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ISLAMIC SHARIAH

IN RELATION TO

CORONAVIRUS (COVID – 19)

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INTRODUCTION

Assalam aleikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh

In the name of Allah, the most Merciful, the Omni-present, and the Creator of Universe and to Him alone we shall return. And may peace and blessings be passed upon His Messenger, Muhammad, sent as a mercy to the world and to all those who followed his paths to the Day of Judgment.

As a student of Islamic Shariah in the Faculty of Law, Islamic Shariah and Judicial Studies and also a student of Education in the Faculty of Propagation and Religious Principles in the Islamic University of Madinah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, I have seen it good to write a simple article by the title:

ISLAMIC SHARIAH IN RELATION CORONAVIRUS (COVID – 19)

This was as a result of misunderstanding the Islamic Law among some of my Muslim brothers on Islamic Law in relation to the new virus known as CORONAVIRUS.

In it, I have mentioned some of the Islamic Laws in relation to the directives given by the Government to curb the spread of the Virus; some of these directives have affected daily religious practices that a Muslim is obligated to perform. I am also going to use the easiest language possible for easy understanding. Also I will quote the hadiths from the Books of Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, thus, no doubts in them.

For fear of going against Islamic teachings and spreading of rumors amongst some people and the want to go against the Authorities.

To Allah belongs all the thanks and praises and in Him Alone we put our trust.

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Definition of Islamic Law

Islamic Laws are laws set forth by Islam to govern a Muslim's entire life and must abide by them. Going against these Laws is considered a violation against the Islamic Religion.

Sources of Islamic Laws

Islamic Law is derived from 11 sources. These sources are:-

1. Quran
2. Traditions of Prophet Muhammed, peace and blessings be upon him.
3. consensus of Islamic Scholars
4. Law of Analogical Reasoning
5. Law of Legal Public Interests
6. Law of Prevention
7. Original Pristine Laws
8. Moral Laws
9. Laws of Companions
10. Customs, cultures and Tradition Laws
11. Laws of the People of the Book

The first three sources are considered the most important and are given the first priority followed by the others. A Muslim is not allowed to derive laws from sources other than the mentioned ones.

Major Principles of Islamic Law

Islamic Law is made of Principles. These principles resemble articles and clauses in the Canon Laws. Principles of Islamic Law are categorized into three:-

1. MAJOR PRINCIPLES

These are the main principles/laws in the Islamic Law. They are five in number:-

- Deeds are judged in relation to a person's intention
- Surety is not affected by doubt
- Suffering necessitates ease
- No harm is allowed in any way
- Islam considers customs, cultures and traditions in social cases

2. MINOR PRINCIPLES

These are laws which fall under the Major Principles.

3. SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES

These are Laws that apply to specific issues on specific fields

Aims of Islamic Law

There is no Law in the world that has no goals and aims. Islamic Law is no different. Aims of Islamic Law are those rights which Islam aims to protect and are the main reason why Islam put down these laws.

These aims are sometimes defined in the Islamic Law as the Five Emergency Aims of Islamic Law or the Five Vital Rights protected by Islamic Law. These are:-

1. Protection of Religion
2. Protection of Life
3. Protection of Human Sanity (Soundness)
4. Protection of Genealogy and Reproduction Health
5. Protection of Wealth and Property

All the laws in the Islamic Law strive to protect these five and prohibit anything that risks their existence.

NOTE: Any law in Islam is based on protection of these five things.

Reasons behind preparing this article

Educating the Muslims and the Community at large on Islamic Law in relation to the Plague that has hit the globe and rectify the misunderstanding among some Muslims in relation to CORONAVIRUS; its effects to daily religious practices among Muslims.

INTRODUCTION TO CORONAVIRUS

Definition of CORONAVIRUS

CORONAVIRUS is a respiratory disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. It is abbreviated as **COVID-19**

Origin of CORONAVIRUS

Many health experts believe that new strain of Coronavirus likely originated in bats or pangolins.

CORONAVIRUS disease in human was first discovered in Wuhan, China in 2019 and widely spread to the rest of the world in 2020.

How Coronavirus spreads

CORONAVIRUS spreads from a person to a person in close proximity, similar to other respiratory illnesses, such as flu. Droplets of bodily fluids- such as saliva or mucus – from an infected person are dispersed in the air or surfaces by coughing or sneezing.

Anyone coming into direct contact with these droplets gets infected or gets infected by picking them up by touching infected surfaces and then their face.

According to scientists, coughs and sneezes can travel several feet and stay suspended in the air for up to 10 minutes. Congestions, crowds and surfaces serve the interest of Coronavirus luxuriously.

Some signs and symptoms of CORONAVIRUS

The incubation period of the Virus, the length of time before symptoms appear, is between 1 and 14 days.

What is Islamic perspective on CORONAVIRUS?

Islam considers Coronavirus as a plague since it affects people in masses and runs to an extension of being fatal.

Facts and Fictions about CORONAVIRUS

Many people take Coronavirus as man-made and others have different ideologies on this virus, but the only thing to believe now is that this is a Plague from the Almighty God, test to human beings and a reminder for us to go back to the right path and abstain from all those things that anger the Creator. Allah says in the Quran Chapter 2 verse 155, **“And We will surely test you with something of fear, hunger, loss of wealth, loss of lives and fruits. And give glad tidings to the patient.”**

So let us take this Coronavirus Plague as a test from Allah to see how strong our faith is.

Reasons behind calamities and disasters affecting a human being and the globe

There are some reasons which lead to Plagues from Allah. A man may be complaining much after becoming a victim of a disaster without knowing that they are the reason behind this disaster. Some of the reasons behind Plagues on earth are:-

1. **Idol worshipping**, when a man turns away from the Creator, calamities and disasters become part of their life until they return to the Almighty God and stop worshipping idols.
2. **Transgressing the Law of the Almighty God**, refusing to abide by the Laws of Allah is among the main reasons behind Plagues. These laws include eating permitted food and refraining from prohibited food and drinks like alcohol etc. Consumption of illegal food and drinks leads to wrath of Allah and in return He strikes the Earth with plagues and other calamities.
3. **Oppression**, this has become a trend in the current world. A person oppresses another person of his/her rights and sees it a normal. The weak are oppressed by the strong and the low living people are oppressed by the high class and oppression becomes part of daily life. When the oppressed person lifts hands seeking mercy from the Almighty above the skies, the answer sometimes is a Plague striking the earth because of this oppression. The Prophet, peace and blessings upon him says, *“And be afraid from the curse of the oppressed person; for there is no barrier between his invocation and Allah...”*
4. **Mischievous on Earth**, spreading and norm of sins among mankind is another reason behind Plagues and calamities on Earth. When people sin Allah becomes angry with them and in return He strikes them with all kinds of punishments so that they may refrain from their sins.
5. **Murder and Suicides**, when mischievous spreads on earth, one of the outcomes is murder and suicides on earth. When the earth is filled with innocent blood, Plague becomes the Law of Felony to a human being and a punishment.
6. **Lack of seeking forgiveness**, seeking forgiveness is one of the pillars of a healthy faith. When a person stops seeking forgiveness for committing sins, Allah becomes angry and creates a way to make a man back to him. This way involves disasters and calamities. And in this stage a man goes back to Him. Allah says in the Quran Chapter 10 verse 12, *“And when affliction touches man, he calls upon Allah, whether lying or on his side or sitting or standing; but when Allah removes from him his affliction, he continues in disobedience as if he has never called Me to remove an affliction that touched him.”*
7. **Naughty to parents and lack of respect to them**
8. **Hatred among people**
9. **Lack of worship**
10. **Lack of giving charity and helping the needy**
11. **A test from Allah**

These are some of the reasons behind Plagues, just to mention a few.

ISLAMIC LAW ON RESPECTING THE GOVERNMENT

Definition of Government

A Government is a system or a group of people governing an organized community or a group of people, according to the law.

Importance of a Government

As it is the nature of a human being that whenever there are a group of people living together, conflict is always inevitable. In one way or the other, people collide. Here the importance of a Government is derived. To ensure justice among its people.

Duties and responsibilities of Government in Islamic Law

Some of the duties and responsibilities of a Government in Islamic Laws are.-

1. Maintaining peace and orders
2. Protection of its citizens
3. Giving first priority to Public Interest of its people
4. Ensuring proper utilization of Public Resources and sharing among its people fairly
5. Practicing Transparency and Accountability in matters touching Public Resources
6. Ensuring justice to the all its citizens
7. Ensuring affordable life to its citizens
8. Ensuring availability of basic needs to all its people
9. Ensuring availability of Government services to every citizen
10. Engaging the citizens in matters touching the citizens
11. Sometimes takes tough decisions for the betterment of its citizens
12. **NEVER BENEFITS FEW INDIVIDUALS AT THE COST OF ITS PUBLIC**

These are some of the duties and responsibilities as defined in the Islamic Law on Governance and Administration of a State

Duties and roles of a Muslim towards the Government

In order to achieve a healthy country, a Muslim has duties and responsibilities towards his Government. E.g.-

1. Abide by Laws and Orders put by Government
2. Respect the authority, as said by the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, "***And it is upon you to heed and respect your leaders at whatever it takes and do not go against them.***"

The Prophet, peace and blessings upon him, warned against disrespecting and going against leaders.

This is because the demerits are always higher than the merits. And the low living class suffers more.

He says also, "*Whoever obeys a leader has indeed obeyed me and whoever obeys me has indeed obeyed the Almighty Allah. And whoever disobeys a leader has disobeyed me and whoever disobeys me has indeed disobeyed the One who sent me.*"

3. Help the government in ensuring smooth learning and developing the country.
4. Protecting the government against risks and threats
5. Patriotism of the highest level and defend one's country at whatever it takes
6. Advice leaders (this should be in respect)
7. Give financial support to government when critical need arises.
8. Participate in Community Development Activities

These are among the duties and responsibilities of a Muslim towards his Government and Country

ISLAMIC PREVENTIVE MEASURES

What are the preventive measures put down by Islamic Law in relation to Plagues?

Islam has been in the frontline to curb the spread of diseases and plagues. It set preventive measures against plagues more than 1400 years ago. Some of the preventive measures set by Islamic Law to curb these Plagues are:-

1. LOCKDOWN

Islam restricts movement to and from areas affected by the pandemic. The Prophet, peace and blessings upon him, says, "*If plague befalls a country, do not go to that country until the plague is over; and when plague befalls a country you are in, do not leave that country...*"

This was the best way to curb it since the virus does not move but people move it. So when people stop moving the virus dies and infection amongst people decreases.

One of the main reasons for the rapid spread of Coronavirus was due to movement of people thus movement of the virus. If restriction was put in place from the first day, the disaster would be controllable because the number is limited. But, when people move to and from affected areas, the victims increase thus the reason behind the high fatality rate we are seeing now.

2. ABLUTION SEVERALLY

In another preventive measure, Islam teaches Muslims to perform ritual ablution (wudhu). This is simply seen as wastage of water but currently proven to be prevention and a cure. Among the virtues of wudhu:-

- It prevents from trachoma since it involves washing the face severally
- It prevents against coronavirus since it involves washing exposed body parts more than five times a day. The directive to wash hands is nothing new to Muslims since it was the traditions of our beloved Prophet, peace and blessings upon him, to wash his hands after waking up and before performing ablution. He is the best doctor who ever lived on earth.
- Refreshes the body

3. STAYING AT HOME

Among the preventive measures, Islam orders Muslims to stay at home during the Plague and not to go out unless there is an emergence case or urgency. The Prophet, peace and blessings upon him, says, "*No person stays at his home when a plague breaks out; patiently and expecting rewards from Allah, knowing in his heart that nothing befalls him excepts by the will of Allah. that person will have the rewards of a martyr.*"

4. OBEYING GOVERNMENT'S DIRECTIVES

Islam commands obedience to directives set by authorities in ways to curb the spread of plagues. These directives are for the betterment of its people as said by the Prophet, peace and blessings upon him, "*You will remain in virtuous life as long as you respect your leaders.*"

Minor Principle of the Major principle of (Suffer necessitates ease) says: **PREVENTION OF AN OMEN OR DEMERIT IS BETTER THAN PRODUCTION OF MERIT INTEREST.**

And in staying at home, a person has prevented himself from becoming a victim to the virus.

And whoever defies this directive has indeed gone against the Laws of Allah as prescribed in the Quran Chapter 4 verses 29 and 30, “**And do not kill yourself. And whoever kills himself will be castes into hellfire...**”

And Allah warns in the Quran Chapter 2 verse 195, “**And do not cast yourself into death with your own hands...**”

It is of a person’s good to respect these preventive measures.

5. FORBIDS PHYSICAL CONTACT

Islam in another way prohibits physical contact that can cause effects. Among them, Islam forbids shaking hands during greetings during the plague period or shaking hands with an infected person. This is learnt from the Prophet, peace and blessings upon him, when he ordered the person with leprosy to go back for he (Prophet) has already given him allegiance.

These are some of the preventive measures in Islam to curb the spread of Plague

GREETINGS IN ISLAMIC LAW

Definition of greetings

This is the Islamic salutation by the wordings: Assalam aleikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh

Modes of greeting

Most people believe that Islamic greetings must involve shaking hands.

Shaking hands in Islamic Law is considered as an additional practice but the basic one is the verbal salutation.

It is not necessarily that a person shakes hands during greetings.

Verbal greetings without physical contacts or shaking hands

Salutations in Islamic Law is basically verbal and shaking hands is not mandatory. And for the prevention of spreading of Coronavirus is avoiding shaking hands in this plague period. This is because Islamic Law says **PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN EARNING A MERIT.**

This can be deduced from the deed of the Prophet, peace and blessings upon him.

ISLAMIC LAW AND DIRECTIVE TO CLOSE MOSQUES

Directives issued by Government as ways to curb the spread of CORONAVIRUS

As part of curbing the spread of Coronavirus, the Government has put measures to ensure it controls the virus. Among the measures Governments are taking:-

1. Imposing curfews
2. Imposing Lockdowns
3. Banning congregations
4. Ensuring no crowded areas
5. Banning public activities that involve crowds e.g. weddings and funerals; and limiting the numbers
6. Shutting down of schools and all learning institutions except online studies
7. Shutting down Mosques, churches and Temples
8. Banning political activities that involve big crowds of people
9. Random screenings
10. Isolation of infected people
11. Imposing quarantine to people who have been in contact with the infected people
12. Imposing quarantine to people who come from abroad
13. Suspension of international flights
14. Closing boarders
15. Ensure availability of sanitizers and essentials to the public.

The directive to close mosques and denial to perform congregation prayers in Mosques

Among the Government's directives to curb the spread of Coronavirus, Governments issued orders to temporarily close all churches, mosques and temples.

This means suspension of all congregational prayers; obligatory prayers and Friday prayers.

Islamic Law on this directive measure from the Government

Islam receives this directive in open hands because it is among the ways to Protect Human Life; this is among the five aims of Islamic Law. And whoever goes against these directives has indeed gone against the Islamic Law. And this is also among the Islamic teachings of respecting the authority and leaders. Islam cannot afford to lose a human life in a situation that can be avoided.

I would like to urge my Muslim brothers and all citizens at large to abide by the measures put in place by the Government to control the rapid spreading Coronavirus.

OBLIGATORY PRAYERS DURING THE LOCKDOWN PERIOD

Definition of Obligatory Prayers

These are the five obligatory prayers that a Muslim should perform on daily basis. They are:-

1. Fajr Prayer (Dawn Prayer usually performed before sunrise)
2. Dhuhr Prayer (Noon Prayers performed in the afternoon)
3. Asr Prayer (Past-noon Prayers usually performed between noon and sunset)
4. Maghrib Prayer (Sunset Prayers usually performed immediately after sunset)
5. Isha Prayer (After dusk Prayers usually performed not long after the Sunset Prayers)

Islamic Law on performing Obligatory Prayers in Congregation

The Five obligatory prayers are mandatory upon all the Muslims unless they have a legal excuse that prevents them from performing it e.g. menstruation period or a person is a traveller etc.

Allah says “**And observe the obligatory prayers and give charity...**”

Failure to perform the Obligatory Prayers, a person is considered a non-believer and risks his Islamic Faith

Islamic Law on performing Obligatory Prayers at home

Islam orders males to observe the Obligatory Prayers in congregations mostly found in mosque. A male is not allowed to perform the Obligatory Prayers at home unless with a valid excuse. Valid excuses are:-

1. Insecurity
2. Rain
3. Sickness and diseases

And the government’s directive goes with the Islamic Law because the situation risks people’s live and offering Prayers in congregation gives a mileage for the virus to spread.

So it is in accordance to the Islamic Law to avoid congregational prayers in the mosque currently until the situation becomes neutral. Instead, Obligatory Prayers should be observed at home.

How should one perform obligatory prayers at home?

During this period, when congregation prayers in mosques have been temporarily suspended, Obligatory Prayers are performed at home and if a person has a family, he can perform all the Obligatory Prayers in congregation with them at home.

What does a Muadhin say this period when making calls for Obligatory Prayer?

In another part of things affected by the spread of Coronavirus, is the system of making the call for prayers (Adhan). The slight changes are made in the Adhan to direct people on where to perform the Obligatory Prayers. The Muadhin (one making the call) says:

Swalluu fii rihaalikum

Swalluu fii rihaalikum

Or

Swalluu fii buyutikum

Swalluu fii buyutikum

Meaning:

Pray in your houses

Pray in your houses

FRIDAY PRAYERS DURING THE LOCKDOWN PERIOD

Definition of Friday Prayer

This is a weekly prayer performed on Friday after the sermon. It takes the place for Dhuhr prayers specifically on Friday. It is usually offered in main congregational mosques.

Islamic Law on performing the Friday Prayers

Friday Prayer is obligatory and every Muslim male must observe it because it has taken the place of another obligatory prayer (Dhuhr Prayer). If a person misses 3 consecutive Friday Prayer intentionally without a valid legal excuse, he becomes a hypocrite and risks his Islamic Faith.

Islamic Law on Friday Prayer in relation to Government's directive to close mosques

As we have seen, Islamic Law eases the Law on performing Obligatory Prayers in congregation in cases of valid legal excuses; Friday Prayer is no different from that.

The only difference is that Friday Prayer is not performed completely at home and instead a person should perform Dhuhr Prayers at home in replacing it. (Dhuhr prayer replaces Friday Prayers in this situation). And the person receives the rewards for Friday Prayers as if he has performed it. Allah says "**Indeed, Allah does not burden a soul above its ability.**" And the disability to go to mosque to perform the Friday Prayers is beyond him, so he receives the full rewards even if he has performed Dhuhr that replaced the Friday Prayers in Lockdown period.

ISLAMIC TEACHINGS DURING THE PLAGUE PERIOD

Islamic teachings on what to do during the pandemic period

During these hard times of Coronavirus period and other plagues, Islam teaches us what to do. Among the teachings:-

1. Repentance from sins
2. Asking Allah for His mercy and Protection
3. Praying a lot not to fall a victim
4. Giving charity
5. Forgiving others
6. Obedience and loyalty to preventive measures put in place
7. Stay at home
8. Recite the Quran a lot
9. Recite supplications a lot
10. Refrain from unnecessary movements
11. Restrain from sins and unnecessary words and talks
12. Help the government (at individuals capability) to curb the spread of this virus.

Mistakes some people do during the pandemic period of CORONAVIRUS

As some people are concerned with this plague and working tirelessly, praying and repenting, others on the other side are busy with some unnecessary activities. Some of these activities are:-

1. Making jokes out of the plague instead of being busy repenting sins
2. Spreading rumors and fictions about the virus which mislead the public
3. Using the lockdown period to disobey Allah and engaging in mischievous acts like committing adultery and fornication, alcoholism and other sins that may increase the wrath of the Creator.
4. Posting things that seem as fun to them without remembering some people on the other side of life are swimming in the pool of sorrow for losing their loved ones.

Let's stop this and go back to the Creator and seek mercy from Him, for it is He Alone who can take away the plague from us. Allah says in the Quran chapter 6 verses 17 and 18, **"If Allah touches you with affliction, there is none to remove it from you. And if He touches you with good, He has power over everything. (18) He has the supreme-hold over His creatures. He is All-Wise, All-Aware."**

MY ADVICE TO THE GOVERNMENT

As a patriotic citizen and Muslim, I would like to thank the Government for all the measures it is putting in place and all the hard work it is doing to ensure the safety of its people.

Secondly, due to the current situation and understanding that as a Law abiding citizens, we request our beloved Government to consider us in waiving some of the bills for citizens or at least extending the payment period because it is open that most of the businesses are affected and others are completely closed due to respect of directives given by the Government.

It is challenging to manage basics needs and clear these bills. The citizens should be considered while making decisions and see how we overcome this plague together without hunger and starving at homes snatch more of our citizens. This may include, not limited to, lowering prices for basic things that a citizen consumes daily and ensure availability of medical services as well as ensuring adequate electric supply and water.

Thanking you in advance as you consider the low living citizens.

With regards,

Patriotic Citizen.

MY ADVICE TO PEOPLE (RESIDENTS AND FOREIGNERS)

We should work with the Government and follow all the preventive measures put in place to avoid being infected by this virus. Sometimes these measures may be against our interest but for the betterment and safety of our lives lets work hand in hand and together we will overcome the Coronavirus Plague.

STAY HOME FOR THIS WILL KEEP YOURSELF AND YOUR COUNTRY SAFE.

WA BILLAHI TAWFIQ

ASSALAM ALEIKUM.

THE END.