



A general view of the Holy Mosque at Makkah

Islam, Saudi Arabia and Terrorism

MUCH talk in the media currently connects Islam with terrorism. The more some culprits claim they are 'true' Moslems the louder this talk in the media becomes.

Recent explosions in the Saudi cities of Riyadh and Alkhobar have added to the din. They were presented by the media as the ultimate proof that Islam in itself is a religion of terrorism and that Moslems do not hesitate to use violence against peoples of different faiths, cultures or systems.

Those who are trying to sell this image claim that Islam incites violence and encourages terrorism. Moslem perpetrators of terrorist acts, professing to be serving the cause of Islam, have vindicated these charges. Great indeed is the favour they have done to those who want to tarnish Islam.

Apart from those who deliberately misrepresent Islam, there are millions across the globe, particularly in Western societies, who have simply misunderstood Islam and its alleged connection with terrorism. The latter are neither overt nor covert enemies of Islam.

They basically do not know what Islam is. They have been deceived by media propaganda: a continued, systematic and well-orchestrated barrage against Islam is backed by powerful interests and unlimited resources.

The intention is not to disclaim the responsibility for much of the prevailing misconceptions. Many Moslems have failed to tell the world the truth

about their creed and have failed to convincingly and objectively refute charges of "terrorism." Worst still, terrorists brandishing the name of Islam continue to paint a repugnant image of the religion for the world.

Thus, we are facing extremism on two sides who act deliberately to serve their own political, social or simply financial ends. The two extremes have helped to widen the gulf between Moslems and the West thereby creating a climate of confrontation that can only lead to a damaging situation for them.

Whilst endeavouring to explain the stance of Islam on violence and terrorism, we must first differentiate between the act of terrorism and mere struggles to achieve legitimate rights. Those who resist aggression, struggle to regain their usurped rights or fight for their lives, honour and property should not be labeled as 'terrorists'. In cases such as these, it is the aggressors and usurpers who should be labeled, condemned and punished accordingly.

Decent men and women everywhere need to unite together to end aggression. Terrorism — as defined by experts — means "all systematic acts of violence and threats which cause fear and terror, such as murder, assassination, kidnapping, plane hijack, explosion and disturbance which are aimed at achieving political ends."

Those who know the core principles of Islam, its social teachings and moral imperatives would realise how far re-

moved from the notion of terrorism the faith is. The word 'Islam' itself is derived from 'salam', which means peace and submission to the Lord of the universe. To accept Islam is to live by higher moral standards, and this includes living in peace both within one's own society and among others.

Laid down by the Qur'an and exemplified by the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), this spirit of peace should be reflected in a Moslem's interaction with those in his environment. Obviously, this imperative is all the more important in man's dealings with his fellow men, irrespective of religion, colour or nationality. Islamic teachings promote a "culture of tolerance" among individuals and societies. The Qur'an declares that people were created to be different and will continue to be different, believing in varying ideologies and having different temperaments. They cannot be the same. It is therefore natural for there to be different ideologies, opinions and aspirations.

The Qur'an states that faith should be based on persuasion rather than compulsion. "Let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject (it)". (Qur'an 18:29). It is categorically asserted that there can be "no compulsion in religion" (2:256). To settle differences, Islam directs its believers to seek peaceful, tolerant discussions free from bigotry and intransigence. Dissent should not be silenced. Controversial ideological differences settled through discussion should continue but without allowing wielders of world power to impose their views on others. Leave it to be decided by Allah on the Day of Judgement, is the advice of the Qur'an, removing any sense of unease to give way to a convivial atmosphere, regardless of differences in religion, cultures and opinion.

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Saudi Arabia's Foreign Aid Programme

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wheat, 1,700 tons of maize and 1,150 tons of oil to Guinea; SR 4.66 million, 1065 tons of wheat, 1,200 tons of maize and 750 tons of oil to Guinea-Bissau; and SR 8.87 million, 1,650 tons of wheat, 1,755 tons of maize and 1,650 tons of oil to Mali. Other states that received similar aids were: Gambia, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Chad.

Support to Palestinians: The Kingdom's support to the causes of the Palestinians is well known. It has given more than SR 1.5 billion to the PLO since 1979. The PLO also received SR 3.2 billion indirectly from the Kingdom which also provided all expenses for the repair of the Dome of the Rock on Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem.

Propagation of Islam: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have

been playing a pioneering role in the propagation of Islam. The Kingdom has supported the construction of over 1,500 mosques, 250 Islamic centres, 1000 schools, 250 vocational institutes and a number of universities in different parts of the world. It also sends teachers and Islamic propagators abroad and provides educational scholarships to Muslim students.

King Fahd Mosque in Islamabad and its annexed university are considered one of the largest Islamic projects undertaken by the Kingdom abroad. The mosque, an outstanding monument in Pakistani capital Islamabad was opened in 1988. The mosque accommodates approximately 10,000 worshippers at a time. The project, including the university, was completed at a cost

of SR 130 million.

Other major Islamic projects financed by the Kingdom include King Faisal Mosque in Chad (SR 60 million), King Faisal Mosque in Sharjah (SR 32 million), King Fahad Islamic Centre in Maldives (SR 7 million), the Kharfakan Mosque in Dubai (SR 2.3 million), and Um Al-Hasn Mosque in Bahrain (SR 2 million). Besides, Saudi Arabia had given SR 1.8 million for the construction of the Islamic centre in Tokyo. SR 7 million for the Saudi-Indonesia Islamic centre and SR 1.17 million for the mosques in the People's Republic of China. The Kingdom constructed the Banjul Mosque in Gambia at a cost of SR 11.25 million, Bama Masjid in Mali at a cost of SR 23.75 million and the Islamic Solidarity Mosque in Somalia at a cost of SR 5.5 million.



King Fahd International Stadium in Riyadh

OUR HEARTIEST FELICITATIONS TO THE BROTHERLY PEOPLE & THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA ON THEIR NATIONAL DAY



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On the 65th National Day of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia we wish progress and happiness of the Government and the Peoples of the Kingdom and desire the fraternal relationship between Government and the Peoples of both the countries will be consolidated further in coming years.

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and Assisted Projects

We extend our heartiest felicitations to His Highness, **The King Fahad Bin Abdul Aziz**, The Government, and the brotherly people of Saudi Arabia on their glorious **National Day**



Custodian of the two holy Mosques, King Fahad Bin Abdul Aziz



Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz, The Crown Prince and Deputy Premier and Head of the National ground



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