



Efforts to strengthen democracy and constitutional values

“While the condition of democracy is deteriorating in more countries than it is improving, the report particularly highlights that the most severe impact of authoritarian trends has been on freedom of expression, fair elections, and the right to organize and participate in civil society.” The report presents an accurate summary of the ground realities in India. Additionally, minorities in India are being treated very poorly. In recent times, the RSS-BJP have increasingly used Hindu festivals and gatherings as tools to intimidate minorities. This has been widely observed during Ram Navami celebrations, Holi, and the Kumbh Mela.

Over the past decade, the ruling group’s increasingly authoritarian attitude led most opposition parties—despite internal contradictions—to unite under the INDIA alliance. The formation of this alliance, Rahul Gandhi’s Bharat Jodo Yatra and Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, along with platforms created by social groups such as Idilu Karnataka and the Bharat Jodo Abhiyan, collectively impacted the Lok Sabha elections and crushed the BJP’s ambition of winning 400 seats.

It is true that the INDIA alliance did not move in the desired direction and failed to contest state assembly elections together. This was one of the reasons why the alliance could not achieve success in Maharashtra and Haryana elections. Another reason was that all organizations affiliated with the Sangh Parivar put their full force behind the BJP. This is not a new development, but it is noteworthy that during the Lok Sabha elections, BJP President J.P. Nadda stated that the BJP no longer needed RSS’s help because it had become strong enough to win elections on its own.

It seems that after the Lok Sabha elections, several constituent parties of the INDIA alliance have adopted a neglectful and indifferent attitude toward strengthening the alliance. Even the largest opposition party, the Congress, has not taken any major initiative in this regard. It is important to note that the ideologically strong component of this alliance, the CPI(M), is reconsidering its approach. Its acting General Secretary, Prakash Karat, has stated that the INDIA alliance was formed for the Lok Sabha elections, not for state elections, and he has called for a broader coalition of secular opposition parties.

He also emphasized that alliances should be viewed from a wider perspective so that electoral politics does not suffocate them. Left-leaning intellectuals express similar views, arguing that the BJP is not a completely fascist party. For instance, Prabhat Patnaik argues that neoliberal capitalism creates a “fascist-like” environment, which manifests as right-wing authoritarian movements, xenophobia, hyper-nationalism, and the erosion of democratic values, but it does not necessarily recreate the fully fascist regimes of the 1930s.

Many terms have been used for Hindutva nationalism, including

neo-fascism, proto-fascism, and radicalism. However, what is important to understand is that no political phenomenon repeats itself in the exact same way. Today, many characteristics of Hindutva nationalism resemble fascism. Fascism itself was the inspiration for RSS founders, especially M.S. Golwalkar. In his book *We, or Our Nationhood Defined*, he wrote:

“To maintain the purity of our culture and race, Germany astounded the world by expelling the Semitic race—Jews—from its country. This is the highest expression of racial pride. Germany has also shown that it is nearly impossible for different cultures and races with fundamental differences to integrate. This is an important lesson for Hindustan, which we must learn from and benefit from.”

We are witnessing the rise of fascist traits in India, such as:

- Glorification of a mythical golden past**
- Aspiration for Akhand Bharat (Undivided India)**
- Targeting minorities as enemies of the nation**
- Authoritarianism**
- Promotion of corporate power**
- Attacks on freedom of expression**
- Suppression of social discourse**

We see intolerance towards free speech, as evident in the case of Tushar Gandhi, the great-grandson of Mahatma Gandhi. He stated:

“The RSS is a poison. They are trying to destroy the soul of this country. We should be afraid of this because if the soul is destroyed, everything is lost.” Tushar Gandhi was asked to apologize and retract his statement, but he refused to do either. As a result, he is now receiving death threats.

Through its extensive network of affiliated organizations, thousands of propagators, and millions of workers, the RSS poses a serious threat to the idea of India born out of the freedom movement. The values of the freedom movement were enshrined in the Indian Constitution, which guarantees equal rights to all citizens and is fundamentally inclusive. However, the ideology of the RSS is completely opposed to the values of the freedom struggle and the Indian Constitution, and it is promoting its agenda through its massive organizational structure.

Initially, the RSS distorted historical narratives to spread hatred against Muslims, as we are currently witnessing in Maharashtra, where removing Aurangzeb’s tomb has become the BJP’s top priority. At its behest, even Mahatma Gandhi, a key figure in the freedom movement, is now being targeted, with propaganda claiming that he had no role in India’s independence.

Some social media posts affiliated with the RSS even claim that Gandhi obstructed the independence movement. This list of distortions is long, but the crucial question is: What needs to be done now? Prakash Karat is right in saying that a broad secular alliance needs to be built.

Sura al-Ma'idah

108. And, (O Muslims,) do not abuse these (false gods) that these (polytheists) worship besides Allah, lest these people should (also, in retaliation,) revile against Allah's Glory wrongfully due to ignorance. Thus have We made the conduct of every sect (and faction) seem attractive to (their own eyes and they regard only that as truth). Then all have to return to their Lord, and He will inform them of (the results of) their deeds which they used to do.

109. They swear their most solemn oaths by Allah that if there comes to them some (manifest) sign, they shall certainly believe in that. Say (to them): 'Signs are but with Allah alone. And, (O Muslims,) you are not aware that when the sign comes, they will (still) not believe.'

110. And (due to their own malice) We shall turn their hearts and their eyes away from (accepting the truth the same way) as they have disbelieved (in the Messenger [blessings and peace be upon him]) the first time. (So, they will not believe even on seeing the sign). And We shall leave them to wander astray in their rebellion and defiance.

111. And if We sent down to them angels, and the dead started talking to them, and We gathered everything in clusters

The delegates of 'Abdul Qais came to Allah's Apostle and said, "The pagans of the tribe of Mudar intervene between you and us therefore we cannot come to you except in the Holy months. So please order us to do something good (Religious deeds) by which we may enter Paradise (by acting on them) and we may inform our people whom we have left behind to observe it." The Prophet said, "I order you to do four things and forbid you from four things: I order you to believe in Allah. Do you know what is meant by belief in Allah? It is to testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah, to offer prayers perfectly, to give Zakat, and to give Al-Khumus (one-fifth of the war booty) (in Allah's Cause). And I forbid you four things, (i.e., Do not drink alcoholic drinks) Ad-Dubba, An-Naqir, (pitched water skins), Az-Zuruf, Al-Muzaffat and Al-Hantam (names of utensils used for the preparation of alcoholic drinks)." (See Hadith No. 50, Vol. 1)

Allah's Apostle said, "The painter of these pictures will be punished on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be said to them, Make alive what you have created. "

The Prophet said, "The painters of these pictures will be punished on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be said to them, 'Make alive what you have created.'"

Islam Is Based On 5 Things

Hadith: Translation: The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said: Islam is based on 5 things.

1. Testifying that there is no God except Allah SWT and that the Holy Prophet Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) is the Prophet of Allah SWT.
2. Offering Salaat.
3. Giving Zakaat (those who are eligible)
4. Fasting in Ramadhan.
5. Performing Haj (those who can afford it)

Hadhrat Hasan Basri (May Allah SWT shower His Mercy on him) says: Islam is that we surrender (hand over) our heart to Allah SWT and that no one is hurt through Muslims. The perfection of Muslims is Islam. You acquire perfect Islam and Insha Allah you will become respected without any material things. Remember! Respect is not through money, wealth, clothes or get up, for Muslims respect is through Islam. In earlier times, Muslims used to be perfect Muslims, so they were respected. Now we are Muslims only in name, so we are insulted and humiliated. The mark of a Muslim is that he/she is firm in religion and has Yaqeen (certitude, certainty) in Iman, fulfils the rights of Allah SWT and the rights of the creation, is moderate when rich and patient when destitute and poor, is benevolent when strong and patient when overburdened. Desires do not rule over him/her and greed does not humiliate him/her.

There is no defect in his/her niyyah (intention); helps the oppressed, has mercy on the poor; is neither a miser nor extravagant; when somebody oppresses him/her they forgive and excuses the illiterate. His/Her self (nafs) is stifled in their hand, but others are happy with him. Islam is not only belief

in the heart and declaration by the tongue, but it is to cross those stages and reach the stage of Ihsaan. This is that stage in which the difference between "seeing" and "testifying" does not exist. The awareness of the Lord is such that all the time we feel as if He is present with us.

Hafidh Ibn Taimiya says: The beauty of Islam is that the beliefs (Aqaaid) are correct and Islam is accepted both outwardly and inwardly and while performing every action, this awareness is present that the sight of the Ultimate Lord is forever seeing us and He is not far from us but is so close that even our jugular is not so close to us. Hadhrat Ghouse Azam (May Allah SWT shower His Mercy on him) says: If there is no Islam, there is no Iman. If there is no Iman, there is no Yaqeen. If there is no Yaqeen, there is no Ma'arifah (Realization of Allah SWT). These are all stations and stages of progress. When Islam is correct, then surrendering everything to Allah SWT will be correct.

Nowadays, Muslims are far away from Islam. Neither the appearance is of Muslims nor the character. The beliefs are corrupted, actions are spoiled. There is deception (cheating) in our dealings. Our lifestyle is of Nonmuslims. Do not even ask about manners and etiquette (akhlaaq). In short, we have left Allah SWT so Allah SWT abandoned us. We lost this world and we have lost the next world (aakhirah), which is a great loss. We are neither here nor there.

Hadhrat Shaykh Ahmed bin Kabir Rifai (May Allah SWT shower His Mercy on him) says: Islam is the way to meet Allah SWT. If Nonmuslims perform worship like all the Jinns and the human beings combined, even then only Allah's SWT wrath (anger) will descend on them....

Israel's genocide continues, and 'we remain numbers'

After months of genocide, a ceasefire – even one that allowed them to continue depriving Palestinians in Gaza of their most basic rights to food, water, medical care, education and freedom of movement – proved too much for the Israeli forces. So they decided to continue their war on Gaza.

Israel casually abandoned the ceasefire agreement and restarted its deadly war that had already destroyed Gaza and killed tens of thousands, because it knew the global community would not do anything to stop it. After all, the world has been largely indifferent to Israel's many other ceasefire violations and massacres of Palestinians since 1948. Israel has been violating international law without any meaningful consequences since its very inception.

Israel did not break this latest ceasefire agreement because it believed the Palestinian side violated it first. It did not break the agreement to try and retrieve its remaining prisoners either (this, after all, was going to happen if it adhered to the agreement).

Israel broke the ceasefire to prevent the reconstruction of Gaza. It restarted the war to stop Palestinians from attempting to rebuild even a small part of their destroyed homeland – to make sure no Palestinian in Gaza has any hope for the future.

The end of the temporary ceasefire marked the beginning of yet another period of displacement, loss and fear for the long-suffering people of Gaza. On the first night of the renewed war, Israel bombed all parts of the Gaza Strip just before dawn. More than 400 civilians, who were preparing food for Sahoor in their cold tents when the bombs began raining on them, lost their lives in the most horrific ways and passed on to another world where they would be free of Israel's abuse and cruelty. Many of the dead were children, who died hungry, scared, cold. The massacre,

undoubtedly committed with full approval from the Americans, also wounded hundreds of others, filling up Gaza's few remaining hospitals. Since that night, the bombs, the threats, the killing did not stop. Amid the renewed genocide, a persistent sound echoes – hollow slogans, devoid of any humanity, are being repeated by people around the world who want to soothe their conscience towards Gaza. The tragedy and the suffering of Gaza's exhausted people have been reduced in their mouths and minds to an empty celebration of their "legendary steadfastness". People of Gaza are being stripped of their humanity and portrayed as heroes who neither grieve nor tire. The slogans echoing across the world are doing nothing to stop the suffering in Gaza. On the contrary, they are making it harder for Palestinians to express themselves – to voice their fear, their love, and their dreams of a dignified life free from war and loss, free from waking up to the sound of missiles. The world expects nothing of them but to die in silence as heroes.

After Israel restarted its genocide, governments and institutions have done nothing to feed a hungry child or protect a family from the occupation's missiles. They only issued empty statements – they "condemned" and they "denounced". But did nothing that would make a difference. Palestinians knew the world's response would not go beyond words, and that these words – however true – would not achieve anything. Since the very beginning of their oppression, they have seen over and over again how such statements, condemnations, human rights reports, and even court rulings do nothing to ease their suffering. By now, they know well the world would not take any real action to help them. They know the international community is deaf even to the sound of its own conscience when it comes to Palestine.

For years, we Palestinians have fought not only for our survival but to reclaim our humanity in the eyes of the world. We have spoken up through protests, art, cinema, and journalism – desperate to break through the global indifference that reduces us to news segments and statistics on media platforms. Initiatives like We Are Not Numbers – which I have been part of – were created as a response to this dehumanisation. We have told our stories to remind the world that we are not just breaking news items or casualty reports, but human beings with names, histories, emotions, and most importantly, dreams. We have written about the friends we have lost, our homes that have been reduced to rubble, the injustice inflicted upon our people, and our lives that have been forever altered by Israel's occupation and abuse – hoping that, by sharing our truths, we could force the world to see us.

But despite all this, Palestinians remain numbers. When a family is wiped out in an air strike, the headlines count the dead, but they do not name them. They do not say who they were – the child who loved to play football with his friends, the teenager who dreamed of getting a high GPA to make his family proud, the mother who held her children close in the final moments. And yet, when Israel claims to have targeted a "high-profile militant" the world's attention instantly shifts – not to the dozens of innocent civilians killed in the strike, but to the so-called success or failure of the assassination. The world mourns in abstraction, detached from the lives lost. And so, the killing continues. Even after months of documented war crimes, after initiatives like We Are Not Numbers, after all the condemnation and denunciation, there are still hungry children in Gaza who cannot sleep because of the pain of an empty stomach and the fear of bombs falling near their makeshift tent.

This means that our world has failed. That all the institutions we built to protect justice have fallen, and all our constitutions have lost their meaning. It means there is no international law or human rights. It means all our "good" armies, supposedly put together to protect the innocent, are powerless. All the world's protections, safety nets, promises and guarantees appear to have collapsed under the weight of Israel's colonial impunity. But why? What exactly are the nations afraid of? America's weapons? Israel's wrath? Why are they sacrificing all this to accommodate Israel's desire for destruction and domination? I do not understand why the world asks Gaza's children to be brave in the face of death, patient in the face of loss, and resilient in the face of hunger. Why should a starving child be expected to show more strength than the leaders of what is called the "free world"? Silence is not just complicity; it is consent. And so, the bombs keep falling, and the Palestinians remain what the world has allowed them to become: numbers. Death continues to visit their homes, and somewhere under the rubble, a child wonders what sin they committed to be born into this world.

Halqae Zikre Ilahi, Islamic Education and Instructiveness Assesions

SUNDAY

2 to 3pm : Halqae Zikr,
Darse Hadees,
Khutbaat-e-Ghouse al Azam
RA, Fiqahi Masail,
Tazkiratul Auwliya.

TUESDAY

Maghrib to Isha: Darse
Tasswuff, Question
Answers. At: Qanqahe
Shujaiya

EVERYDAY

After Maghrib Zikre Jahri.
At: Khanqahe Shujaiya

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THURSDAY

After Asar to Maghrib:
Halqae Zikre Jahri and
Waaz. At: Dargah Hazrat
Syedna Mir Shujaiddin
Hussain Qibla RA, Eidi
Bazar Hyderabad.

FRIDAY

2 to 3 pm : (Khitab) Speech
of Hazrat Maulana Syed
Shah Obaidullah Qadri Asif
Pasha Sahab Qibla At:
Jama Masjid Shujaiya
Charminar Hyd. Namaze
Juma at:3-15 pm. After
Namaz Majlis Darood wa
Zikr, Salaam Ba Huzoor
Sallalaho Alaihi Wa Sallam

SATURDAY

Deeni Tarbiyati Camp: After
Maghrib to Sunday Isha
(Zikr, Wazif, Basic Education
of Islam, Tazkiratul Awliya,
Muraqiba, Prays Namaze
Thajjud and Ishraq. At:
Khanqahe Shujaiya
Backside Jama Masjid
Shujaiya Charminar,
Hyderabad.

Humility, True Worship

I grew up in a dysfunctional family setting in the atmosphere of alcoholism, physical and emotional abuse that came from my father. Without a positive father figure, I was basically developing antisocial behavior and an inclination to violence.

At 13, I fell into association with similar children, but because they weren't as driven as I was, I quickly became bored with them. I began to hang out with the young adult type who welcomed my willingness to participate with no reservations in anything under the title of alcohol, drugs, crime, violence and racism.

The period of reform school (adolescent jail) began, and that environment also shaped me, refining crime inclination to a full time skill. After 3 years of this (reform period) I was released. I was a walking grenade.

Searching for a point of focus to release this rage I got associated with paramilitary racist group of young adults. I participated in regular assaults on people and engaged in various criminal activities. At 16, I found myself incarcerated serving a 6 1/2 year sentence in the California Youth Authority for robbery, assault and weapons charges. Immediately I feel in step with the gangs of "white supremacy" and cultivated my rage and anger into pure "hate" of all people who were not "Anglo Saxon."

I began correspondence with the KKK, and upon my release on parole, I was a full-fledged card carrying hate-monger. For the next 3-4 years, my activities were heavily involved in Klan cross-burnings, media appearances, night raids of beatings, property desecrations, etc. My parole was violated for possession of weapons and suspicion of robberies.

This last violation of parole, at the age of 20, the search for peace began. In a haze of anger and rage, I found myself stripped naked in solitary confinement with not even a mattress. Only me and a styrofoam cup. I began to review my past and the negatives, which brought me to this point of reduction to the lowest terms.

While I was there my daughter was born. I began

to assess my future. I thought of the many victims' lives I had affected. I could see myself in prison for life if this past were to continue into the future. I said to myself, "Clint, you must make a choice between this evil or a future good." It was clear to me there was no future (of longevity) in this evil. My family — mother, girlfriend, brothers — were afraid of me. I had become alienated from them. I began searching for a purity to purge the cancer of hate from inside me. I wanted to be loved and to love in a pure sense. I just didn't want to "hate" anymore.

I moved to Montana and was arrested for burglary. I was sentenced and served 2 1/2 years of a 5-year sentence, and was then released on parole, which I successfully completed.

I became involved with human rights groups and I started my own human rights group, C.H.E.R.E. (Children Escaping Racist Environments). But I was still involved in crime. I took part in possession of explosives and was arrested by the federal government and sentenced to 35 months in federal prison. Here, an African American offered to assist me in my cosmetic needs. He said he was a Muslim. I asked this brother for some literature on Islam.

I found out about the universality of it, how it transcends color, ethnicity and race. It sounded real and pure. It began to appeal to me. This brother invited me to Jumah (Friday) service. I was given a Qur'an, and as I read the translation, I felt the purity and truth of it. There was no hocus-pocus, no spookism, no mysticism, just plain, simple understanding of the "Truth." When I heard the Adhan (the call to prayer) I felt closeness to God that penetrated my heart and soul.

After some research and study of the Qur'an, I discovered its total infallibility, no contradictions in it. There are religions based on believing in certain sciences, multiple deities, the religion of 3 gods in one. I was a thinking man, and none of them made any logical sense to me.

Here was Islam, based on the belief in One God who created the creation itself out of nothing, and

the fact that this book I was reading (Qur'an) had not one vowel or language changed in over 1,400 years was a miracle in itself. Thus, I was sold on the oneness of God and the unity of Islam.

Christianity has and is still undergoing changes, in the Bible and in the Christian doctrines, and cannot even claim originality of the Bible. There is only one God and one religion, and religion is "submission" to the one God. This is the meaning of Islam.

After years of falsehood, half-truths, following others on the road, and then, from within a place (prison) where more than one million people are cast away, the same environment that once honed my anger and hate to a razor sharpness was now the place where Islam greeted me and proceeded to change me into a "servant of (the Source of) peace." Islam filled the spiritual void by teaching me my beginning and end, has given contentment, a peace, a serenity to me these words cannot adequately describe. My purpose is clear, my direction is straight.

Islam has, through its truth, taught me humility and the true worship of God. I had learned that from God we came and to God we must return.

On the last day, it will not matter if I was black or white, rich or poor, powerful or weak in power, nor will it matter about all mankind. Rather it will be about one's deeds good and bad that an individual is personally responsible for and will be punished and rewarded accordingly.

No one can die or be punished for my sins or be rewarded for the good I may do but me. I am responsible, I must answer when asked. I became aware of this truth and I declared openly, "There is no god but God and his last messenger was Prophet Muhammad-Ibn-Abdullah-Al-Mustafa." I have found "truth" in God, Who has (many) names or attributes, one attribute is Salam (peace). The Creator, Originator of the very existence of peace. There is no peace but the peace of God (Whom all praise is due).

Significance of The 6 Days Of Shawwal

Badiuddin Nizami Naqshabandi

Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari relates that Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) says: "Whoever fasts the month of Ramadan and then follows it with six days of fasting in the month of Shawwal, it will be as if he had fasted the year through." (Sahih Muslim, 1163) The month of Shawwal is singled out for the observance of extra fasts, since this month follows immediately after Ramadan. The six days of voluntary fasting are to the obligatory fast of Ramadan what the Sunnah prayers are to the obligatory prayers.

Thawban reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "The fast of Ramadan is like observing 10 months of fasting. Fasting six days of Shawwal is like observing two months of fasting. This together is like fasting throughout the year." (Sahih Ibn Khuzaymah, Sunan Al-Nasai Al-Kubra; authenticated by Al-Albani)

Al-Nawawi says: "Scholars have explained that it is like observing a year of fasting because the reward of one's good deeds are multiplied 10-fold. Therefore fasting the month of Ramadan is like fasting for 10 months and fasting six days in the month of Shawwal is like fasting for two months." (Sahih Muslim)

Virtues of fasting six days

1. Fasting 6 days in Shawwal after Ramadan gives the person the reward of fasting throughout the year.
2. The fasts of Sha'ban and Shawwal are like the Sunnah prayers that accompany the five obligatory prayers. Like the Sunnah prayers, these extra fasts cover up for the deficiencies in our performance of our obligatory worship. On the Day of Judgment, our voluntary acts of worship will compensate for the shortcomings in how we carried out our duties. Most of us have deficiencies in our observance of our Ramadan fasts and we need something to cover up for those deficiencies.
3. Our return to the habit of fasting right after Ramadan is a sign that our Ramadan fasts were accepted. When Allah accepts our worship, He blesses us to engage in further acts of piety. The saying goes: The reward of virtue is further virtue. Therefore, following one good deed with others like it is a sign that the first deed had been accepted by Allah. By contrast, if a person's good deed is followed by a sinful one, it is an indication that the first good deed might not have been accepted.
4. Those who observe the fast of Ramadan are given their recompense of the day of Eid Al-Fitr, the day when the fast is rewarded. Getting into the habit of fasting again soon thereafter is a means of giving thanks to Allah for the blessings that we have received. There is no blessing greater than forgiveness for one's sins, and we know that fast of Ramadan is recompensed with forgiveness of one's previous sins.

Indeed, Allah has commanded us to give thanks for the blessings of the Ramadan fast and to do so by making mention of Him and through other means of giving thanks. Allah says: "(He wants you) to complete the number of days, and to glorify Him in that He has guided you; and perchance you may give thanks." (Qur'an, 2:185)

It is known that some of the pious predecessors would try to get up at night to pray the Tahajjud prayer. When Allah blessed them to wake up and do so, they would fast the next day in thanks to Allah for blessing them to observe that prayer. Every blessing that Allah gives us is something that we have to be thankful about. Moreover, when Allah blesses us to show

thanks, this is a further blessing from Allah that deserves further thanks from us. If we show further thanks, this in turn is another blessing deserving our gratitude. There is no end to this and we can never be thankful enough. When we recognize that our thanks is never enough, this is the highest expression of gratitude we can give.

Al-Shafii, Ahmad bin Hanbal and Ishaq Al-Rahawayh hold that is preferable and recommended to fast six days in the month of Shawwal. This opinion has also been related from Ibn Abbas, Kab Al-Ahbar, Tawus, Al-Shabi, Maymun bin Mahran, and Ibn Al-Mubarak. They base their opinion upon the Hadith that we have discussed above.

Others have regarded fasting six days in the month of Shawwal to be something disliked. This view has been related from Malik and Abu Hanifah. They argue that it is feared from the general public that they might misconstrue fasting these six days to be something obligatory. They also see it as emulating the People of the Scripture to exceed the number of fasting days in the prescribed month of fasting.

However, these objections are spurious in the face of the clear statements of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that encourage this fast. If we were to abandon a Sunnah act on the grounds that we are exceeding what is obligatory, then we would have to abandon all recommended fasts, including the fast of Ashura and the fast of the middle of the month.

It has been related that Malik used to personally fast six days in Shawwal. Also, later Hanafi scholars decided that there is no objection to fasting these days.

The Maliki jurist Ibn Abd Al-Bar explains (Al-Istidhkar, 3:380): Malik did not know of the Hadith related by Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari, even though it is a Hadith from the people of Madinah. No one possesses all the knowledge held by others. Malik explained and clarified what he disliked about it. He was afraid that it would be added to the obligatory fast of Ramadan by the general public. Malik was extremely cautious when it came to matters of religion.

As for fasting six days in the month of Shawwal to seek extra blessings, as Thawban depicts it, this is something that Malik had no objection against — and Allah knows best — since fasting is a person's protective shield and its virtues are well-known. When we give up our food and drink for Allah's sake, it is a virtuous and good deed. Allah says: "O you who believe, bow down in Ruku and bow down in Sajdah, and worship your Lord and do good deeds, so that you achieve success." (Qur'an, 22:77)

There are various opinions about how to observe the fasts in Shawwal: 1. Some scholars hold the view that it is preferable to fast the six days in consecutive order, starting from the second day of Shawwal. This is the view of Al-Shafii and Ibn Al-Mubarak.

2. Others are of the opinion that it is preferable to fast the six days intermittently, spreading them out throughout the month of Shawwal. This is the position of Ahmad bin Hanbal and Waki.

3. Then there are those who hold the view that the days should all be postponed until later in the month and not close to the day of Eid, which is a time of celebration and feasting. They prefer fasting the three days in the middle of the month (Ayyam Al-Bid) along with the three days right before or after. This is the opinion of Mamar and Abd al-Razzaq. There is considerable flexibility in all of this. We can choose to follow any of these approaches that we wish.

‘EI’D IN THE HOUSE OF THE PROPHET (SAWS)

On a joyful day in Al-Madeenah An-Nabawiyyah, and on the morning of a happy ‘Eed, the house of the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) , witnessed the scenes of the celebration of ‘Eed under the supervision of the best of human beings: Muhammad, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) . Everyone joined in to celebrate the occasion of ‘Eed and all were keen to let the noble Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) , witness their celebrations because they loved him the most and held him the utmost esteem.

Concerning the house of the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) , it was narrated that ‘Aa’ishah, the Mother of the Believers may Allah be pleased with her said,

“The Messenger of Allah sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) came to my house while two girls weresinging beside me the songs of Bu’aath. He lay down and turned his face to the other side. Then Abu Bakr came and spoke to me harshly saying, ‘Musical instruments of the devil (referring to the tambourine) in the house of the Prophet sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) ?’ The Messenger of Allah sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) turned his face towards him and said: ‘Leave them.’ When Abu Bakr became inattentive, I signaled to those girls to go out and they left.”

Moreover, there is another example of celebration of the ‘Eed near the honorable room, let our Mother, ‘Aa’ishah may Allah be pleased with her tell us about it to complete the context of her previous speech. She narrated,

“It was the Day of ‘Eed, and the Abyssinians were playing with shields and spears; so either I requested the Prophet sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) or he asked me saying: ‘Would you like to see the display?’ I replied in the affirmative. Then the Prophet sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) let me stand behind him and my cheek was on his cheek and he was saying: ‘Carry on! O Banu Arfidah (title given to Abyssinians),until I got tired. The Prophet sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) asked me: ‘Are you satisfied (Is that sufficient for you)?’ I said, ‘Yes.’ Then he said to me: ‘So leave.’ [Al-Bukhari and Muslim in the Chapter of Al-‘Eedayn and the wording is that of Al-Bukhari]

In another place next to the room of the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) , there was another joyful celebration of ‘Eed performed by some children singing melodiousNasheeds (verses) praising the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) .

‘Aa’ishah may Allah be pleased with her said,

“Once the Messenger of Allah sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) was sitting. Then we heard confused sounds and boys’ voices, so he got up (to investigate the matter). He saw an Abyssinian woman dancing with the boys around her. He said: ‘O ‘Aa’ishah! Come and look,’ So I went and placed my chin on the shoulder of the Messenger of Allah sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) and began to watch her over his shoulder. He then said to me:‘Have you not had enough? Have you not had enough?’ I began to say, ‘No,’ in order that I might look where I was with him. ‘Umar then came along, and when the people ran away from her, the Messenger of Allah sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) said:‘I am looking at the devils of the jinn and humans fleeing from ‘Umar.’ Then she said,“I went back.” (At-Tirmithi)

If we would like to know some suchNasheeds and their words, they are in their language and even the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) , used to ask about their meanings. It was narrated in Al-Musnad andSaheeh Ibn Hibbaan that Anas ibn Maalik may Allah be pleased with him said, “The Abyssinians used to come before

the Messenger of Allah sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) dance and speak words that he did not understand. Then the Messenger of Allah sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) said: ‘What are they saying?’They said that they are saying, ‘Muhammad is a righteous slave (of Allah).’

Lessons scholars deduced from the Hadeeths mentioned above: It is permissible to be generous to your dependants during the days of ‘Eeds in a manner that pleases them and give them rest. In case a person does not like to have rest or amusement due to his old age, his status and prestige – although that may really befit him – others, especially his family and children and those who are still young love amusement, so he should give them the chance to satisfy these natural desires in accordance with the rules and limits ofSharee’ah (Islamic legislation). [Fat-h Al-Baari]

It also indicates that showing happiness during the days of‘Eeds is among the main principles and rituals of our religion. That is because when the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) , witnessed the singing of the two little girls, he did not stop them; rather, he approved of that. Moreover, when the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) , heard Abu Bakr may Allah be pleased with him wanting to stop them, he said to him: “Leave them,” and in another narration he said: “O Abu Bakr! There is a festival for every nation and this is our festival”, and in the narration reported in Al-Musnad, the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) , said: “Let the Jews know that our religion is full of ease and that I was sent with a tolerant religion of true monotheism.”

It also indicates that one should treat women gently and seek closeness to them because women have a natural love for kind feelings and gentle emotions. Such intimacy can be attained by satisfying her natural desires and fulfilling her usual needs as long as they are lawful. In fact, the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) , gave us the best example in this regard. His houses were full of kindness and gentleness with the Mothers of the Believers. The affectionate scene, in which the Mother of the Believers said, “My cheek was on his cheek” and the harmonious emotions and spiritual contact that it includes, clearly proves that‘Eed is a chance to heal any rift that may afflict the beautiful picture of marital life.

In fact, what the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) , did with ‘Aa’ishah, in spite of his noble status and great burdens, is a precious lesson for parents, brothers, and husbands. Hence, ‘Aa’ishah may Allah be pleased with her used to say, “You should understand the fact that young girls like to have fun.”That is to say, we should understand our desires for such things until we have had enough of it. After investigating the matter, it was concluded that denying children and wives their share of amusement and entertainment has adverse effects on their psychological and social lives.

Engaging in play and entertainment on ‘Eed should not make one forget the religious and moral teachings to which he has to adhere strictly. Entertainment and amusement do not justify doing forbidden actions, neglecting duties, and causing harm to people. ‘Aa’ishah may Allah be pleased with herpointed this out when she said,“Some Abyssinians were playing with spears and the Messenger of Allah sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) screened me (with his cloak) so that I could watch them,” and her description of the two girls that they were still very young and that they were not singers and that they were singing a Nasheed that is religiously permissible and suits the occasion of ‘Eed. ‘Eed in Islam is not an individual celebration; rather, it is collective. Thus, all individuals of the Islamic nation shall share the happiness of this occasion. Islam came to ensure happiness for all Muslims –

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REWARD CONTINUANCE GOALS, POST-RAMADAN

After a long-awaited blessed month, Ramadan 2017 has sadly ended, but the rewards need not stop there. Set yourself some post-Ramadan goals to keep you focused, and on the same level spiritually and in terms of strength.

READ A PORTION OF THE QUR'AN EVERY DAY: Reading the Qur'an every day is our duty as Muslims. It has been delivered to us as a guide, a way of living. Did you know that the rewards for reciting one letter from the Qur'an are ten-fold?

IMPROVE YOUR PRONUNCIATION OF THE QUR'AN: Practice reciting the Qur'an every day. Our recitation will improve considerably, and we will increase our status in Allah SWT's eyes. Our wealth in this world is not measured by what is contained in our wallets, but by how much we practice our book, our guide to Paradise. It is, after all, for our own betterment. **RECITE NAFL (OPTIONAL) PRAYERS REGULARLY:** The benefits of praying Nafl (Sunnah) prayers are endless. They are voluntary prayers and classed as an additional blessing. They keep shaytaan (devil) further away from our homes and bring us closer to Allah SWT.

PERFORM WUDHU BEFORE YOU GO TO BED:

Death is a given, and nobody knows when their time will come. Hence, it is important to try and stay in wudhu wherever possible. He who sleeps in a state of purity has the Angels watching over him throughout the night, asking for forgiveness to Allah SWT, on their behalf. Should we pass away through the night whilst we are in a state of purity, we shall die a faithful Muslim.

KEEP OPTIONAL FASTS ON MONDAYS AND THURSDAYS:

The rewards for good deeds during these fasts are multiplied by ten. The significance of fasting on a Monday is that it was the day our Prophet Muhammad, Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam, was born, and also marks the day the revelation was sent to Him. It is said that Prophet Muhammad, Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam, Himself used to fast every Monday and Thursday. These are known as a days where our deeds are shown to Allah SWT, and our deeds are indeed purer whilst we are fasting.

BE MINDFUL OF YOUR SPEECH: Ultimately, when we fast, we do not only refrain from food and drink, but also from bad language, backbiting and other sinful acts as well. We can continue this post-Ramadan and attempt to stay away from such language and any other acts, which could have an impact on the rewards we have strived for.

VISIT THE SICK: Visiting the sick was a practice of Prophet Muhammed, Sallallahu Alayhi Wa Sallam. It is a duty of ours, towards our brothers and sisters in Islam. It is said that the rewards for visiting a sick person are extortionate. Allah SWT assigns 70,000 angels to those Muslims who visit the sick in the morning, and 70,000 angels in the evening – each Angel praying for your mercy. Those who voluntarily visit the sick will also have a garden built for them in Jannah. **KEEP REGULAR DAILY INVOCATIONS:** It is of the utmost importance to keep reciting our daily supplications, those of which are obligatory

and non-obligatory. Duas will only strengthen our imaan (faith), both in this world and the hereafter, and will serve as our shield on the Day of Judgement. **TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY THROUGH HEALTHY EXERCISE AND EATING:**

Our physical appearance and body are gifted to us by Allah SWT. It is, therefore, our duty to take good care of it. We should stay away from harmful or toxic substances, eat healthily, exercise, and keep fit – both internally and externally. Our body is the property of Allah SWT after all, so it is our duty to look after it, and not abuse it.

GIVE REGULAR CHARITY OR VOLUNTEER TO HELP A LOCAL CAUSE:

Charity (zakat) forms one of the Five Pillars of Islam. Whilst Zakat is an obligation upon Muslims, sadqah is voluntary. It is this voluntary act that will determine and reveal our true colour in front of Allah SWT on the Day of Judgement. Together, our wealth could remove the calamity that is poverty from this whole earth entirely. Had Allah SWT desired, would He not have given wealth to each and all of His followers? He didn't for a reason. There is reason behind everything. This is our test as Muslim brothers and sisters, to help our fellow brothers and sisters, and seek pleasure from giving rather than taking. Allah SWT dislikes greed and loves generosity. Furthermore, if an act of charity is done in a way that the needy continue to benefit, the giver shall continue to reap the rewards for their charity – even from within the grave. A few examples of this form of charity are Dig a Well project and child sponsorship, which could include sponsoring the education of a child, enabling them to pursue a career and build a future for themselves and their communities.

There are many, many forms of charity, like time (volunteering) or donating funds; be it for someone's today, for someone's tomorrow or someone's after. Helping or teaching someone is also an act of charity.

See, good deeds are not limited to Ramadan. Ramadan teaches us to spiritually enable ourselves to further our good deeds. So let's continue our good deeds and attempt to keep ourselves on the blessed path, towards Allah SWT's happiness.

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from our little children to our relatives and neighbors. This can be clearly manifested by the Sunnah (tradition) of the Prophet, sallallahu alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) , when he ensured food, which is considered one of the essential elements of happiness, for all members of the Islamic society on the morning of 'Eed Al-Fitr and sacrificed on the day of 'Eed Al-Adh-ha. As a matter of fact, no other system in the world as a whole can ensure this amount of food for all people and and the integration of the poor as the Islamic Sharee'ah has done.

Noble and kind Muslims realize that satisfying the needs of people and alleviating poverty are things that accompany every joyful occasion. Thus, 'Eed includes the meanings of happiness, mercy, and kind and sincere affection. Moreover, history continues to record the attitudes of noble Muslims whose happiness could be complete except by satisfying the needs of the poor and the needy around them. They give them food, clothing and a great deal of money. 'Eed – with its great scenes and signs – is a golden opportunity to call non-Muslims to Islam and present to them the true nature of Islam through compliments and the Islamic courteous behavior which Allah The Almighty ordered us to adopt in His saying (which means):

"Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes – from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly." (Quran 60:8) 'Eed in Islam is a great integrated ritual. It satisfies both the spiritual and physical needs. 'Eed crowns the great and significant rituals of worship that Allah The Almighty has enjoined in the month of Ramadan and the months of Hajj. These are the needs of the soul: Allah The Almighty Says (what means): "Say, "In the Bounty of Allah and in His Mercy – in that let them rejoice." (Quran 10:58)

Physical needs and psychological desires that seek entertainment, amusement and play are also satisfied on the occasion of 'Eed in Islam. Therefore, Islam forbade observing fast on the days of 'Eed as the happiness of the one who witnesses 'Eed will not be complete unless he could eat or drink. What can refer to achieving such aims is what Anas may Allah be pleased with him narrated saying "The people during Jaahiliyyah used to have two days in every year when they would amuse themselves.

Uttar Pradesh: Passports, Licences can be cancelled, Meerut Police warn Muslims

In Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, the police have imposed strict restrictions on offering Eid prayers on the streets, warning that anyone violating the rule will face legal action. The authorities have emphasized that those who break the law could face criminal charges, and their passports may be canceled. This move comes ahead of the Muslim festival of Eid, which is expected to be celebrated on March 31 or April 1. Meerut City Superintendent of Police, Ayush Vikram Singh, urged the Muslim community to celebrate Eid peacefully and to avoid offering prayers on roads. He advised worshippers to either pray at their local mosques or attend the Idgah in a timely manner.

Singh further clarified that the police would not tolerate any prayers on the streets under any circumstances, and strict measures would be taken against violators. He stated that those caught praying on roads could face confiscation of their passports, the cancellation of their licenses, and difficulties in obtaining a No Objection Certificate (NOC) for future passport or license applications. To ensure compliance, authorities plan to monitor the situation using CCTV cameras, drones, and local intelligence.

This decision has sparked controversy, with many questioning the motives behind such strict measures. Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) chief and Union Minister condemned the action, calling it "Policing towards Orwellian 1984!" The district's Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Vipin Tada, also warned that anyone spreading rumors or inciting unrest on social media would face severe consequences. He emphasized that authorities were closely monitoring social media platforms and would take firm action against anyone attempting to disturb communal harmony. Additionally, special security arrangements have been put in place in sensitive areas that have previously experienced tensions.

In the previous year, over 200 individuals were booked for allegedly offering Namaz on the roads during Eid. This year, the police are taking extra precautions to prevent such incidents. Similarly, in Sambhal, another district in Uttar Pradesh, local authorities have issued directives prohibiting collective prayers on residential rooftops and streets.

Sambhal SP Krishan Kumar Bishnoi reiterated that no prayers would be allowed on the roads, and collective prayers at houses were also banned. However, residents were encouraged to offer prayers at their homes, provided that they ensure no untoward incidents occur. The police actions have drawn sharp criticism from some political figures and social activists. Aazad Samaj Party MP Chandra Shekhar Aazad accused the police of making inflammatory statements about Muslims to gain publicity. He argued that the police do not have the authority to cancel passports and suggested that Muslims in Uttar Pradesh would soon need permission for even the most basic actions, including breathing.

He also criticized the authorities' previous actions, such as sending survey teams to mosques, and said that Muslims were not asking for symbolic gifts but for the rights granted to them by the system. He emphasized that Namaz is a short prayer, lasting only around 10 minutes, and that people should be allowed to pray without facing unnecessary restrictions. The debate over these restrictions highlights a deeper conversation about religious freedoms and the role of the state in regulating public space during religious observances. While authorities argue that these measures are necessary to maintain order and prevent disruptions, many feel that they infringe on the basic rights of individuals to practice their religion freely. — With Agencies Inputs

Debating Aurangzeb: Learning from history or avenging the past

Since the demolition of Babri mosque by RSS Combine(1992), history has started dominating the social space. A particular version of history which looks at history through the Kings, their religion, is being imposed on the social common sense. This too is being done in a selective way. Taking a step further now the communal forces are linking it up with the nationalism. Interestingly the history of era of Kingdoms is being linked to Nationalism, forgetting the fact that Nation state is a modern phenomenon and the concept of India emerged as a parallel to the struggle against colonial powers.

The communal forces are presenting the Hindu kings who fought against Muslim rulers as being presented as patriots and great nationalists, as national icons. Earlier Nathuram

Godse, who put three bullets in the chest of Mahatma Gandhi; in his, "May it please your honour", the book based on his testimony in the court, while commenting on Mahatma Gandhi, said that was a pigmy in contrast to the Nationalism of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj or Maharana Pratap. Now those belonging to his ideology are reiterating the same in a more intensified form. UP Chief minister Adityanath Yogi recently launched a sharp attack "on those glorifying historical invaders, calling it an act of treason that 'new India' will not tolerate. The firebrand BJP leader's remarks came amid rising demands for the removal of Mughal ruler Aurangzeb's tomb in Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar district."

On similar lines Dattatray Hosabale, the Sarkaryavah (General Secretary) of RSS went on to question, "if ionizing someone who was against the ethos of India was right. He asked why those who advocate Ganga-Jamuni culture (fusion of Hindu and Islamic cultural elements) never thought of idolizing Dara Shikoh, the elder brother of Aurangzeb who is said to be a pioneer of such an idea."

All this is being said in the din of presenting Aurangzeb as an invader, cruel villain. Let's deconstruct the whole statement. Who were invaders, was Aurangzeb an invader? The simple fact is Aurangzeb had inherited the empire from his father, Shahjahan. The dynasty began with Babar, who was ruling in Kabul Rana Sanga sent him a letter to come to defeat Ibrahim Lodi, the ruler of Delhi. As it happened Babar landed up fighting with Rana Sanga and Ibrahim Lodi to rule over Delhi Empire.

Even before Babar, we had Greeks, Kushans, Huns, and Shakas who invaded from North West and became part of the populace here. Mughals were not the only rulers who came here; there were Khilji, Ghulam, and Gazanavid who have come after defeating the local kings. India in the present form was not there, a nation ruled from Delhi. The Kings were fighting with each other for power and pelf, while the interaction of different people Shakas, Huns, Kushans and Ahoms on the East created the mixed, syncretism prevalent here.

Who is the icon of Indian Nation? Yogi and Godse present Shivaji and Rana Pratap as the national icons. Shivaji had many Muslim Generals and officers in his administration. He fought against Aurangzeb, whose army was led by Mirza Raja Jaising. Rana Pratap's Haldighati bravery is worth eulogizing, but does it represent fight for Indian Nationalism? His army had 3000 soldiers, 1000 of which were Pathans commanded by Hakim Khan Sure. Akbar on the other side had Mansingh as his Commander in Chief? The baattle was not on the issue of Nationalism, it was for Mansab. Even if Hindu Nationalists want to present those who fought against Muslims as National icons, the story is more complex, it was Kings versus kings not Hindu versus Muslims!