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EXTREMISTS ARE EXTREMISTS : THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND LANGUAGE OF REASON AND PEACE

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Item Type	Article
Authors	Engineer, Asghar Ali
Publisher	CSSS (Centre for Study of Society and Secularism)
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Download date	2026-07-07 10:10:00
Link to Item	http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/189341

EXTREMISTS ARE EXTREMISTS –THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND LANGUAGE OF REASON AND PEACE

Asgar Ali Engineer

Recently we read with great pain that the extremists in Pakistan killed several women who were active in administering the polio dose to the children. They think it is an international conspiracy to reduce population of Muslims in the world as polio dose makes a person impotent. Some Muslims and Imams of the mosque in India too thought likewise and asked Muslims in their Friday sermons not to allow social workers to administer polio dose to their children.

But in India it was just an appeal, no one was physically harmed, much less killed. In Pakistan these extremists believe in culture of violence and for them the only solution for defying their orders is to be shot dead. Malala was shot as she did not listen to Taliban and stop advocating education for girls. Those who kill others in the name of Islam are far from being Muslim, let alone pious Muslims. In order to be pious Muslims one has to be just. The Qur'an says that "Do justice, it is closest to piety". (5:8)

How can one claim to observe norms of justice by killing others? Justice is something most difficult to do, even for murder we require at least two pious and honest witnesses and to prove rape or fornication we need four such witnesses. One has to make it sure, according to shari'ah law that before accepting witness, that witnesses are honest and pious. Witnessing cannot be accepted from anyone. And killing someone is permitted only in certain specific cases like murder and there too, if it is not *qatl-e-'amad* (deliberate and coldblooded murder) Allah prefers pardoning with or without compensation).

To kill someone without justification is great sin. Qur'an says that "whoever kills a person unless it be for manslaughter or for mischief in the land, it is as though he has killed whole humanity. And whoever saves a life, it is as if he has saved the whole humanity." (5:32) it is very important statement of the Holy Book. Life is sacred and is not cheap that anyone can kill any other person without any reason or rhyme. There has to be strong justification for taking anyone's life. If life could be taken by anyone and any time the whole humanity will be wiped out in course of time.

Normally weapons should be used for protecting and not taking life. And which rule of Shari'ah has prescribed that administering polio should be punished with death. That cure did not exist in those days. The orthodox people greatly resist any change in shari'ah law even with proper justification but do not hesitate to change shari'ah law or innovate one through false reasoning when it suits their interests. This is what killing women administering polio amounts to. It is pure innovation with false justification.

These very extremists would not mind producing and selling drugs through smuggling to buy weapons and destroy thousands of young lives. All intoxicants are strictly prohibited in Islam, particularly liquor and drugs and yet Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan are known to be producing, smuggling drugs and buying weapons. I have attended anti-drug conference in

Afghanistan and know how thousands of people are suffering because Taliban want weapons. Even many women are addicted to drug in Afghanistan. So much for the Islam of Taliban.

Also whoever said that polio dose makes men impotent? Have they done any research on that? Or they believe only in hearsay? To believe in something without confirming its truth is highly condemned by Qur'an. Qur'an calls it *zann* (suspicion, guess). See the Qur'anic verses 48:9, 48:12, 49:12, 53:23 etc. how Qur'an condemns *zann*. In some cases, it says it is even sin, in some cases it is our personal desire and has nothing to do with truth and Qur'an advises believers to avoid *zann* as much as it can.

And if these Taliban, who are killing those administering polio dose it is mere *zann* and has nothing to do with objective reality. And if they have confirmed its truth let them produce the proof. Or do they want these young children born to live life of polio affected people paralyzed for whole life? Life is a beautiful gift from Allah. Do they want this beautiful gift to become affliction for these young ones? That too on mere suspicion or guess?

Also this campaign has been launched by the UNO to eliminate this curse from our earth and make our lives healthier and happier. It is far from aimed at Muslims. Polio doses are being administered throughout the world. Whole humanity is benefitting from it and particularly in Africa and Asia where most poor of the world live. It appears it is a conspiracy of Taliban to paralyze the coming generation of Muslims so that they can live at their mercy and through their charity?

There is so much emphasis in Qur'an and hadith on knowledge ('ilm) and instead of being forerunners of science and scientific attitude Muslim extremists are being so ignorant and superstitious? And they want to keep Muslims in darkness of ignorance through sheer power of gun. Muslims are in fact duty bound to eliminate ignorance and usher in an era of enlightenment. But Taliban do not want modern education, especially for women, do not want modern medicines and do not want freedom. Instead they are spreading gun culture. Is this Islam? We have to produce young Muslims to fight this menace of Taliban and it is no less a curse than polio.