**The politics of Islamophobia**

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November 06, 2020

The term Islamophobia can be decoded as the racism, discrimination, hatred, prejudice, bigotry and fear against Islam and its followers, Muslims. Anti-Muslim sentiments are increasing rapidly as the leaders of the countries especially in the west are using it as a tool for their own political objectives.

Historically, an American political Scientist namely Sammuel P. Huntington presented a theory in the post-cold war era named the “Clash of Civilisations” in which he theorised that; the upcoming wars would be fought between civilisations. He identified two civilisations as challenger civilisations to that of western; Islamic and Sinic (Chinese) civilisation.

The West, overwhelmed by the hypothetical framework of Huntington, shifted its aggressive focus towards not only Islamic countries; Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan, Iran and so on, but the Muslim minority as well in their countries.

[Protesters gather in Philadelphia as US Election Vote Counting continues](https://nation.com.pk/05-Nov-2020/protesters-gather-in-philadelphia-as-us-election-vote-counting-continues)

Since the religion Islam has been falsely attached to terrorism, radicalism and extremism and portrayed as religion of sword for terror. Whereas, Islam in reality, is undoubtedly a religion of peace and it condemns extremism and violence. It promotes peace, calm, harmony and tranquillity in society.

An unprecedented surge in Islamophobia is seen in the world after the French president Emmanuel Macron’s derogatory remarks on Islam coupled with his backing of blasphemous sketches of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and display of caricatures on government buildings.

This is not the first time France’s aggression against Islam came to prominence; rather, in the past, it was the first European Union country which passed and enforced a discriminatory law in 2011 against wearing full-face veil by Muslim women at public places. It is also France which passed a law on December 8, 1905 that officially separated the church and the state, aiming to defend the secular values of France by not allowing the propagation of other religions especially Islam, and deliberately dubbing it with radicalism, falsely considering it a threat to their western culture. On January 18, a French girl Mila did a live broadcast on her Instagram account called Islam a “religion of hate”. She was criticised all around the world whereas, she was defended by French President Macron by insisting that blasphemy is “no crime”. In addition to it, in February 2020, France restricted other countries from sending imam and Islamic teachers to France and stated that it is an attempt to counter Islamic extremism.

[France hints at sanctions against Erdogan's Turkey amid bitter row](https://nation.com.pk/05-Nov-2020/france-hints-at-sanctions-against-erdogan-s-turkey-amid-bitter-row)

In 2018, Austria shut down seven Turkish mosques and expelled 40 Turk imams in a fit of bigotry against Islam as a vibrant religion. The same year, in Finland amid European polls, a candidate from the Finish first party Macro Dewit deliberately desecrated a copy of Holy Quran in order to garner electoral support from the populace. Similarly, the Christ-Church attack on New Zealand on March 15, 2019 killing at least 51 people clearly portrays non-Muslims’ extreme hostility against Islam and its followers.

Besides, in Denmark, the Danish parliament passed legislation in August 2018 which made wearing a full-face veil a crime liable to be punished. Similarly, in November 2019, a young Muslim foiled an attempt of the desecration of the Holy Quran during an Anti-Islam rally in Norway.

The perception of western and Anti-Muslim countries seems entirely unjustifiable and invalid holding Islam accountable for fanning extremism and terrorism, when they themselves are deeply enwrapped in slaughtering Muslims, spreading sectarian violence and disparaging and denigrating religious values of others. Some authentic instances are: Rohingya Muslims’ blatant ethnic cleansing and their exodus from Myanmar, massacre and persecution of Palestinians by Israel and the genocide of Kashmiri Muslims by the Narendra Modi-led BJP government of India.