

Relations between the Muslims and Non-Muslims ♦

Never before the relations of non-Muslim and the Muslims was so much under strain as in the present time. The powerful nations and the media hype dub many justified activities of the Muslims as wrongs and some of the Muslim groups have also earned notoriety among the non-Muslims for their extreme views and actions. In this background it was considered important by the Islamic Fiqh Academy in its Fourteenth Seminar to reassert the Islamic viewpoint regarding the relations of the Muslims with people of other creeds and cultures. The theologians attending the Seminar have put the following guidelines forth.

- 1.1 Islam has its own distinctive permanent system of governance. However, in the perspective of the present global circumstances, as compared to other non-Islamic systems of governance, the prevalent democratic system is preferable and more suited to the Muslim minorities. Therefore, under the political system, it is perfectly permissible for Muslims to partake in the electoral process, contest the elections, and exercise their franchise as well to participate in any election campaign for any candidate.
- 1.2 It is the demand of the *Milli* and the religious interests and aspirations of the Muslims to exercise their legal and constitutional right to vote, in an aggregate and wholehearted way.
- 1.3 It is not permissible for Muslims to join or be associated with those political parties that unabashedly declared their party's motive of opposing Islam and Muslims. Further, it is not appropriate to vote for any candidate of such a party, no matter if he is a person of good character in personal terms.
- 1.4 Pacts and alliance can be made with democratic and secular political parties in the greater interest of the community.
- 1.5 A substantive course of action can be followed along with the like-minded non-Muslims to create an atmosphere of peace and security ensuring fairness and justice in the society, in the larger interest of the country and the mankind. Organisations can also be formed in addition to them in order to tread a collective path.
- 1.6 Muslims should prefer to settle down in such areas where they could uphold their religious identity. A system of education ought to be established which would protect and uphold the spirit and identity of their religious as well as

♦ 14th Fiqhi Seminar (Hyderabad – A.P) 20-22 June 2004.

Milli character.

- 1.7 There are certain obligations in Islam towards the non-Muslim neighbours as well as the related ones. Therefore, it enjoins upon the Muslims to be hospitable towards them, look after them and sympathise with them particularly in situations where they are unwell or sorrowful.
- 1.8 The songs like Vande Matram contain words that have definite connotations with *Shirk*. In other words, there is a clear conception of the Indian land being treated as god. In this respect, it is certainly forbidden and unlawful for Muslims to sing such a kind of songs, from the viewpoint of Shariah. It is also obligatory upon them to refrain from it.
- 1.9 In case certain judgements are made in favour of any Muslim on the basis of established non-Islamic law of evidence or some other such laws, which are not in consonance with the tenets of Shariah, then it is not permissible for him to take advantage of them whatsoever. This Seminar appeals to all the Muslims to seek the help of Dar-ul-Qaza itself for resolution of their conflicts or disputes. They should also abide by the decisions or judgements taken up by it and take a subsequent course of action in accordance with the judgements passed. Further, this system holds more relevance because, with respect to certain cases, the judgement of a Muslim Qazi only stands appropriate and justified from the point of Shariah.
- 1.10 The concept of "Unity or Similarity of religions" is absolutely un-Islamic. It is also in stark contradiction with the principles enshrined in the Holy Quran as well as the *Sunnah* besides being highly unrealistic and non-beneficial from the practical viewpoint. Putting it frankly, it is nothing but a sinister attempt to malign and destroy the identity of Islam. It is also a malevolent stratagem or conspiracy to detract Muslims from the straight path. Therefore, the Muslim ought to realise it and eschew from this evil concept.
- 1.11 Islam has due respect for the humanity. Therefore, it is a moral and religious obligation upon the Muslims to help their oppressed non-Muslim counterparts on the ground of humanitarian values, as far as possible.
- 1.12 As far as the welfare institutions run by Muslims such as hospitals, etc. are concerned, there ought not to be any distinction in rendering their selfless services towards any religion or community. This itself is the core objective of human welfare and Islamic teachings, although it should be kept in mind that the *Zakāt* amount is spent on deserving Muslims only.
- 1.13 It is the underlying primary message of Islamic teachings that the Muslim organisations should sympathise and show compassion towards the fellow countrymen, especially in catastrophic circumstances such as natural calamities or accidents. Rehabilitation tasks should be undertaken without any discrimination.