

Khilafah: A Wealth of Possibilities

In the month of Rajab 2020 CE, it will be the 99th Hijri anniversary of the destruction of the Khilafah (Caliphate). After tasting the bitter fruits of socialism in the 1950's and then the mirage of independence throughout the 1960's and 1970's, the situation of the Ummah across the world remains the same if not worse. As a result, the problems the Ummah faces have ballooned into many other issues.

The Ummah faces a number of challenges since the destruction of the Khilafah that would need to be overcome for change. Challenges such as poverty, development, healthcare as well as sustainable economic growth, distribution of wealth and industrial development. Unfortunately such a debate has skewed the discussion of change, and whilst many material obstacles need to be overcome by the Ummah, change from some perspectives remains a physiological barrier rather than material i.e. do the Ummah believe change is possible?

Political Will

The birth of any nation would require those who espoused change and those that participated in its emergence to ascertain the nation's strengths and advantages. Those elements considered necessary but absent would need the development of policies so they can be overcome.

Otto Van Bismarck oversaw German unification which set the nation on the path to industrial supremacy. Beginning in 1884, Germany established several colonies outside of Europe in order to overcome its shortage of mineral resources. Bismarck managed to achieve unification of the German lands which many had attempted for nearly a thousand years. Such unification meant German resources and minerals could all follow one unified policy and for once Germany could be domestically developed without facing any secessionist calls.

Similarly Japan by the turn of the 20th century had managed to develop its industries, however the rapid growth of the economy had made Japan painfully aware of its limited natural resources. Japan overcame such disadvantages through a programme of aggressive territorial expansion through conquering the Korean peninsula and surging deep into China in order to exploit labour and resources. In a similar manner the British Empire conquered foreign territories for export markets and utilised slave labour to overcome small workforce.

These examples show that all nations need some very basic ingredients to emerge as powerful states and ones that can very quickly establish a prosperous standard of living for its people with secure borders. The development of infrastructure, defence industries and energy are fundamental for any nation, the possession of mineral resources would therefore be a strategic strength and a huge advantage for the emergence of a nation. The examples of Germany and Japan are examples of societies – rightly or wrongly, who overcame shortages of the key building blocks for a new nation.

The Ummah's potential

When one looks at the potential of the Muslim Ummah, the Muslim lands do not just possess the key building blocks for a new nation, but over and beyond this reality the Khilafah would emerge a very powerful state due to the many strengths it will inherit that are present in the Muslim lands.

The Muslim lands possess 74% of the world's oil reserves, more than the rest of the world combined.

It possesses 54% of the world's Gas reserves, has \$1 trillion in Gold reserves and a 4.7 million standing army. All of this makes it possible for the Khilafah to field an advanced military and have a strong manufacturing base.

The Muslim Ummah collectively possesses over 700 billion barrels of oil and half of the world's gas. Both the world's key energy sources. It is for this reason the Muslim countries

produce half of the world's daily oil requirement and 30% of the world's gas needs. Alongside this Saudi Arabia possesses the world's largest oil field, whilst Qatar and Iran possess the world's largest gas field.

The Ummah globally is fast approaching 2 billion, more importantly over 60% of the Ummah is below the age of 28. The importance of a large population is critical for domestic economic development and defence. This large pool of labour means the nation can be constructed at a faster pace rather than taking decades before it was able to become self-sufficient.

Alongside this the Ummah will inherit many advantages. The geographical distribution of the Ummah and the Muslim lands means some of the world's key strategic waterways and airspace will be in the hands of the Muslims. 40% of the world's oil passes through the Straits of Hormuz waterway that straddles between the Gulf of Oman in the southeast and the Persian Gulf in the southwest. This fact alone makes it the most important waterway in the world. The Suez Canal that passes through Egypt is considered one of the world's most important waterways as it links Asian markets to the Mediterranean and Europe. 7.5% of global sea trade transits the canal. Similarly Muhammad (saw) ensured that key trade routes in the Hijaz were under Islamic control, which severely weakened the enemies of Islam to manoeuvre and weaken the Ummah.

Whilst many in the Ummah live in severe poverty, this by no means is due to the absence of agriculture in the Muslim lands. In fact, with the right policies the Khilafah can become the world's breadbasket. Egyptian agriculture takes place in some 6 million acres of fertile soil in the Nile Valley and Delta. It has made Egypt amongst the world's largest agricultural producers and is the world's largest producer of dates, second largest producer of geese meat and the world's third largest producer of buffalo and camel meat. Pakistan not only irrigates more land than the whole of Europe combined, but Pakistan is also the 2nd largest producer of chickpeas, buffalo meat and milk, the 4th largest producer of apricot, cotton, goat's milk and mangos and the 5th largest producer of onion and sugar cane. At the same time Turkey is the world's largest producer of hazelnut, fig, apricot, cherry and pomegranate. The Ummah should be the world's bread basket. But due to short term policy making and corruption, even with such strengths the Ummah languishes in poverty.

The Muslim lands also possess the world's largest aluminium smelter in Bahrain, critical for industrialisation, the world's largest open pit Gold Mine in Uzbekistan's Qizilqum Desert, the world's largest aluminium plant in Tajikistan, the world largest coal field in the Thar dessert in Pakistan and the world's largest producer of tin in Indonesia.

The real problem

The real question that needs to be asked is how is it possible for a people so rich and so plentiful in resources, to be so poor in reality? There is only one reason for this and that is the rulers over the Muslim lands have never had any intention of making the right use of such huge wealth for their people. Our lands are run by tyrants held in place by the colonial powers, who on their departure ensured a small land owning gentry or family remained in place. Their primary purpose is to control the countries they rule over, bringing in their tribesman, family members and loyalists to keep a tight grip on the nation. Due to this, development, economic and technological progress is secondary to them, as their primary concern is keeping the reigns of power.

In contrast the resources of this Ummah will be utilised by the Khilafah to advance this Ummah to the leading state in all the fields of life, as we once were when our lands were governed by the divine system of Allah (swt).

The Muslim lands possess all the necessary ingredients to take its own destiny into its own hands, it now just needs a ruler who fulfils the potential of this Ummah. The Ummah has no need to colonise other peoples or engage in territorial expansion as Germany and Japan and the British Empire did, as it has all the necessary ingredients are within its own borders.

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