France in Crisis”
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Words are crucial and so are expressions. They change the course of lives. If one argues that words are mere letters capable of just to be uttered or written and become past then all the advertisement, marketing and book industry would have closed by the modern dawn of human history. If one has a point of view that showing your expressions out of a piece which you may call “an art” has nothing to do with the influence it can cause, the person has no idea about the influencers the humans witnessed from Picaso to Munch and from Benny Anderson to Michael Jackson.

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Modernization which has been marked with the liberation of mankind and as by some famous western humanitarians, it all emerged out of the newly formed United States of America which under George Washigton’s Presidency passed the Bill of Rights in 1791- the first amendment to the written constitution of America- which gave the public basic freedoms including freedom of speech, expression and religion etc. This marked the beginning of an unprecedented exercise of freedom which was later on reciprocated by European Charter of Fundamental Rights- Article 11 which not only talked about the freedom of expression but also respected the freedom and pluralism of media.

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But did these freedoms bring equality in the general public or caused more harm than good? It is undeniable that with such freedoms voices, words and expressions carry more value today than in the past. Media’s role has become quite influential with the recent modernization. But we need to understand that with time the public evolves, their tradition evolves, their values get changed, their needs get diversified and so the laws and freedoms should. The modernization has surpassed a buffer point where humiliating others at the cost of freedom of speech and freedom of expression is generally seen as a basic right. This clearly negates the basic responsibility-right rule which says, “My right stops when it infringes upon your right.” Such violations not only cause social disturbance but also contribute to the rise of hatred within a society.

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Same happened earlier this month in France. Under the banner of freedom of expressions a teacher showed his pupils Charlie Hebdo cartoon depicting the Islamic Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). This led to an incident which not only took his life but marked nationwide protests in France. This is not new for French public since such “freedom of expression” already caused the killing of 12 people in 2015 in an attack on the officers of French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, which had published the cartoons. In such a scenario most disturbing factors are the approach of executives and the response of the world towards it. French President out of his narrow mindedness not only passed religious insensitive remarks and called Islam as “a religion in crisis” but also urged that France “would not give up cartoons” which caused protests by Muslim comminities all around the world. Twitter got trended by the boycott French products hashtag on Sunday and as a result a number of shops in middle eastern countries stripped their shelves of French made products which in turn has put the whole “France in crisis” after which according to international media sites, France Foreign Ministry requested Arab nations to prevent boycotts over Macron’s cartoon defense.

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Such incidents of the 21st century sometimes provide the historians a strong argument of how and why the humanitarian crisis still exists and our values are disproportionately decreasing with the increasing modernization. Instead of appreciating the synergy which cross culture diversity provides, western premiers are usually seen as promoting Islamophobia out of their shelf knowledge and intellect. With no provision in laws about restricting rights when they intervene in others rights’ spheres of influence and promotion of hatred for a belief a religious community holds, this all can only fuel more such incidences. Expressions have to be justified that they are not being displayed at the cost of humiliation of someone. World needs to understand the basic rights’ rule.

Disrespecting someones’ values, beliefs and dignified personalities irrespective of caste, color or religion do not give you freedom. It promotes disbalances and can tear out the social fabric. World needs to not only come up with the justificatory amendments in the constitutions but also show a stance against derogatory remarks of executives such as French President Macron. Globalization calls us for this. International organizations have to take notice of such breaches before it gets too late. Former UN secretary Ban Ki Moon warned this in 2012, “All of this freedom of expression should not be abused by individuals; some people abuse this freedom. This effort to provoke, to humiliate others by using (religion) beliefs cannot be protected in such a way.” World needs to understand that Islam is not being represented by few of hundred and thousands of radicals but by 1.9 billion Muslims who follow their religion as a true religion of peace. Humiliating the values and beliefs of 25 percent of the population of the world won’t rest the things in peace. Every religion must be respected and exercising freedoms at the cost of humiliation of some other religions should be discouraged. Moreover encouraging steps if taken, won’t only bring up social harmony but will also help in lowering the radicalization emerging in the modern society of the world.

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