Safety of Human life in Islamic Perspective: A research Based study

Dr. Karim Dad (A/P, Deptt of Islamic Studies, Abdul Wali Khan Univ. Mardan) Dr. Muhammad Zubair(A/P, Deptt of Islamic Studies, Abdul Wali Khan Univ. Mardan)

Abstract

Islam gives due importance to human existence and lies the reponsibilty on every individual to secure himself. The protection of human life is included in the basic objectives of Sharia. The idea behind this objective is to make the human life free from every danger and menace at every cost. According to Islam, every step that adds the risk to survival is unlawful. Killing one-self or someone other is an irreparable loss. Islam takes it as the destruction of the entire humanity. Every society has taken this issue on priority in order to lessen the menace to human existence. The rules are formulated to handle the matter. The concept and objectives of sustainable development introduced by the United Nations also highlight the importance of life. But besides this, the rate of casual death increases. Every year, thousands of precious lives are damaged due to violation of traffic rules and aerial firing. Similarly, the usages of low standard foods and medicines have increased the rate of diseases. If the Islamic guidelines are followed, the matter can be tackled adequately. For this purpose, the safety of human life has been discussed in this article in the light of Sharia. This research paper contains the basic introduction of Objectives of Sharia. The significance of human life and the precaution whatsoever have been presented according to Islamic code of life. Moreover the risks to human existence are added with solutions in Islamic perspectives.

Key Words: Safety, carelessness, survival, aerial firing,

Introduction

There are specific objectives in Islamic System of rulings called the "Objective of Sharia". These objectives have been derived from the commands of Allah and the teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). In the commandments of Allah, there is seen a sense of facilitation and convenience. Where there the inconvenience or difficulty has occurred, the instructions have been relaxed.

In Surat Hajj Allah says:

و مَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ
$$^{-1}$$

And has not laid upon you in religion any hardship.

Similarly the divine instructions are based on gradual principles. They were updated according to the physical and mental development of believers. For instance, in the prohibition of using the wine, this criterion has been followed. The prohibition came gradually at various times in the sense to bring the mental and physical level capable to comply with the order. In Surat Baqara after the rulings of keeping fast, Allah says,:

" يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْر
2

Allah desires for you ease, He desires not hardship for you.

The scholars of Islam have taken out some legal maxims from these verses of the Holy Quran. For example they say:

"The hardship fetches the ease".

Similarly, the lexal maxim 4 " الضرر يزال "explains that the harm if occurred shall be dissolved.

Likewise, the Islamic Jurist Imam Sarakhsi(403 Hijri) has noted that ألحرج مدفوع"i.e. The hardship shall be removed.

This article basically describes the importance of life safety. In this connection, at first, the scope of human life has been discussed by giving the proofs from the Holy Quran and the sayings of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W), and these objectives of Sharia have been explained. After that, the objective "Protection of Human life" has been described. Similarly, the suggestions have been added to resolve the matter.

Pre- Literature Review

This work is a new addition in the field of research. It has been deduced from the books available on the subject in Arabic and Urdu languages, such as:

- 1 Almawafaqat by Allama Shatibi;
- 2 Hujjatullah-al-Baligha by Shah Waliullah;
- 3 Magasid e Shariat by Dr. Nijat ullah Seddigu; and
- 4 The Significace of human creation etc.

In this world the human being has been sent as the most superior creature by Allah almighty. The philosophy that exists behind the creation of the worldly things is to serve the mankind and provide him the ease and comfort. The Holy Quran clears this conception in Surat Baqara as:

"It is He who created everything on earth for you."

From the above verse it is obvious that all the creatures whether they are living or non-living have a deep and close relation with human beings. The other meaning that finds out from the Quranic word "is that, everything one way or the other has been favorable for them. In another verse, Allah says that I have not made this world and the things therein merely in idle and purposeless. They all have come into being with a grand plan and specific determination. In Surati Dukhan it is explained thus:

"وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لَاعِبِينَ ـ مَا خَلَقْنَاهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ"

"And we did not create the heavens and the Earth, and all which is between them, just to play. We created them with truth, but most of them do not know." Likewise, the Holy Quran calls on its readers to investigate the uncovered and search out the hidden facts. Allah says:

"He it is Who made the Earth subservient to you, so go about in the spacious sides thereof, and eat of His substances. And to Him is the rising after death." Similarly, Allah almighty emphasizes on utilization of the intellectual skills.

"Do they not reflect within themselves? Allah did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them but with truth and for an appointed term. And surely most of the people are deniers of the meeting with their Lord."

"We will soon show them our signs in the horizon and within themselves until it is quite clear to them that it is the truth. Is it not enough that your Lord is witness over all things?"

The intensity of misconduct

On another occasion says:

Besides this scope and status, the human creature has been ordained to avoid such conduct that results in the annihilation of the world. In other words he is bound to be relevant and responsible towards his duties and liable to his assignments. In addition to that he has been alarmed of the negative outcomes of his ill deeds.

The Holy Quran describes this fact in the following words:

"A great wealthy person in the time of Prophet Moses (may bless be upon him) Qaroon, had been directed to utilize his wealth for the benefit of others and get away from committing the mischief on the earth."

The people of past with misconduct and wrong doing were treated harshly by giving them the worldly torments because they had a bad habit of torturing the humanity.

The Holy Quran has discussed the dreadful character of Pharaoh (Firoun) repeatedly, who used to slain the children of Bani Israel.

"And remember when we did deliver you from Pharaoh's folk, who were afflicting you with dreadful torment, slaying your sons and sparing your women: That was a tremendous trial from your Lord. And when we brought

you through the sea and rescued you, and drowned the folk of Pharaoh in your sight".

Karon (Qaroon) the relative of Prophet Moses (May blessing be upon him) did not comply with the Prophet's advice and played the role as arrogant and a corrupt person. This evil character made him the victim of the divine punishment. The Holy Quran has noted the advice of the Prophet Moses (May blessing be upon him) to Karon in the words given below:

"And seek not corruption in the earth, Allah loves not corrupters".

According to Allah almighty, the intensity of making mischief is so much that He has closed the door of Heaven for those who are committing so. In Surat Qasas the idea has been explained as:

"As for that Abode of the Hereafter we assign it unto those who seek not oppression in the Earth, nor yet corruption. The sequel is for those who ward off evil."

The notable commentator of the Holy Quran, Allama Tabari (310 Hijri) explains that:

"It means to become arrogant and superior with no reason and to make the life of livings miserable with his wrong doings which deprives the committing of the eternal prestige" ¹⁵

Righteousness is the basic and symbolic feature of Muslims. The Followers of Islam would always maintain the status of morality. Corruption and immorality have been narrated the habits of the people of pre-Islamic era.

In Surati Baqara, a mischievous person who had been habitual to destroy the farms and kill the livestock has been condemned with rigorous words.

"And when he turns away from you his effort in the land is to make mischief therin and to destroy the crops and the cattle; And Allah loves not mischief." The prominent commentator of Quran, Allama Qurtabi (671 Hijri) is of the view that the farms and cattle are essentials for human life and destroying them is indirectly a risk to life.¹⁷

The said verse transmits the message of morality to the readers and alerts them of the bad effects of evil and foul actions. From this explanation, it is evident that a person should pass his life responsibly and observe consciousness. Moreover, he should provide the surety of protection to others.

The teachings of Islam are very clear, transparent, and in the range of human capacity regarding the worth of human life. These commandments are perpetual, beyond the time limit and are in line with the natural phenomenon. In the underlying text, the significance of human safety has explained in detail.

Protection of Human Life

The objectives of Sharia are divided into three categories i.e. 1) Necessities; 2) Needs; and 3) Luxuries.

Necessities are the basic requirements of human life. The human life can become at sever risk if these requirements are not provided properly. In addition to that, Islam has focused on the assurance of some essential rights protection in this regard. These include: 1) Protection of Life; 2) Protection of Honor; 3) Protection of Intellectual capability; 4) Protection of Belief; and 5) Protection of Property.

The protection of life is the foremost objective of Sharia as all the benefits are solely depend upon the survival. If there is no life, there is no value of worldly things. Therefore, protection of life has been given utmost importance. Safety of life is prior than everything and has made obligatory upon every individual to take the initiatives promptly to save this valuable gift. In times of extreme hunger, the usage of some non-permissible things becomes permissible and mandatory to eat. If the effected person denies having that forbidden item and resultantly loss his life, he will be considered responsible and sinful. In such situations, the conditions are relaxed for the sake of human survival which should not be ignored.

Relaxation in rulings

In Quran, on more than one occasions the rulings, in emergency situations, have been relaxed. For instance, in Surati Baqara it is mentioned as:

"He has forbidden you only what dies of itself, and blood, and the flesh of swine, and that over which any other name than that of Allah has been invoked. Then whoever is driven by necessity, not desiring, nor exceeding the limit, no sin is upon him; Surely Allah is forgiving, Merciful."

This is because Allah does not want to fall his creatures in trouble and worry. He never demands of such rulings to be followed that are beyond their approach and potential.

In Bagara Allah says:

"لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا"
19

"Allah takes not a soul beyond its scope."

Prohibition on suicide and murder

Ensuring the protection to human survival, killing one self or others is prohibited and has been taken an act of irreparable loss. In the Holy Book, Allah says:

Killing others without a profound reason is equal to the killing of entire humanity and protecting the life of a person is just like saving the entire mankind.

This fact in the Quranic words has been described as:

"Whoever kills a human being for other than man-slaughter or corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he had killed all mankind, and whose saves the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind."

The features that exist behind the criminal laws and punishment in Islamic Judiciary are not other than to ensure the protection of human existence. For example, the theme of implementing the act of revenge is to secure the life of others. The Almighty Allah says:

"And there is life for you in retaliation, O men of understanding that you may ward off (evil).

Emphasis on precautionary measures

To take the precautions is the teaching of Islam. It is the ruling of the Holy Quran for believers to take care of themselves. While performing prayer, they should be alert and well equipped with weapons during the Holy War. A specific prayer at the time of fear was revealed and ordained only in security point of view. The Holy Quran describes the value of this ruling as follows:

"Those who disbelieve long that you may neglect your arms and your baggage, that they may attack you with a sudden united attack. And there is no blame on you, if you are inconvenienced on account of rain or if you are sick, to put away your arms; and take your precautions. Surely Allah has prepared shameful punishment for the disbelievers."

In several Hadiths, the Holy Prophet points out specific precautions that should be followed in every step of life.

Precautions at Night

The Prophet (peace be upon him) has directed to shut the doors and cover the utensils at night. A Hadith has been reported from the Holy Prophet(s.aw) which says:

"Shut the doors, cover the utensils, put off the candles and cover the water bowls at night."

This tradition teaches us some important points following which can be of a great help in preventing many hazards in our daily life. It is a fact that many precious human lives have been spoiled due to carelessness and negligence. Many times the people have not looked after the gas supply and the leakage has damaged the lives.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) has prohibited to sleep on the roof having no boundary wall.

من بات على ظهر بيت ليس له حجار فقد برئت منه الذمة
25

"He who passed night on the floor of his house with no support of stones (boundary wall) all the responsibility fell upon nobody except his own self."

Precautions at driving

In our daily life we observe numerous cases of road accidents that are caused due to negligence and overlooking the rules. Traffic signals are not followed properly. Over speeding, Overloading, wrong overtaking are common and above all the one wheeling of innocent youngsters has damaged a huge number of masses. This mal practice is a national concern which should be resolved by maintaining the strict rules and regulations.

Ban on the aerial firing

On occasions of happiness, people are habitual of aerial firing. The sense of social responsibility here fails to think over the irreparable shocks of this misconduct. This sense can be awakened through strict regulations besides the public awareness.

Allah almighty shall inquire about the murdered whose killer has been unknown or is incapable to advocate himself on the Day of Resurrection.

26
وَإِذَا الْمُوْءُودَةُ سُئِلَتْ $_{-}$ بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُتِلَتْ $^{-26}$

"And the girl-child that was buried is asked. For what sin she was slain."

Precautions at work

In factories and at work places the persons on duty should take care of their safety. They should use the specific kit and equipment (Gloves, glasses, uniform and helmet etc.) during working which will almost reduce the risk to life and loss of organs.

Now a days, many short and long term courses have been introduced that are necessary for folks working in factories and operating the machineries. The common masses are also needed to be familiar with the "Civil Defense". In times of disasters such as flood, fire, earthquake, storm and other calamities they should know how to tackle the incidents.

Handling the weapons with care

The Holy Prophet has forbidden the believers to play with the arms or handle them carelessly.

"Nobody should use the arms tools to point out someone because he is unaware of falling in the hands of Satan who may cause him enter the Hell." In a Hadith narrated in Sahih Bukhari, the Holy Prophet has directed not to brandish the weapon. Similarly, he has forbidden this while walking. These directives have been given just to secure the lives of other fellow human beings.

The Prophet has described it as:

إذا مر أحدكم في مسجدنا أو في سوقنا ومعه نبل فليمسك على نصالها أو قال: فليقبض بكفه أن يصيب أحدا من المسلمين منها شيء
28

"When someone is passing through our mosques or the marketplaces having an arrow in hand, He should hold the sharp edge of the arrow tightly in his hands that may not hurt someone."

Unintentional Killing of human being and killing through a negligent behavior have also been declared actionable in Islamic Sharia. At such cases, the penalty of Diyat has been imposed. This issue has been elaborated in Surat Nisa in the following words:

"It does not suit a Muslim to kill another Muslim except in mistake, and he who killed a Muslim in mistake is bound to set free a Muslim slave and pay the Diyat amount to the relatives of person killed, if they demand so."

It is not permissible for pilgrims to hunt or kill an animal in the in the premise of Haram but some harmful things have been accepted. The following Hadith has been reported in Sunan Abi Dawud relating to this matter:

"Five things are allowed to be killed in the Land of Haram namely the snake, the scorpion, the kite, the mouse and the biting dog."

The above mentioned Hadith highlights that killing of dangerous and life threatening animal is permissible even at the time Hajj and Umara.

Removal of dangerous things from thoroughfares

The Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) has mentioned the removal of thoroughfare from the harmful substances, an integral part of faith. He says:

"The faith has more than seventy or sixty branches, the foremost among them is to believe in the Oneness of Allah and the lowermost is to remove the harmful thing from the path."

On a certain occasion the Prophet (Peace be upon him) told his followers to avoid sitting in the open streets. The companions told that they would sit the street for fulfilling their needs. The Prophet showed his consent with that but also guided them with instructions to follow; one of them was to remove the dangerous articles from thoroughfares and passages³².

Treatment of sick people

From the Islamic point of view it is very important for us to take care of our health and to safeguard ourselves from diseases. The instructions in this regard are crystal clear.

In Sahih Bukhari, the Holy Prophet (s.w.a) said:

"For every disease, Allah has created the recovery."

The concept of "Preventive Medication" was introduced by Islam at first which is a planning against the attack of any disease. This issue has been resolved in the teachings of Holy Quran and Sunnah. The diseases are caused by germs and lack of sanitation. There are numerous verses of the Holy Quran which have discussed this specifically. Allah likes those who have the habit of cleanliness.

Allah says:

"Trust Allah loves those who turn to Him and loves those who have a care for cleanliness."

The Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited the inhabitants of the place where an epidemic disease has spread to migrate to others places, because that disease would spread to others areas as well on leaving the area effected by an epidemic disease.³⁵

The great Scholar of Hadith, Imam Novavi (died: 676 H) explained that this guidance has been given only for the sake of human protection. He describes:

"Allah has ordered to be careful and save yourself from the causes of death." The germs exist around can easily attack us if we do not care about our health. In order to keep ourselves healthy and prevent from viral diseases we should keep our utensils and food stuffs covered. The germs of Cholera, Typhoid, Dengue Fever and Hepatitis are all originated in the dirty water.

Observance of professional guidelines

Due to its sensitive nature, the medical profession should be allowed for those only who duly fulfill the eligibility criteria. One reason observed for the increase in the diseases is the lack of qualification and experience of the individual related to medical profession.

The Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) has held accountable those persons having no required qualification in this life and the life hereafter.

"من تطبب ولم يعلم منه طب قبل ذلك فهو ضامن
37

"He who cures the patients besides he is unskilled, he will be responsible for consequences."

It is the responsibility of the government to get rid of the society of those people involved in such like activities and to punish the perpetrators. There should ban on the selling of the unhygienic foods and contaminated items.

Public awareness campaign

It is also the responsibility of the public to play their role in keeping the environment neat and clean. The surroundings should be kept pollution free. Most of the diseases are the result of bad habits. The natural resources are at sever threat due the imbalance in production and utilization. The deforestation,

the continuous constructions, excessive usage of fuel, chemical fertilizers and germicides have made the environment polluted. In such situations, the concept of sustainable development needs to be introduced for the purpose of awareness of the general masses. It is also necessary to note that the rapid decrease in the natural resources is a constant threat in future.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) has directed to avoid the pollution as mentioned in the following lines.

The Holy Prophet has prohibited the Muslims to make the standing water dirty.

"Nobody should urinate in the standing water. "

Conclusion

From the above detail it is clear that Islam has a very clear concept about the safety of human beings. It orders its followers to be serious about life and make it secured at every cost. It forbids them to disturb the natural resources. It never encourages the risk to security but support the carefulness and the preventive measures. Killing one or other is a irreparable loss and strict rules have been given to close the door of genocide. Similarly, the philosophy of Islamic criminal procedures is to secure the human life and honor. Following the Islamic guideline we can lead a more secure, peaceful, and successful life.

References & Notes

¹ Surat Hajj 22:78

² Surat Bagara 2:185

³ Imam Sayuti, Alishbah wa Naza'ir, 1:07 Darul Kutub ul Ilmia Beirut 1990

⁴ Ibid 1:07

⁵ Usool Sarakhsi, Imam Sarakhsi 2: 203 Darul Mariafa Beirut

⁶ Al Bagara 2: 29

⁷ Al Dukhan 44:38-39

⁸ Al Mulk 67:15

⁹ Al Rome 30:08

¹⁰ Fussilat 41: 53

¹¹ Al Araf 07:56

¹² Al Bagara2: 49,50

¹³ Al Qasas 28:77

¹⁴ Ibid 28: 83

Tabri, Jami-ul Bayan 19:637 Muassisat Ur Risala Beirut 2000

¹⁶ Al Bagara 2: 205

Imam Qurtabi, Tafseer Quratabi 3:18 Darul Kutub Almisriya, Cairo 1964

¹⁸ Surat Al Bagara 2:173

¹⁹ Ibid 2:286

²⁰ Al Nisa 4:29

²¹ Surat Maida 5:32

²² Surat Bagara 2:179

- ²³ Ibid 4: 102
- Musnad Ahmad 22:134 Hadith No:14228 Muwassisatur Risala Beruit,2001
- ²⁵ Sunan Abu Daud No.5041
- ²⁶ Surat Takveer 81:09
- Sahih Bukhari, Kitab ul Fitan Hadith No:7072 Dar Toug un Najat 1422
- ²⁸ Ibid Hadith No.7075
- ²⁹ Al Nisa 4: 92
- Sunan abi Daud, Kitab al Mansik Hadith No.1847, Maktabat ul Alasria Beriut
- Sahih Muslim, Kitabul Eiman, Hadith No. 58(35) Dar Ihya ut Turasilarabi Beruit
- ³² Sahih Bukhari, Hadith No. 2465
- 33 Sahih Bukhari Hadith No. 5678
- ³⁴ Al Baqara 2: 222
- Saheh Muslim, Kitab ul Adaab, Hadith No. 98(2219) Dar Ihya ut Turath Alarbi, Beruit
- Al Minhaj(explanation of Sahih Muslim), Imam Novavi 7:211 Dar Ihya ut turas Alarabi Beruit 1392 H
- Sunan Ibne Maja, Kitab Al Tib Hadith No. 3466 Dar Ihya Kutub Al Arabia Beruit
- 38 Sahih Bukhari kitab ul Wudhu, Hadith No: 239