**Spiritual Blackmail**

**Where the Muslim Ummah has to hold itself accountable, there must also be a change in its attitude.**

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March 06, 2024

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The unfortunate episode of May 9 did not leave the minds of the people of Pak­istan that an incident has hap­pened in Ichra Bazaar of La­hore in recent days, which has given a strong slap on the face of our soci­ety. All the details of this untoward incident are in the public domain- how some people started threatening a woman wear­ing an Arabic script printed dress, saying that it is blasphemy to wear a dress with Quranic verses. Peo­ple menaced a woman in a big city bazaar without knowing the facts. Rather, a lynching crowd gathered against her, threatening her life and demanding that the punish­ment for Quranic blasphemy be severed from the head.

May Allah bless those shopkeep­ers who not only gave shelter for a woman in the shop, but also tried to convince the mob that the Ar­abic script was printed on the clothes, which had nothing to do with the Quranic verses, howev­er, the woman was trembling with the fear of the raging crowd until ASP Shehrbano Naqvi arrived at the scene and rescued her from a lynching mob. The terrified wom­an in police custody categorical­ly denied the accusation of blas­phemy and said that she belongs to a religious family and she can­not even think of insulting Islam and Quran.

[Punjab CM assigns portfolios to eighteen-member cabinet](https://www.nation.com.pk/07-Mar-2024/punjab-cm-assigns-portfolios-to-eighteen-member-cabinet)

How strange that one Muslim in an Islamic country is becoming in­secure from another Muslim. This is a picture of Pakistan in the 21st century where religious fanati­cism has grown to such an extent that once a Sri Lankan engineer was burnt alive in Sialkot while in other cases, mass atrocities were attempted on churches and mosques and sometimes innocent people are put to death on false ac­cusations of blasphemy. The limit is that even a woman wearing Ar­abic script is not being spared, if it is demanded to file a case against those who make false accusations of blasphemy, then they start pro­testing by declaring it as blasphe­my. Groups of religio-political par­ties roam rampant in educational institutions and judge and execute their own political opponents on trumped-up charges of blasphe­my like Mashal Khan was brutally murdered by a similar mob in KPK.

Does any code of conduct or any religion in the world allow such fanaticism? While Islam only means security and peace. Islam absolutely does not allow such unilateral and cruel actions. This horrifying trend of taking the law into one’s own hands in the name of Islam and shedding the blood of innocent people under the guise of slogans like “beheading the accused ” as punishment for blasphemy is leading us to law­lessness and civil war. Its time­ly remedy is very important but will there be any resolution for this? We have already been dev­astated in all respects, if this reli­gious extremism and hatred is not stopped in time, we may also be victims of a major tragedy.

[US says Israel plans to build new settlement units in West Bank continue to be 'barrier to peace'](https://www.nation.com.pk/07-Mar-2024/us-says-israel-plans-to-build-new-settlement-units-in-west-bank-continue-to-be-barrier-to-peace)

How sad that these honor of faith groups are neither outrage nor protesting the massacre of inno­cent Palestinian children in Gaza. While non-Muslims in Europe demonstrate in support of the Pal­estinians, and Muslims remain si­lent, a serving US airman commit­ted self-immolation outside the Israeli embassy in Washington just a few days ago to protest the geno­cide against Palestinians. Where­as the extreme of indifference of our Muslims is that they are not seeing the persecution of Kashmi­ri Muslims, nor is their jihad spir­it against the genocide of Pales­tinians awakening, our religious extremists have only targeted their own people and Muslim states are also at odds with each other, the Is­lamic government of Afghan Tal­iban is clashing against Pakistan and this is the case with other Is­lamic states including Iran, Sau­di Arabia, which are at odds with each other while the enemies of Is­lam are trampling them.

[KPRA conducts workshop on automated tax deduction](https://www.nation.com.pk/07-Mar-2024/kpra-conducts-workshop-on-automated-tax-deduction)

Where the Muslim Ummah has to hold itself accountable, there must also be a change in its attitude. The religion of Islam teaches everyone justice, compassion and brother­hood. However, since the forma­tion of sects in all of the world’s re­ligions, each group has interpreted its sect separately; as a result, dif­ferent sects within the same reli­gion have become mortal enemies of one another, and religion has be­come only an emotional weapon. People in positions of power use it to expand their influence. Peo­ple forget about their poor per­formance and become emotional­ly charged in the name of religion, which is why religion is becoming a tool for violence. This use of reli­gion is happening not only in Paki­stan, but all over the world. Before the French Revolution, the entire Christian world was also a victim of the same religious blackmail­ing, they have transformed their societies into moderate societies by connecting with religious toler­ance i.e. secularism but we are still making secularism a fad.

[DC for relief to citizens in Ramazan](https://www.nation.com.pk/07-Mar-2024/dc-for-relief-to-citizens-in-ramazan)

The creation of Pakistan as a re­ligious state is largely true, but the establishment of Bangladesh in 1971 has disproved it. The mile­stones of development achieved by Bangladesh by adopting secular­ism are in front of everyone, rather we are still oppressing those who administer polio shots and blas­pheming a woman for wearing a dress with Arabic script. Public must shun the usage of religion as a means of blackmailing. Religion is a matter between God and man, it should not be advertised in the streets and markets in an illegal manner, otherwise, we will have to face such despairing events that cannot be compensated.

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