diversity of this honorable forum is an example, on the level of our awareness of this divine will, to be followed by such a convergence, cooperation and rapprochement, to serve humanity and its happiness.” He concluded by saying “I also hope that our world will realize that politics has an important role in fueling the fuse of terrorism or extinguishing it, the passivity of its role is an important bet in the strategy of extremism to escalate religious emotion, in the minds of naïve youth, and it is easy to draw them with enthusiastic songs and exhortations.”

Negative programming

The Secretary General stressed during his

participation in the conference (Islam in Europe and Islamophobia), held at the headquarters of the European Union Parliament, the necessity of positively recognizing the natural differences between civilizations, indicating that civilizational conflict prohibited humanity from cooperation and coexistence.

He said, “Our Creator commanded us to get acquainted, to converge, cooperate to overcome the closeness that controls some minds which look from one angle away from the logic of fairness and awareness. The error of diagnosis and treatment leads to a new historical stage of civilized clash. When we talk about this, we recall the tragedies of confrontations that end with heavy losses for all, and this can only be overcome with the logic of wisdom, fairness and awareness.” He indicated that the origin of extremism has been met by an extreme reaction, as they both carry hatred and confrontation.

Exploitation of extremism

The Secretary General noted, “It is a grave mistake to treat religious, cultural and intellectual differences as the cause of hatred,



“If this speech is not stopped immediately and urgently, then chaos will haunt the stable countries and terrorize the safe. If we do not prevent this speech, we will witness similar actions to New Zealand’s attack.”

**Secretary-General of the OIC
Dr. Youssef Al-Uthaymeen**

extremism and terrorism. Islamophobia is a model of violent extremism and that terrorism gained from the followers only a gang with a lack of awareness and understanding of those who are denoted by name only to Islam, and another group that met with counter-extremism. Terrorism depended on the mere religious passion that hatred of Islamophobia provoked.”

Stressing that it is the most powerful message of extremism that it exploits to mobilize the Islamic feeling against the other. “When the logic of consciousness is absent, we will be in front of a painful civilization clash in the difficult circumstance, and that the history of religious extremism in all religions has had painful facts.”

Official document

Sheikh Dr. Al-Issa concluded his speech, which was prepared by the European Parliament as a document to work on, saying: “Extremism in all religions has painful historical facts and religious extremism has not achieved anything throughout its history





except for some populists, eventually finding the inevitable fate of its elimination. Terrorist elements are the first earner of Islamophobia that seeks to double their numbers by mobilizing religious feelings. In Islamic countries and others, terrorism does not have a specific religious reference and its elements consisted of 100 countries, of which more than 45,000 fighters were recruited from multiple intellectual tendencies with one goal. It did not direct its desperate campaigns and hostile messages as it addressed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and was not based on an abstract political grouping, but rather on an extremist ideology. There is no escape from it except by defeating its slogans.”

The common use of the term

During his participation in the Saudi Media Forum, held in early December 2019, Sheikh Dr. Al-Issa said that the increasing presence of extremist groups associated falsely with Islam, and the increasing civilization gap due to lack of dialogue with the



other, was compounded by the negative effects of Islamophobia, which has become a term used by the far-right groups in the West to isolate Islam from the rest of religions. According to theorists of this term, these groups are inconsistent with the age and carry dangerous thoughts. He noted that this extreme rightist discourse describes Islam as a religion that calls for wars and devastation, hates towards others and rejection of the presence of non-Muslims. Sheikh Dr. Al-Issa said that this term gave negative images and offended Islam and Muslims, and



“This strange phenomenon is behind the inciters of terrorism and violence, and Muslims who lived in Western countries are affected.”

Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar

Dr. Ahmed Al-Tayeb

excluded Islam as a civilizational religion. He explained that this term is no longer limited to the West only, but also spread around the world and is being used in a wider range,

and the Far East are using this discourse as well.

Unprecedented threat

The Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Dr. Youssef Al-Uthaymeen, warned during the emergency meeting of the organization, after the crime of Christ Church in March 2019, that chaos will hit the doors of the world, if the hate speech is not addressed. He noted that the far-right parties are involved in promoting Islamophobia and the numbers of these parties are increasing in an unprecedented way. He added that if this speech is not stopped immediately and urgently, then chaos will haunt the stable countries and terrorize the safe.

He also said, “If we do not prevent this speech, we will witness similar actions to New Zealand’s attack, because it threatens the peaceful societies of the world. It is based on extreme right-wing thought, which does not target Islam and Muslims alone, but also the Western democratic regimes and states. We cannot neglect the activities that

incite violence by fanatic groups or individuals, whatever their religious beliefs are”.

Concepts of citizenship

The Grand Sheikh of Al-Azhar, Dr. Ahmed Al-Tayeb, called on religious institutions in the East and West to address the phenomenon of Islamophobia, stressing the importance of acquaintance, cooperation and complementarity between representatives of religions. Addressing the “Freedom and Citizenship, Diversity and Integration” conference organized by Al-Azhar, with the participation of delegations from more than 50 countries, he said “This strange phenomenon is behind the inciters of terrorism and violence, and Muslims who lived in Western countries are affected”. He stressed the importance of spreading the values and principles of religions that urge cooperation and acquaintance, as well as activating the concept of citizenship, denouncing the allegations that Islam is behind terrorist acts, as a result of a lack of understanding of the correct teachings of religion. Al-Tayeb emphasized the role of religious scholars and thinkers in addressing Islamophobia and terrorism that harmed Muslims in Western countries and the image of Islam. He added, “Acquitted religions of terrorism is no longer enough, and scholars should clarify the principles of religions and ethics”.

Two options with no third

The Chairman of the Human Rights Committee and the Supervisory Bodies of Saudi Shoura Council, Dr. Hadi bin Ali Al Yami, stresses that Islamophobia has become a threat to the stability of the world and the security of its countries, calling for a decisive response to this phenomenon. He said, “The danger lies in the crimes committed by the



“The danger lies in the crimes committed by the advocates of the extreme right against Muslims, and the abuses they direct to Islam as the artery that terrorists feed on, who try to hide behind these crimes.”

Chairman of the Human Rights

Committee of Saudi Shoura Council

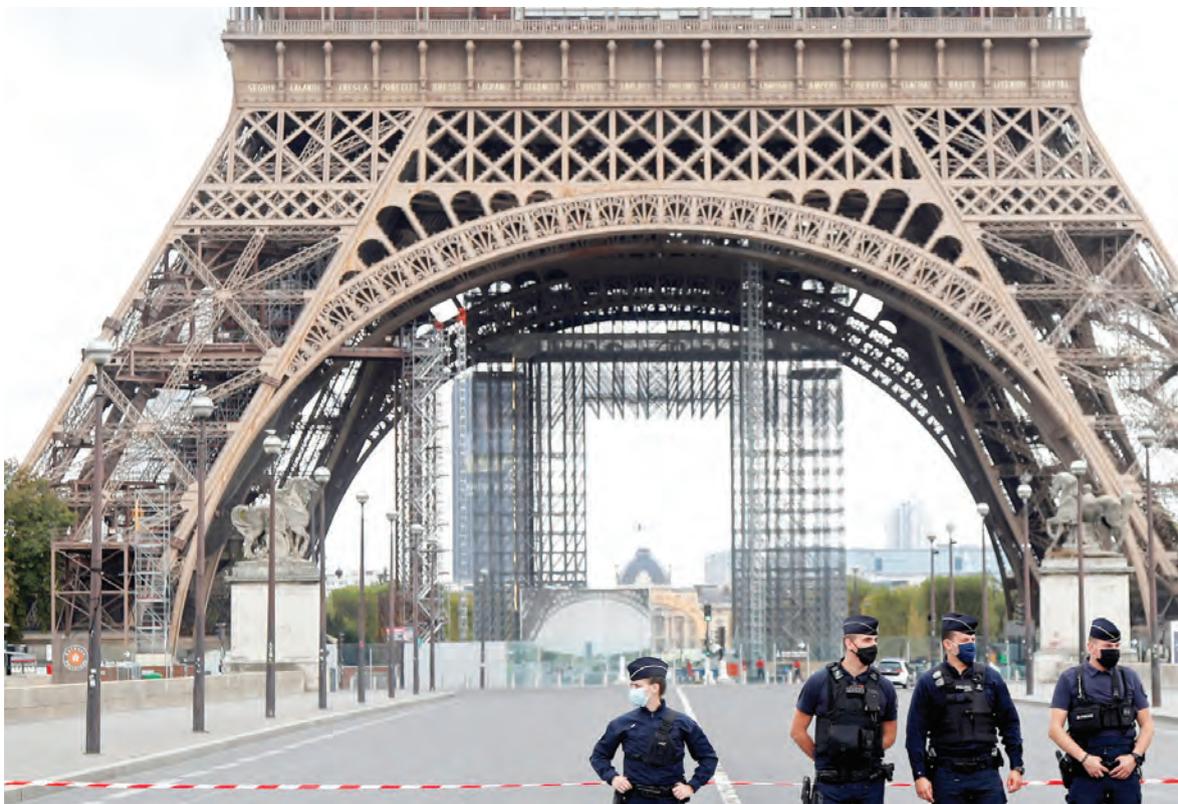
Dr. Hadi bin Ali Al Yami

advocates of the extreme right against Muslims, whether in the West or the East, and the abuses they direct to Islam as the artery that terrorists feed on, who try to hide behind these crimes and portray their actions as just a reaction to it. The continuation of practices resulting from Islamophobia ignites extremism. Therefore, the world stands today at a historic crossroads and its leaders have two options: either to firmly confront all forms of violence and counter-violence, to take firm and decisive measures against call of hate, to promote a climate of tolerance and coexistence, or to ignore such crimes, and turn a blind eye to those who call and justify them, Then, history will not forgive them”.

Islam does not experience crisis, but suffers distortion and abuse

By Dr. Al-Mahjoob bin Saeed - Morocco

🗨️ *The speech of French President Emmanuel Macron, delivered on October 2nd in the suburbs of Paris, caused a wide debate and mixed reactions of support and rejection. The position of the Muslim World League (MWL) was wise and consistent with its goals and Islamic civilizational and humanitarian vision based on the values of moderation.*



In one of the episodes of the MBC's religious show (On Horizons), His Excellency Secretary General of the MWL and Chairman of Muslim Scholars Association, Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa said, "Islam is a strong religion, and its strength does not depend on recommending anyone. Its existence as a divine message is never shaken by word or action, and Allah Almighty orders us in the Noble Qur'an to refrain from any arguments that only benefit negative escalation".

The careful reading of the contents of the French President's speech requires evoking the general context regarding the circumstances experienced by France, the Islamic world and international relations, both at the present moment or since the beginning of the third millennium. In this context, we refer to a number of data with direct or indirect impact on the orientations, visions, proposals and decisions included in Macron's statements. These real-time data are as follows:

- The young Pakistani's attack on journalists on the street in Paris, and the debate and condemnation that it raised, especially as it coincided with the trial of the perpetrators of the suicide attack on the Charlie Hebdo headquarters in 2015, in addition to the accusation of French President Macron of inaction.

- Releasing a report by the French Senate last July confirming that "Islamic extremism is real" in an increasing number of regions in France, and that "supporters of political Islam are currently seeking to control Islam in France" in order to "establish a caliphate", and fuel some cities with dangerous separatism.

- The announcement of the French Interior Minister on September 27th, on the occasion of the Jewish holiest day of Yom Kippur, that his country is "in a war against Islamic terrorism", and revealed that "32 attacks" had been



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thwarted in France over the past three years, explaining that this "is roughly equal to one attack every month".

- Controversy has raged in recent years over the role of some imams affiliated with the French Council of the Islamic Faith in spreading extremist ideas in France, prompting the state to review the methods of accrediting imams who were brought from other countries, including Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and Turkey. The French President said in a previous media statement: "I will not allow any country, whatever it is, to fuel discord ... You cannot find Turkish law applied on French soil. This cannot happen".

- The French authorities began to rearrange their papers regarding the bodies representing Muslims on France's soil. In 2016, they established the (France Islam Foundation) in order to manage the issue of financing places of worship and the conduct of Islam in France after consultations with French intellectuals, politicians and social actors, which aims to counter all attempts to spread extremist behaviors and ideas.

- Organizing the (International Conference on Peace and Solidarity) in 2018 in cooperation between the France Islam Foundation and the Muslim World League. The organization of this conference came in the context of con-

fronting all extremist ideas that depart from moderate Islam and call for extremism in applying the teachings of religion. On this occasion, the Paris Agreement was signed for the Abrahamic Family, which calls for strengthening relations between followers of religions and raising the level of mutual understanding, completely independent of any orientations or goals outside the framework of the values of the agreement. The agreement also stipulates full commitment to the principle of freedoms and legitimate rights, and keenness to educate young people, listen to their problems and strive to solve them, in addition to confronting the moral challenges in the current era and that hinders man's attempt to contribute to the service of their society and the development of their homeland. At the opening of that conference, MWL's SG Sheikh Muhammad bin AbdulKarim Al-Issa declared the MWL's support for the contents of the speech of French President Emmanuel Macron regarding the so-called political Islam that uses religion merely to achieve political ambitions seeking separation from societies and threatening their stability.

For a deep and compre-



hensive understanding of the speech of the French President, whether in terms of its motives, dimensions or goals, it is important to bring the following general facts:

- Organizing citizens and immigrants of Muslim origin in order to integrate them.

Based on roughly agreed-upon estimates members of Muslim minorities and communities in France amount six million, and therefore Islam is the second religion in France after Christianity.

More stringent measures in dealing with Muslims were taken in some French cities. The French authorities began organizing the Islamic presence in 1989 at the initiative of (Pierre Joux) Minister of the Interior in the then socialist government, who sought to establish the (Council of Thinking about Islam in France). Former Minister of the Interior Charles Pasqua took measures in this re-

gard. In 1993, he sought to establish the Representative Council of the Muslims of France headed by DalilBoubakeur, the rector of the Great Mosque of Paris at the time. After that, Minister of the Interior (Jean-Pierre Chauvman) in the government of Lionel Jospin from 1997 to 2000 tried to adopt a new approach in establishing a council that would represent the Muslims of France and organize their affairs. Considering the obstacles that thwarted the efforts of his predecessors at the Ministry of the Interior, he proceeded to hold consultations to launch a new initiative from Muslim leaders in France alone, with the help of the French authorities. Accordingly, it was agreed to establish the French Council of the Islamic Faith, whose formation details were complete at the end of 2002, and the founding elections for the Council were held in



Expectations and studies indicated that they would triple during the first decade of the twenty-first century

April 2003 under the supervision of the then Minister of Interior, Nicolas Sarkozy.

In fact, the interest of the French Ministry of the Interior in (organizing Islam) in France is due to the fact that French Muslims have become a real figure and balance in the French political equation. Expectations and studies indicated that they would triple during the first decade of the twenty-first century. Therefore, with the approaching election dates in France and the presidential elections in particular, candidates in these elections resort to win the friendship of these Muslims and even send official envoys to the countries of the Maghreb, for example, to direct their citizens in France to support one party or another.

- From “French Islam” to “Islam of lights”

Many questions were raised regarding the process of organizing the Islamic existence in France, the most important of which were: Is this process intended to block the path of political Islam? Does the issue have anything to do with the birth of the so-called “French Islam” or “Francophone Islam”? Is it related to reshaping the relationship between the French State and Islam towards a real integration of Muslims as a new cultural component in France, alongside its secular culture and Christian heritage? Did the “organization of

Islam” in France coincide with a transitional period that recognized French Islam and stripped it of the garment of foreign religion that came since the 1950s with the first waves of immigration of workers from the countries of the Maghreb and North Africa? Or is it related to the process of Westernization of Islam through the establishment of an “Islamic Church” intended to remove the social, cultural and political particularities of Islam in a manner that is consistent with the French vision on religion as an individual matter within the framework of the positivist vision of the universe.

The first to use the term “French Islam” was Nicolas Sarkozy, the former French Interior Minister, while attending the opening of the Twentieth Congress of the Federation of Islamic Organizations in France, held on April 19th, 2003. It was the first historical presence of an interior minister in France in a large gathering of Muslims in France. In his speech on this occasion, he famously said: “We do not want Islam in France, but we do want it French Islam.” It also provoked the reactions of the French political class, among the fiercest of which was the position of the leader of the far-right National Front (Jean-Marie Le Pen), who considered that Sarkozy’s attendance as a “visit to the hornet’s nest”.

Many observers and those interested in Islamic affairs in France unanimously agree that the French government’s handling of the issue of Islamic existence is linked to realistic facts and is basically governed by the will to frame the Islamic religion in French lands, as it has come to be ranked second in terms of followers after Catholicism, surpassing Protestantism and Judaism. Therefore, the French authorities had to consider how Islam could be incorporated into the State based on two basic trends: the assertion that any “French

Islam” should not contradict the values of the State, which means respecting the values of absolute equality between men and women and the issue of freedom of choice, and removing the “Arab Islam” term from “French Islam”, as there is no space in French Islam to talk about the application of Shari’ah, entailing the consideration of the possibility of applying limits.

According to a myriad of French intellectuals and specialists in “French Islam,” the saying “French Islam” is just an attempt to “Frenchize” Islam and secularize it in a way that strips it of its collective dimension and its inclusion in the Western understanding of religion as an individual affair.

Indeed, part of the concerns of the French authorities over the effects of “political Islam” on Muslim communities and minorities in France stems mainly from the influence of Islamic movements on members of these communities. And, if the “French Islam” model that the French government wants to incorporate is that Islam that distances itself from the influences of Islam outside France, then the facts confirm that the French government wants an independent “French Islam” that is contrary to political



Islam, and therefore it is “an Islam that does not hold a political or social project”, because it is assumed that the State and its principles are the project that contains all other projects, cultures and religions.

- Offending Islam and Muslims in the French media

With the dawn of the third millennium, offending Islam and Muslims has taken place in new forms that violate the rules of international law regulating human rights and the media. The methods and mechanisms of the breach have evolved, so that the offense has moved from books, encyclopedias, knowledge circles and oriental studies to movies, radio and TV programs and Internet. Through these means, legal violations increased in the French media, and they worked to distort the image of Islam and Muslims among the French elites, and even on the global

level, including the academic and cultural circles. Such dissemination and offense constituted a deliberate breach of the rules of international law, and a blow to the core of the contents of the documents of the international legitimacy of human rights affirming freedom of the media and freedom of expression, and which are restricted when it comes to offending religions, under the clause of preventing and prohibiting advocacy of hatred, racism, religious discrimination, and advocacy to tolerance.

Some French media have stoked Islamophobia in its relation to offending the Islamic religion, its symbols and sanctities, with the stereotypical images they disseminate about Muslims and Arabs, and about Islam, which it describes as the religion of terrorism. Therefore, calls began to rise from within the United Nations, in



We consider that saying that Islam is experiencing a crisis in all countries of the world is an exaggeration and is characterized by generalization and misunderstanding

the General Assembly and in the Human Rights Council, for the establishment of binding international law to deter and prevent the spread of this phenomenon, consistent with the requirements of respect for religions. This was achieved when the UN General Assembly approved on April 11th 2011 Resolution no. 65/224 calling for (combating distortion of religions). The UN General Assembly expressed its dissatisfaction with the use of printed, audiovisual and electronic media to incite violence

and xenophobia, the related intolerance and discrimination against any religion, and the targeting of sacred books, places of worship, and symbols of all religions and violating their sanctities.

We conclude that Islam is not experiencing a crisis, but rather suffers from a three-dimensional offense:

- An insult from terrorist groups that claim to belong to and defend it by misinterpreting it to serve cultural and political agendas.
- An insult from the extreme right-wing parties in Western

countries that have continued to scare international public opinion against Islam and Muslims and spread hate speech and racial discrimination to serve electoral, economic and political goals.

- Insult from those who sought to promote media content offensive to Islam and its sacred media symbols under the pretext of freedom of expression and opinion without regard for professional ethics and respect for human rights principles and international media law.

Therefore, we consider that saying that Islam is experiencing a crisis in all countries of the world is an exaggeration and is characterized by generalization and misunderstanding. There is no crisis in Islam in the sense of faith, which is evidenced by the ceaseless increase in the number of old and new Muslims. There may be a crisis in the interpretation of the sources of Islamic legislation that led to the emergence of sectarianism, extremism and religious exaggeration. Overcoming them is possible through strengthening moderate Islam, combating ideological extremism and ideological intolerance, and educating young people on the values of dialogue, tolerance and coexistence.

Youth engagement and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad

By M. Minhaj Niloy

☞ *Youth is the most important time of life as it is the period between childhood and adulthood. It is the indomitable stage of human life. In other words, youth is the age of power and strength, in favor of doing any noble work.*





‘All developments, either it is worldly or otherworldly are dependent on the development of the youth stage’

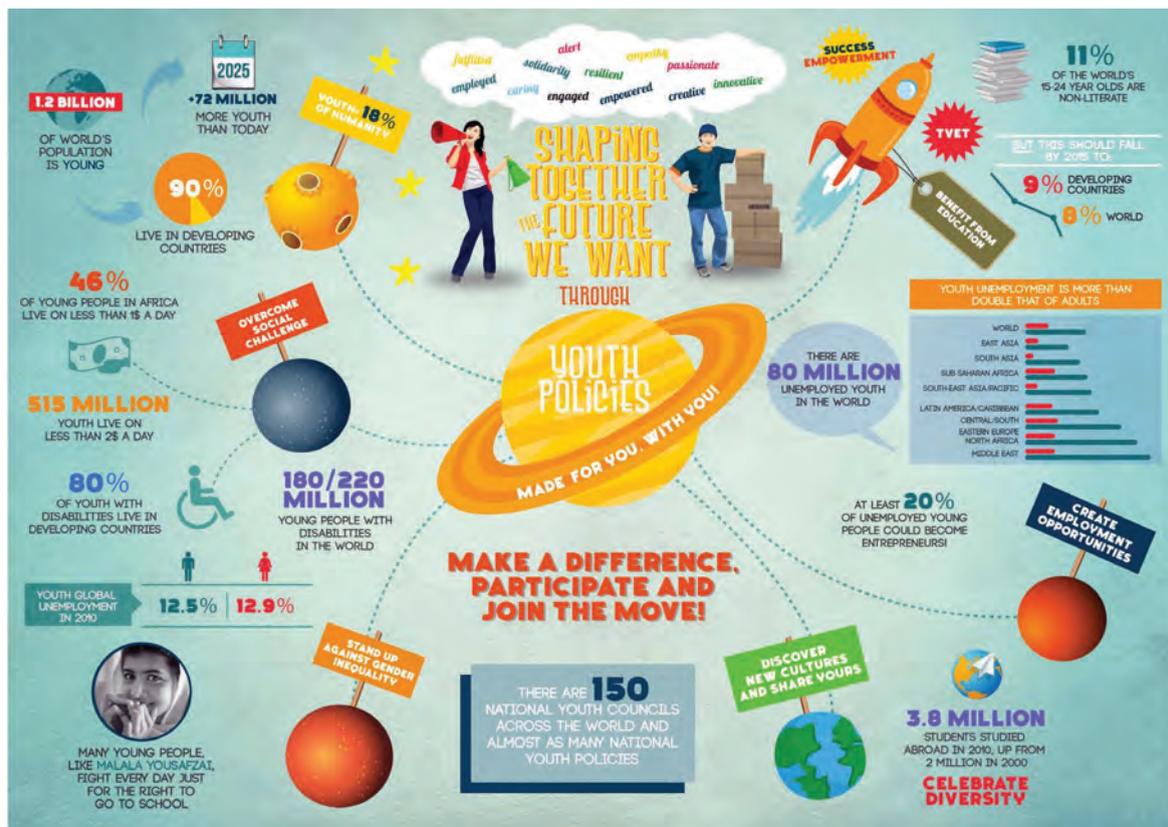


It also helps to attain his or her full potential and develop ethical, emotional, physical, and social activities and experiences. All developments, either worldly or otherworldly, are dependent on the development of the youth stage. Comprehending this fact, in 1999, the General Assembly of the United Nations declared ‘August 12’ the International Youth

Day. Since 1999, the day has been marked globally to draw attention to youth issues and ensure their meaningful engagement in every stage of local, national, and international levels. The International Youth Day (IYD) 2020 theme is “Youth Engagement for Global Action.” IYD gives a chance to rejoice young peoples’ voices, activities and initiatives.

More than 1400 years ago, Islam has highlighted the charismatic youth period of human life. It has also given importance to assignation for global action. In this case, the Prophet Muhammad’s enthusiastic characteristics of social arrangement or engagement are irreplaceable. For example, at the age of 14, he participated to protect Kaaba from the attack of Hawazin. When he was 20 years old, he showed unparalleled leadership in Hilful Fadhul to stop Harbul Fijar. At the age of 25 years, he left home for business matters in Syria. In his 35 years old, the Prophet prevented a possible war by his peaceful solution to setting Black Stone or Al-Hajr Aswad. During the reconstruction of the Holy Kaaba, a dispute arose among the tribes for placing the Black Stone. Then the Prophet Mohammad gave his unique idea to put the Black Stone in the middle of a cloth, and also asked a representative of each tribe to hold one of the edges of the cloth. Then the Prophet picked it up and restored it to the original place. This is how the Prophet Muhammad proved his wisdom.

Today’s youth can learn some valuable teachings



from the Prophet’s lifestyle. To assure global youth engagement the Prophet Muhammad traditions and instructions are crucial. According to Surat Al-Ahzab verse 21 of the Noble Qur’an, ‘There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.’ This verse bears testimony that the Prophet Muhammad is one of the chief leaders of all

time. His life experiences provide examples of his leadership principles. The Prophet Muhammad was an orphan and he had to face many hardships during his youth. Even guardianship changed three times. Hence, youth can learn much from the Prophet’s life.

Moreover, Allah says in the Noble Qur’an about Prophet Muhammad, ‘‘And indeed, you are of a great moral character’’ (Surat Al-Qalam, verse 4). Therefore, if a youth wants to

lead a successful and effective life, they can obtain life lessons from Prophet Muhammad. The prophetic lifestyle covers diverse matters of worldly life, such as business, faithfulness, relationships, as well as living together in peace and tranquility. The Prophet preferred to live in a very simple life with little concern for worldly possessions and adopted a modest way of life. It is a lesson for youth to live a simple or modest life without being so

much worried or involved in worldly possessions. Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet Muhammad said, “In order to be a Muslim, wish for your fellow Muslims that which you wish for yourself” (Tirmidhi). One of the essential characteristics of faith is that a believer should wish for others what he wishes for himself.

It is a clear guideline for young people to do good for others and wish good for others just like the Prophet did in his whole life. Also, he forbids jealousy and mutual hostility. Narrated by Anas bin Malik that the Prophet Muhammad said, “Do not hate one another, nor be jealous of one another; and do not desert one another, but O Allah’s worshipers! Be Brothers! And it is unlawful for a Muslim to desert his brother Muslim (and not to talk to him) for more than three nights” (Sahih al-Bukhari). Similarly, Prophet Muhammad warns about unfairness to others. He advised those who do unfairness to others in these words: “Beware of injustice, for injustice will be darkness on the Day of Resurrection.”

Anger is one of the main problems of today’s young



***The International Youth Day (IYD)
2020, theme is “Youth Engage-
ment for Global Action”***

people. Importantly, the Prophet advised people that they must be cautious about being angry. It is narrated by Abu Hurairah that the Prophet Muhammad said, “The strong is not the one who overcomes the people by his strength, but the strong is the one who controls himself while in anger” (Sahih Al-Bukhari). So young people can fol-

low the Prophet’s teachings in every stage of life. Adding to his pearls of wisdom the Prophet teaches us not to criticize other peoples. Prophet Muhammad held that: “Always remember your own faults before you mention the faults of others.”

Additionally, the Prophet once said, “A true believer is one with



To assure global youth engagement the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) traditions and instructions are crucial

whom others feel secure. One who returns love for hatred.” The Prophet made it apparent that one should be accustomed to being good to other people who are not always good to them and to not ill-treating those who do harm. In another hadith the Prophet said, “If a believer is not able to benefit others, he must at

least do them no harm.” According to a tradition documented in the Sahih of Imam Muslim, when the Prophet Muhammad’s opponents seriously increased their persecution and his Companions asked him to curse them, then the Prophet answered, “I have not been sent to lay a curse upon men but to be a bless-

ing to them.” The prophet’s opponents continued to treat him as well as his Companions cruelly and unfairly, but he continuously prayed for them.

The Prophet Muhammad was a sociable person himself. He encouraged other people with his traditions and education. Once a man asked the Prophet, “Which act in Islam is the best?” The Prophet answered, “To feed the poor and needy as well as greet those who you know and those who you do not” (Sahih Al-Bukhari). This approach will help to shape the thinking of youth and will focus not only on intellectual welfare, but also social welfare about the youth development process. And young people would be able to play a big role in making the world a better place.

Basically, the Prophet Muhammad’s guidance is not restricted to any particular age, people, place, or period, it is a guide to all mankind. The Prophet Muhammad’s Prophethood is encompassing everything. Even on the judgment Day, he will intervene by the power of intercession allowed to him by Allah. All the needy will beseech and implore him, and he



Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: “Always remember your own faults before you mention the faults of others”

will act as the intercessor for all nations and communities (Sahih Al-Bukhari).

Allah the Almighty says in the Noble Qur’an in these words about the Prophet Muhammad, “And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds’ (Surat Al-Anbya, verse 107). This

verse refers irrespectively to Muslims, non-Muslims, and any living things all are included in the Prophet Muhammad’s mercy. Even it is no surprise then that the tree or a date-palm, which the Prophet used to lean or stand by cried upon separation from him while the pulpit (for delivering the

sermon) was built (Sahih Al-Bukhari).

The Islamic code of life is liberal and rational. It appeals to people of all ages. To ensure youth engagement for local, national, and global action to build a resilient world they can follow some important ideas from the Prophet’s lifestyle in the context of youth leadership. The purpose of International Youth Day is to promote paths to engage youth to actively participate in contributions to their communities. Therefore, the Prophet Muhammad is a great role model for the Muslim youths in every aspect of life.

MUSLIM YOUTH MENTORING

Empowered youth with awakened minds, inspired hearts, and enlightened actions

- CONNECT**
Youth
Community
Safe place
- DEVELOP**
Leadership
Entrepreneurship
Special skills
- ADVOCATE**
Faith
Self
Community

Charminar: the Historic Landmark of India

K.M. Alavudheen Hudawi Puthanazhi

🗨️ *India is one of the major tourist destinations that attract the travelers and tourists world over with a wide range of landmarks that spread across its geography and tell the glorious ancient history of India. The city of Hyderabad stands high among the important cities in India for the development, growth and modernity it has embraced throughout the history. It is an ancient city whose history dates back to about 400 years.*



It is now home to a large number of people, nearly 4.2 million. In the past, it was known as the City of Pearls. This city is famous for many of the most magnificent monuments and Islamic architectural models, including beautiful mosques that embrace a civilization that extends into the depths of Islamic history. Charminar which is considered the beacon of innovative architectural ideas in Islamic town planning is the most important of these models.

Hyderabad: the Sites of Heritage and Models of Islamic architecture

Hyderabad is a city of Islamic origin. Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, one of the kings of the Qutb Shah family that independently ruled the Golconda in Deccan after the child Sultan Mahmud II assumed the

throne of the Bahmani Kingdom in 887 AH, 1482 CE, ordered its construction once the Qutb Shah emirs of Persian origins became independent in ruling this region between 1512 and 1687 AD. Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah began its construction in the heart of the Deccan in Southern India at a midpoint between the famous Golconda markets on the silk trade route and the port of Masulipatnam in 998 AH, 1589 CE, as part of his kingdom's flourishing preparations for the participation of Muslims in celebrating the advent of the second Hijri millennium in the year 1000 AH. Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah entrusted the supervision of the planning and construction works of the city to his Minister Mir Moamen Al-Astarabadi, who in turn sought the assistance of a number of engineers and builders from neighboring Persia, subsequently rendering Hyderabad an abundant city with features of Islamic architecture in Iran encapsulated in an Indian spirit.

The high fame of Hyderabad along with its strategic location and legendary wealth of Golconda attracted the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb who took over Golconda after a long siege in 1687 AD. After this defeat, the importance of Hyderabad decreased and the city went to partial devastation and collapse. Later, when the Mughal Empire faced its decline, the city of Hyderabad with the entire state of Deccan fell into decline, disintegration and chaos. The deputy king Asif Jah declared his independence and called himself the Nizam (servant of the kingdom's affairs) and established an independent kingdom in the Deccan. Soon Hyderabad became once again a major capital and the Nizams, the descendants of the Asif Jah dynasty ruled over it until it was incorporated into Indian Union 1948 AD.



Charminar: the Monument and the Archaeological Masterpiece

Charminar is located in the heart of the city of Hyderabad on the eastern bank of the Musi River, steps away from the grand mosque known as the Makkah Masjid. It is a huge building that has also been used as a school since its construction in the year 1000 AH, 1591AD, and still remains as the golden icon of Deccan and one of the ten most important architectural landmarks in India.

This city is the capital of the state of Telangana today, as it was the capital of Andhra Pradesh before the bifurcation. It was included in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's list of World Heritage sites, and the Archaeological Survey of India has included it in the official list of monuments as well.

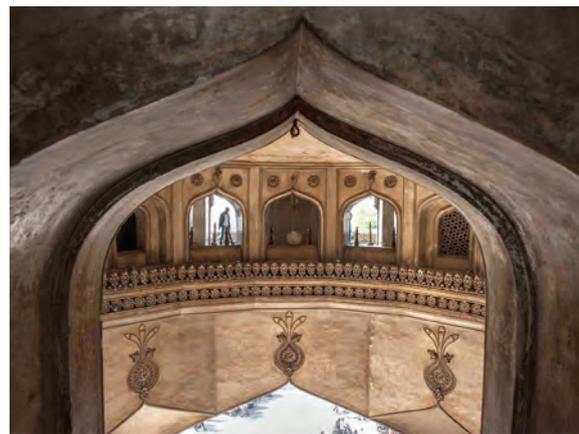
The word "Charminar" consists of two words: Char which means four in the Urdu language and Minar which means the minaret and the tower as well in Urdu. It was named so because of the shape of the building famous for its four minarets, each around 56 meters in height. This mosque was named so because of its four towering minarets. In Hyderabad, it occupies the position held by Big Ben in London and the Eiffel Tower in Paris. Each of the four minarets represent each of the four caliphs of Islamic history.

The Historical Facts behind this Legendary Masterpiece

Once we dive deep into history, we find that there are historical backgrounds for the construction of this legendary masterpiece. There is a commonly believed story that Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah built the mosque as a memorial to celebrate the end



'It is a square-shaped building having four minarets. It is said that they symbolize the four Caliphs of Islam with each one standing for each one of them'



of the threat of the fatal plague that gripped the city at the time. The story goes that he was praying for the end of the plague that ravaged his city and pledged that once it ends he would build a mosque in the place where he was praying. Meanwhile, the popular accounts say that Qutb shah constructed the Charminar in the year 1589, on the very spot where he first glimpsed his future queen Bhagmati, and after her conversion to Islam, Qutb Shah renamed the city as "Hyderabad" in order to eternalize that event.

The historian Masoud Hussain Khan confirms that Hyderabad was built in the year 1000 AH, 1591 AD, while Charminar



‘Hyderabad was the center of Islamic culture in India. It was ruled by the Muslim sultans for centuries’



was built in the year 1001 AH. According to Jean de Thévenot, a French traveler of the 17th century whose narration was complemented with the available Persian texts, the Charminar was constructed in the year 1591 CE, to commemorate the beginning of the second Islamic millennium year (1000 AH). The construction of this mosque is attributed to Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah's interest in the matter of prayer and its regularity in the mosques of his kingdom. Qutb Shah was also among the early poets of Dakhani Urdu and while laying the foundation of Charminar, he performed the prayers in Dakhini couplets.

Architectural Description of Charminar

It is a square-shaped building having four minarets. It is said that they symbolize the four Caliphs of Islam with each one standing for each one of them. Each side of the Charminar is 20 meters long and the height of the minarets is 48.7 meters from the surface of the ground. Each of them consists of four floors. One magnificent circular balcony separates each floor from the other and each one ends with a small dome. Inside each minaret, there are 149 steps of the staircase that the visitor can use to climb to the top of the minaret in order to enjoy a wonderful view of the city. One clock was added in the four main directions of the mosque each in 1889 AD. There is a small fountain for ablution in the middle of the mosque below the prayer hall.

Conclusion

To sum up, Hyderabad was the center of Islamic culture in India before the independence because of its ancient Islamic history and its luxurious archaeological buildings. It was ruled by the Muslim sultans for centuries. A large Islamic state was established in it on the ruins of the Mughal Empire. It remained the second largest princely state in India during the British reign. It was also the first class Islamic city for several reasons, the most important ones of which are the high rate of Muslim population in it, the large number of mosques scattered throughout it and Osmania University which was established in 1917 AD during the reign of Osman Ali Khan, the seventh ruler Nizam family and considered the seventh oldest university in India as well as its airport which is the best witness to its Islamic civilization by its Islamic design.



Euthanasia and Islam

By Tasnuva Jahan

🗨️ *Generally, euthanasia is known as mercy killing. It is one of the substantial bioethical issues. It has created a complexity over time in different ethical issues. This complexity runs deeper than ethical matters as they also involve spiritual and legal matters. In the case of euthanasia 'aid in dying' as well as 'death with dignity' has proved elusive. As euthanasia undermines the human dignity to aid in dying voluntarily.*



Human beings are the best creation in the world. Every person has a right to live on this earth happily and die naturally. Human life is protected by several legal international instruments. According to Article (6) of the 'International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights' 1966, 'Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his/her life'. Similarly, Article (2) of the 'European Convention on Human Rights' protects everyone's right to life. Due to Euthanasia sometimes this right to life of human beings is hindering these days. From the international law perspective, active euthanasia and physician or health care provider's participation is almost prohibited. In the world, a few countries accepted the legal practice of euthanasia from a medical care perspective. In Muslim and Arab countries, any person who performs or helps to euthanasia is subject to liability. This paper explores the Islamic perspective on euthanasia in the light of scriptural texts and teachings.

Explanation of Euthanasia

Euthanasia is considered as the deliberate killing of a person's benefit. It is the life termination of a terminally ill patient at his/her request. Euthanasia is identified as assisted suicide, doctor/physician assisted suicide (dying). It is performed to relieve a patient of pain. Doctors usually perform this

task if any patient requests to relieve his or her incurable sufferings from diseases. It is an intentional life ending process. The term 'Euthanasia' comes from the Greek word 'Euthanatos', meaning 'easy death'. Its origin words derive from two Greek words 'Eu' meaning 'good' and 'Thanatos' meaning death (Robert M and Stuart E Rosenbaum 1989, Bangbose O. 2004). There are several types of euthanasia, each type brings some different criteria of rights and wrongs to different persons.

Voluntary Euthanasia

Voluntary euthanasia happens when the patient clearly requests to die and the patient's wish is granted. It is also known as assisted suicide. Because a patient is capable of making their own decisions to end their own life. This kind of euthanasia includes willingness to die without having any food, requesting to switch off the life-supporting machines and stop medical treatment. Since 2009, voluntary euthanasia has been legalized in Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, Luxembourg, and the states of Oregon and Washington (USA).

Involuntary Euthanasia: Involuntary euthanasia is conducted without the patient's consent. The decision is made by another person as the patient is unable to do that himself/herself.

Non-voluntary Euthanasia

Non-voluntary euthanasia is a life ending process of a non-consenting and non-competent person's. Non-voluntary euthanasia occurs when someone takes the decision for the termination of a patient's life. Because the patient is incapable of making any decision, either he/she is mentally unfit to make a decision or a brain damaged person, or in

case of babies, they are not considered by the law to be old enough.

There are two other procedural types of euthanasia: Active euthanasia and Passive euthanasia. Active euthanasia concept directly causes the patient to die. For instance, injecting a lethal solution into a patient for relieving pain. Passive euthanasia is a complex category. As some acts of this theory can be categorized as euthanasia and some do not define euthanasia. Passive euthanasia occurs while a patient is left to die by withholding or withdrawing treatment which he or she needs for survival. For example, turning off the device that keeps patients alive or by withholding any treatment that could perform a life-saving operation.

Religious View of Euthanasia

Muslim religion strictly and widely prohibits euthanasia. Muslim community believes it is Allah's task to fix the time of a person's death. Human beings are not in a position to end someone's life. And helping to end one's life is the intervention of the divine plan. The Noble Qur'an declares that, 'Allah takes the souls at the time of their death, and those that do not die [He takes] during their sleep. Then He keeps those for which He has decreed death and releases the others for a specified term. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought' (Surat Az-Zumar, verse 42). Again Surat Al-Imran, verse 145 states that 'And it is not [possible] for one to die except by permission of Allah at a decree determined. And whoever desires the reward of this world - We will give him thereof; and whoever desires the reward of the Hereafter - We will give him thereof. And we will reward the grateful.' As a result, Islamic jurisprudence does not allow a person's right to die voluntarily.



Euthanasia undermines the human dignity to aid in dying voluntarily



In Shari'ah, the concept of mercy killing is totally wrong. Islam considers life as an Amanah or divine trust. Peoples are responsible for protecting their lives. It cannot be terminated by any sort of active or passive voluntary intervention. Surat Al-Isra, verse 33 declares on the sacredness of life. It states that 'And do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden....' The Holy Qur'an directly disallows consenting to one's own destruction. 'And spend in the way of Allah and do not throw [yourselves] with your [own] hands into destruction...' (Surat Al-Baqarah, verse 195). It can be related to terminally ill patients who give consent to mercy killing. Islam does not recommend doing harm to the body and the soul besides its integrity. In another verse of the Noble Qur'an, Allah Almighty says that '... And do not kill yourselves [or one another]. Indeed, Allah is to you ever Merciful' (Surat



Islam provides cohesive guidance to take care of ill and elderly people



An-Nisa, verse 29). Islamic teaching has a clear direction on the prohibition of killing. These verses explicitly exclude euthanasia, suicide, and other types of mercy killing.

Another aspect of euthanasia is to reduce suffering and discomfort. However, the issue of patience and endurance is highly appreciated in Islam. If a patient endures, his/her hardships will be rewarded in the other world. According to Surat Al-Baqarah, verse 153, ‘O you who have believed, seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the patient.’ In the journey of life, human beings may face different types of unwanted problems, sufferings, tests, and challenges. It is suggested to face all these uninvited issues with patience. Surat Al-Baqarah, verse 155 also clarifies that, ‘And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and

lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient’.

Islam places the highest emphasis on patience in the worldly life. Another verse explains that, ‘Those are the ones upon whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy. And it is those who are the [rightly] guided. Consequently, Allah gives glad tidings rewards to those, who patiently endure any calamity’ (Surat Al-Baqarah, verse 157). In addition, narrated by Abu Huraira: The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, ‘No fatigue, nor disease, nor sorrow, nor sadness, nor hurt, nor distress befalls a Muslim, even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but that Allah expiates some of his sins for that’ (Sahih Al-Bukhari). These clearly indicate that Allah will recompense those persons who keep patience during suffering and not kill themselves in any way.

Moreover, Islam provides cohesive guidance to take care of ill and elderly people. Duties and maintenance to parents and other family members are included in this guidance. Religious principles provide suitable psychological support for a person’s sufferings with a terminal illness. About elderly parents, the Noble Qur’an states that ‘And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment. Whether one or both of them reach old age [while] with you, say not to them [so much as], “uff,” and do not rebel them but speak to them a noble word’ (Surat Al-Isra verse, 23). The Holy Qur’an clearly demonstrates the responsibility of children to parents. ‘And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy and say, “My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up [when I was] small” (Surat Al-Isra verse, 24)’. Islam offers organized social systems

for believers and a set of rules for the community to keep warm relationships with each other. In addition, the believer is not supposed to be hopeless in case of any adversities and difficulties. People should keep faith and hope as distress is not the death or final destiny of human beings.

In Islamic law, health-care providers or doctors must do everything to prevent premature death. Furthermore, narrated by Abu Huraira, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, ‘There is no disease that Allah has created, except that He also has created its treatment’ (Sahih Al-Bukhari). Surat Al-Ma’idah, verse 2 states that ‘...And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression...’ In regard to euthanasia, the verses also prohibit killing by physicians. Therefore, each act on the part of the doctor involves the killing of a critically ill patient, or any assistance or guidance in the killing of a critically ill patient is forbidden. As the mercy killing is against the concept of the right to life. Consequently, all forms of euthanasia remain irrelevant in Islamic ethical policy.



**Islam considers
life is an
Amanah**



According to Surat An-Nisa, verse 93, ‘But whoever kills a believer intentionally - his recompense is Hell, wherein he will abide eternally, and Allah has become angry with him and has cursed him and has prepared for him a great punishment.’ Thus, intentional killing is outlawed in Shari’ah.

Islamic principles support individuals to help others morally and emotionally. Therefore, the physician has no right to terminate any life under his/her care.

And killing a person to ease pain even though it is at the request of the patient is inconsistent with Shari’ah. Terminally ill patients should get the proper palliative care and all measures provided. Even doctors should put their best effort to care for their patients ethically and physically, irrespective of whether these measures are remedial or not. Islam directly prohibits euthanasia as it is the system to terminate the life of terminally ill patients at their request or others’ interest.

However, based on traditions, Muslim scholars opine an important issue related to patients’ brain death. In the case of a patient’s brain death, caused by irreversible damage to the brain, the person is declared biologically dead. Moreover, if the family is not able to bear the hospital expenditures, in that situation, the withdrawal of a futile treatment and letting death take its natural course is really accepted. Physicians or family members do not kill a patient by omitting or failing treatment, but rather the disease ends the patient’s life. As any patient has a right to a ‘death with dignity’. Additionally, withholding and withdrawing of the treatment is different

from mercy killing. Islamic instruction does allow the removal of the medical equipment that used to keep a person alive. If it is no longer expected that such a patient will be cured.

Ethical Views of Euthanasia

The ethical position on euthanasia is in a complex situation. In bioethics, acceptability of euthanasia is a serious ethical issue (Boudreau J D and Somerville M A 2014). Some people strictly support euthanasia. They support their arguments on euthanasia focusing on the issue of humanity, dignity, self-sufficiency, and reduction of intolerable suffering. Euthanasia arguments also relate to reducing the family member's emotional and economic burden of a terminal illness (Givens J and Mitchell S 2009). Even terminating life violates the basic human right provisions not to kill any person (Mason K, Laurie G, and Smith A M 2013). Importantly, patients who ask for euthanasia may not actually want it. They choose euthanasia to eliminate their unbearable suffering. They may be suffering from incurable diseases. The critically ill patients may also have depression, which



Muslim religion strictly and widely prohibited euthanasia



can lead to suicidal thoughts. In addition, vulnerable people like the elderly or lonely can request euthanasia as they often feel a burden on family or society. Islamic point of view clarifies that the euthanasia concept undermines human dignity. Very importantly, this ethical theory is not paralleled in the Islamic intellectual principle. Islamic ethics includes several philosophical traditions and holds a religious view

from Qur'anic texts and Prophetic traditions.

Concluding Observation

A certain level of spiritual and cultural awareness is essential to provide medical care. In a multicultural modern world, any traditional and religious differences can lead to bioethical battles in the clinical sector. In order to avoid these variances, each party should respect the ethical concepts of others. It is not only to gain cultural skill, but skill in dealing with different ethical codes as well. It is highly suggested to health care professionals for a Muslim patient's treatment to consider the Islamic theory regarding euthanasia or other ends of life issues. As euthanasia is not acceptable in Islamic philosophies. It is also supported by several ethical ideologies. If euthanasia is legalized and if a patient is misdiagnosed with a disease and leads to death, it would open the doors to doctors killing their innocent patients. On the other hand, allowing euthanasia will disappoint the myriad opportunities for new cures, research, and treatments for terminally ill patients. To prevent this sort of problem, euthanasia should not be legalized.

Muslims in Europe should protect it and show the true image of Islam

By: Dr. Sayed Al-Hussaini

Because of the current tensions in Libya, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen, especially after the horrific crimes and massacres that hit the Middle East region and the whole world, every Muslim living in Europe should do his best to show the true image of our religion Islam.

Violent crimes and antagonizing others, despite their being Muslims, added more blur and ambiguity to many bright human aspects of the Islamic religion. Unfortunately, these crimes and incidents have begun to give the impression that Islam is based on this ambiguity and blur. Scholars and thinkers should be aware that raising issues

and matters stirring Muslim communities residing in Europe in general and France in particular, does not serve the Islamic religion in any way.

Allah the Almighty says in the Holy Quran, “Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation, and reason with them in the better way. Lo! thy Lord is Best Aware of him who strayeth from His way, and He is Best Aware of those who go aright”. (Surat Al-Nahil, Verse 125). The true Islam is the religion that logically and mercifully addresses humanity. Muslim communities living in the West should adopt a rational and tolerant approach that





Humankind in the present time is in a dire need for tolerance and a call for co-existence and acceptance of the other more than ever

stems from the true principles of Islam that call for love and harmony.

Humankind in the present time is in a dire need for tolerance and a call for coexistence and acceptance of the other more than ever. No doubt, that the technological progress has greatly contributed to the rapprochement among peoples, civilizations and cultures despite some temporal and spatial barriers among them. The Holy Quran contains many indications and evidence that bear the meaning of tolerance. For example, but not limited to, Allah says, “And argue not with the People of the Scripture unless it be in (a way) that is better, save with such of them as do wrong; and say: We believe in that which hath been revealed unto us and revealed unto you; our Allah and your Allah is One, and unto Him we surrender”.

Allah also says, “Keep to forgiveness (O Muhammad), and enjoin kindness, and turn away from the ignorant”. Allah says, “Let them forgive and show indulgence. Yearn ye not that Allah may forgive you? Allah is Forgiving, Merciful”.

There are many Hadith regarding the call to tolerance and merciness, Prophet Muhammad says, “Allah show mercy to a man who is kindly when he sells, when he buys,

and when he makes a claim!”

It is also very important to remember the tolerant humanitarian position of Caliph of Muslims, Ali bin Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, when the Muslims entered Makkah “Fatah Makkah” saying upon order of the Prophet, “Today is the day of mercy. Today the sanctity will be protected”.

It is necessary for every male and female Muslim to carefully consider this Quranic noble verse, “O humankind! Be careful of your duty to your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from them twain hath spread abroad a multitude of men and women.” This verse means that the entire humankind, with all its different religions, ethnicities and cultures, is descendant from a single soul. This promoted us to be united with the fraternal human bond. In addition, Muslims living in the European countries should contribute to maintaining the prevailing peace, security and stability. They should also cooperate to thwart and prevent any terrorist act and safeguard their places of residence from terrorist acts. The most important thing for those Muslims is to assist the competent authorities in order to prevent any terrorist acts.

The internal immunity of the Muslim family is very important. This takes place by rejecting the ideas of extremism and intolerance in tandem with safeguarding Muslim young people from evil friends along with warning them against suspicious social media websites and platforms bearing the stamp of extremism and terrorism. Our task as Muslims in the West is to get Europeans acquainted with our Islamic religion and its tolerant human nature and principles. We should also indicate that our Islam orders us to coexist and deal with others peacefully and mercifully.



Islamic History

By Tarique Anwar Khan

🗨️ *Many people make a mistake while marking the beginning of Islamic History, they mark it to the year 610 A.D. when Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) started receiving the Divine revelation. However, the truth is that Islam is there since time immemorial. The first human being to walk on the surface of the earth, Adam, was a Muslim.*

“And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels: “Verily, I am going to place (mankind) generations after generations on earth.” They said: “Will You place therein those who will make mischief therein and shed blood, - while we glorify You with

praises and thanks (Exalted be You above all that they associate with You as partners) and sanctify You.” He (Allah) said: “I know that which you do not know.” And He taught Adam all the names (of everything), then He showed them to the angels and said,



Every event in history is teaching us something

“Tell Me the names of these if you are truthful.” (Surat Al-Baqarah, Verses: 30-31)

Since, now as we know that the Islamic History dates back to the birth of Adam, I would like to discuss in this article the lessons to be learned from history rather than just recalling the historical events.

The first story we know from history is that Iblis disobeyed Allah the Almighty when He commanded him to prostrate to Adam,

“And (remember) when We said to the angels; “Prostrate to Adam.” So they prostrated except Iblis (Satan). He was one of the jinns; he disobeyed the Command of his Lord. Will you then take him (Iblis) and his offspring as protectors and helpers rather than Me while they are enemies to you? What an evil is the exchange for the wrongdoers” (Surat Al-Kahf, Verses: 50)

And after that, Iblis convinced Adam and his wife to disobey Allah: “Then they both ate of the tree, and so their private parts appeared to them, and they began to stick on themselves the leaves from Paradise for their covering. Thus did Adam disobey his Lord, so he went astray.” (Surat Taha, Verse: 121)

The important lesson to learn from this story is that both Adam and Iblis made a mistake but Adam repented to Allah the Almighty while Iblis became arrogant as a result Allah the Almighty forgave Adam and

granted him His blessings and chose him as a Prophet where on the other side Iblis is the cursed one. We all are children of Adam and we all make mistakes but the moment we realize of it, we should immediately repent to Allah the Almighty as He is the Most Merciful, the Most Forgiving. Being arrogant and continuously repeating the same thing will make us among the group of Shaitan.

We all might have read the story of Sulaiman and the ant, it is mentioned in Qur’an, “Till, when they came to the valley of the ants, one of the ants said: “O ants! Enter your dwellings, lest Sulaiman (Solomon) and his hosts crush you, while they perceive not.” So he [Sulaiman] smiled, amused at her speech and said: “My Lord! Inspire and bestow upon me the power and ability that I may be grateful for Your Favors which You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do righteous good deeds that will please You, and admit me by Your Mercy among Your righteous slaves.” (Surat An Naml, Verses: 18-19)

This is a small event from the life of Sulaiman, but we miss to learn the lessons here. The first quality of a leader is that he perceives the danger when it is still far away and finds a way out of it. After perceiving the danger, the ant did not try to save itself alone but showed its concern for its entire colony. It came forward to warn its colony about the upcoming danger. The next quality in the ant was that it did not blame Sulaiman and his troops for what they would have done unknowingly, the statement ‘while they perceive not’ teaches us that we should not blame others if we suffered a loss which is done by someone unknowingly. In addition, we should note here how grateful Sulaiman was for the



blessing which Allah has bestowed upon him rather than being arrogant.

The life of Prophet Muhammad is full of lessons, the years of secret calling, the open preaching, his migration, the wars, the treaties, the expeditions, all of them have different lessons. But here, I would like to mention the treaty of Hudaibiyah.

If we look at the treaty signed between Muslims and Pagans at Hudaibiyah, it seemed that Muslims were oppressed here (Sahih Al-Bukhari, 2731-2732). So much so that Umar bin Al-Khattab began questioning Prophet until these verses were revealed.

“Indeed, We have given you, [O Muhammad], a manifest victory.” (Surat Alfateh, Verse: 1)

In books such as ‘The Sealed Nectar’ and others, the benefits of the Hudaibiyah Treaty are mentioned. However, I would like to emphasize here that peace treaties

are always beneficial in the long term. The pact with Jews was also beneficial to Muslims. Also, there is a lesson for being patient in harsh times. Patience has been mentioned in Qur’an far more times than Salah. Moreover, we should learn from the Companions of the Prophet that whatever be the situation we should follow the Prophet. The treaty seemed to be humiliating for the Muslims but still, the Companions maintained silence and followed the guidelines of the Prophet.

The next thing I would like to mention here, after the battle of Yarmuk, the Roman emperor Hercules began to ask his people that you were more in number than Muslims, you had more weapons, the people you were fighting against were humans, so what made you lose the battle? An old man amongst them stood up and said, we lost against Muslims because the Muslim pray Tahajjud at nights, fast at days, fulfill the



Patience has been mentioned in Qur'an far more times than Salah.



covenant, command for good things, forbid bad things, are Just whereas on the other side we are alcoholic, we do adultery, we neglect the covenant, we are unjust, we do not command for good things, and we never try to please our Lord. (Al- Bidayah wan Nihaya, 7/15,16)

Now we need to note here how many of these qualities are actually found among the Muslims today and in what percentage of the population. We need to revive these qualities among ourselves again.

Another interesting thing is that at the time of Uthman bin Affan, in the year 29 A.H. at the time of Hajj, Uthman led the salah performing four Rak'ahs. People complained about this to Abdur-Rahman bin Auf, and he discussed the issue with the Caliph. He said we used to pray only two rak'ahs at the time of Prophet and after him, both the Caliphs followed the same. Then why have you changed to four rak'ahs, Uthman tried to explain to him his reasons for doing so, but still he was unconvinced.

Later on, the issue was discussed with Ibn Masud and he said that we should lead our prayers with 4 rak'ahs so that we do not have a difference with Caliph (Tareek At-tibri, 5/268). We need to note here that even knowing that Prophet prayed two rak'ahs at Ar'fat, the companions followed the way of Uthman just to avoid the conflict among the

Muslims.

Every event in history is teaching us something, but I have carefully selected only some important issues. Before I finish I would like to emphasize that if we will not read history today someone might change it tomorrow. The same was the issue with Babri Masjid in India, which was built in the year 1527, but it was demolished in the year 1992 claiming that the land belongs to Hindus and there was a temple at the same place before the mosque was built.

The same thing is being done with the entire Mughal History in India. There are attempts to distort it. Recently, I have seen a video on YouTube saying that the place where the World-famous monument Taj Mahal is right now, there was an idol of Shivji and that the land belonged to Hindus which Shah Jahan had purchased from them. So, the same story is being repeated with another Mughal monument. If we will not take care of our History and Heritage, they can just simply claim that Muslims had not played any role in the development of the nation and in the field of science. Rather than just recalling the Historical events, we should try to learn from them and it is our duty to preserve it.

I would like to end this article with a famous quotation, "One who does not know history can't create history".



Willi Ott:

Islam has changed my life dramatically

By Qais Bajaifer

»» Willi Ott, an Austrian mixed martial arts fighter, has embraced Islam after spending most of his quarantine weeks reading up on the religion. He even changed his name to Khalid because he was impressed with the Prophet's companion Khalid bin Alwaleed, who was known for his strength as the commander of the Muslim armies.



***My faith is now strong
enough that I can
recognize the one true
God and recite the
Shahada to be able to say
proudly, yes I am a Muslim***



Ott has always been interested in Islam and wanted to learn more about it but his career as a professional wrestler did not give him enough time to find out about Islam. When Austria imposed a lockdown, Khalid thought to himself this was the right time to read more about Islam. During his quarantine days, he had a lot of free time and decided to use this time to study the religion, especially after he noticed that many newspapers started to publish features and articles about Prophet Muhammad's advice about how one could get protected against a plague. He thought it was incredible how the Prophet, who was an illiterate person, knew over 1,400 years ago what to do during a pandemic.

Ott's urge to find out more about Islam increased after reading one of the Prophet's sayings, which advises people not to enter a land where a plague has spread and not to leave a place where a plague breaks out. The Prophet asked people with contagious diseases to stay away from healthy people. This fact drew Ott more to Islam so he went on studying the religion thoroughly for several weeks

and ended up reading many books about it.

Then he posted a video on his Instagram account and announced that he embraced Islam. The message he posted said, “The corona crisis gave me the peace I needed to find my faith again. Islam occupied me for many years. But there were also times when I couldn’t do anything with it and I let myself be politically influenced. But when I had difficult times, the Islamic faith gave me the necessary strength. Life goes up and down. If you had learned to walk in my shoes you would only cry.



when I had difficult times, the Islamic faith gave me the necessary strength

My faith is strong enough now that I recognize the only true God and speak the Shahada to be able to proudly say, yes, I am a Muslim.”

The message went viral immediately and received over half a million reac-

tions from Muslims from different parts of the world congratulating Ott on converting to Islam. He also posted a video for himself reading Surat Alfatiha, which he memorized and reads five times a day. He said he memorized several



surats of the Noble Qur'an and is planning to learn more surats by heart. He is happy that he performs prayer five times a day just like all Muslims around the world.

Ott believes that his life before becoming a Muslim was meaningless; he spent most of his time training and working out to get ready for the next fighting match. He participated in many professional fights around the world. He felt great emptiness in his life and would fill this emptiness by going to the pubs, staying up late and drinking alcohol. It was a purposeless life, there was too much void as he described it. His life has changed dramatically after he converted to Islam.

He says, "I feel now I have a better control of my life and know what I want to do. I can also sleep with a peace of mind and get up early to perform Alfajr prayer. I have more faith now. Islam is a peaceful religion."

He still gets messages from Muslims all over the world who post their best wishes to him on his Facebook and Instagram accounts and congratulate him for reverting to Is-



Islam is a religion of peace and truth

lam. Every time Ott reads these messages feels happy and wants to cry.

Ott's wife, Michele Birringer, also converted to Islam and decided to wear hijab. However, when she went to work donning the hijab, she was fired. Ott posted the story of his wife on the social media websites and said, "My wife got her termination today because of a headscarf."

The couple received the bad news positively and said maybe it was for the better, thanking Allah the Almighty for everything. Ott and Birringer decided to have an Islamic wedding ceremony and held one at the Islamic center in Austria.

Ott's message to all Muslims is to perform prayer on time and read the Noble Qur'an.

A Critical Study of Dr. Waleed Bleyhesh al-Amri's New Translation of the Holy Qur'an

Owais Manzoor Dar

❏❏ *Despite the Muslims belief vis-à-vis the untranslatability of the Qur'an, Muslim scholars throughout the history have endeavoured at translating it with the intention of generating its comprehensive meaning and message and then communicate it to humanity. In contemporary epoch, the Qur'an has been translated into numerous languages by Muslims as well as non-Muslims. In 16th century, among other languages, the Qur'an was also translated into English.*





‘The English translations of the Qur’an can be roughly divided into two subdivisions; (i) Orientalist translations and (ii) the Muslim translations.’

The English translations of the Qur’an can be roughly divided into two subdivisions; (i) Orientalist translations and (ii) the Muslim translations. The first English translation of the Qur’an was done by Alexander Ross in 1649, entitled “The Alcoran of Mohmet, Translated Out of Arabic for the Satisfaction of All That Desire to Looking into Turkish Vanities” which was the part of “concerted Pan-European effort to fortify and bolster internal defences and spurn ‘Mahommetanism’” – a very derogatory term they coined for Islam at the time when Ottoman armies paused a real existential threat to Europe. This was followed on the same vein by George Sale, who in 1734, also translated the Qur’an in English, namely, “The Koran, commonly

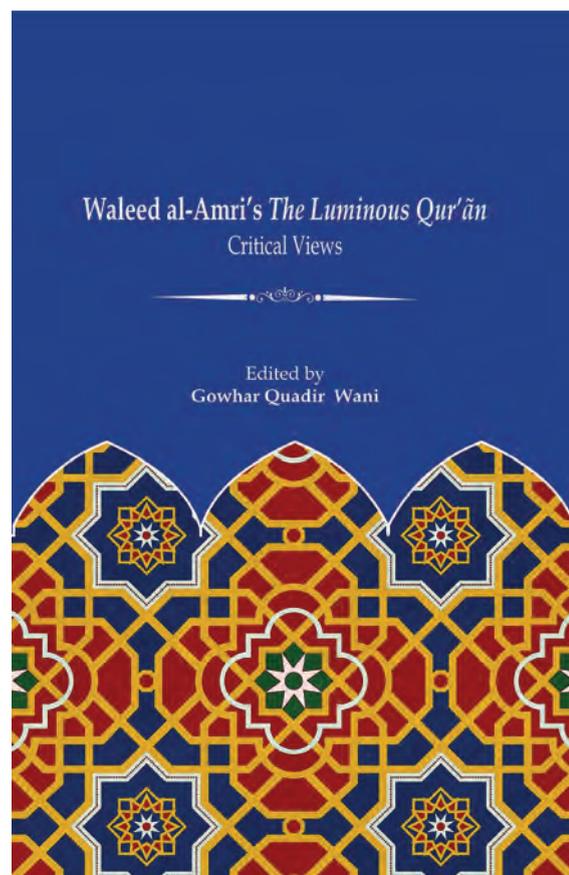
called as the Alcoran of Mohammed.” These two earliest translations (Ross’s 1649 and Gorge Sale’s 1734), however, “are not Orientalist per se, as they were not informed by studies of the Orient, but they help to show that history does have its bearing on translation.” The proper spate of Orientalist English translations began almost after more than a century with the two consecutive translations; J. M. Rodwell’s 1861 and E.H.Palmer’s 1880. They were “informed by the studies of traditionalist Orientalists like those of Theodor Noldeke, Gustav Weil and Ignaz Goldziher.” The later Orientalist translations are; Richard Bell (1939), N.J. Dawood (1957) and recently Alan Jone’s (2007) and A. J. Dorge’s (2014). They were “not particularly informed

by that streak hard-line Orientalist approach to the Qur’an” however, they carry the same trappings; “irreverence of the time-honoured Muslim traditions and treating Qur’an merely as a historical text, not regarding its sacredness.” The main aim of these Orientalist translations, however, was to distort the message and image of the Qur’an/Islam and to create doubts in Muslim mind. It was nor what Islam is and neither what Islamic sources say, but rather how Muslims perceive their faith and how Orientalists want them to perceive it, to use Edward Said’s evocative phrase, ‘covering Islam.’ It was the question of representation; ‘Muslims can’t represent themselves, they must be represented.’

Many Muslims translations, however, appeared to debunk the Orientalist narrative vis-à-vis the Qur’an. Among them, Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall (1930), Abdullah Yusuf Ali (1937), and Muhammad Asad (1980), gained familiarity for their renditions of the Qur’an. In the last two decades the translation of the Qur’an has increased tremendously, more than fifty (50) complete English translations

have been published. According to a survey, there were only four complete English translations of Qur'an before the 1980s and by 1999, around seventy (70) English translations were produced. Today, there are around one hundred forty (140) complete English translations of the Qur'an available. In previous century, the scene was occupied by non-Muslim translators, however, in present times, especially from 2000s, Muslims translators have dominated the field. Today English-speaking readers can draw upon reliable and reader-friendly translations to gain some of the life-giving Qur'anic message and guidance which was otherwise inaccessible to the non-Arabic speaking readers.

Despite the rising number of English translations of the Qur'an, a little critical consideration, however, has been paid to them in the academic world. Nevertheless, Professor Abdur Raheem Kidwai – a noted scholar and expert on the Qur'anic studies, professor of English and the Director of K. A. Nizami Centre for Quranic Studies (KANCQS), Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), India. Prof Kidwai has to his credit two doctoral degrees in English, one from University of Leicester, UK, and the other from AMU. He has authored more than thirty (30) books on the Qur'anic Studies and literary Orientalism etc. and has contributed significantly to the field of the Qur'anic Studies, especially in the sub-area of English Translation of the Qur'an. More importantly, Prof. Kidwai has translated the Qur'an in English, namely, "What is in the Qur'an? Message of The Qur'an in Simply English" [2013 (2019)] – in some of his recent works; "Bibliography of the Translations of the Meaning of the Glorious Quran into English 1649-2002" (2007); "Translat-



ing the Untranslatable: A Critical Guide 60 English Translations of the Quran" (2011); and "God's Word Man's Interpretations: A Critical Study of the 21st Century English Translations of the Quran" (2018), critically evaluating one hundred thirty-nine (139) English translations of the Qur'an to fulfil this gap of triviality.

To the field of Qur'anic translations, among Muslims, the native Arabs have also contributed; for instance, M.A.S. Abdel Haleem's (b.1930) "The Quran: A New Translation" (2004), Ahmad Zaki Hammad (b. 1946) "The Gracious Quran: A Modern-Phrased Interpretation in English" (2007), Tarif Khalidi's (b.1938) "The Quran: A New Translation" (2008), Muhammad Mahmud Ghali's (b. 1920) "Towards Understanding



To the field of Qur'anic translation, among Muslims, the native Arabs have also contributed

the Ever-Glorious Quran” (2008), Mustafa Khattab’s (b. 1977), “The Clear Quran: A Thematic English Translation of the Message of the Final Revelation” (2016) and recently a new English translation of the Qur’an entitled “The Luminous Qur’ān: A faithful rendition, annotated translation of the first three suras of the Message of God” (2019) by a distinguished Saudi scholar, Dr Waleed Bleyhesh al-Amri appeared. Dr Amri was born in Saudi Arabia. He was educated at different universities of Saudi Arabia. Later, he studied in Britain and obtained his Masters (MA) and doctorate (Ph.D.) in Translation Studies from Salford University and Manchester University respectively. He is a member of the scholarly council for the translations centre, King Fahd Glorious Quran Printing Complex and has served as the head of European Language Unit at the Complex. He is currently an Associate Professor of Translation Studies in the Department of Languages and Translation, Taibah University, Madina. Furthermore, he has published extensively on the issues related to the translation of the Qur’an and has translated some works from Arabic into English, for

instance, Abdul Razzaq ibn Abdul-Muhsin Al-Badr’s “Book of Dhikr and Supplications in Accordance with the Quran and Sunnah” (2004). He has command over Arabic and English languages, knowledge of the different nuances of translation and is specialist and expert in the ‘critique of Qur’an translations.’ The Luminous Qur’an presents an easy to understand, lucid, reader friendly and much faithful English rendering of first three Surahs –namely al-Fatitha, al-Baqarah and Âl-Imran; the latter two are collectively known as ‘al-Zahrawan’ (literally ‘Two Luminous Surahs’), hence the title ‘The Luminous Qur’an’. This translation project is sponsored by ‘Endowment for Cherishing the Two Glorious Revelations’, Medina and is named as The Grand Qur’an, of which The Luminous Qur’an is only the first step.

The essay attempts to present an analytical evaluation/ critical study of the recent English translation of the Qur’an, The Luminous Qur’an. The study is based on a recent work titled “Waleed al-Amri’s The Luminous Qur’an: Critical Views” (2019), published by Brown Books, in association with K. A. Nizami Centre for Quranic Studies (KANCQS), edited by Gowhar Quadir Wani (Assistant Professor at KANCQS). Most of the material of this book has appeared in the e-journal, The Aligarh Journal of Quran Studies in October 2019 issue (p.vi). The book can be broadly divided into two parts: part one contains three (3) articles and an interview with al-Amri and the other part covers four (4) reviews/ review essays. The book spans over 106 pages and draws attention to the strengths and weaknesses of al-Amri’s English translation by adopting the tools of comparative and critical methodology.



The first English translation of the Qur'an was done by Alexander Ross in 1649

The methodology of al-Amri's *The Luminous Qur'an* is discussed in chapter one entitled "Mainstreaming the mainstream: Introducing 'authority' to the Qur'an Interpretation in English" (pp. 1-17) by Nazeer Ahmad Ab. Majeed (Assistant Professor at KANCQS). The author argues that "al-Amri is not a sectarian scholar in the strict sense of the term", for he "remains committed to the representation of canonical views and positions of the Sunni mainstream." (p.3). He evades quoting any scholar/opinion, the author holds, "whose authenticity or authority can be questioned in the orthodox Sunni circle." (Ibid.). Regarding the 'articles of faith', 'Naskh (abrogation)', 'signs of Allah' etc., "he invariably cites [Tafsir] al-Tabari along with other masters in the



field of tafsir", however, the 'modernist' English translators are cited on 'the safest places' (pp.4-9). Further, he offers a comparative study of al-Amri's translation vis-à-vis other English translation of the Qur'an, for instance, unlike others al-Amri translates the word *adhā* (Q. 2:222), as "hateful" and offers justification in footnote (p.10). While translating the word *minkum* (Q. 2:151), al-Amri omitted its translation "from among you" and his translation of "al-birr (Q. 2:189) as sincere pity", ac-

ording to author is "against the principle of linguistic equivalence" (pp. 15,16).

Chapter two "Assessing the Translational Distinctions of Waleed Bleyhesh al Amri's the *Luminous Qur'an*: Shift from Translation towards Adaptation" by Ubaid V.P.C (Assistant Professor at Farook Collage, Calicut, Kerala) examines the translational quality (merits and limitations) of *The Luminous Qur'an*. A comparative study of Surah al Fātiha vis-à-vis five other English translation of the Qur'an [Abdullah Yusuf Ali (1989), Taqiuddin al-Hilali and Muhammad Muhsin Khan (2007), Muhammad Asad (1980), Abu'l A'la Mawdudi (2004) and Tarif Khalidi (2008)] of is presented, in order to highlight its difference with reference "to its selection of target words/phrases", "source text which is philosophically loaded, competency level over both sources and target languages, bias-free philosophical standpoint and pluralistic outlook." Based on this analysis, the author argues that unlike others, al-Amri "purposefully uses the name Allah in Arabic in the verse and its western-

ized version ‘God’ in notes” and his detailed explanation of Arrahmān and Arahīm, “helps the readers to internalize the sole message of the Qur’an” (pp.19-21). To cope with the linguistic features of the target language, al-Amri adds ‘explanatory brackets’ and “leaves the Qur’an to speak for itself” (p.34). He “marks a shift from translations towards adaptation” and thus “possesses a unique position in the history of Qur’an translations in English” (p.35).

Āyat al-Kursī – the most precise and concise description of the Attributes of God in a single verse – is discussed in chapter three entitled “Translating the Throne Verse (Āyat al-Kursī): A Study of Waleed Bleyhesh al-Amri’s *The Luminous Qur’an*” by Gowhar Quadir Wani. The author provides a comparative study of al-Amri’s translation of Āyat al-Kursī vis-à-vis Khattab (2016), Khalidi (2008) and Ahmad Zaki Hammad’s (2007) English translation of the Qur’an. Based on this assessment, he offers three critical points: (i) the selected translators “have translated Allah as God”, however, “al-Amri has retained it”, but “a separate and

sufficient discussion on the preference of the word ‘Allah to God’ ... is completely missing” (p.45). (ii) His translation of the Qur’anic catchphrase ‘al-Kursi to footstool’ is “neither a proper linguistic equivalent of al-Kursi nor a catchy and eloquent usage, especially in relation to God.” Wani argues that in Islamic cosmologies, “al-Kursi is above the cosmos, and al-Arsh is above al-Kursi, a symbolism which cannot afford the translation of al-Kursi as ‘the footstool’ because a footstool sits in front of a throne, not underneath it.” (pp.46,47). (iii) Al-Amri’s translation of the Divine Names, al-Aliyy and al-Azim, in this verse, as ‘the Most High’ and ‘the Most Great’ respectively is “not a perfect choice on the part of al-Amri in comparison to the other translators” (p.47).

The fourth chapter is based on an interview with al-Amri by Sajid Shaffi (Research scholar, Department of Islamic Studies, AMU), wherein he raises some basic questions like “Qualifications for translating the Qur’an” (p.50), “Issues of Qur’an Translatability” (p.54), “Addressing Contemporary Issues in English translation of the Qur’an” (P.58) and “Orientalist and English translation of the Qur’an” (P. 63) etc. While answering to the one of frequently asked question about Arthur J. Arberry (1954) English translation of the Qur’an, Dr Amri argues, “although, by virtue of its being the product of a non-Muslim Orientalist scholar, it was lauded by some Muslim scholars as unbiased. I would say it should be taken with a pinch of salt and read critically anew no regarding



Among more than 140 complete English translations of the Qur’an, Kidwai asserts, “only few may be recommended”

the translator's degree of bias vis-à-vis his peers" (p. 65).

The next portion of the book is based on four reviews of *The Luminous Qur'an* by Hamid Sayeed Ekram Ahmed (PhD, Linguistics, AMU) Abdur Raheem Kidwai (Director, KANCQS), Tauseef Ahmad Parray (Assistant Professor, Islamic Studies, Higher Education Department, J&K) and Muhammad Mubeem Saleem (Assistant Professor, KANCQS), respectively. Ahmad holds that Al-Amri in the introduction has given "a definition of the Qur'an followed by a brief explanation of what it is, whom it is revealed to and its importance for mankind", which constitute the significant features of *The Luminous Qur'an* (p.67). His major argument is that *The Luminous Qur'an* is a "marvelous work" and "seems to be much faithful to the original text" (pp.67,69). Ahmad's argument is furthered by Kidwai, who argues that al-Amri has been "successful in conveying the meaning of the Qur'an in the chaste English" and "appears to have carried out a thorough analysis of the need of readers before taking up this assignment"



There are several shortcomings in the book; it neither contains any 'Introduction' nor 'Bibliography'



(p.75). Among more than 140 complete English translations of the Qur'an, Kidwai asserts, "only few may be recommended" and "the Luminous Qur'an belongs to the same enviable category" (p.75). He also highlights four 'noteworthy features' of the translation; viz. (i) it provides "easy-to-understand information on a range of key Qur'anic terms and concepts such as *Yawm al-Din*, *al-huruf al-muqatt'ah*... and *hadud*

Allah" (ii) he has "done well to readers to learn about the occasion of revelations of some verses" (iii) "safest and most effective pedagogic approach to the Qur'anic interpretation" namely *Tafsir al-Qur'an bi'l-Qur'an* and (iv) highlighted the "pressing issues and concerns of 21st century" such as "exploitation of wives by unscrupulous husbands, marital affairs... and gender parity" (pp.76,77). Furthermore, Kidwai has



‘ Based on this critical and comparative study, we can conclude that The luminous Qur’an is a marvellous work and faithful rendition of the Qur’anic text’

underlined some of the typographical errors and irksome features such as “al-Amri’s excessive predilection for the capitalization” etc. (p.77). The most interesting and remarkable feature of The Luminous Qur’an, Parray upholds, are (i) the seventeen 17 “right keys to understand the Qur’an”, which are helpful in understanding the message of the Qur’an” (p.810). (ii) “Each Surah is supplemented with ample annotations to make the message of the Qur’an more understandable” for instance, “Surah al-Fatihah is provided with nine (9) footnotes, while Surah al-Baqarah and Āl- Imrān are supplemented with 507 and 265 footnotes, respectively” (p. 83). To highlight uniqueness, similarities and differences of The Luminous Qur’an, Parray compares it with the translations of

Abdullah Yusuf Ali (1937) and Dr Peachy and Dr Al-Johani (2012). Other four significant features of the translation, Saleem focuses on, are; (i) Tafsir al-Qur’an bi’l-Qur’an, (ii) Tafsir al-Qur’an bi’l-hadith, (iii) “usage of semantically non-charged, transparent English lexical items for some Islamic terminology” which is an attempt at Islamising the English, and (iv) selection of appropriate vocabulary. (pp.96,97).

There are several shortcomings in the book; it neither contains any ‘Introduction’ nor ‘Bibliography.’ It does not justice with its title promises to deliver. In consonance with the general methodology of the book, most of the chapters and reviews offer a comparative, not ‘critical’, analysis, so it would have been more appropriate and better on the

part of the editor to retrain from the sub-title ‘Critical Views’. Apart from these inadequacies, Waleed al-Amri’s The Luminous Qur’an: Critical Views is a good read for everyone as it helps in understanding the ‘merits and limitations’ of English translation of the Qur’an. Moreover, the book will be beneficial for the readers for their selection of English translation of the Qur’an. In sum, it is a good initiative to bring seriousness to the ill-considered subject of English translation of the Qur’an.

Based on this critical and comparative study, we can conclude that The luminous Qur’an is a marvellous work and faithful rendition of the Qur’anic text. It stands out for its excellent presentation in chaste reader-friendly English, for the notes based on authentic works on tafsir and for adopting the methodology of Tafsir al-Qur’an bi’l-Qur’an. Notable, Dr Amri succeeds in facilitating and advancing readers’ understanding of the Qur’an and helps them to fathom its meaning. In sum, Prof. Kidwai classification of The Luminous Qur’an to the ‘recommended enviable category’ is apt and apposite.

Number of sanitizing robots at Grand Mosque

Makkah - Arab News

: The General Presidency for the Affairs of the Two Holy Mosques has announced that it will increase the number of robots used to sanitize the Grand Mosque.

More than 4,500 liters of sterilization materials are being used each day to disinfect the Grand Mosque to achieve a safe and healthy environment.

“The presidency is working to the highest standards to intensify sterilization operations in the Grand Mosque and its external squares, to provide the highest levels of readiness and to apply precautionary and preventive measures,” director of the environmental protection and epidemic control department at the presidency, Hassan Al-Suwairi, told Arab News.

He said that the presidency was studying all the options to mechanize technology and adapt it to serve pilgrims and create a safe and healthy environment in which they could practice their rituals with ease.

Al-Suwairi said that specialized robots were used for sanitization to keep pace with the latest inventions and to use the best technology devices in confronting the coronavirus.

“The smart robot, which is used in sterilization and environmental protection in enclosed spaces, works with an automatic control system programmed on a pre-map, and it holds a SLAM patent, with a high-performance atomization unit,” he said.

Al-Suwairi said that the launch of the high-precision robot would contribute to reducing the spread of coronavirus and other diseases and epidemics.



The robot performs internal sterilization on six levels, which improves the strength and safety of environmental health, and it intelligently analyzes sanitization requirements according to usage scenarios. It works from five to eight hours without human intervention.

The device can accommodate 23.8 liters. The volume of spraying is estimated at two liters per hour, and it eliminates bacteria in an area of 600 square meters at a time. The size of dry mist particles used in the disinfection process is from five to 15 micrometers.

“There are work teams in the General Presidency for the Affairs of the Grand Mosque and the Prophet’s Mosque that continuously study the possibility of increasing the number of smart robots in the Grand Mosque in proportion to its area,” Al-Suwairi said.

Al-Suwairi said that the technology reduced human intervention and measured the safety of environments that required continuous sterilization and disinfection.

He called on visitors to adhere to regulations and instructions to help the implementation of security, health and preventive plans aimed primarily to serve them and ensure their comfort.

Saad Palace - Diriyah - Riyadh

