



**AN ABRIDGED
VERSION FROM THE
LARGE MAIN BOOK ON**

LEADERSHIP IN ISLAM

**THE ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP AND
FOLLOWER-SHIP REQUIREMENTS
IN ISLAM, AS REPORTED FROM
THE QUR'AN AND SUNNAH**

**Prof. Sani Abubakar Lugga, MFR, FNIM
The 5th Waziri of Katsina**

This Book is an Abridged Version from a Bigger Book on “Leadership In Islam” by the same Author. The Book is meant to provide a brief guide to Muslims on what Leadership encompasses in Islam. Based on the provisions on Leadership in the Qur’an and the Sunnah, every person occupies a position of Leadership from the Family level to the levels of Communities and Nations. This Book, however lays emphasis on National Leadership from the Wards to the Federal levels, Politically, Traditionally, Religiously, in the Private Sector, etc.

The Book begins with what Islam is, who is a Muslim and what Leadership in Islam entails. It introduces the concept of Leadership in Islam from family levels to national and international levels. The Book states the Islamic Government System, the Modes of Electing or Selecting a Leader, the 12 Basic Qualities of a Good Leader and the Obligations of Leaders and Followers. Also in this Book are the 15 Fundamental Rights of Citizens in Islam, which are more laudable than those provided by the United Nations Civil Rights. Indeed, this Book clarifies how a Muslim Leader shall handle Leadership in an Islamic State or in a Non-Islamic State. The weight of Leadership is enormous and those who aspire to lead must be prepared to account to posterity in this World and to Allah (SWT) in the Hereafter.

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LEADERSHIP IN ISLAM

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**NOTES ON
ABBREVIATIONS USED
IN THIS BOOK**

(SWT) Subhanahu wa Ta'ala - Pure and Most High be He - used for Allah

(SAW) Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam - Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him - used for Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) Peace and Blessings of Allah upon him, used for Prophet Muhammad

(AS) □ Alaihis Salaam –Peace be upon him – used for other Prophets of Allah

(RLA) Radhiyal Lahu Anhu or Anha - May Allah be pleased with him or her; used for Companions of Prophets

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَغِيثُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ
سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا
صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

Assalamu Alaikum

INTRODUCTION

My special gratitude is to Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, who gave me the strength, the health, the endurance, the wisdom and the intellectual ability to undertake the writing and the publication of this Great Book.

This Book on “**Leadership In Islam**” is meant to provide a brief guide to Muslims on what Leadership encompasses in Islam. Based on the provisions on Leadership in the Glorious Qur’an and the Sunnah, every person occupies a position of Leadership from the minute Family life to Religious and Mundane matters and to the Communities or Nations. This Book, however gives emphasis on National Leadership from the Wards to the Federal levels, Politically, Traditionally, Religiously, etc.

I collected and collated all the texts, typed them myself and personally edited and/or wrote the commentary on the Qur’an Verses and the Hadith in this publication. I therefore take full responsibility for the publication and pray to Allah (SWT) to forgive me for any error(s), as we all err. I wish to humbly appeal to all those who notice any mistake(s) in this publication to please correct them and inform the publishers for incorporation into future prints.

Lastly, but by all means not the least, I extend my love and profound gratitude to my wives, Hajiya Binta, Hajiya Hadiya and Hajiya Azhar, my children and grandchildren; and other members of my family for their continued obedience and respect; and for their patience and encouragement. May Allah bless all of you, *ameen, summa ameen*.

I pray to Allah to have mercy and to bless the souls of our late parents, Alhaji Abubakar Lugga, the Sarkin Dawa of Katsina and Hajiya A'isha; and the souls of my late wife Hajiya Ummah and my late daughter Fatimah. We pray to Allah (SWT) that we shall all join them in Paradise. Ameen.

May Allah (SWT) forgive our mistakes and our sins and may He accept this work from me and by His Mercy and Grace make *Jannat Al-Firdaus* our final Heavenly abode, *ameen*.

Wassalamu Alaikum

Dr Sani Abubakar Lugga

The Waziri of Katsina

Ramadan, 1435 Hijrah (July, 2014)

CHAPTER ONE

WHAT IS ISLAM; AND WHO IS A MUSLIM?

The Time Before Islam

The time before the advent of the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (SAW), was generally referred to as the *jahiliyya* period (i.e. the period of ignorance). Those dark days were characterised by object worshipping, injustices, diseases of the soul, backwardness and other vices. Allah sent Prophets (AS) to their communities to warn them of the consequences of their evil actions and to call them to worship one God, Allah (SWT), and to do good thereby enjoying the life in this world and preparing for that of the hereafter. Allah's wrath was unleashed on those who ignored the warnings of their Prophets and continued to worship objects and institute injustice. However, Allah never punished a people until He had sent a messenger to them and they reject the message, as Allah (SWT) explained in the Qur'an:-

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ الْقُرَى حَتَّى يَبْعَثَ فِي أُمِّهَا رَسُولًا يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِنَا وَمَا كُنَّا مُهْلِكِي الْقُرَى إِلَّا وَأَهْلُهَا ظَالِمُونَ

And never will your Lord destroy the towns (populations) until He sends to their mother town a Messenger reciting to them Our Verses. And never would We destroy the towns unless the people thereof are zalimun (polytheists, wrongdoers, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah, oppressors and tyrants). (Qur'an 28:59).

Let us look at a few examples of those communities on whom Allah's wrath was unleashed due to their transgression.

1. The Jews rejected the message of Prophet Musa (AS) and callously insisted that they must be shown Allah (SWT) openly

before they could believe. They were punished by thunder and lightning. Allah says,

يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَى أَكْبَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالُوا أَرَنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّاعِقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ

The people of the Scripture (Jews) ask you (Muhammad) to cause a book to descend upon them from heaven. Indeed, they asked Musa (Moses) for even greater than that, when they said: "Show us Allah in public", but they were struck with thunderclap and lightning for their wickedness. (Qur'an 4:153).

2. The people of Prophet Nuhu (AS) were destroyed by the great flood when they refused his message. Allah says,

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَجَبَّيْنَاهُ وَمَنْ مَّعَهُ فِي الْفُلْكِ وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ خَلَائِفَ وَأَعْرَفْنَا الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُنْذَرِينَ

*They denied him, but We delivered him, and those with him in the ship, and We made them generations replacing one after another, while We drowned those who belied Our **ayat** (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.). Then see what was the end of those who were warned. (Qur'an 10:73).*

3. The Pharaoh and his people rejected the calls by Prophet Musa (AS) and Prophet Harun (AS) and Allah initially tested them with draught. Allah says,

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ بِالسِّنِينَ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ

And indeed We punished the people of Fir'aun (Pharaoh) with years of drought and shortness of fruits (crops), that they might remember (take heed). (Qur'an 7:130)

4. When the Pharaoh and his people persisted in their evil ways Allah further tested them with more calamities as follows:-

فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الطُّوفَانَ وَالْجَرَادَ وَالْقُمَّلَ وَالضَّفَادِعَ وَالدَّمَ آيَاتٍ مَّفْصَلَاتٍ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِينَ

*So We sent on them: the flood, the locusts, the lice, the frogs, and the blood (as a succession of) manifest signs, yet they remained arrogant, and they were of those people who were **mujrimūn** (criminals, polytheists and sinners). (Qur'an 7:133).*

5. Finally Allah caused the Pharaoh and his people to be drowned. Allah says,

فَأَنْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا

*So We took retribution from them. We drowned them in the sea, because they belied Our **ayāt** (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.). (Qur'an 7:136).*

6. The people of the land of Sodom in Palestine rejected the call by Prophet Lut (AS) to stop sodomy and other homosexual (gay) relations and they were accordingly punished by Allah (SWT).

فَلَمَّا جَاءَ أَمْرُنَا جَعَلْنَا عَالِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا حِجَارَةً مِّن سِجِّيلٍ مَّنْضُودٍ

So when Our Commandment came, We turned (the towns of Sodom in Palestine) upside down, and rained on them stones of baked clay, in a well-arranged manner one after another. (Qur'an 11:82).

The Advent Of Islam

For several millennia, the people of the world lived in abject ignorance with leaders perpetuating injustice and the citizens following them blindly. Life was characterised with idol worshipping, alcoholism, adultery and fornication, illiteracy, diseases of the body and the soul, etc. The rich and the powerful held sway while the poor and the weak were made victims of all

sorts of exploitation and atrocities. Ladies were regarded as articles of pleasure and not as partners of men. At one point (particularly in Arabia) female babies were buried alive because only male children were wanted! The world was made a place for the survival of the fittest.

As the world was in that state of confusion, Allah (SWT) in His infinite mercy and wisdom, sent a redeemer, a messiah and a messenger of peace, progress and prosperity, Prophet Muhammad (SAW). As all other Prophets (AS) were sent to specific nations, tribes or communities, so was Muhammad (SAW) sent as a mercy to mankind, jinn and all that exists. Allah says,

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

And We have sent you (O Muhammad) not but as a mercy for the `alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists). (Qur'an 21:107)

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا

Blessed be He Who sent down the criterion (of right and wrong, i.e. the Qur'an) to His servant (Muhammad) that he may be a warner to the `alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists). (Qur'an 25:1).

The Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (SAW), was born in Mecca in the “**year of the elephant**” that corresponds with 570 AC. The year was termed as the “year of the elephant” because it was the year King Abrahah of Yemen went to Mecca with a view to destroying the Holy Ka’aba Mosque, using a fleet of elephants. Muhammad (SAW) received the first revelation of Prophet-hood and Messenger-hood in the year 610 AC. He migrated on the first year of the Hijra (AH) from Mecca to Medina on 12th Rabi’u

Awwal (September 24th 622 AC). From there, he spread the message of Islam far and wide.

The **Holy Qur'an** (from Allah SWT), the **Sunnah** (words, acts and actions) of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and all other genuine teachings of Islam clearly state the rules and regulations of *ibadat* (worship) and *mu'amalat* (day-to-day dealings with each other). Islamic provisions cover the lives of Muslims from birth to death. They cover individual, family and community relations. They also cover National and International relations, be they economic, political or social.

Islam provides how to tend pregnancy and how to receive a newborn baby. Islam has provisions for childcare up to puberty and old age. It has provisions for social and economic interactions between individuals, communities and Nations. Islam provides for such minute things as how to eat, drink, sleep, go to the toilet and bury the dead. Islam has provisions on how to rear domestic animals and birds and how to hunt wild ones. Islam has given men, women and children their rights and obligations. Islam prescribes the rights of animals and birds to such minute details as how to slaughter them without inflicting unnecessary pain. Islam mentions human-to-jinn relations. No other religion has made such provisions for mankind, jinn, animals and birds. Who then would doubt that Islam is the only religion in this world that covers the *`alamin* (mankind, jinn and all that exists)?

What is Islam?

The Arabic root word of Islam is “*silm*” which literally translates to “peace”. Simply put, Islam means “peace with Allah” that is, “to totally submit to Allah’s rules and regulations as contained in the Qur’an and the Sunnah, to worship Allah and to handle other day-

to-day activities of the world as ordained by Allah through Prophet Muhammad (SAW)”. This simplified definition relates the fact that all the other Prophets (AS) of Allah and their followers in their respective communities, nations or tribes, practiced Islam as ordained during their times. Allah (SWT) says,

شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ اللَّهُ يَجْتَبِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُنِيبُ

*He (Allah) has ordained for you the same religion (Islamic Monotheism) which He ordained for Nuh (Noah), and that which We have revealed to you (Oh Muhammad), and that which We ordained for Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses) and `Isa (Jesus), saying you should establish religion (i.e. to do what it orders you to do practically) and make no divisions in it (religion) (i.e. various sects in religion). Intolerable for the **mushrikun** (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah) is that (Islamic Monotheism) to which you (Oh Muhammad) call them. Allah chooses for Himself whom He wills, and guides unto Himself who turns to Him in repentance and in obedience. (Qur'an 42:13)*

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) came as the final Prophet with a final message to the whole world, which is the message of the only chosen religion by Allah, the religion of Islam. Allah says,

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

Truly, the religion with Allah is Islam. (Qur'an 3:19)

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers. (Qur'an 3:85).

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

*It is He Who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islam), to make it superior over all religions even though the **mushrikun** (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah) hate (it). (Qur'an 9:33).*

The finality of the message of Islam as brought by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was related by Allah in one of the last relayed verses of the Holy Qur'an as follows,

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. (Qur'an 5:3).

Therefore it is important to obey Allah's instructions to be **complete Muslims** in worship and in other day-to-day matters. Allah says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَافَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ

*O you who believe! Enter perfectly (wholly) into Islam (by obeying all the rules and regulations of the Islamic religion) and follow not the footsteps of **Shaitan** (Satan). Verily, he is to you a plain enemy. (Qur'an 2:208).*

Who is a Muslim?

A Muslim is the one who believes in the Five Pillars of Islam in his heart and is guided by them in his actions.

Ibn Umar (RLA) reported that, the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:

بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ عَلَى أَنْ يُعْبَدَ اللَّهُ وَيُكْفَرَ بِمَا دُونَهُ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ وَحَجِّ الْبَيْتِ وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ

Islam is built upon five: to worship Allah and to disbelieve in what is worshiped besides him, to establish prayer, to give charity, to perform Hajj pilgrimage to the House, and to fast the Month of Ramadan (Sahih al-Bukhari)

This Hadith emphasises the five Pillars upon which Islam is built, as follows: (1) There is no deity worthy of worship but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; (2) To establish Prayers; (3) To give Charity-Zakah; (4) To Fast the Month of Ramadan, and (5) To perform Hajj (pilgrimage) to the House of Allah (Mecca) if one has the means. Indeed, these five Pillars have been amply provided for in the Glorious Qur'an and amply demonstrated in the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and in the Sunnah of the Guided Companions. In Islam, it is important to recognise and acknowledge one's duties and obligations towards the Faith. The Five Pillars of Islam are the foundations of the obligations of a Muslim. These well-known Islamic Pillars comprise Shahadah, Salah, Zakah, Sawm and Hajj. It is important to understand what these foundational principles actually mean.

1. What is Shahadah?

Shahadah means declaration of Faith and dedication to the belief that there is only one God, Allah (SWT), and that He sent His

Messenger, Prophet Muhammad (SAW), to guide humankind. As the first of the Five Pillars of Islam, Shahadah is one of the most important and acts as the fundamental step towards submission to Allah (SWT) and announcing one's intention as a true follower of the Islamic Faith. Reverts to Islam are also required to take Shahadah as their first act of joining Islam. This serves as an affirmation of their commitment to the Faith. To take Shahadah, intent is important. One must recite the declaration sincerely with acceptance with the heart and mind. It is important to know what the words actually mean while taking Shahadah. Allah (SWT) says in the Qur'an about true submission: *"And who can be better in Religion than the one who submits his himself to Allah (i.e. follows Allah's Religion of Islamic Monotheism); and he is a Muhsin (a good-doer)."* (al-Nisa 4:125)

2. What is Salah?

Salah is the second Pillar of Islam and the act of Five Obligatory Daily Prayers that are observed five times a day at set times. The five prayer times fall between dawn and midnight, although the times depend on location in the World and the time of the year. The Prayers in order are as follows:

1. **Fajr** – starts at dawn and ends at sunrise.
2. **Zuhr** – mid-day, starts once the sun has passed the highest point and lasts until Asr.
3. **Asr** – begins in the late afternoon and ends a little before the sun begins to set.
4. **Maghrib** - starts just after sunset once the sun dips below the horizon.
5. **Isha** – starts after Maghrib time (the disappearance of red afterglow) and lasts until midnight.

3. What is Zakah?

Zakah is an obligatory charity in Islam. It is a way of worshipping Allah (SWT) by giving what He has ordained to those eligible in the light of the Qur'an. Every year, Muslims pay a 2.5% share of their held wealth (cash, gold, and silver) over a certain threshold of grains and other specified foodstuff to help the less fortunate. Zakah purifies wealth and helps it grow literally and metaphorically, according to Islamic principles. Donating from one's wealth protects a person from problems, and Allah increases his provision because of his charity giving. The Prophet (SAW) said: *Wealth never decreases because of charity.* (Muslim) Allah (SWT) says in the Qur'an: *The example of those who spend in the way of Allah is just like a grain that produced seven ears, each ear having a hundred grains, and Allah multiplies (the reward) for whom He wills. Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing.* (2:261) Zakah is a means of salvation from the heat of the day of resurrection. The Prophet (SAW) said: *Every man will be in the shade of his charity on the Day of Resurrection.* (Sahih al-Jaami)

4. What is Sawm?

The term Sawm means to fast. Fasting during the holy Month of Ramadan is more than simply avoiding food. It is the practice of discipline and abstaining from temptations and bad habits. From dawn to sunset, able Muslims should avoid food and drink, sexual activity, smoking, intoxication, and any impure thoughts. Throughout Ramadan and the rest of the year, believers strive hard to refrain from acts of evil and causing harm to others. *The length of the fasting day* varies according to daylight hours in a particular region, as Sawm starts just before dawn and ends at sunset. There are two meals the Believers eat in Ramadan – *Suhoor and Iftar*.

Suhoor is the pre-dawn meal and is highly encouraged to be eaten before beginning the Fast. Iftar is the meal eaten just after sunset at the time of breaking the fast.

Ramadan is an incredibly auspicious Month in which the initial *Verses of the Holy Qur'an* were revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as a guide for all humanity. An important *purpose of fasting is to attain taqwa* (closeness to Allah) and to establish a strong connection with Allah. The Month itself holds countless rewards for those who seek forgiveness and the pleasure of Allah. Certain individuals have been granted *exemption* from fasting; including those who are ill, those travelling, women expecting a child, breastfeeding mothers, and those who are underage or going through extreme old age. In most cases, missed fasts have to be made up later, but those unable to do so have to pay *fidya* (specified alms)

5. What is Hajj?

The fifth and final Pillar of Islam is Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca. It is a time when Muslims from around the World congregate in Mecca to worship Allah (SWT) and perform several rituals to strengthen their Islamic Faith and devotion. Pilgrims must wear plain white clothing and enter a spiritual state of holiness known as Ihram. Ihram helps promote unity amongst the Muslim Ummah in attendance, for no man or woman, rich or poor, resident or traveller, stands above another. Regardless of age, ethnicity, status, and race, Muslims are all equal in the sight of Allah. Hajj falls in the 12th and final Month of Dhul Hijjah of the Islamic Hijrah Calendar. It is a journey that every Muslim is obligated to take at least once in a lifetime, if he satisfies the requirements of lawful means.

CHAPTER TWO

GOOD LEADERSHIP IN ISLAM

Good Leadership is the key to unity, peace progress and development. While Bad Leadership is the direct opposite of these. In addition to these, it is only by having a good leadership that the Muslim *Ummah* can unite, progress and be able to ward off all verbal and physical aggressions against it.

One of the areas where Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is greatly praised by Muslims and Non-Muslims alike was his ability to establish the Muslim Community (the *Ummah*) that grew into the Muslim Nation and ultimately into the great Muslim State of an unprecedented nature within his 23 years of Active Life on Earth.

In establishing the very powerful Muslim Community, Nation and State, the Prophet (SAW) had always been guided by the fact of Allah's ultimate authority over Power and Leadership; as contained in the Glorious Qur'an:

قُلِ اَللّٰهُمَّ مَلِكِ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ
وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ اِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Say: "O Allah! Possessor of the Kingdom (power and authority), You give the Kingdom to whom You will, and You take the Kingdom from whom You will, and You endow with honour whom You will, and You humiliate whom You will. In Your Hand is all the good. Verily, You are able to do all things. (Qur'an 3:26)

Some points are made here very clearly: one being that the actual possessor of power is Allah and that it is He who grants power on Earth to whom He wants and it is He who takes away power from

whomsoever He wants. So the whole matter in this regard rests with Allah. Thus the dominance or subjugation by any leader of any group, community or nation, is ultimately for Allah to decide.

Here what comes to light is that political or any form of power is totally governed by Allah, just as the entire Universe is running in accordance with His divine plan. It is like saying that, just as Allah exercises full power over the setting and rising of the Sun, so also has He full power over the granting of political or any form of ascendancy.

The Prophet (SAW) was an embodiment of a good leadership. His successive successors who held the titles of “*Amirul Mumineen*” (Caliph or Leader of the Faithful) were also embodiments of good leadership.

Leadership in Islam is so important that whenever Muslims pray, they must appoint an Imam to lead in the prayers. To buttress the importance of leadership, Allah (SWT) placed our leaders as third in the hierarchy of those to be obeyed, after Him and the Prophet (SAW). Allah says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger (Muhammad), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority (leaders). (Qur'an 4:59).

The Prophet (SAW) also emphasised the importance of leadership; as narrated by Abu Huraira (RLA) and Abu Said Khudri (RLA) the Prophet said, “*Whenever three people are to be on a journey, they must appoint one of them to be the leader*” (Reported by Abu Daud).

Islamic Definition of a Leader; and the Concept of Leadership

Based on the provisions on Leadership in the Glorious Qur'an and the Sunnah, every person occupies a position of Leadership from the minute Family life to Religious and Mundane matters and to the Communities or Nations. This Book, however gives emphasis on National Leadership from the Wards to the Federal levels, Politically, Traditionally, Religiously, etc.

The fact that, in Islam, every person occupies a position of Leadership from the minute Family life to Religious and Mundane matters has been amply stated by the Prophet (SAW). Ibn Umar (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (SAW) said,

أَلَا كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْنُوءٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ فَإِلَامَامُ الَّذِي عَلَى النَّاسِ رَاعٍ وَهُوَ مَسْنُوءٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ وَالرَّجُلُ رَاعٍ عَلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ وَهُوَ مَسْنُوءٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ وَالْمَرْأَةُ رَاعِيَةٌ عَلَى أَهْلِ بَيْتِ زَوْجِهَا وَوَلَدِهِ وَهِيَ مَسْنُوءَةٌ عَنْهُمْ وَعَبْدُ الرَّجُلِ رَاعٍ عَلَى مَالِ سَيِّدِهِ وَهُوَ مَسْنُوءٌ عَنْهُ أَلَا فَكُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْنُوءٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ

Listen! Every one of you is a shepherd (guardian) and is responsible for his flock. The Leader of people is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects. A man is the guardian of his family and he is responsible for them. A woman is the guardian of her husband's home and his children and she is responsible for them. The servant of a man is a guardian of the property of his master and he is responsible for it. No doubt, every one of you is a shepherd and is responsible (to Allah) for his flock (people and things that are placed under his or her care). (Sahih Bukhari)

Muslim Scholars have identified three key Concepts for Leadership: (1) legitimacy, (2) authority and (3) power. The Islamic concept of legitimacy differs fundamentally from other systems. In Islam, there are two types of legitimacies: divine and popular. While most other systems consider popular legitimacy as

the will of the majority and the only determining criterion, Islam requires divine legitimacy that is legitimacy acceptable to Allah as an essential pre-requisite. Divine legitimacy is acquired when the leader obeys Allah (SWT) and the Prophet (SAW); only then is he entitled to people's obedience. Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِيَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِن تَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with Authority among you. If you differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you do believe in Allah and the Last Day: that is best, and most suitable for final determination. (Qur'an 4:59)

Divine legitimacy thus forms the basis for popular legitimacy. Leadership in Islam must have both divine as well as popular legitimacy; without the first, it cannot have validity; without the second, it remains unfulfilled. As divine legitimacy is bestowed by Allah (SWT) Himself, it follows that all Prophets had divine legitimacy; but not all of them, however, acquired popular legitimacy.

The Qur'an tells us that only a few Prophets became rulers, e.g., Yusuf (AS), Daud (AS), Sulaiman (AS) and Muhammad (SAW). Some other Prophets delivered their messages but the people to whom the messages were addressed refused to accept them.

The Qur'an highlights an important aspect of Islam's concept of leadership. After succeeding in a number of tests, Prophet Ibrahim

(AS) was given the glad tidings that he has been appointed an Imam (leader) of all the people. Allah says:

وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا ۗ قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي ۖ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ

And remember that Abraham was tried by His Lord with certain commands, which he fulfilled: He (Allah) said: "I will make you an Imam to the Nations." He (Ibrahim) pleaded: "And also (Imams) from my offspring!" He (Allah) answered: "But My promise is not within the reach of evil-doers (oppressors)." (Qur'an 2:124)

An important point emerges from this dialogue: an oppressor is not fit to be a Leader of the Muslims, regardless of what other qualities he may possess. Implicit in this Verse are two other points about leadership: to be legitimate, it must have divine sanction and each person must qualify for it on merit.

Man in the generic sense is Allah's *Khalifah* (vicegerent or representative) on Earth. Allah says:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ۖ قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۗ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

Behold, your Lord said to the Angels: "I will create a vicegerent on earth." They said: "Will You place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood; while we do celebrate Your praises and glorify Your Holy (Name)?" He (Allah) said: "I know what you know not." (Qur'an 2:30)

This Verse imposes certain constraints on Man (vicegerent); he is not free to act as he chooses; nor must he submit to the wishes of any group, be it a majority or an influential minority; he must act only to implement Allah's Laws on Earth. There is thus a fundamental difference between the Islamic concept of leadership and that of other systems where aspirants to high office often say and do what the people want irrespective of their merit.

Differences between a Leader and Ruler

It is appropriate to clarify the difference between a leader and a ruler in Islam. While the two are often used interchangeably, they are not the same. A leader has certain inherent qualities quite independent of any office he may hold. These include both qualities of personal character (*taqwa*) and the ability to motivate others towards the realisation of specific goals or objectives. Inherent in this is also the assumption that his leadership is accepted by the people, as he has not imposed himself by physical force or other coercive means. Similarly, his authority is not dependent on any office he may hold. The ruler's authority, on the other hand, is linked directly to his office; without it, he may be powerless and, therefore, quite ineffective. Examples of this kind abound everywhere in the World today. Thus, a Monarch, President or a Prime Minister may not necessarily be suited for the job but each derives his authority from the office he holds.

In nature, there is a hierarchy based on power. The dictum “might is right” applies clearly in the jungle, but human beings also frequently resort to it. Islam, on the other hand, regulates power differentiation so that it does not lead to injustice in society. This is crucial because the holder of office exercises power and authority over others which can easily lead to abuse.

Islamic Government System

The Islamic Government System is best described from its origin under the *Khilafa* or Caliphate System, which is an essential concept in Islamic history and governance. It refers to the leadership position that was held by the Successors of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) after his death. They were known as Caliphs. The benefits of Khilafa are:

- **Unity:** The *Khilafa* (Caliphate) system helps to unify Muslims around a common leader whose duty is to uphold the Rules and Regulations of Islam.
- **Justice:** The *Khaleefah* (Caliph) ensures the equal application of justice and fairness to all individuals.
- **Welfare:** The governing system of Khilafah effectively met the needs of most people during uncertain periods by offering welfare assistance. And net facilities to enable the worship of Allah and the provision of reasonable livelihood in the World.
- **Economic Development:** This approach ensured wealth alongside steady growth through economic stability propagating peace eventually throughout society.
- **Security & Protection:** As time passed, protecting against outside foes became very important by constructing defensive structures and providing mechanisms for safety and security of lives and properties, in accordance with Islamic Rules.
- **Destroying Social Divides:** It diminished divisions developed under caste, religion, gender differences, and segregations across diverse communities, and polity.
- **Preservation of Religious Values:** Enforcing Shari'ah Law to set the ultimate seal for promoting peace and morality within

local populations bounded through specific guidelines specifically cited above remaining pivotal.

The Islamic leadership system is based on the principles of justice, equality, and protection for all citizens living under its rule regardless of religion, race, gender, or place of origin. Under the Islamic ruling, non-Muslims were given equal status with Muslims as per Shari'ah Law.

CHAPTER THREE

ELECTING OR SELECTING GOOD LEADERSHIP

This Book places emphasis on National Leadership from the Wards to the Federal levels, Politically, Traditionally, Religiously, etc. Therefore, all subsequent presentations in this Book shall be under this provision.

It is only by having good leadership that the Muslim *Ummah* can unite, progress and be able to ward off all the verbal and physical aggression against it. Therefore, Muslims must strive to elect or select good leaders in order to be able to attain felicity in this World and in the Hereafter.

The much talked about “democracy” or government by the people, for the people and of the people, is not a new phenomenon in Islam. Whether by election or by selection, Islam has provisions for the appointment of good leaders in a most “democratic” way. In Islam, the mode of appointing leaders changes with time and exigencies. The first sets of successors of the Prophet (SAW), generally known as the “Caliphs”, were appointed through slightly different ways. Muslim scholars are agreed that time could change the mode of appointing leaders, as long as the method used is not repugnant to the Shari’ah. The Prophet (SAW) was appointed by Allah (SWT) to lead humanity. The first Caliph (Abubakar- RLA) was unanimously selected by the people as the Prophet (SAW) did not nominate anyone to succeed him after his death. The second Caliph (Umar –RLA) was nominated by Abubakar to succeed him after his death. So it can be seen that within a set of three leaders, the mode of their appointments differed. A confirmation of this came to light as follows:-

Abdullahi bin Umar (RLA) narrated that Caliph Umar (RLA) was asked, *“Will you nominate your successor?”* He answered, *“If I nominate a successor, I am right since someone better than me did so”*. (He was referring to Caliph Abubakar who nominated him as a successor). *“If I leave the matter undecided, I am right since someone better than me did so”*. (He was referring to the Prophet SAW who did not nominate a successor). He continued that, *“People are of two kinds, i.e. those who want to be Caliphs and those who want be free from its responsibility. I do not want to bear the burden of caliphate responsibility after my death as I do now”*. He meant that when you nominate a successor and he messes up you will share the burden with him in the hereafter. So he did not nominate a successor. (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

The general consensus of the *Ulama* (Muslim Scholars) is that Muslims must elect or select good leaders based on the qualities of leadership, as enshrined in the Shari’ah. The method to be followed must be just and transparent. It could be by unanimous consensus (“unopposed” in modern parlance) or by an electoral college or by an open or secret ballot.

Islam encourages giving leadership to those who merit it. Allah (SWT) assists such leaders and in most cases those who are led by such deserving leaders will most willingly help them in the discharge of their responsibilities. On the other hand, Islam discourages giving leadership to those who clamour and manoeuvre for it, because in most cases they have sinister motives for doing so. Allah does not help such people; neither will those being led help them! So the attainment of leadership positions through unnecessary clamouring and manoeuvring usually spells disaster for the leaders and the people they lead.

AbdulRahman ibn Samura (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (SAW) said to him, “*Oh AbdulRahman, do not **clamour** for leadership. If you are appointed to a leadership position without **clamouring** for it (i.e. **on merit**), you will be assisted in discharging the responsibility (by Allah and the people you lead). If you are appointed to a leadership position because you **clamoured** for it, you will find obstacles in the discharge of your responsibilities*”. (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim).

Abu Huraira (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (SAW) said, “*A time will come when people will be **clamouring** for positions of authority. You better know that this will be a source of worry and regret on the Day of Judgement*” (Reported by Bukhari).

The Prophet (SAW) spoke those words over 1,400 years ago and we are now witnessing their effects! People clamour, manoeuvre, rig, kill, maim and destroy lives and properties with a view to becoming leaders. We are all suffering for these ignominious acts that are prevalent in our societies today.

However, as usual with the beauty of Islam, there are times when general rules are exempted from being implemented in a *dharura* (emergency) situation. For example, it is compulsory to fast during the month of *Ramadan*, but if you are sick, you may not fast. Likewise you can perform the five obligatory prayers seated or even lying down if you cannot stand up.

In a similar vein, the rule that one should not clamour for leadership can be set aside. For example, if you see that someone is about to be appointed into a position he is not qualified to occupy and you are more qualified for the job, you are bound to say so in order not to allow the person to turn out to be a bad leader. The justification for this was drawn from the case of

Prophet Yusuf (AS) who asked the King of Egypt that he be placed to head the Egyptian Food Stores because he was more trustworthy and knowledgeable than all those clamouring for the job. The Glorious Qur'an reports this as follows:-

قَالَ اجْعَلْنِي عَلَى خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ إِنِّي حَفِيظٌ عَلِيمٌ

(Yusuf) said: *Set me over the store-houses of the land; I will indeed guard them with full knowledge* (Qur'an 12:55).

This example of Prophet Yusuf (AS), give credence to those who have the qualification for leadership as enshrined in Islam to ask for it when they see that unqualified people were about to be entrusted with it. The story of Prophet Yusuf (AS) is the most elaborate single story in the Glorious Qur'an and one of the most elaborate in the Holy Bible. Therefore billions of Muslims and Christians are conversant with it, making it, along with the stories of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), (King) Prophet Daud (AS) and (King) Prophet Sulaiman (AS), as the most well known stories of Leaders in the World! Therefore the story of Prophet Yusuf (AS) is worth being related here very briefly, as it signifies the appointment and duties of a Great Leader.

Prophet Yusuf (AS) was placed in prison unjustly in Egypt. When Yusuf (AS) was still in prison, the King of Egypt had a frightening dream. In the dream, the King saw himself by the banks of the River Nile watching the waters of the life-line of Egypt graciously flowing towards the Mediterranean Sea. Then suddenly, the water started receding, leaving behind mere mud. The fish began to skip and jump in the mud. Seven fat cows came out of the river followed by seven lean ones. The seven lean ones devoured the seven fat ones. Then seven ears of green corn suddenly sprouted

by the river banks and disappeared into the mud. On the same spot, seven dry ears of corn emerged!

The King woke-up frightened, shocked and depressed, not knowing what that dream meant. He summoned the ministers, the sorcerers and the priests and told them of his dream. Serious discussions were held and they all could not interpret the dream, therefore they concluded that the King's dream was only a nightmare. Prophet Yusuf (AS) was summoned and he immediately interpreted the dream by saying that, there shall be seven years of abundant rain water and the Nile River shall flood all its banks. Whatever was sown in those seven years shall bring forth good harvest. He advised that in those good harvest years, people should plant a lot and work hard so as to reap plenty of corn. The surplus corn should then be stored in its ears. That was necessary because the seven years that shall follow shall be characterised by heavy drought and great famine. Therefore what was stored shall serve to cushion the effect of the seven severe years. Then, thereafter will come a year in which people will have abundant rain and in which the vineyards shall yield a lot of wine and the olive trees shall provide a lot of oil. (Qur'an 12:43-49 gives this account in details)

The King of Egypt formally summoned Yusuf (AS) before the King's Council and a form of interview was held and Yusuf (AS) responded excellently to all the questions asked. The King and his Council were astonished with his noble qualities, cultural refinement and wide knowledge of a variety of subjects. The King didn't want to lose such a talented young man, so he offered Yusuf (AS) a very high position in the Council. Yusuf (AS) responded by asking the King to place him over the Kingdom's storehouses

which he would manage with the knowledge granted to him by Allah (SWT). Allah says:

And the King (of Egypt) said: “Bring him (Yusuf) to me that I may attach him to my person”. Then, when he spoke to him, he said: “Verily, this day, you are with us high in rank and fully trusted”. (Yusuf) said: “Place me over the storehouses of the land; for indeed I am a (good) guardian and full of knowledge”. Thus did We (Allah) give full authority to Yusuf in the land, to take possession therein, as when or where he likes (Qur’an 12:54-56)

With his authority established, Yusuf (AS) reminded the King of the impending seven years of good harvests and seven years of drought and famine. He informed the King that the famine would affect not only Egypt but all the neighbouring Nations as well. He therefore advised that planning should start immediately. In those regards, he offered to serve as the Chief Controller of all the grain silos so as to ensure their prudent management as he was most qualified to do so being a knowledgeable and trustworthy person. As Allah willed, there were seven years of abundant rainfall, good River Nile flooding and excellent cultivation and harvests of all crops all over Egypt. The chief crop of the land was wheat, which provided over 90% of the food requirements of not only Egypt, but also of all neighbouring lands of Sudan, Palestine and the Maghreb (North Africa). During the seven good harvest years, Yusuf (AS) had full control over the cultivation, harvesting, local usage and storage of the excess crops.

A very interesting aspect of the management of the excess grains was Yusuf’s plan for the Egyptian Authority to purchase the excess grains from the people during the good harvest period at normal market prices and later sell at a subsidy during the famine

period to the needy. Equally, Yusuf (AS) had absolute control over the equitable sales and distribution of the stored grains to the needy Egyptians and citizens of neighbouring lands during the seven years of drought and famine.

What had been known over thousands of years was that Yusuf (AS) instructed that huge grain silos should be built where the excess grains would be stored in readiness for the envisaged seven years of drought and famine. Also known was that Prophet Yusuf (AS) succeeded tremendously in the distribution of the grains during the famine period to the satisfaction of both the Authority and the commoners, not only in Egypt, but in all neighbouring lands. Besides that, nothing else was known on the management of the bumper harvests and the drought periods. Recently, however, archaeological findings have brought new dimensions to Prophet Yusuf's strategic plans and wonderful management of the period of abundant rainfall and good harvest and that of drought and famine. Claims are being made to the discovery of the grain silos constructed under the leadership of Prophet Yusuf (AS) in Egypt! These incredible structures are located in Saqqara; about thirty kilometres from central Cairo, Egypt.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE BASIC QUALITIES OF GOOD LEADERS

Leaders are like drivers. A good driver is expected to drive his passengers safely to their destinations. Even if the vehicle develops some minor mechanical faults along the way, a good driver uses his expertise to drive safely. However, it doesn't matter how good a vehicle is, as long as the driver is a bad one, accidents are likely to happen and if the vehicle is in bad shape, that worsens the matter. Likewise, good leaders deliver the "dividends of democracy" to their people, especially in a wealthy nation. They also manage to turn a poor nation into a wealthy one and make life meaningful for its citizens. Therefore, good Muslim leaders would ensure that the Muslim *Ummah* is united, becomes strong and progressive, and able to ward off all the verbal and physical aggression against it.

Before considering whether a Person is fit to be a Leader based on the 12 Basic Qualities of Good Leaders that are listed below, it is very important to perform an initial assessment of the Person to being a Leader. This is very important to the Nation and to the Person, because the end result shall be accountability to the citizens in this World and to Allah in the Hereafter. It is therefore very vital to avoid an unfit person becoming a Leader. Even the Person needs to be morally conscious to diagnose himself whether he is capable of holding a position in any cabinet, ministry or organisation. Critical self-examination, which involves being true to themselves and accepting only the duty he can bear, needs to be carried out before undertaking any burden of trust offered. This is because academic certification, privileged status, social rank, or titles without intellectual and moral integrity are inadequate for the

great responsibilities and accountabilities to be placed on a Person in a leadership position. The following Hadith is vital in these regards. Abu Haryrah (RLA) reported that:

While the Prophet was saying something in a gathering, a Bedouin came and asked him, *“When would the Hour (Doomsday) take place?”* Allah’s Messenger (SAW) continued his talk, so some people said that Allah’s Messenger (SAW) had heard the question, but did not like what that Bedouin had asked. Some of them said that Allah’s Messenger (SAW) had not heard it. When the Prophet (SAW) finished his speech, he said, *“Where is the questioner, who inquired about the Hour (Doomsday)?”* The Bedouin said, *“I am here, O Allah’s Apostle.”* Then the Prophet (SAW) said, *“When honesty is lost, then wait for the Hour (Doomsday).”* The Bedouin said, *“How will that be lost?”* The Prophet (SAW) said, *“When the power or authority comes in the hands of unfit persons, then wait for the Hour (Doomsday).”* (Reported by Sahih Bukhari)

The Bedouin who asked about the exact timeline of the Day of Judgement was replied by the Prophet (SAW) that it will occur when the honesty is lost. He then further described that it will be lost when an unfit person comes to power or authority.

A Leader must not feel that he is obligated to hold the position due to the majority’s decision appointing him as a Leader if he is well aware he is unable to fulfil the responsibility, does not possess enough knowledge in managing the situations, and does not own moral capacity and integrity to lead. In this way, he should either leave on his own or be removed for a fit Person to take over. Therefore, the Person is saved the torment of the Hereafter and the Nation is saved the catastrophe of the World

Muslim scholars have, over several centuries, advanced what they deduce as the qualities of a good leader. I will try to discuss ten of such leadership qualities below.

1. A Good Leader must have Knowledge (*Ilm*) and Wisdom (*Hikmah*).

People who are not knowledgeable and lack wisdom in their approach to daily affairs should not be made leaders. For example, if a carpentry trade group wants to appoint a Chairman to lead it, the most qualified person to occupy that seat will be a skilled carpenter, who is full of wisdom in handling people and carpentry affairs. Anybody who is not knowledgeable in the carpentry trade cannot make a good leader of a group of carpenters.

At the national level, a well educated and experienced person who is full of wisdom will make a better National Leader than a dull and illiterate person.

Those chosen by Allah (SWT) to be His Prophets and Messengers (AS) were given knowledge and wisdom before they were asked to embark on their assignments. Indeed, Allah instructed His Messengers to call people to His Way with knowledge, wisdom and fair preaching:

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ

*Invite (mankind) to the Way of your Lord with **wisdom** and fair preaching (Qur'an 16:125)*

The greatest leaders in history, known to the Qur'an and the Bible (and by extension to billions of Muslims and Christians), were Prophet Da'ud (AS) (David) and his son, Prophet Sulaiman (AS) (Solomon). Both were endowed with knowledge and wisdom before they were made Great Kings by Allah (SWT). Allah says,

فَفَهَّمْنَاهَا سُلَيْمَانَ وَكُلًّا آتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا

And We made Sulaiman to understand; and to each of them (Da'ud and Sulaiman) We gave wisdom and knowledge. (Qur'an 21:79).

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عِلْمًا وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

And indeed We gave knowledge to Dawud (David) and Sulaiman (Solomon), and they both said: "All the praises and thanks be to Allah, Who has preferred us above many of His believing servants!" (Qur'an 27:15)

Certainly there is no basis for comparison between a knowledgeable person who is full of wisdom and a stark illiterate who is dull! We must, therefore, place round pegs in round holes when it comes to leadership, if we want to succeed as a community or nation.

In order to appreciate the importance of knowledge, let us cast our minds on how a newborn baby learns to suckle milk from his mother's breasts, how he learns to eat food and drink water, how he learns to crawl, walk, speak, etc. A baby becomes a mature being only after having undergone training in all the aspects of life for several years. Let us also remember that the first revelation from Allah (SWT) to the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (SAW) was to seek for knowledge. Allah says:

أَقْرَأْ بِأَسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ﴿٢﴾ أَلَمْ يَكُنْ أَكْرَمَ ۚ ﴿٣﴾ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ﴿٤﴾ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ﴿٥﴾

Read! *In the Name of your Lord Who has created (all that exists). He has created man from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). **Read!** And your Lord is the Most Generous. Who has **taught** (the writing) by the pen. He has **taught** man that which he knew not. (Qur'an 96:1-5).*

Allah (SWT) said in Hadisil Qudsi that,

فاعرفوني قبل أن تعبدوني وان لم تعرفوني كيف تعبدوني؟

*You should **know** Me before you worship Me and if you do not **know** Me, how can you worship Me? (Reported by Sheik Muhammad ibn Abubakar ibn Ali on page 7 of his book, “Khamsuna Farida”)*

Allah (SWT) therefore made knowledge come before anything including worshipping Him.

Al-Tirmidhi reported in Hadith No 1284 that the Prophet (SAW) said, *“There is nothing parents can bequeath to their children that is more precious than adequate **education**”.*

The Prophet (SAW) also said,

اطلبوا العلم ولو بالصين

*Seek for **knowledge** even if it means going to Sin (China). (Narrated by Ibn Adi and Baihaqi)*

The words of Allah (SWT) and those of the Prophet (SAW) quoted above point to the importance of religious and all other forms of education. As we learn how to worship Allah (SWT) from our Muslim clerics, we were instructed also to seek for other forms of knowledge on worldly affairs (like commerce, industry, science, technology, etc) from whoever could teach us. The Prophet (SAW) wouldn't ask us to travel to China to learn Islam, but perhaps to

learn some form of manufacturing or trade, for which China is still famous today.

In numerous Verses of the Glorious Qur'an, Allah says that the Prophet (SAW) was given both knowledge and *hikmah* (wisdom). The two are not the same. Almost anyone can acquire knowledge through study and hard work but *hikmah* comes only through an inner enlightenment and by seeking sincere guidance from Allah. *Hikmah* is the ability to apply knowledge to a particular situation to bring about the most desirable outcome. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) was given both knowledge and *hikmah* because Allah had appointed him for a great purpose in life. *Hikmah* is also essential for a Muslim Leader because he is responsible for the well-being of the *Ummah* (Muslim community). He has to deal and negotiate with hostile powers as well as make decisions that directly affect the Community.

There are many instances from the Prophet (SAW) where his *hikmah* achieved results that his followers were unable to see immediately. The most striking example is illustrated by the Treaty of Hudaibiyya in the sixth year of the Hijrah. Some 1,400 Muslims led by the Prophet (SAW) were prohibited by the Quraish from entering Mecca to perform Umrah. The conditions stipulated in the treaty appeared on the face of it to be detrimental to the Muslims and even such close companions as Umar ibn al-Khattab (RLA) were unable to understand their true import at the time, yet it was the Prophet's great *hikmah* that brought about the treaty whose benefits soon manifested themselves to the Muslims.

2.A Good Leader must have *Taqwa* (Humility, Righteousness)

Islam lays great emphasis on *taqwa* (humility; being conscious of Allah's presence and fearing Him at all times) not only for the

Leader but for every Believer. It is the only criterion by which people are judged in Islam (Al-Qur'an 49:13).

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا
إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

O Mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into Nations and Tribes, that you may know Each other (not that you may despise each other). Verily the Most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things). (Qur'an 49:13)

Taqwa (humility) and righteousness for a Leader are very important because the power and authority he acquires can easily make him arrogant. While *taqwa* is much more than being humble, it is among the many meanings of the term. Humility is especially important for a Leader since he is entrusted with the affairs of the community. Not seeking a leadership position is part of *taqwa*. We see from the Prophet (SAW) that his personal honesty and integrity had already earned him the title of “Al-Amin” (the trustworthy one) in Mecca even before being commissioned as Prophet. Similar modesty and humility were apparent in the conduct of the *Khulafa Ar-Rashidoon* (the four Rightly-Guided Successors of the Prophet (SAW), i.e., the Caliphs).

In his first speech as *khalifah* of the Muslims, Abu Bakr Siddiq (RLA) proved himself an ideal of modesty and humility. There was total absence of the kind of arrogance one finds in modern-day rulers when they assume power. They proclaim their own virtues and the great feats they will perform. The attitude of Abu Bakr Siddiq (RLA) was totally different. He said:

I have been appointed as ruler over you although I am not the best among you. I have never sought this position nor has there ever been a desire in my heart to have this in preference to anyone else... If I do right, you must help and obey me; if I go astray, set me aright... Obey me so long as I obey Allah and His Messenger. If I disobey them, then you have no obligation to follow me (Reported in Tabari)

There was a group of people who felt that Caliph Ali (RLA) should have been the *khalifah* instead of Abu Bakr Siddiq (RLA). In an attempt to exploit this, Abu Sufyan went to Imam Ali offering to bring out 10,000 armed men in his support if he so desired. The reply of Ali (RLA) is instructive:

What you have said reflects your open enmity to Islam and the Muslims. I do not want any help from you. All Muslims are brothers to each other; only the munafiqun (hypocrites) cut each other. We consider Abu Bakr to be fit for this position otherwise we would not have let him assume it

Because of his *taqwa*, Ali (RLA) refused to encourage anyone or anything that would appear to promote his personal interests or act in any way that might lead to *fitna* (sedition) in society.

3. A Good Leader must be Just, Fair and Compassionate

Adl (justice) and *Rahmah* (compassion) are two very important essential characteristics a leader must possess. Justice without compassion leads to tyranny, while compassion without justice creates anarchy. A leader needs to maintain a careful balance keeping the overall good of society in mind. Allah says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاَنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَى أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

*O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah as **just** witnesses; and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid **justice**. **Be just**: that is nearer to piety; and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do. (Qur'an 5:8).*

Aisha (RLA) reported that, the Companions (RLA) became very worried about the Makhzumiya lady who had committed theft. They said, “*Nobody can speak (in favour of the lady) to Allah’s Messenger (SAW)*”. And nobody dared do that except Usama (RLA). When Usama (RLA) spoke to Allah’s Messenger (SAW) about that matter, Allah's Messenger (SAW) said, “*Do you intercede (with me) to violate one of the legal punishments of Allah?*” Then he got up and addressed the people, saying, “*O people! The Nations before you went astray because if a noble person committed theft, they used to leave him, but if a weak person among them committed theft, they used to inflict the legal punishment on him. By Allah, if Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad committed theft, Muhammad will cut off her hand!*”

This has shown clearly that, Justice is a fundamental precept of Islam; even more so for a Leader because it is part of his responsibility to maintain balance in society. Injustice invariably leads to turmoil and conflict. At the same time, justice must be tempered with compassion. An Islamic Leader must combine the two in his personality.

Muslim scholars are all agreed that justice and fairness sustain leadership and injustice and tyranny destroy leadership. We must therefore ensure that only fair and just rulers lead us. When you tyrannise and inflict injustice upon any person, and you are not appropriately punished in this World (because you enjoy political might or immunity), you will pay back on the Day of Judgement (where there is no political immunity).

Unjust and unfair rulers who tyrannise people were referred to by the Prophet (SAW) as “paupers”. Abu Huraira (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (SAW) asked us, “*Do you know who is a pauper?*” Someone among the people replied, “*Among us, a pauper is one who has nothing in cash or in property*”. The Prophet (SAW) said, no, “*A pauper among my people is one who faces the Day of Judgement with a good record of Salat, Fasting and Zakat, but who **unjustly** abused this one, poured calumny on that one, devoured the property of the third, shed the blood of the fourth and beaten a fifth. Then each one of them shall be allotted a portion of his good deeds as compensation (by Allah). Should his good deeds not be enough, then the bad deeds of those others shall be transferred from them to him and he will be thrown into Hell-fire*”. (Reported by Muslim and is Hadith No. 220 in the book, Riyadhul Saliheen).

Allah (SWT) instructed leaders in particular and all people in general (several times) to be fair and just in all their dealings. Allah says,

وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ

*And that when you judge between men, you judge with **justice**.* (Qur'an 4:58).

And Allah says,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ

*Verily, Allah enjoins **justice** and good deeds.* (Qur'an 16:90).

And Allah says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِنْ يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا

*O you who believe! Stand out firmly for **justice**, as witnesses to Allah; even though it be against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, be he rich or poor, Allah is a Better Protector to both (than you). So do not follow the lusts (of your hearts), lest you avoid **justice**. (Qur'an 4:135).*

At the beginning of this section, we have seen how the Prophet (SAW) described the unfair and the unjust as “paupers” in the Hereafter. What then is the reward for those who are fair and just in the Hereafter? The Prophet (SAW) said that seven sets of people will enjoy a special shade from Allah on the Day of Judgment and the set of fair and just leaders was mentioned first before the other six sets. Abu Huraira (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (SAW) said, “*Seven sets of people shall be shaded by Allah in His special shade on the day when there is no shade except that of Allah. Those people are, first **a just leader**,...*” (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim)

Abdullah bin Amr bin As (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (SAW) said, “*The **just** shall be on the brightly-lighted first-rows in front of Allah (on the Day of Judgment). Those are the ones who were **just** in their dealings with their families and in running that which was entrusted to them as leaders.* (Reported by Muslim).

4. A Good Leader must be Honest, Trustworthy, Strong and Courageous

Honesty and sincerity lead to trustworthiness, which is a major quality of good leadership. Dishonest and untrustworthy people cannot make good leaders, as they cannot discharge their responsibilities creditably well. Good leaders hold a nation's income in trust and expend it in the interest of the people they lead. When we want to “hire” a servant to work for you (as it is now the

practice for leaders to call themselves “public servants”), we should look for a combination of honesty, trustworthiness and strength of character. Allah says,

إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنْ اسْتَأْجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ

*Verily, the best of men for you to hire is the **strong**, the **trustworthy**.* (Qur'an 28:26).

Muslim reported that Abu Dharr (RLA) asked the Prophet (SAW), “*Oh the Messenger of Allah, wouldn't you appoint me to an office?*” The Prophet (SAW) touched him on his shoulders and said, “*Oh Abu Dharr, you are a **weak person** and an office is a **trust** and a source of limitations and remorse on the Day of Judgment except for him who takes it up with a full sense of responsibility and duly discharges its obligations*”. (Hadith No. 679 in Riyadhul Saliheen).

When you are placed in a position of trust you must discharge that trust to the satisfaction of those who entrusted you. Allah says,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا

*Verily, Allah commands that you should render back the **trusts** to those, to whom they are due.* (Qur'an 4:58).

Those who lead are expected to set an example by showing courage and taking calculated risks. Courage and bravery, important for everybody, are essential attributes for a leader. People must see their leader as someone who is not afraid to face danger. Only by doing so can a leader inspire others to perform great feats. In the battle of Badr, for instance, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was clearly taking a great risk. That this was inspired by Allah is true but the odds were such that it appeared to be a complete mismatch. The People of Mecca, who were confronted in

battle by the Muslims, not only had far greater numerical superiority (3,000 to 1,000) they were also heavily armed. An ordinary leader would have demurred from such confrontation. The exemplary courage of the Prophet (SAW) and his bravery not only inspired his followers but also changed the course of history. Badr highlighted the courage and the commitment of Muslims.

5. A Good Leader must Fulfil His Promises, be Beneficial and a Mercy to the People

It is a very common practice today for leaders not to fulfil their promises. This is a grave error, as Allah hates those who do not fulfil their promises and people do not have an iota of respect for such leaders. Allah says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ , كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ

O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do? Most hateful it is with Allah that you say that which you do not do. (Qur'an 61:2-3).

وَأَوْفُوا بِالْعَهْدِ إِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْئُولًا

And fulfil (every) promise (covenant). Surely, you will be questioned about your promises (by Allah). (Qur'an 17:34).

وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ

And fulfil the Covenant of Allah when you have covenanted. (Qur'an 16:91).

A very strong Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) clearly shows the natures of people, especially Leaders, who are beneficial and merciful to people. Ibn Umar (RLA) reported that, the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:

أَحَبُّ النَّاسِ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَنْفَعُهُمْ لِلنَّاسِ وَأَحَبُّ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ سُرُورٌ تُدْخِلُهُ عَلَى مُسْلِمٍ أَوْ تَكْشِفُ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً أَوْ تَقْضِي عَنْهُ دَيْنًا أَوْ تَطْرُدُ عَنْهُ جُوعًا وَلَأنَّ أَمْشِيَّ مَعَ أَخِيهِ فِي حَاجَةٍ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْ أَعْتَكَفَ فِي هَذَا الْمَسْجِدِ يَغْنِي مَسْجِدَ الْمَدِينَةِ شَهْرًا وَمَنْ كَفَّ غَضَبَهُ سَتَرَ اللَّهُ عَوْرَتَهُ وَمَنْ كَظَمَ غَيْظَهُ وَلَوْ شَاءَ أَنْ يُمْضِيَهُ أَمْضَاهُ مَلَأَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ قَلْبَهُ أَمْنًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَمَنْ مَشَى مَعَ أَخِيهِ فِي حَاجَةٍ حَتَّى أَثْبَتَهَا لَهُ أَثَبَتَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ قَدَمَهُ عَلَى الصِّرَاطِ يَوْمَ تَزَلُّ فِيهِ الْأَقْدَامُ

The most beloved people to Allah are those who are most beneficial to people. The most beloved deed to Allah is to make a Muslim happy, or to remove one of his troubles, or to forgive his debt, or to feed his hunger. That I walk with a brother regarding a need is more beloved to me than that I seclude myself in this Masjid in Medina for a month. Whoever swallows his anger, Allah will conceal his faults. Whoever suppresses his rage, even though he could fulfil his anger if he wished, then Allah will secure his heart on the Day of Resurrection. Whoever walks with his brother regarding a need until he secures it for him, then Allah Almighty will make his footing firm across the bridge on the day when the footings are shaken. (al-Mu‘jam al-Awsat lil-Tabaraani)

Essentially, this important Hadith is showing that the most beloved people to Allah are those who are most beneficial to people. This is an important dictum in Islam. In particular, Leaders should aspire to be beneficial to people, as that will make the Nation peaceful, secure and prosperous. Any Leader, who cannot imbibe the qualities mentioned in this Hadith, is not worth leading even his family, talk less of a Community or Nation.

In support of this Hadith, there are several other Hadith and Verses of the Glorious Qur'an, which emphasise the importance of being beneficial to people. This is especially so, that if a Leader is not beneficial to people, why is he a Leader at all? The Prophet (SAW)

was asked, *“Who is the best amongst people?”* He replied, *“The best of people are those who are most beneficial to people.”*

The Prophet (SAW) was a mercy for all in the universe, hence it is expected that all of his followers would be merciful and kind to others. The Mercy of Allah (SWT) encompasses all of his creation. The advice and teachings of being kind and merciful to others will remain true till the Day of Judgement for all the followers of the Prophet (SAW). His mercy cannot be restricted. There was the case of a man who prayed to Allah, *“O Allah! Show mercy to me and Mohammed (SAW) and not to anyone else”*. The Prophet (SAW) instantly corrected him by saying: *“Do not make such dua but ask Allah to show mercy to all.”*

Among the best examples are that, humans should show good conduct even towards animals. Ibn Umar (RLA) narrates a Hadith: *The Prophet (SAW) said, "A woman entered the Hell Fire because of a cat which she had tied, neither giving it food nor setting it free to eat from the vermin of the earth"*. (Sahih Bukhari). Scholars have explained that she was a believing woman but she entered Hell Fire because of her cruelty towards animals.

Al-Bukhari reports Abu Umama (RLA) who states that: *“Whoever slaughters an animal or a fowl, and shows mercy by sharpening the knife properly so that the animal may be spared from suffering, Allah would show mercy to him on the Day of Judgment.”*

6. A Good Leader must Shun Bribery, Corruption and Embezzlement.

Bribery, corruption and embezzlement are three evils that bedevil particularly governments of developing nations. These evils contribute greatly to the decay in both the public and private sectors.

Therefore good leaders must shun them and those who indulge in them should be booted out and sanctioned according to the laws of the land. Allah strongly warned against betraying trust (i.e. bribery, corruption and embezzlement) when He says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوا أَمَانَاتِكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

O you who believe! Betray not (the trusts of) Allah and His Messenger, nor betray (embezzle) knowingly things entrusted to you. (Qur'an 8:27).

Abu Hamid Sa'idi (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (SAW) said,

If I appoint any one of you to go and perform a duty as prescribed by Allah (e.g. collect Zakat) and he then comes to me and says, this is for the assignment you sent me and this is a gift given to me. If it is true that it is a free gift, why was he not given it when he was in his parent's house? I swear by the Almighty Allah that if any one of you receives anything in the form of bribery, he will come before Allah carrying that thing on the Day of Judgement. I would therefore not want to see anyone of you carrying a howling camel or a bleating goat on his shoulders in front of Allah". (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim).

What irony! Just imagine how many tonnes of Naira or how many barrels of crude oil or how many tonnes of fertiliser some people will come carrying on their shoulders in front of Allah on the Day of Judgement!

Adiyy ibn Umaira (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (SAW) said, *"If I appoint anyone of you to any position and he takes or receives a needle or anything smaller than that, in the form of bribery or embezzlement, he will be called to bring that thing out on the Day of Judgement". (Reported by Muslim)*

7. A Good Leader must be Patient, a Visionary and Decisive.

People differ in their behaviour, outlook and perception of affairs. Therefore, a good leader must have the capacity to be patient and accommodate all shades and characters of people. At the same time, he must have vision and good foresight. Allah says,

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا ۖ وَكَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يُوقِنُونَ

And We made from among them leaders, giving (visionary) guidance under Our Command, when they were patient and believe with certainty in Our Revelations. (Qur'an 32:24).

Abu Huraira (RLA) narrated that the Prophet (SAW) said, “A strong person among you is not the one who is capable of downing opponents in a wrestling contest, but one who is capable of **controlling his temper** when instigated”. (Reported by Bukhari and Muslim).

Sheik Naseur Jabnun wrote on page 210 of his book, “Islam wal Idara” (Islam and Management) that, “**vision** is what distinguishes a leader from a simple manager”

A leader must be decisive and resolute. He must demonstrate such qualities at all times because a decision delayed may be an opportunity lost. The Prophet (SAW) showed great decisiveness at many critical moments in life.

Despite suffering a setback in the Battle of Uhud, he decided to go after the Quraish the following day instead of waiting for them to re-launch their offensive. It was this brilliant thinking and decisiveness on the part of the Prophet (SAW) that forced the Quraish to abandon their plans to return and attack again. Similar decisiveness was demonstrated when dealing with the Jewish

tribes in Madinah (the Banu Qaiynuqa‘, Banu Nadhir and Banu Quraidha) after their treachery was exposed.

The Banu Qaiynuqa were expelled from Medina following the Battle of Badr because of their scandalous behaviour towards a Muslim woman in public. This led to fighting between the Jews and Muslims and despite the appeal of the Prophet (SAW) to them, the Banu Qaiynuqa‘ refused to abide by the terms of the treaty binding them, the Covenant of Medina. They were thus expelled from Medina. The Banu Nadhir were the next to violate the terms of the treaty during the Battle of Uhud, so they too were expelled. But despite witnessing such expulsions resulting from their coreligionists’ treachery, the Banu Quraidha still broke their treaty obligations by conspiring with the Quraish to undermine Muslims during the Battle of Ahzab. After the battle was over, essentially as a result of the confederates fleeing following a siege that lasted more than a month, all the male members of the Banu Quraidha were executed while their women and children were taken captive. Thus was the Jewish menace in Medina eliminated. Only a leader with firmness and conviction could implement such a policy.

Decisiveness may appear to contradict the requirement for “Consultation” (*Shura*). How can a leader carry out his programme if he has to listen to conflicting advice and yet be decisive and firm? From the Islamic point of view, a leader is required to seek the advice of his followers but is not obliged to act upon it if his own judgement, based on Islamic values, indicates otherwise. The people, however, are obliged to obey him at all times, except when he orders something prohibited in Islam. Obedience in Islam is only for *ma‘roof* (good and upright conduct) and not for *munkar* (forbidden conduct).

8. A Good Leader must be Gentle, Kind, Consultative and Listens to Advice.

Anyone who is not gentle, does not consult his lieutenants and does not listen to advice, should not be made a leader. Allah says,

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ

*And by the Mercy of Allah, you (Prophet Muhammad) dealt with them **gently**. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from you; so pass over (their faults), and ask (Allah's) forgiveness for them; and **consult** them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him). (Qur'an 3:159).*

Allahu Akbar! Despite the special position of Muhammad (SAW), as a Prophet and a Messenger of Allah, he was instructed to deal with people gently (otherwise they will desert him!), to consult his lieutenants and to listen to advice before taking any decision. Who then can be harsh, claim monopoly of wisdom, refuse to consult people or listen to their advice and expect them to follow and obey him?

Allah also instructed leaders to be kind. He says,

وَأَخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

*And be **kind** and humble to the believers who follow you. (Qur'an 26:215).*

Those who conduct their affairs by mutual consultations are among those whom Allah loves. He says,

وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا
رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

*And those who answer the Call of their Lord, and perform As-Salat (prayers), and who (conduct) their affairs by **mutual consultation**, and who spend (in charity) of what We have bestowed on them. (Qur'an 42:38).*

A good leader does not wait for people to come and advise him, no, he seeks for their advice. Page 45 of Sheik Naseur Jabnun's book, "Islam wal Idara" reported Sayyidina Abubakar- RLA (the first Caliph after the Prophet-SAW) as having said,

I have been made your leader not because I am better than you, so, please assist me when I am doing things rightly and correct me when I am wrong".

Shura (mutual consultation) is a Qur'an command (3:159; and 42:38); the Prophet (SAW) regularly consulted his Companions (RLA) on all important matters. It is therefore very important in the case of Muslim Leaders.

The most outstanding example of the *Shura* of Prophet (SAW) occurred on the eve of the Battle of Uhud. While he was of the opinion that the City should be defended from within, the majority of his Companions (RLA) wanted to go out and fight. The Prophet (SAW) accepted this; he did not impose his own opinion. There is an important lesson here.

The followers' trust and confidence is gained if their opinion is respected. That the majority opinion ultimately turned out to be wrong was not used to point accusing fingers. The Prophet (SAW) used the opportunity instead to instil discipline and to impress upon them the importance of following instructions of the Leader

whose abandonment had led to the Muslims' defeat despite their initial success in that battle. People can be inspired to make sacrifices only if they feel that their opinion is respected and that the leader does not merely dictate to them.

Another important case of consultation was the case of the Battle of Ahzab, the suggestion of the Companions (RLA) to dig a trench as a defence mechanism worked very well for the Muslims.

9. A Good Leader must be Able to Groom Future Leaders.

A good leader must identify prospective future leaders, bring them close to him and groom them as his successors. The continuity of a good leadership depends on the grooming of those who would continue in the event of the incapacitation or demise of the current leader. The Prophet (SAW) identified and groomed his successors (the Caliphs) and that led to the continuity of the Islamic State. Indeed, that continuity accounted for the rapid spread of Islam within a very short period. A leader is deemed to be selfish if he corners all responsibility to himself and does not allow others to learn the art of leadership. In such a situation, the state will have to grapple with the search for new leadership when the incumbent leaves office.

10. A Good Leader must be Worthy of Emulation.

No one can be certified as a good leader unless what he does is worthy of emulation. Allah says,

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ
اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad) you have a good example to emulate; for him who hopes for (the mercies of) Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much. (Qur'an 33:21).

Therefore, a good leader must say excellent things and act in the best ways in order to make others to emulate him. Allah says,

أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ... أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ

Do you enjoin Al-Birr (piety and righteousness and every act of obedience to Allah) on the people and you forget (to practice it) yourselves? ...Have you then no sense? (Qur'an 2:44).

For a Leader to be worthy of emulation, he must cultivate simplicity and self-sacrifice. These are qualities that Islam enjoins, especially for a leader because his behaviour has a direct bearing on the conduct of others. If the leader is seen to be making personal sacrifices, then the followers will make even greater sacrifices. The leader will soon lose all support if he asks others to do so but himself holds back. Similarly, he must have no personal or class interests. The Prophet (SAW), for instance, never did anything to benefit himself or his family only. In fact, throughout his life, he made great personal sacrifices. Often he and his family went without food for days on end.

Once, when his beloved daughter Fatima (RLA) asked for a servant to help with household work in her husband's house, he told her that he was sent to secure the Hereafter, not to seek the comforts of this World. On another occasion, when Umar ibn al-Khattab (RLA) saw marks on his blessed body because the Prophet (SAW) had been lying on a coarse mat on the floor, he asked why the Prophet (SAW) denied himself even the small comforts of life when the rulers of Persia and Rome enjoyed great luxury. The Prophet (SAW) replied that, he has been a guiding light for sincere Muslims throughout their lives: such comforts are for people who wish to cling to this worldly life.

Not only did the Prophet (SAW) personally participate in many battles but in some of the most crucial ones, members of his own family, his uncle Hamza (RLA), and cousins Ali (RLA) and Ja'far (RLA), were in the forefront. Hamza (RLA) was martyred in the battle of Uhud (in 3 AH) while Ja'far (RLA) was martyred in the battle of Mu'ta (in 8 AH). These actions have shown that Leaders must actually lead their subjects all the times and in all cases, for the overall success of the community or Nation.

There is an area in which the Islamic order is fundamentally different from the corrupt secular system today. An Islamic Leader and those in positions of authority make sacrifices so that the downtrodden would have more. In the corrupt secular system, the elites live in luxury while exhorting the people to make sacrifices, telling them that once the rich get richer the benefits of prosperity will trickle-down to the poor. In other words, the poor must wait for the rich to get even richer before the poor will get any relief. In real life, this is not true; as even in many rich societies, the poor are becoming poorer and the rich are getting richer!

The same kind of simplicity in the Islamic Leadership of the Prophet (SAW) was practised by the Rightly Guided Caliphs. Abu Bakr Siddiq (RLA) took a small portion from the public treasury for his family's upkeep because he had to give up his own business when he became the Caliph. On his deathbed, he instructed his family to return to the treasury whatever was left of his possessions. It was this example which prompted Umar ibn al-Khattab (RLA) to say that he had left a very difficult legacy for his successors to follow. During the Caliphate of Umar (RLA), the Companions (RLA) wanted to increase his stipend from the treasury, but he flatly refused despite the fact that the Islamic domain had extended far and wide and having acquired great

riches. Similarly, Ali (RLA) led a very simple life. A Bedouin once found him shivering of cold in a worn out sheet because he could not afford to buy a better cloth to cover himself in.

Such examples of self-sacrifice abound in the early history of Islam. Those leaders never ordered anything that they did not practise themselves. They were always conscious of Allah's command: *"O you who are divinely committed! Why do you say that which you do not practise yourselves? The worst of you in the sight of Allah is he who says that which he does not practise"* (Qur'an 61:02-3).

It was only when Muslim Leaders and Rulers abandoned these principles that they became separated from the people and eventually lost all trust leading to catastrophes of monumental dimensions.

11. A Good Leader must Appreciate the Limits of His Capacity and that of His People.

One of the qualities of a good leader is the ability to assess the capabilities and limits of himself and those of his people. No one has monopoly of knowledge, wisdom or ability neither could one expect his people not to have limitations in thoughts and in actions. Therefore a good leader should do what he can within his limits and guide his people to do what they can within their limits. Anything beyond this will lead to chaos. Allah (SWT) Who created us appreciates our limits and therefore gives us some leeway in worship and in worldly transactions. For example, if you cannot pray while standing you can pray in a seating position. Likewise, if you cannot fast the month of *Ramadhan* you have options to make up for it. So, if Allah will appreciate human limits, who can say he is a "Mr Know-all and Mr do-all?" Allah says:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إِكْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ^ط وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ

On no Soul did Allah place a burden greater than it can bear. It gets every good that it earns, and it suffers every ill that it earns. (Therefore Pray:) "Our Lord! Condemn us not if we forget or fall into error; Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which You did lay on those before us; Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Blot out our sins, and grant us forgiveness. Have mercy on us. You are our Protector; help us against those who stand against faith. (Qur'an 2:286).

Whoever is entrusted with any responsibility and fails to positively perform should either resign or be removed in order to appoint any other person who can positively perform. This is more applicable to Leaders as leadership has no room for failures. No Leader (or any other person for that matter) shall have an excuse to posterity or to Allah for failing to credibly perform his/her duties and still cling to power. Therefore, any person who cannot perform anything, should leave that to those who can perform. This is the fundamental command of Allah.

12. A Good Leader must have Eloquence in Speech

A Leader must be eloquent and articulate. This is required to communicate the purpose of the mission clearly and to inspire people to follow it. An excellent example to Muslims is in the Glorious Qur'an, which itself is the most eloquent document; it

appeals both to the mind and the heart. Of course Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was most eloquent, as he articulated the Message of Islam in a way that was immediately accepted by a small group of people in Mecca. Even the Quraish acknowledged that his message had merit but they opposed it because they viewed it as undermining their personal interests.

To buttress the importance of eloquence in Leadership, let all the Prophets and Messengers of Allah be used as examples. Their histories and stories given in the Qur'an and Sunnah have shown that all of them, in thousands, were eloquent; except Prophet Musa (AS) at one point. He prayed to Allah to relieve him of that weakness before confronting the Pharaoh with Allah's Message. This is reported in the Glorious Qur'an as follows:

قَالَ رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي ﴿١٥﴾ وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي ﴿١٦﴾ وَأَحْلِلْ عُقْدَةً مِّنْ لِّسَانِي ﴿١٧﴾ يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي ﴿١٨﴾ وَاجْعَلْ لِّي وَزِيرًا مِّنْ أَهْلِي ﴿١٩﴾ هَارُونَ أَخِي ﴿٢٠﴾ اشْدُدْ بِهِ أَزْرِي ﴿٢١﴾ وَأَشْرِكْهُ فِي أَمْرِي ﴿٢٢﴾ كَيْ نُسَبِّحَكَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٢٣﴾ وَنَذْكُرَكَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٢٤﴾ إِنَّكَ كُنْتَ بِنَا بَصِيرًا ﴿٢٥﴾

(Prophet Musa)] said: "O My Lord! Open for me my chest (grant me self-confidence, contentment, and boldness). And ease my task for me. And make loose the knot (the defect) from my tongue, (i.e. remove the stammering from my speech). So that they (Pharaoh's people) will understand my speech. And appoint for me a helper from my family. Harun my brother. Increase my strength with him. And let him share my task (of conveying Allah's message and Prophethood). That we may glorify You much. And remember You much. Verily! You are of us ever a Well-Seer. (Qur'an 20:25-35)

CHAPTER FIVE

THE OBLIGATIONS OF LEADERS

The Qualities of Good Leaders enumerated in Chapter Four above, have gone along to show what the Obligations of Leaders are. However, it is worth mentioning that, the major obligation of leaders to followers is that they must be just and fair in their dealings with them and honest and sincere in the distribution and utilisation of state wealth. Leaders who are not fair and just have the torments of Hell-fire awaiting them in the Hereafter, as Allah (SWT) told Prophet Dawud (King David)- AS.

يَا دَاوُدُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاكَ خَلِيفَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ
فَيُضِلَّكَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَضِلُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ

Oh Dawud (King David)! Verily, We have placed you as a successor on the earth; so judge you between men in truth (and justice) and follow not your desire, for it will mislead you from the path of Allah. Verily, those who wander astray from the path of Allah (shall) have a severe torment (in Hell-fire). (Qur'an 38:26).

Besides being fair and just, leaders must fulfil all promises made to their people, ensure that peoples' health, education and economic wellbeing are safeguarded and boosted in order to provide a conducive atmosphere for the worship of Allah and for day-to-day comfortable living. In addition, peace and security of lives and properties must be enhanced and guaranteed by leaders. Below is a summary of the major tasks a Leader must perform:

1. Articulation of his Vision for his People

Clear articulation of the leader's vision as well as his firm conviction to achieve that vision, are the primary requirements for any leadership to bring about change. Those who are subjects must

know the ultimate objective. For example, when the Messenger of Allah (SAW) started to deliver the message of Islam, it was clear and concise: “Worship of the One and only God, Allah, who has no partners, and Muhammad, upon who be peace, is the Messenger of Allah”. There was no ambiguity about it. It was a direct challenge to the existing order based on tribal affiliations, exploitation and an arrogant belief in self-importance. The Prophet (SAW) challenged the very foundations of the decayed system of the people by calling for a new order based on *Tawheed* (Oneness of Allah and Muslim Brotherhood).

Therefore, visions must be articulated in such ways that the changes they bring are beneficial to the people. In these regards, the leader shall have the absolute confidence and support of the people. Thus, the goal was articulated in such a way that its recipients understood it clearly and were prepared to face any challenge to defend it.

2. Inspiring and Motivating People

Together with a clear articulation of the vision, the leader must inspire and motivate people. Translating vision into action is an important task. The leader must turn people's indifference into interest, pessimism into optimism and motivate them to action for the realisation of the goal. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) was able to motivate people who not only accepted the Message but were also prepared to sacrifice their lives for it. This level of commitment was not inspired by any enticements to worldly gains only; but ultimately to the everlasting joys of the Hereafter. Thus, people are likely to obey and support a leader whose inspiration and motivation is geared towards a life that shall ensure peace,

security and progress in this World and ultimate Paradise in the Hereafter.

3. Proper Understanding of the Existing Order

In order to motivate people, a correct analysis of the prevailing system is necessary. It is only when people understand that the existing system is exploitative and unjust that they will be motivated to work to change it. A leader must outline an effective strategy for dealing with the prevailing order, especially in surmounting problems and difficulties that will be encountered when it is challenged. He must also indicate what he plans to replace it with. In Mecca, the Prophet (SAW) rejected the unjust prevailing order; he called people to the worship of One God, to abandon killings, especially of their daughters, and to be truthful and honest in their dealings with each other. He also called for an end to oppression of the weak. Despite great oppression and persecution, the Prophet (SAW) did not directly respond to such provocations; he also urged his Companions (RLA) to endure their hardships with patience. A leader must therefore make his followers to understand the misgivings of the existing order and why and how it should be changed.

4. Initiate, Guide and Control Change

A successful leader is should be able to initiate, guide and control change in order to achieve the desired objectives. Many movements, even those struggling for a genuine cause, are often subverted from within by “Agents Provocateurs”, or when people are forced to move too quickly because they arouse expectations which cannot be fulfilled. It is the responsibility of the leader to keep the expectations of the people within realistic limits. The Mission of Prophet Musa (AS) was temporarily sabotaged by

Samirri in his absence even though he had left his brother, Haroon (AS), another Prophet, in charge of the people (Al-Qur'an 2:92-93). During the time of the Prophet (SAW) in Medina, there were *munaḥiqun* (hypocrites) in the ranks of the Muslims who made every effort to subvert Islam from within but the great *hikmah* of the Prophet (SAW) overcame all their attempts.

It is, therefore, important for the leader to guide and control change as well as overcome the obstacles to change to ensure the desired result. Often the difference between success and failure is predicated on the pace and direction of change. In fact, a leader himself is judged on the basis of whether he is able to bring about change that is in consonance with the vision he has articulated. A good leader is able to see an opportunity and take advantage of it to advance the cause. Great leaders often create opportunities by challenging the status quo.

5. Sustaining Movement of Followers Over the Long-term

Sustainability of the movement is one of the most difficult tasks a leader faces. Initially, people may participate because their enthusiasm is aroused and they have not encountered any problems or difficulties. But when obstacles or difficulties arise, some people abandon the struggle. One of the essential qualities of a leader is that he is able to secure continuous cooperation of the group. The Prophet (SAW) achieved this both in Mecca and in Medina. In Mecca the people were persecuted, yet their loyalty was retained. In Medina, the Hosts (*Ansar*) were motivated to make great sacrifices by accommodating and looking after the Migrants (*Muhajiroun*) as well as offering protection to the Prophet (SAW). An additional challenge was to prevent any misunderstandings arising between them as a result of the sudden

influx of such a large number of people in Medina. There were trouble-makers trying to create dissension in the ranks of the Muslims. These events are pointers that a leader should expect all sorts of challenges to his followers; therefore he must articulate ways and means to sustain the movement of his followers. Similarly, mobilising human and material resources to sustain the movement is another important task a leader must perform.

6. Spiritual and Moral Satisfaction

All activity is undertaken because it provides some degree of satisfaction. The higher the level of satisfaction, the greater the willingness of the people to identify with the mission and the greater their readiness to make sacrifices for it. Satisfaction is, therefore, an important consideration in the motivation of a group. Most leaders in the world today appeal to such notions as nationalism, race, material benefits, etc. Worldly temptations often act as a strong motivational force. Islam does not resort to such worldly temptations only. Islam offers “The best in this World and the best in the Hereafter” (Qur'an). Because, a Nation built under good Islamic leadership shall make life peaceful and beneficial in this World, which translate to upholding the tenets of Islam leading to the best in the Hereafter. For instance, the Islam allows Zakat funds to be used to free slaves or to win people's hearts (Al-Qur'an 9:60). In Islam, the satisfaction is more spiritual and moral rather than material.

7. Leadership is a Trust

In Islam, leadership is an *Amanah* (a Trust) and the job of the leader is to discharge this responsibility to the best of his abilities. Failure to do so will render him liable before Allah on the Day of Judgement. In the Islamic system, a person does not seek

leadership; it is entrusted to him because it is a grave responsibility. The candidate must be a good communicator, able to motivate and mobilise people and inspire them to rise above petty preoccupations for the sake of a higher and nobler purpose, which is the establishment and defence of the Islamic State. This he must demonstrate through personal sacrifice, courage and ability to keep the group focused on the goal.

The most important task of a leader, however, is to implement the Laws of Allah on Earth. This is the ultimate mission of man as Allah's *Khalifah* (vicegerent) on Earth which can only be achieved in the framework of the Islamic State. The *Seerah* (Life History) of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) offers the best and most comprehensive guide and model to achieve this.

CHAPTER SIX

THE OBLIGATIONS OF FOLLOWERS

As there are obligations incumbent upon leaders; so also are obligations on the followers if success is to be achieved. Both parties must strive to fulfil their obligations in order to have the much needed balance to succeed. No nation can live in peace and harmony and attain progress and development without a cordial leadership and followership relationship.

Followers are obliged to respect and obey their leaders, Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِيَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ ۚ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ
ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with Authority among you. If you differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you do believe in Allah and the Last Day: that is best, and most suitable for final determination. (Qur'an 4:59)

Without respect and obedience to leaders, whatever good plans they have for the people cannot be actualized. But obedience to leaders (and to parents) is only obligatory as long as they do not instruct people to do anything against what Allah has ordained.

In his first speech as *Khalifah* of the Muslims, Abu Bakr Siddiq (RLA) proved himself an ideal of modesty and humility. There was total absence of the kind of arrogance one finds in modern-day rulers when they assume power. They proclaim their own virtues

and the great feats they will perform. The attitude of Abu Bakr Siddiq (RLA) was totally different. He said:

I have been appointed as ruler over you although I am not the best among you. I have never sought this position nor has there ever been a desire in my heart to have this in preference to anyone else... If I do right, you must help and obey me; if I go astray, set me aright... Obey me so long as I obey Allah and His Messenger. If I disobey them, then you have no obligation to follow me (Reported in Tabari)

Therefore, when leaders are not doing the right things, it is obligatory to advise them accordingly. However, caution must be exercised in giving the advice. It is common nowadays for people to rush to the mass media and castigate leaders instead of using wisdom and fair speech in advising them. Let us remember that there can never be a worse leader than the Pharaoh associated with Prophets Musa and Haroon –AS- (Moses and Aaron) whose transgression culminated in his saying:-

فَقَالَ أَنَا رَبُّكُمُ الْأَعْلَى

He (Pharaoh) said “I am your supreme Lord (God)” (Qur’an 79:24)

Because of the greatness of the Pharaoh’s transgression Allah promised to preserve his corpse to serve as a lesson to those that shall come after him.

فَالْيَوْمَ نُنَجِّيكَ بِبَدَنِكَ لِتَكُونَ لِمَنْ خَلْفَكَ آيَةً

So this day We (Allah) shall deliver your (dead) body (out from the Sea) that you may be a sign to those who come after you! (Qur’an 10:92).

The body of the Pharaoh is richly preserved today in the Cairo Museum thousands of years after his death!

Despite the Pharaoh's transgressions and the worst leadership style in recorded history, Allah (SWT) sent two Messengers (Prophets Musa and Haroon- Moses and Aaron-AS) to him and asked them to use mild language in talking to him, but not to castigate him.

اذْهَبَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَىٰ , فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهُ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشَىٰ

Go both of you to Fir'aun (Pharaoh), verily, he has transgressed (all bounds in disbelief and disobedience and behaved as an arrogant and as a tyrant). And speak to him mildly, perhaps he may accept admonition or fear (Allah). (Qur'an 20:43-44).

Allah (SWT) knows that the Pharaoh will not accept admonition but asked the two Prophets to use mild language in order to teach people how to approach leaders with respect in speech (even if they are tyrants).

Therefore, leaders should be respected and obeyed and if they go wrong, they should be advised through the use of mild and not harsh language. In addition, they should be assisted to carry out good works.

Abu Hurayrah (RLA) reported that, the Prophet (SAW) said:

مَنْ أَطَاعَنِي فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَقَدْ عَصَى اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ أَطَاعَ أَمِيرِي فَقَدْ أَطَاعَنِي، وَمَنْ عَصَى أَمِيرِي فَقَدْ عَصَانِي

Whoever obeys me, obeys Allah, and whoever disobeys me, disobeys Allah, and whoever obeys the Ruler I appoint, obeys me, and whoever disobeys him, disobeys me. (Bukari and Muslim)

The Prophet (SAW) once sent a man on an expedition and instructed the people with him to obey him. One day, they angered

the man so he ordered them to gather wood and they did. He then ordered them to start a large fire and they did. He then commanded them to throw themselves in it. They refused saying, “We only followed the Messenger of Allah (SAW) out of fear of the Fire!” When they returned to the Prophet (SAW), they informed him of the incident to which he said:

إِنَّهُمْ لَوْ دَخَلُوهَا مَا خَرَجُوا مِنْهَا، إِنَّمَا الطَّاعَةُ فِي الْمَعْرُوفِ

Indeed, had they entered it, they would never have come out from it. Obedience is only in that which is good. (Bukhari and Muslim)

Ali (RLA) reported that, the Prophet (SAW) said:

لَا طَاعَةَ فِي مَعْصِيَةِ إِنَّمَا الطَّاعَةُ فِي الْمَعْرُوفِ

There is no obedience to anyone if it is disobedience to Allah. Verily, obedience is only in good conduct. (Sahih Bukhari)

In Islam, the concepts of leadership and followership hold significant importance. Followership in Islam entails the following and the obedience to Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW). In addition, Followers are obligated to follow, obey, trust and support their Leaders, as long as their leadership is in accordance with the teachings of Islam. Islam encourages Believers to follow righteous leaders who uphold justice, integrity, and the welfare of the community. However, blind conformity is discouraged, and followers are encouraged to exercise critical thinking and hold leaders accountable if their actions deviate from Islamic Principles. Very importantly, Followers in Islam are not passive recipients but active contributors to the betterment of the community. Islam encourages individuals to use their unique skills, talents, and resources for the collective welfare. Followers are called upon to engage in acts of charity, volunteerism, and community service,

actively working towards positive change and the fulfillment of their responsibilities as Muslims.

It should be emphasised that, in Islam, the concepts of leadership and followership are intertwined, emphasising the need for leaders to serve with humility and followers to support with trust and active participation. The Quran provides guidance for both leaders and followers, encouraging them to uphold the principles of justice, compassion, and righteousness in their respective roles. By embracing the teachings of the Quran, Muslim leaders and followers can foster a harmonious community built on mutual respect, collaboration, and the pursuit of collective well-being.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RIGHTS OF CITIZENS, WHICH MUSLIM LEADERS MUST ENSURE, WHETHER IN AN ISLAMIC OR A NON-ISLAMIC STATE

Those who are bestowed with the Leadership of a Nation, in whatever nomenclature: State, Nation, Country, Kingdom, etc; must ensure that the Basic Rights of Citizens are provided to them and protected. This is irrespective of whether the Nation is an Islamic State where the absolute citizens are Muslims, or in a Non-Islamic State where the citizens are a mixture of Muslims, Christians, and/or other Faiths.

The Rights enumerated below are those that are sanctioned by Islam; and they are more extensive than the general Human Rights, which have been talked about at International Levels. Many Muslim States and Muslim Organisations have articulated these Rights that shall be guaranteed for all Citizens irrespective of their Religious, Cultural or other leanings; as long as they reside in the affected State where a Muslim is the Leader. One of the best of such Rights articulated was that of the International Islamic University of Malaysia as posted on their website.

1. The Security of Life and Property

In the address which the Prophet (SAW) delivered on the occasion of the Farewell Hajj, he said: *"Your lives and properties are forbidden to one another till you meet your Lord on the Day of Resurrection."*

Allah (SWT) has laid down in the Glorious Qur'an that: *"Anyone who kills a Believer deliberately will receive as his reward (a*

sentence) to live in Hell for ever. Allah will be angry with him and curse him, and prepare dreadful torment for him" (4:93).

The Prophet has also said about the *Dhimmis* (the Non-Muslim citizens of the Muslim State): *"One who kills a man under covenant (i.e. a Dhimmi) will not even smell the fragrance of Paradise"* (al-Bukhari and Abu Dawud).

Islam prohibits homicide but allows only one exception, that the killing is done in the due process of Law which the Qur'an refers to as *bil-haqq* (with the truth). Therefore a man can be killed only when the Law demands it, and it is obvious that only a Court of Law can decide whether the execution is being carried out with justice or without justification.

In case of war or insurrection a just and righteous government alone, which follows the Shari'ah or the Islamic Law, can decide whether a war is just or unjust, whether taking of a life is justified or not; and whether a person is a rebel or not and who can be sentenced to death as a punishment. These weighty decisions cannot be left in the hands of a Court alone that has become heedless to Allah and is under the influence of corruption. A Judiciary like this may miscarry justice.

Nor can the crimes of the State be justified on the Qur'an or the Hadith when the State murders its citizens openly and secretly without any hesitation or on the slightest pretext, because they are opposed to its unjust policies and actions or criticise it for its misdeeds. The very existence of such a government is a crime and none of the killings carried out by it can be "execution for the sake of justice" in the phraseology of the Qur'an or the Sunnah.

Along with security of life, Islam has with equal clarity and definiteness conferred the right of security of ownership of

property, as mentioned in an address of the Farewell Hajj of the Prophet (SAW). On the other hand, the Qur'an goes so far as to declare that the taking of people's possessions or property is completely prohibited unless they are acquired by lawful means as permitted in the Laws of Allah. The Law of Allah (SWT) categorically declares that:

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدْلُوا بِهَآ إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا
مِّنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾

And do not eat up one another's property unjustly (in any illegal way e.g. stealing, robbing, deceiving, etc.), nor give bribery to the rulers (judges before presenting your cases) that you may knowingly eat up a part of the property of others sinfully. (Qur'an 2: 188)

Therefore, it is the strict responsibility of the Leadership to ensure that citizens and their properties are closely guarded against insurgents, bandits, thieves, militants and all other criminals by whatever names or titles they go by.

2. The Protection of Honour

Another important right is the right of the citizens to the protection of their honour. In the address delivered on the occasion of the Farewell Hajj, the Prophet (SAW) prohibited the encroachment upon the people's honour, respect and chastity by the State or by one another. The Quran clearly lays down that:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ مِّنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا
نِسَاءٌ مِّنْ نِّسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ ۚ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا

بِالْأَلْقَابِ ۚ بئسَ الْأَسْمُ الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ ۚ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَتُبْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
 الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿١١﴾ يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ
 إِثْمٌ ۚ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبَ بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ۚ أَنُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ
 لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ

O You who believe! Let not a group scoff at another group, it may be that the latter are better than the former; nor let (some) women scoff at other women, it may be that the latter are better than the former, nor defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames. How bad is it, to insult one's brother after having Faith! And whosoever does not repent, then such are indeed Zalimun (wrong-doers, etc.).

O You who believe! Avoid much suspicion; indeed some suspicions are sins. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it (so hate backbiting). And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is the one who accepts repentance, Most Merciful. (Qur'an 49: 11-12)

This is the Law of Islam for the protection of honour which is indeed much superior to the Western Law of Defamation. According to the Islamic Law if it is proved that someone has attacked the honour of another person, then irrespective of the fact whether or not the victim is able to prove himself a respectable and honourable person the culprit will in any case get his due punishment. But the interesting fact about the Western Law of Defamation is that the person who files suit for defamation has first to prove that he is a man of honour and public esteem and during the interrogation he is subjected to the scurrilous attacks,

accusations and innuendoes of the defence council to such an extent that he earns more disgrace than the attack on his reputation against which he had gone to the Court of Law for protection! According to the Islamic Law the mere proof of the fact that the accused had said things which according to common sense could have damaged the reputation and honour of the plaintiff, is enough for the accused to be declared guilty of defamation.

3. The Sanctity and Security of Private Life

Islam recognises the right of every citizen in a State that there should be no undue interference or encroachment on the privacy of his life. The Qur'an has laid down the injunctions that:

يَتَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبَ بَّعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ؕ تُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ؕ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ؕ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾

O You who believe! Avoid much suspicion; indeed some suspicions are sins. And spy not, neither backbite one another. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You would hate it (so hate backbiting). And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is the one who accepts repentance, Most Merciful. (Qur'an 49: 11-12)

يَتَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ بُيُوتِكُمْ حَتَّىٰ تَسْتَأْذِنُوا وَتُسَلِّمُوا عَلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا ؕ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

O You who Believe! Enter not houses other than your own, until you have asked permission and greeted those in them, that is better for you, in order that you may remember. (Qur'an 24:27)

The Prophet (SAW) has gone to the extent of instructing that a man should not enter even his own house suddenly or surreptitiously. He should somehow inform or indicate to the dwellers of the house that he is entering the house, so that he may not see his mother, sister or daughter in a condition in which they would not like to be seen, nor would he himself like to see them in that condition.

Peeping into the houses of other people has also been strictly prohibited by the Prophet (SAW); and he has also prohibited people from reading the letters of others, so much so that if a man is reading his letter and another man casts sidelong glances at it and tries to read it, his conduct becomes reprehensible. Abu Hurayrah (RLA) reported that, the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:

مَنْ اطَّلَعَ فِي بَيْتِ قَوْمٍ بِغَيْرِ إِذْنِهِمْ فَقَدْ حَلَّ لَهُمْ أَنْ يَفْقَهُوا عَيْنَهُ

He who peeped into the house of people without their consent, it is permissible for them to put out his eyes. (Sahih Muslim)

Abdullah ibn Abbas (RLA) reported that, the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: “*He who sees the letter of his brother without his permission, sees Hell-fire!*” (Sunan of Abu-Dawood)

These are the sanctities of privacy that Islam grants to individuals. On the other hand, in the modern World, we find that not only the letters of other people are read and their correspondence censored, but even their Photostat copies are retained for blackmail. Even bugging devices are secretly fixed in the houses of the people so that one can hear and tape from a distance the conversation taking place behind closed doors. In other words it means that there is no such thing as privacy and to all practical purposes the private life of an individual does not exist.

4. The Security of Personal Freedom

Islam has also laid down the principle that no citizen can be imprisoned unless his guilt has been proved beyond reasonable doubt in an open Court of Law. To arrest a man only on the basis of suspicion and to throw him into a prison without proper Court proceedings and without providing him a reasonable opportunity to produce his defence is not permissible in Islam. It is related in the Hadith that once the Prophet (SAW) was delivering a lecture in the Masjid (Mosque), when a man rose during the lecture and said:

"O Prophet of Allah, for what crime have my neighbours been arrested?"

The Prophet (SAW) heard the question and continued his speech. The man rose once again and repeated the same question. The Prophet (SAW) again did not answer and continued his speech. The man rose for a third time and repeated the same question. Then the Prophet (SAW) ordered that the man's neighbours be released. The reason why the Prophet (SAW) had kept quiet when the question was repeated twice earlier was that the Officer who arrested the neighbours was present in the Masjid and if there were proper reasons for the arrest of the neighbours of this man, he would have got up to explain his position.

Since the Officer gave no reasons for the arrests, the Prophet (SAW) ordered that the arrested persons should be released. The fact that the Officer did not give any reasons for the arrests in the open was sufficient reason for the Prophet (SAW) to give immediate orders for the release of the arrested men.

The injunction of the Qur'an is very clear on this point. Allah (SWT) says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا

Verily! Allah commands that you should render back the trusts to those, to whom they are due; and that when you judge between men, you judge with justice. Verily, how excellent is the teaching which He (Allah) gives you! Truly, Allah is ever All Hearer, All Seer. (Qur'an 4:58)

The words used here clearly show that justice means due process of Law. What has been prohibited and condemned is that a man be arrested and imprisoned without clear proof of his guilt in an open Court of Law and without providing him an opportunity to defend himself against those charges. If the Government suspects that a particular individual has committed a crime or he is likely to commit an offence in the near future then they should give reasons for their suspicion before a Court of Law and the culprit or the suspect should be allowed to produce his defence in an open Court, so that the Court may decide whether the suspicion against him is based on sound grounds or not and if there is good reason for suspicion, then he should be informed of how long he will be in preventive detention. This decision should be taken under all circumstances in an open Court, so that the public may hear the charges brought by the Government, as well as the defence made by the accused and see that the due process of Law is being applied to him and he is not being victimised.

5. The Right to Basic Necessities of Life

The State should do everything possible to ensure that citizens have access to the basic necessities of life, those are: Food, Water, Shelter, Clothing and the like. Here, it is a major duty of the

Government to provide ways and means for able people to access these facilities. For example, in the World today, provision for infrastructure and other facilities for agriculture, water, commerce, industry, communication, transport, etc., should be priorities so as to enable people to be self reliant in the basic necessities of life. Those who are not able to use such facilities for the reason of destitution either as a result of ill-health or incapacitation, Islam has provided for the institution of Zakat to care for them. This is in addition to the palliatives that the Government may give from its other sources of revenue. Islam has recognised the right of the needy people that help and assistance will be provided for them, therefore it instituted Zakat. Allah says:

وَفِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِّلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ ﴿٥١﴾

And in their wealth there is acknowledged right for the needy and the destitute (51:19).

The importance of Zakat cannot be overemphasised. It is one of the five Pillars upon which Islam is built. It is compulsory and a necessary obligation that must be satisfied as long the conditions are met. The consequences of not paying out Zakat in this World are clear to Muslims. They include poverty, hardships, disasters, crises, social and economic problems, etc. The consequences in the Hereafter are well spelt out in the Glorious Qur'an and the Beautiful Sunnah.

Allah (SWT) mentioned Zakat over 80 times jointly with Salat in the Glorious Qur'an as an emphasis on the cleansing nature of Salat on the human body and soul; and the cleansing nature of Zakat on the human wealth! For example, Allah states:

And perform As-Salat, and give out Zakkat, and bow down (or submit yourselves with obedience to Allah); along with those who bow down (Qur'an 2:43)

*As-Sadaqat (Zakkat) are for the Fuqara (poor), and Al-Masakin (needy) **and those employed to collect (and administer the funds);** and for to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined (towards Islam); and to free the captives; and for those in debt; and for Allah's Cause (i.e. for Mujahidun), and for the wayfarer (a traveller who is cut off from everything); **(this is a compulsory duty imposed by Allah.** And Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise. (Qur'an 9:60).*

When Khalifa Abubakar Saddiq (RLA) became the Caliph after the death of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), some Muslims refused to pay Zakat. Abubakar (RLA) responded by saying that Allah (SWT) says: *Take Sadaqat (Zakkat) from their wealth in order to purify them and sanctify them with it... (Qur'an 9:103)*

Abubakar (RLA) also related what Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said,: *I have been commanded (by Allah) to fight against the people till they testify that there is no true deity worthy of worship except Allah and that (me) Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and to establish As-Salat and to pay Zakat; and if they do this, then their blood and their property are secured except by the rights of Islam (Bukhari and Muslim reported it from Abu Huraira - RLA)*

With these two references, Abubakar (RLA) sent a message to those who refused to pay the Zakat as follows:

I will fight whoever separates Salat and Zakat, for Zakat is the compulsory right to be taken from wealth. By Allah, if they withhold from me a young goat that they used to give to the

Messenger of Allah (SAW), I will fight them for withholding it (An-Nasa'i reported it from Abu Huraira - RLA)

A truly Islamic State is therefore a truly welfare State, which will be the guardian and protector of all those in need.

6. The Right to Good Healthcare and Well-being

In the case of the citizens' Right to Healthcare, there are many Verses in the Qur'an and many Hadith emphasising health and wellbeing as a blessing and illness as a test. The sources exhort the status of the ill, saying that those who are sick have the right to be cared for and those who are in a position to do so have a duty to care for them. The State responsibility with regards to man's Right to Healthcare is based on the following principles that are central to Islamic government:

1. Man is an honoured creature. Such an honour bestowed by God requires that man should be protected so as to enjoy good and complete health. Allah says:

And indeed we have honoured the Children of Adam, and we have carried them on land and sea, and have provided them with At-Taiyibat (lawful good things), and have preferred them above many of those whom We have created with a marked preference. (Qur'an 17:70)

2. Islamic Law has been devised in order to protect and promote man's five essential needs: faith, life, progeny, property and mind. It is clear that three of these five essential needs, namely life, progeny and mind, cannot be properly protected without healthcare protection.

3. The right to life applies to every human being, and it must be honoured and defended. A single human life is valued as equal to

all humanity. Healthcare is paramount in caring for life. Thus, an assault resulting in the killing of a single human being, even though he may be a child, an elderly or a handicapped person, represents an aggression against all mankind: Allah says:

If anyone slays a human being, for anything other than in punishment of murder or for spreading corruption on earth, it shall be as though he had slain all mankind; and if anyone saves a human life, it shall be as though he had saved all mankind (5:32)

4. Justice and perfection are two highly important values that must be applied uniformly to all citizens irrespective of their Faith, status, culture, etc. Applying justice to all in the case of healthcare is therefore paramount. Leaders and their families should not seek for healthcare in outside Countries and allow the ordinary citizens to rot.

With regards to the above four principles, it is pertinent to point out that all those values were put into practice from the first period of Islamic civilization:

Sick people had the right to medical care provided by the State. An example is the following report: As he passed through Al-Jabiyah in Damascus, Syria, Caliph Umar (RLA) passed by a group of Christians suffering from leprosy. He ordered that they be given a portion of Zakat and a food allowance. (Reported in Al-Balathori, Futooh al-buldan)

All children were entitled to care provided by the State, as explained in this report: Caliph Umar (RLA) established a benefit for a newborn amounting to 100 Dirham. When the child grew up the benefit was raised up to 200 Dirham, and increased again when the child attained puberty. Caliph Umar (RLA) also gave abandoned children an allowance of 100 Dirham and a maintenance allowance to the child's guardian to look after him or

her. The allowance was increased year after year. Caliph Umar (RLA) urged people to take care of abandoned children, and ordered that their expenses, particularly their suckling, be paid by the public treasury”.(Reported by Ibn Saad, Al-Tabaqat)

Incapacitated, handicapped and elderly people were also entitled to State care, as outlined in the peace treaty concluded by Khalid ibn Al-Walid and the people of Al-Heerah (who were Christians), which states: “I have also agreed the following condition: Any old person who is too weak to work, or any person who falls victim to a disease, or a rich person who suffers a loss of his means so that his co-religionists would give him part of their charity shall be (1) exempt from the Jizya tax, and (2) provided for, with his dependents, from the Islamic State treasury as long as he lives in the Islamic State”. (Reported by Imam Abu Yussuf, Al-Kharaj)

It is clear from all these examples that the Islamic state considers the right to health as a human right applicable to all human beings with no discrimination on the basis of colour, race or religion.

Moreover, care is provided by the Islamic State from birth, ensuring that every child is breast-fed, and continues into old age, making sure that each elderly person receives an allowance ensuring healthy living.

In between birth and old age, government care is available to everyone who is ill, incapacitated, handicapped or sustaining a serious injury.

All human beings, whatever their status or affiliation, were, in the Islamic State, entitled to equal healthcare, preventive or curative. This is indeed the essence of the goal advocated fourteen centuries later by the World Health Organization, which is defined as “Health for All”.

7. The Right to Quality Education

In Islam, there has been a strong emphasis on education based on Allah's instruction in the Glorious Qur'an, thus:

أَقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ﴿٢﴾ أَلَمْ يَكُنْ أَكْرَمَ ﴿٣﴾ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ﴿٤﴾ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ﴿٥﴾

Read! In the Name of your Lord; Who has created (all that exists). He has created man from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous. Who has taught (writing) by the pen. He has taught man that which he knew not. (Qur'an 96:1-5)

The first Word of the Qur'an to be revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was “*Iqra*”, which means “Read.” Reading is the avenue to education, and it is the means through which knowledge can be gained. Being the first revealed Word, “Read” serves to symbolise the importance of education in Islam. In Islam, seeking for knowledge is incumbent on every Muslim, be they male or female. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, “*Acquisition of knowledge is binding on all Muslims (both men and women without any discrimination)*” (Reported in Sunan Ibn Majah)

Education in Islam can be categorised into two types:

1. Religious Education – This type of education consists of learning and interpreting the Holy Scriptures in Islam such as the Qur'an and the Hadith. This type of education serves to increase spirituality and act as a guide on living one's life in the best spiritual way possible.
2. Worldly Education – This is the type of education that is concerned with worldly matters. These include trade, commerce,

industry, man to man dealings, etc. By increasing in worldly education, an individual can positively influence the society that they live in, and thereby the World at large.

Education is therefore regarded as a very essential Human Right in Islam. This over 1,400 years old provision in Islam has spurred the whole World to embrace the Basic Human Rights Education Policy. This provides that, every individual has a right to education irrespective of gender, race or social standing.

Education plays a pivotal role in the upbringing of a child; it nurtures their way of thinking and expands their mind. Subsequently, it is one of the most influencing factors in the development of a child. Spurred on by Islam's call to education, many Muslim scholars deeply explored the oceans of knowledge and made astounding discoveries and innovations that were later to form the core basis of many modern scientific disciplines. In Islam, the acquisition of wisdom has been made obligatory by Divine commandment. The aim of education in Islam is to associate and balance a person's physical and spiritual growth. Furthermore, Islam advocates the advancement of free education for everyday life and core ethical & religious values.

8. The Right to Protest Against Tyranny and Evil

Amongst the rights that Islam has conferred on human beings is the right to protest against tyranny. Allah (SWT) states that:

Let arise from among you a group of people inviting to what is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is evil. They are the ones to attain felicity. (Qur'an 3:104).

Establish prayer, enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil, and endure patiently whatever befalls you. Verily! These are among the most important Commandments ordained by Allah. (Qur'an 31:17)

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

Whoever amongst you sees evil being committed, he must change it with his Hands (i.e. use his authority); if he is incapable of doing so, then with his Tongue (i.e. to give advice); if he is incapable of doing so, then with his Heart (i.e. to hate it), and that is the weakest of Faith. (Sahih Muslim)

The quoted Qur'an Verses are clear and unambiguous; and among the most important commands from Allah (SWT). Glad tidings are given in the Verses to those who obey the commandments, as they are the ones who shall attain Allah's Felicity, Grace and Mercy both in this World and in the Hereafter. Transgressors shall be doomed to punishments both in this World and in the Hereafter.

The quoted Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) instructs people who have authority to use their power to remove/forbid evil; those who are not in a position of authority but have the leeway to offer advice, to offer that advice for the removal/forbidding of evil; and those who are ordinary citizens who have no authority and have no leeway to offer advice, to hate the committing of evil, and that is the least of what is expected of the Faithful. Not forbidding evil and not enjoining what is right shall invite Allah's wrath to the extent of His forsaking the people and not accepting their supplications. This is clearly the misfortune that has befallen Nigeria!

In Islam, the concepts of leadership and followership hold significant importance. Followership in Islam entails the following and the obedience to Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW). In addition, Followers are obligated to follow, obey, trust and support their Leaders, as long as their leadership is in accordance with the teachings of Islam. Islam encourages Believers to follow righteous

leaders who uphold justice, integrity, and the welfare of the community. However, blind conformity is discouraged, and followers are encouraged to exercise critical thinking and hold leaders accountable if their actions deviate from Islamic Principles.

Therefore, when leaders are not doing the right things, it is obligatory to advise them accordingly. However, caution must be exercised in giving the advice. It is common nowadays for people to rush to the mass media and castigate leaders instead of using wisdom and fair speech in advising them.

Let it be noted that, Leaders should be respected and obeyed and if they go wrong, they should be advised through the use of mild and not harsh language. In addition, they should be assisted to carry out good works. However if Leaders embrace tyranny and evil, they should not be obeyed and all peaceful means should be employed to protest. Ali (RLA) reported that, the Prophet (SAW) said:

لَا طَاعَةَ فِي مَعْصِيَةِ إِيْمَا الطَّاعَةِ فِي الْمَعْرُوفِ

There is no obedience to anyone if it is disobedience to Allah. Verily, obedience is only in good conduct. (Sahih Bukhari)

9. Freedom of Thought and Expression

Islam gives the right of freedom of thought and expression to all citizens of the Islamic State on the condition that it should be used for the propagation of virtue and truth and not for spreading evil and wickedness. This Islamic concept of freedom of expression is much superior to the concept prevalent in the West. Under no circumstances would Islam allow evil and wickedness to be propagated. It also does not give anybody the right to use abusive or offensive language in the name of criticism. The right to

freedom of expression for the sake of propagating virtue and righteousness is not only a right in Islam but an obligation. One who tries to deny this right to his people is openly at war with Allah, the All-Powerful. And the same thing applies to the right to stop people from evil. Whether this evil is perpetrated by an individual or by a group of people or the government; it is the right of a Muslim and it is also his obligation that he should warn and reprimand the evil-doer and try to stop him from doing it. Over and above these, he should openly and publicly condemn it and show the course of righteousness which that individual, Nation or Government should adopt. Allah (SWT) has described this quality of the Faithful in the following words:

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٧١﴾

The Believers, men and women, are protectors one of another: They enjoin what is just and forbid what is evil: They observe regular prayers, practise regular charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is Exalted in power, wise. (Qur'an 9:71).

In the contrast, describing the qualities of the hypocrite, Allah (SWT) mentions that:

الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ بَعْضُهُم مِّنْ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمُنْكَرِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ
عَنِ الْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَقْبِضُونَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ هُمُ
الْفَاسِقُونَ

The Hypocrites, men and women, (have an understanding) with each other: They enjoin evil, and forbid what is just, and are close with their hands. They have forgotten Allah. So He has forgotten them. Verily the Hypocrites are rebellious and perverse. (Qur'an 9:67)

The Prophet SAW), while emphasising on the freedom to stop or at the least to castigate evil, has said:

Whoever amongst you sees evil being committed, he must change it with his Hands (i.e. use his authority); if he is incapable of doing so, then with his Tongue (i.e. to give advice); if he is incapable of doing so, then with his Heart (i.e. to hate it), and that is the weakest of Faith. (Sahih Muslim)

This obligation of inviting people to righteousness and forbidding them from adopting the paths of evil is incumbent on all true Muslims. If any government deprives its citizens of this right, and prevents them from performing this duty, then it is in direct conflict with the injunction of Allah. In this case, the government is not in conflict with its people, but is in conflict with Allah. In this way it is at war with Allah and is trying to usurp that right of its people which Allah has conferred not only as a right but as an obligation to them.

As far as the government that itself propagates evil, wickedness and obscenity and interferes with those who are inviting people to virtue and righteousness is concerned, it is the government of the hypocrites.

10. Freedom of Association

Islam has also given people the right to freedom of association and formation of groups or organisations. This right is also subject to certain general rules. It should be exercised for propagating virtue

and righteousness and should never be used for spreading evil and mischief. People have not only been given this right for spreading righteousness and virtue, but have been ordered to exercise this right. Addressing the Muslims, Allah declares:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ ۚ وَلَوْ ءَامَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ ۚ مِنْهُمْ
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

You (Muslims) are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah. If only the people of the Book had Faith, it were best for them: among them are some who have Faith, but most of them are perverted transgressors. (Qur'an 3:110)

This means that it is the obligation and duty of the entire Muslim community that it should invite and enjoin people to righteousness and virtue and forbid them from doing evil. This is emphasised by Allah when He says:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۚ
أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity. (Qur'an 3:104)

As has been said before; this is not only a right but an obligation and on the fulfilment of which depends success and prosperity here in the World as well as in the Hereafter.

11. Freedom of Religion, Conscience and Conviction

Islam gives the right to freedom of religion, conscience and conviction to citizens in an Islamic State. Allah (SWT) has laid down this injunction unambiguously as follows:

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ ۚ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ ۚ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمَرْ
بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٥٦﴾

Let there be no compulsion in Religion: truth stands out clear from falsehood: Whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah hath grasped the most trustworthy Hand-hold, that never breaks. And Allah hears and knows all things. (Qur'an 2:256)

Though there is no truth and virtue greater than the religion of Truth, Islam, and Muslims are enjoined to invite people to embrace Islam and advance arguments in favour of it, they are not asked to enforce this Faith on them. No force will be applied in order to compel them to accept Islam. Whoever accepts it does so by his own choice.

Muslims will welcome such a convert to Islam with open arms and admit him to their community with equal rights and privileges. But if somebody does not accept Islam, Muslims will have to recognise and respect his decision, and no moral, social or political pressure will be put on him to change his mind.

Along with the freedom of conviction and freedom of conscience, Islam has given the right to the individual that his religious sentiments will be given due respect and nothing will be said or done which may encroach upon this right. It has been ordained by Allah that:

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدَوًّا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۖ كَذَٰلِكَ

زَيْنًا لِّكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ ۖ عَمَلُهُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ مَرْجِعُهُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

You revile not those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they out of spite revile Allah in their ignorance. Thus have We made alluring to each people its own doings. In the end will they return to their Lord, and We shall then tell them the truth of all that they did. (Qur'an 6:108)

These instructions are not only limited to idols and deities, but they also apply to the leaders or national heroes of the people. If a group of people holds a conviction which according to you is wrong, and holds certain persons in high esteem which according to you is not deserved by them, then it will not be justified in Islam that you use abusive language on them and thus injure their feelings. Islam does not prohibit people from holding debate and discussion on religious matters, but it wants that these discussions should be conducted in decency. Allah says:

وَلَا تُجَادِلُوا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ ۖ

وَقُولُوا ءَامَنَّا بِالَّذِي أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَأُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَإِلَهُنَا وَإِلَهُكُمْ وَاحِدٌ وَنَحْنُ

لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

And you do not dispute with the people of the Book, except with means better (than mere disputation), unless it be with those of them who inflict wrong (and injury): but say, "We believe in the Revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you; Our Allah and your Allah is One; and it is to Him we bow (in Islam)". (Qur'an 29:46)

This order is not merely limited to the People of the Scriptures (Christians and Jews), but applies with equal force to those following other faiths.

12. Protection from Arbitrary Punishment

Islam also recognizes the right of the individual that he will not be arrested or imprisoned for the offences of others. The Holy Quran has laid down this principle clearly:

قُلْ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ أَبْغَىٰ رَبًّا وَهُوَ رَبُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ۚ وَلَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ إِلَّا عَلَيْهَا ۚ وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُم مَّرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

Say: "Shall I seek for (my) Cherisher other than Allah, when He is the Cherisher of all things (that exist)? Every soul draws the results of its acts on none but itself: No bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another. Your goal in the end is towards Allah. He will tell you the truth of the things wherein you disputed. (Qur'an 6:164)

Islam believes in personal responsibility. Each person is responsible for his acts, and the consequence of his actions cannot be transferred to someone else. If another man has not shared this action then he cannot be held responsible for it, nor can he be arrested. It is a matter of great regret and shame that this just and equitable principle which has not been framed by any Human Being, but by the Creator and Sustainer of the entire Universe, being flouted and violated. This is indeed very outrageous and shameful. This is the height of meanness and depravity. What right do such tyrants have to perpetrate these crimes against mankind?

13. Equality Before Law; And Rulers are Not Above the Law

Islam gives its citizens the right to absolute and complete equality in the eyes of the Law. As far as the Muslims are concerned, there are clear instructions in the Glorious Quran and the Sunnah that all people are equal with Allah, therefore, are equal in the eyes of the Law. Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

O mankind, indeed We (Allah) have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted. (Qur'an, 49:13)

This Verse clearly highlights that all humans are equal in the eyes of Allah, and the criteria for superiority are piety and righteousness, not gender or any other criteria. This injunction by Allah (SWT) has been exemplified by the Prophet (SAW) in one of his sayings thus:

No Arab has any superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab. Nor does a white man have any superiority over a black man or the black man any superiority over the white man. You are all the children of Adam, and Adam was created from clay (al-Bayhaqi and al-Bazzaz).

In this manner Islam established equality for the entire human race and struck at the very root of all distinctions based on colour, race, language or nationality, etc. According to Islam, Allah has given man this right of equality as a birthright. Therefore no man should

be discriminated against on the ground of the colour of his skin, his place of birth, the race or the Nation in which he was born.

Discrimination of people into different classes was one of the greatest crimes that, according to the Qur'an, the Pharaoh of Egypt used to indulge in. Allah says:

إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضِعُّ طَائِفَةً مِنْهُمْ
يُذَبِّحُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٤﴾

Truly the Pharaoh elated himself in the land and broke up its people into sections, depressing a small group among them: their sons he slew, but he kept alive their females: for he was indeed a maker of mischief. (Qur'an 28:4)

Therefore, the perpetrators of discrimination and segregation of people, especially in the eyes of the Law, are followers of the footsteps of the Pharaoh.

Islam clearly insists and demands that all Officials of the Islamic State, whether he be the Head or an ordinary employee, are equal in the eyes of the Law. None of them is above the Law or can claim immunity. Even an ordinary citizen in Islam has the right to put forward a claim or file a legal complaint against the highest executive of the country. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) had shown that nobody should be above the Law, be he or she a Leader or a family member of a Leader. He gave a personal example on himself and on his family in a reported example with his daughter.

The Wife of the Prophet (SAW), Aisha (RLA) reported that, the Companions (RLA) became very worried about the Makhzumiya lady who had committed theft. They said, “*Nobody can speak (in favour of the lady) to Allah's Messenger (SAW)*”. And nobody

dared do that except Usama (RLA). When Usama (RLA) spoke to the Prophet (SAW) about that matter, Allah's Messenger (SAW) said, *“Do you intercede (with me) to violate one of the legal punishments of Allah?”* Then he got up and addressed the people, saying, *“O people! The Nations before you went astray because if a noble person committed theft, they used to leave him, but if a weak person among them committed theft, they used to inflict the legal punishment on him. By Allah, if Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad committed theft, Muhammad will cut off her hand!”*

In Islam, common people could lodge complaints against the Caliph in the Court of Law and the Caliph had to appear before the Qadi (Judge) to answer the charges. And if the Caliph had any complaint against any citizen, he could not use his administrative powers and authority to handle the matter, but had to refer the case to the Court of Law for proper adjudication.

14. The Right to Avoid Sin

Islam also confers this right on every citizen that he will not be ordered to commit a sin, a crime or an offence; and if any government official or administrator or the head of department orders an individual to do a wrong thing, then the individual has the right to refuse to comply with the order. His refusal to carry out such crime or unjust instructions would not be regarded as an offence in the eyes of the Islamic Law. Giving orders to one's subordinates to commit a sin or to do something that is wrong is itself an offence that the officer who gives this sinful order, whatever his rank and position, is liable to be summarily disciplined. The Prophet (SAW) made this clear in a very brief Hadith that: *“It is not permissible to disobey Allah in obedience to the orders of any human being”*. (Musnad of Ibn Hambal).

In other words, no one has the right to order his subordinates to do anything against the Laws of Allah. If such an order is given, the

subordinate has the right to ignore it or openly refuse to carry out such instructions.

15. The Right to Participate in the Affairs of State

According to Islam, Leaderships in this World are actually Representatives (*Khulafa'*) of the Creator of the Universe, Allah (SWT); and this responsibility is not entrusted to any individual or family or a particular class or group of people but to the entire Muslim Nation. Allah says:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
كَمَا أَسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ
وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَن
كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

Allah has promised, to those among you who Believe and work righteous deeds, that He will, of a surety, grant them in the land, inheritance (of power), as He granted it to those before them; that He will establish in authority their Religion - the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state), after the fear in which they (lived), to one of security and peace: They will worship Me (alone) and not associate anything with Me. If any do reject Faith after this, they are rebellious and wicked. (Qur'an 24:55)

This clearly shows that *Khilafah* (representation in leadership) is a collective gift of Allah in which the right of every individual Muslim is neither more nor less than the right of any other person. The correct method recommended by Allah for running the affairs of the State is as follows:

وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

Those who hearken to their Lord, and establish regular prayer; who (conduct) their affairs by Mutual Consultation; who spend out of what we bestow on them for sustenance (Qur'an 42:38)

According to this principle it is the right of every Muslim that either he should have a direct say in the affairs of the State or have a representative chosen by him and other Muslims to participate in the affairs of the State. This is called the “*Shura*”. Islam does not permit or tolerate that an individual or a group of individuals to deprive the common Muslims of their rights, and usurp these powers of participation in the affairs of the State. Similarly, Islam does not regard it as right and proper that an individual may use underhand tactics such as fraud, persecution, bribery, etc., to get himself and the men of his choice elected into the *Shura* Assembly; or into any other position of leadership. This is not only a treachery against the people whose rights are usurped by illegal and unfair means, but against the Creator Who has entrusted the people to rule on this Earth on His behalf, and has prescribed the procedure of an Assembly for exercising these powers.

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