Original Research Paper

Social Science

Islam : The Issues of Fundamentalism, Fanaticism, Intolerane and Terrorism

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ABSTRACT

The paper deals with the issues of fundamentalism, fanaticism, intolerance and terrorism in context of Islam and Muslims all around the world in the current scenario. Islam and Muslims are particularly targeted by media in relation with these issues. Muslim stereotypes are highly perpetuated almost in all forms of media. It seems due to misinformation about Islam and Muslims or due to wrong implications of the incidents with Islam and Muslims which are basically occurred because of power struggle in political and economical arena. Many times this false propaganda leads to discrimination and communal violence against the Muslims. The paper is an attempt to deal with such grave issues and bringing to light the real and vivid picture of Islam.

KEYWORDS : Islam, Muslims, terrorism, fanaticism, intolerance, media

The issues of fundamentalism, fanaticism, intolerance and terrorism need a clear understanding one by one with the nucleus of their meanings and practical happenings around which everything revolves. The word fundamentalism occurred from the word *'funda'* or the basics of any discipline. As per the Webster's dictionary the term 'fundamentalism' was first used in the early 20th Century in American Protestantism to identify the reactionaries to modernism who believed in the infallibility of the holy bible. These reactionaries considered the bible as the literal word of God, not only in the matter of faith but as a literal verbatim historical record also.

Therefore, 'Fundamentalism' is a term which is first used to a group of Christian reactionaries who believed that the Holy Bible was the verbatim word of God without any mistakes. In later period when Islam and Muslims has encounter with modernity they also became conscious to increase their Islamic values. However, their reaction was not as was of Christian reactionaries against the scientific facts. Because, there is no scientific fact which is in contrast with the Qur'anic revelation. Muslims reaction in general was against colonialism, Western domination and Western culture. But slowly and gradually Western media applied the same term of fundamentalism to Muslim reactionaries also. When that kind of radical reaction intensified the other epithets of fanaticism and terrorism were also be used to them. Therefore, in media and later entries of English dictionaries the term fundamentalism become a synonym of Islam and Muslims. Now as per the latest Oxford Dictionary the meanings of the term fundamentalism are written as 'strict maintenance of ancient or fundamental doctrines of any religion, especially Islam.' the name of Islam is included with meanings of fundamentalisms. Though in real sense to became a fundamentalist is not always bad. Nobody can be good enough in any respective field unless or until he follow the fundamentals of that field. A good sports person, a good musician, a good scientist and a good doctor never be imagined without following the fundamentals or becoming a fundamentalist in their respective fields. However, to becoming a fundamentalist for wrong reasons is wrong off course. A fundamental, scientist, Philanthropist and physician are good to the society but a fundamentalist communal, casteist, raciest robber and dacoits are bad and undesirable to our society. Therefore good or bad fundamentalism depend upon the field of activity in which a particular fundamentalist deals with.

Similarly, if a person is a fundamentalist Muslim who follow the fundamentals of Islam should not shy away to be identified as a fundamentalist Muslim. Rather one should full proud to become a fundamentalist Muslim. Because Islam means peace, submission to the will of the creator. The fundamentals of Islam are beneficial to whole mankind. If one study Islam with open mind and with out any prejudice, will find that there is not a single fundamental of Islam which is against the interests of mankind and our social fabric as such. However, many people are victims of misconceptions and misunderstanding about Islam due to media hype of issues and incorrect knowledge of Islam.

Therefore, a true and fundamentalist Muslim is good and beneficial to our society. Moreover, of we talk about the spirit of all religions

the true fundamentalist of all faiths are good for society. One many be a fundamentalist Hindu, Muslim, Budh, Jain and Sikh to become that kind of fundamentalism is in benefit of society. But a communal Hindu, Muslim, Budh, Jain and Sikh may create a havoc in society. As he will be fanatic and intolerant to others. That is the point which is highly manipulated in vote bank politics of secular India. To manipulate on the name of religion become the basic funda of some of political leaders of India. Any suitable constitutional provision and suitable reforms in election process earnestly required to cleans the Indian polity and society from fundamentalist criminals, corrupts and communal.

The term fanaticism, intolerance and terrorism are closely related in meanings and to show a particular person's radical behavior from fanatic to terrorist. As per Oxford Dictionary fanatic is a person who is too enthusiastic about something, especially religion or politics to tolerate others. The fanatic attitude, behavior and ideology makes a person intolerant to others which further leads to terrorize the people who have any disagreement with them in this context Islam as an ideology and practice accepts disagreement and difference. It is a faith which is not to be thrust upon any one. This fact is very much clear by the versus of the holy Qur'an and Hadith words, behavior and practice of prophet Muhammad (s) himself. The first Islamic constitution known as *'Mishaq-e-Maeina'* formulated by prophet Muhammad (s) himself to the first Islamic state known as Medina accepts idolaters and Jews on equal terms without any coercion and compulsion. In the context this holy Quran says, " There is no compulsion in the matter of religion (2:256) Allah directs prophet Muhammad(s) to say to idolaters, 'For you is your faith and for me is mine' (109:6). The issue is so important as Allah again instructs prophet Muhammad(s), 'If it had been they Lords' will, they would all on earth have been Muslims, will than them force them till they are became believers? (10:99). Therefore, there is no scope to fanaticism, intolerance and terrorism on the name of Islam.

As per Oxford Dictionary meanings, terrorism means use of violence and threats of violence, especially for political purpose. In that meanings terrorist is a person who causes terror. Therefore, to a robber and miscreant policeman also a terrorist. In this context a Muslim also be a terrorist as the should terrified anti-social elements to maintain peace and harmony in his surroundings. Islam as per its nature, promotes peace reason why it also exhorts its adherents to stand up against oppressors and miscreants for the sake of peace and justice. In Islam the use of force is only justified to promote and protect peace and justice but not to kill the common innocent people. However the Qura'n mentions that "to kill and innocent is equal to kill whole mankind"(5:32). It is fact that the world terrorist is generally used for a person who terrorize the common people.

In the political context of terrorism same individual had defined with two different labels-'terrorist' and 'patriot'. Before India's Independence, some freedom fighters of India who did not subscribe to Gadhian non-violence was labeled as terrorist by the British government. But the same individuals for the same activity were labeled as patriots by Indians. Those who accepts that British had right to rule India

considered these people terrorist, while those who believed that British had not right to rule India called them freedom fighters. Similarly George Washington was a terrorist to British before Independence of America and after Independence who became the first president of America. Likewise during the Apartheid period of South Africa. Nelson Mandela was considered as a terrorist but is post apartheid period he was honored with Noble Award for peace for the same activity therefore, the situations, reasons and intentions should be analyzed carefully beyond media reports to understand the real causes of terrorism. To understand historically and current causes to present time terrorism in Muslim contexts it seems appropriate to quote here this important authors, one is Prof. M. Lepidus a noted historian and orientalist and another is Asgar Ali Engineer well known Indian writer who particularly writes on Islam and secular context. As per M. Lepidus, the causes of terrorism are:

To many Westerners Islam represents the East-the outside civilization to their own. For the West Islam is always problematic. It is often looked upon with curiosity, concern, contempt, or fear. Islam is a competitor and it has been a focus of conflict and was from the Arab conquest of the seventh century, through the crusades and the Ottoman Turkish invasion of Europe, down to Islamic terrorism today.

<div align="right">(M. Lepidus, p. VII)</div>

Asgar Ali mentions,
If any thing it is getting exacerbated in recent times and 9/11 attack has further intensified it. The extremists among Muslims resort to violence in response to violence by the West in middle East and it has become a vicious circle. Strong prejudices have been created against Islam in this region. The Muslim extremis invoke slogan of Jihad (wrongly of course) to commit violence in Western countries and this strengthens the stereotype that Islam is religion of violence and war and does not want to co-exist with other religions, especially Christianity. (Asgar Ali Engineer, p.8)

In the light of above mentioned facts it is right to conclude that the issues of fundamentalism, fanaticism, intolerance and terrorism are not the monopoly of Islam and Muslims or any other religion. There are certain other causes that may be traced in political and economical policies of certain ruling establishment which germinate these problems in our society and nations making it a huge area of concern both nationally and internationally.

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