

Muslim voices of sanity must get louder

Ahmedabad and Bangalore, like many others, are global cities and the terror that struck these on consecutive days too is a global phenomenon. As a human being and an Indian Muslim, I literally wept over the needless deaths of those who died or were maimed.

In the last decade, a significant number of moderate Hindus have started supporting anti-secular and anti-minority groups that want to transform India into a theocratic Hindu nation. This bodes ill for the nation.

The situation calls for introspection by Muslims, India's largest minority community.

Muslims should put themselves in the shoes of these newly converted Hindutva forces. They should put themselves in their minds, eyes and souls. From that vantage point, they should look at happenings in India and their community. They should understand why moderate Hindus have changed.

Terrorism in the heartland has left many Hindus insecure and angry.

The Students Islamic Movement of India, Shahi Imam Bukhari, fanatics in Coimbatore and Maharashtra, the calls for jihad and the distribution of inflammatory posters have enraged middle class Hindus. Minor issues like a few Muslim leaders opposing the singing of the Vande Mataram on national occasions adds fuel to fire.

Even though the instances are less than one percent of what happens in the Muslim community in India, the Hindutva forces blow them out of proportion. The situation gets aggravated because moderate and secular Muslims, who are in a majority, do not get involved in their community's civic affairs.

If any member of the Indian Mujahideen, Lashker-e-Taiba, Al Qaeda, Harkat-ul-Ansar, Jaish-e-Mohammed, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, Sipah-e-Sahaba and others is found anywhere, he should immediately be shot like the military trials in Iran as all committed to desecrate peaceful coexistence and harmony must also pay by dying.

The jihadis have been slaughtering innocent lives at railway stations, bus stops, trains, temples and markets. The ideologically networked jihadis kill without mercy, specialise in suicide attacks and when cornered fight to the finish.

These radical jihadis are part of an intricate web of nationalist insurgent groups that act autonomously and are difficult to track down. From 9/11 in the US to 29/10 in Delhi, theirs is a bloody tale of hate and kill.

Many of the terrorists acting in the name of Islam cite Palestine, Chechnya, Iraq and Afghanistan to justify the killing of innocent lives. They have lost their moral compass. For them, anyone who does not agree with their point of view is an infidel and should be eliminated.

They are able to misinterpret verses from the Quran to justify their heinous designs. Muslims must separate themselves from 'Muslim' terrorism.

Those who kill innocents have nothing to do with Islam. Sura Al-Baqr (Verse: 114) in the Quran states that Allah dislikes those who indulge in arson, loot and killings. Sura Al-Kafirun (Chapter: 30) mentions: Lakum dinokum waley yadeen (You follow your religion; let them follow theirs).

Islam rejects violence in all its forms, but the jihadis take the terror path without bothering about the impact it can have on a common Muslim by making him the usual suspect.

They don't read those verses that declare that taking the life of even one innocent individual means killing the whole humanity.

The jihadis use those verses from the Quran that are 'contextual' and by twisting and bending them they act self-deceivingly as human bombs. Islam has no room for suicide.

There are many verses in the Quran that are 'contextual', in the sense that they are the verses used during a war and are not of a general nature.

Take for example the verse, 'Slay the pagans wherever you find them, seize them, beleaguer them, lie in wait for them with every stratagem' (Chapter: 9, Verse: 5).

No doubt these verses call upon the believers to fight with determination against perpetrators and all odds, and these are not necessarily against non-Muslims. If taken out of context, they might appear to advocate violence; misguided Muslims are doing exactly that.

According to the US-based Islamic scholar Mirza Faisal Beg, what is so abominable is that the extremists select these (some 20) verses only to express 'righteousness' to act 'righteously'.

Frankly speaking, to a common Muslim, it is abhorrent to attach such acts to the teachings of Prophet Mohammed, who is known to be merciful not only to Muslims but to the whole humanity.

The so-called jihadis have no right to misinterpret the verses to suit their dastardly machinations.

Gujaratis and Bangalorians with a characteristic calm have got on with life despite the blasts.

The very next day crowds were back at the three places. There was no backlash.

The need of the hour in cities like Delhi, [Mumbai](#) and [Chennai](#) is that the moment the community observes any suspicious people living in their neighbourhood, they must, without delay, inform the police.

It is also important that the Muslim community itself develop a broad range of tactics, from traditional counter-terrorism methods to more sophisticated strategies, to destroy the jihadi trend.

Muslim voices of sanity are not heard loudly. Even the London Muslims while condemning the July 7 killings added a 'but' (root cause) to it, as if they were justifying the murders. We have to agree in principle that killing of innocents cannot be justified irrespective of race, religion, place or ethnicity.

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