

Muslim Religious Militancy *(Causes and Cure)*

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ABSTRACT

Islamic religious militancy is a matter of great concern for the Muslim and the non-Muslim world today. The analysis of the ideology of the militants reveals that they find the legitimacy of their military activities in the ideal of the establishment of an Islamic state to establish the universal rule of Islām, and in the specific interpretations of some Qur'ānic verses, Aḥādīth of the Prophet (ﷺ), and also from the establishment of the Islamic state in Madīnah by the Prophet (ﷺ), his the military expeditions and those of his companions against their opponents and from the treatment of our historians of the individual military campaigns against the Muslim regimes of their times.

The Muslim militants also fight against their Muslim governments on the grounds that they are not the true Islamic governments. The militants do not bother to kill the common Muslim masses, who vote and support such rulers. They take it as collateral damage.

The world naturally reacts to this cult, especially the west, being at the helm of the world politics. Not only do the West tries to crush the Islamic militants, across the world, but also, topple the Muslim democratic governments having any ideal of an Islamic Khilāfah. This frustrates the peaceful political activists and strengthens the military activists, further.

To end this ongoing and mounting cult of religious militancy, it is necessary to review the specific and traditional interpretations of the academic sources of Islām: Qur'ān, Ḥadīth and Fiqh, regarding the legitimacy of militancy in Islām. Secondly, to remove their misconceptions, it is necessary to engage the militants in dialogue through a counter narrative, which the author tried to present here.

Keywords: *Peace, Jihād, Itimām al-Ḥujjah, Islamic State, Blatant Kufr.*

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The Holy Qur'an declares the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) as the prophet of peace and mercy for all the worlds:

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴾⁽¹⁾

And We have not sent you, [O Muḥammad], except as a mercy to the worlds.

And it is believed that Islām is the religion of peace and harmony. But, now, a new narrative of a hardliner, militant Islām has become the new introduction of Islām to the world. This is a new voice in Islām, which claims its authority from Islamic academic sources and proclaims to the world like divine vigilantes, 'اسلم تسلم 'Accept Islām, you will be safe, or else, you will be responsible for the consequences of your refusal.' This is the ideology, which believes that Islām has come to dominate the rest of the un-Islamic world, so that:

﴿ وَكَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا ﴾⁽²⁾

While the word of Allāh- that is the highest.

Further:

﴿ هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظَاهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ ﴾

﴿ كَلِمَةً وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴾⁽³⁾

It is He who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to manifest it over all religion, although they who associate others with Allāh dislike it.

They believe that the Muslims are enjoined by Allāh to keep fighting with the non-believers until their enemies be perished or subdued and subjugated:

﴿ وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كَلِمَةً لِلَّهِ ﴾

﴿ فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴾⁽⁴⁾

And fight them until there is no Fitnah and [until] the religion, all of it, is for Allāh.

They, with the complete satisfaction of mind and heart, in a state of divine ecstasy, are ready to take the lives of others and render their own lives, too, to achieve this supposed divine destination. This phenomenon has so intensified in our time that it has become the primary concern of the Muslim, as well as, of the non-Muslim world, to tackle with. The indiscriminate militant activities of such private militant groups are causing havoc with the lives and properties of the Muslim and the non-Muslim societies, alike; and all this is being carried out in the name of Islām and the Prophet of mercy and peace Muḥammad (ﷺ).

It is true that militancy is not confined to the present day Muslims only, the followers of other religions, too, practice militancy, yet, the difference is, the militancy of the followers of other religions, by and large, is an outcome of their own personal agendas and due to their socio-political factors, but the militancy in the Muslim groups, by and large, claims to be an outcome of the directives of their religion, i.e., it has been taken from the Qur’ān, Sunnah and Fiqh. That is why, when a Christian, Buddhists or Hindu, for example, practice militancy, the individuals are held responsible, but when it comes to the Muslim militants, their religion is held responsible, along with the individuals.

In this paper, the ideology of the militant Islām, as presented by the present militant activists will be analyzed in the light of their own arguments, which are supposed to get their legitimacy from the academic sources of Islām. Also, we will see what role our historians had played in the promotions of such ideals. Then, a counter narrative, according to the understanding of the author of this paper, will be presented in the light of the Qur’ān and Aḥādīth to cure and correct this ideology. The author used the word, ‘Jihād’ as the holy war, in this paper.

We need to address some fundamental questions, first. Does the Qur’ān and Sunnah really enjoin the Muslim to establish some Islamic political system through militancy or through peaceful or democratic measures? What is the stance of our Fiqh on this matter?

What is the role of the Muslim historian in establishing such ideologies and idealism in the Muslims, which entice them to set to arms to establish an Islamic state by all means? Are we in need to review our Fiqh and our attitude of history to see if there are some mistakes or misconceptions standing in need of correction? Do we need a new interpretation of the political ideology of Islām?

The fountainhead of this militant ideology of the Muslim militant groups is that Islām is meant to rule the world. According to them, the first man and the prophet, Adam, sent to the World, as a Khalīfah Allāh (Deputy, vicegerent or trustee of Allāh). Many prophets established their states, for example, the Prophet David (Da'ūd) and Solomon (Sulaymān). The Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) himself established an Islamic state in Madīnah. Not only, he established a state, but he waged the holy wars against the non-Muslims. He defeated the 'Arabs and killed all those who refused to accept Islām, the evidence, presented is that the Prophet (ﷺ) is reported to have said:

«أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أُقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَشْهَدُوا أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ فَإِذَا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ عَصَمُوا مِنِّي دِمَاءَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَّا بِحَقِّ الْإِسْلَامِ وَحِسَابُهُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ»⁽⁵⁾

I have been ordained to keep fighting with the people until they bear this witness that there is no god but Allāh and that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is the prophet of Allāh and that they establish prayer, and pay Zakāh. When they will do all this, they will save their lives and property from me, except for the right of Islām and their accountability is the matter with Allāh.

Then his successors, the rightly guided Khulafā', extended these holy wars to Byzantine and Persians. First, they offered them to accept Islām, if they declined it, then, they were asked to be subjugated and pay the tax to the Islamic state in the name of Jizyah, and if both the proposals were turned down, then, they were invited to fight and their sword would decide the fate.

This is the ideal of the political Islām of the present Islamic or the Muslim militancy. But they do not find such an ideal political Islamic state in the present so-called Muslim states. They find that the Muslim rulers are not going to embark upon holy wars against the whole non-Muslims states of the world. So, having disappointed from their Muslim rulers, these ideologues, set up their own private military groups and start their private Jihād, because, to them, Jihād (the holy war) is a religious obligation, which needs to go on incessantly till the Day of Judgment. This belief comes from a report of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), which states:

«الْجِهَادُ مَا ضِيَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ، مُذْ بَعَثَ اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَى آخِرِ عَصَابَةٍ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ، لَا يَنْفُضُ ذَلِكَ جَوْرٌ جَائِرٌ ، وَلَا عَدْلٌ عَادِلٌ»⁽⁶⁾

Jihād will last till the day of judgment, since Allāh sent Muḥammad till the last group of the Muslims, no cruelty of any cruel or justice of a just will impede it.

To them, to ensure the continuity of Jihād, a state power is required. Now, the scenario is, in the absence of such a desired ideal state power, the militant groups are being established at the private level. Their foremost aim is to achieve a state to reestablish Islamic Khilāfah, and, after the attainment of good enough power to declare holy war against the non-Muslim world, one by one, in the light of the following verse:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ يَلُونَكُمْ مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ وَلْيَجِدُوا فِيكُمْ غِلظَةً وَعَلِمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ﴾⁽⁷⁾

O you who have believed, fight those adjacent to you of the disbelievers and let them find in you harshness. And know that Allāh is with the righteous

Their ultimate aim is to bring the non-Muslim world under the fold of Islām, or to subjugate them under the rule of the Islamic state.

One can imagine what can be the reaction of the world to such an ideal of the militant Islām. They take it as another potential force of Islamic imperialism in its very spirit. They feel threatened and find the peace of the world at peril. Their reaction to such militants is naturally hostile. The west is even more apprehensive about it. The western convert Muslim, the renowned Islamic scholar, Muḥammad Asad (1900 to 1992), writes in his famous book, *Islām at the Crossroads*, that the western mind was first introduced to Islām through the crusades. He writes, “*They (the wars of the crusades) produced one of the deepest and most permanent impressions on Europe’s mass psychology.*”⁽⁸⁾ Further, he writes: “*It was the Crusades, first and foremost, that decided the European attitude towards Islām for many centuries to come.*”⁽⁹⁾ In the very psychology of the modern western mind, Islām is still a militant religion. He writes, “*Without indulging in undue exaggeration we can say that modern Europe was born out of the spirit of the Crusades.*”⁽¹⁰⁾ So, the world powers, especially, the western powers, being at the helm of the world’s politics, are more sensitive to such an ideology, which can challenge their position. Therefore, not only they use all their resources to eliminate such groups, but also, they do not allow the Muslim peaceful political activists, whose ultimate agenda is to establish an Islamic State or Khilāfah, to bring the rest of the non-Muslim world under the fold of Islam or the rule of the Islamic state. So much so, if these democratic Muslim activists ever succeed to win election in their countries and come into power, the world powers topple their governments, by hook or by crook. However, these negative measures from the world powers are just adding fuel to fire, the peaceful activists feel frustrated and incline to join the militant groups; the militant activists get more convinced that peaceful struggle is of no avail, and Jihād or the militant struggle is the only option left to them.

On the other hand, the world powers, considering it as an internal affair of the Muslim governments, in whose lands the

militant groups are active, push and involve these Muslim governments, to curb and control such groups and stop or monitor the means of their education and funding, which breeds this ideology.

At this point, the private military groups fall into conflict with their own Muslim governments. Now, they develop good enough reasons to fight their own Muslim governments. They think that the Muslim governments are trying to stop Jihād at the behest of the non-Muslim powers. Secondly, they think that the Muslim governments, which are not implementing the Islamic law or al-sharī‘ah in their countries, are committing a blatant kufr, as the verse of the Qur’ān goes:

﴿وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾ (11)

And whoever does not judge by what Allāh has revealed - then it is those who are the disbelievers.

And a Ḥadīth goes, ‘Ubādah bin Ṣāmit narrates that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ called them:

«أَنْ بَايَعَنَا عَلَى السَّمْعِ وَالطَّاعَةِ فِي مَنْشِطِنَا وَمَكْرَهِنَا وَعُسْرِنَا وَيُسْرِنَا
وَأَثَرَةِ عَلَيْنَا وَأَنْ لَا نُتَارَعَ الْأَمْرَ أَهْلَهُ قَالَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَرَوْا كُفْرًا بَوَاحًا عِنْدَكُمْ
مِنْ اللَّهِ فِيهِ بُرْهَانٌ» (12)

so that we give him pledge to listen and obey in every condition of convenience, or coercion, in distress or with pleasure, or even if other are preferred over us that we will not contest them. (However, you can go against them) if you witness blatant Kufr in them for which you have clear evidence from Allāh.

So, they assume that their Muslim governments are committing this blatant kufr, therefore, they are kāfir or semi kāfir, so, to fight against them is legitimate. Moreover, they feel that they have no obligation to obey their governments. Also, they do not bother to kill the Muslim masses, too, taking it as a matter of collateral damage, and because they think that since the Muslim masses are in agreement with their rulers, who do not want to

implement Islamic Sharī'ah in their countries; these people vote them and support them, so they are committing a tacit kufr, and they are kāfir, too, or at the least extreme sinners, and punishment of kufr is death, so to shed their blood is lawful and at least their blood carries no value.

The militant activists had been getting their legitimacy from the Fiqh and Islamic history. In a recent post, Mawlānā Zāhid al-Rāshidī, writes, on behalf of the Islamic militants:

"مسلمانوں کے تمام فقہی مذاہب کا متفقہ فیصلہ ہے کہ "خلافت اسلامیہ" کا قیام
ملت اسلامیہ کا اجتماعی دینی فریضہ ہے۔" (13)

It is the unanimous verdict of all the schools of Fiqh of the Muslims to establish that the Islamic Khilafah is the collective obligation of the Muslim Ummah.

If this ideology has rightfully come to the Muslims from Allāh, as the above mentioned statement claims on behalf of the whole Islamic academic literature, then, the Muslim must be ready, all the time, to be at a perpetual war with the whole of the world.

Tracing the roots of this private militant ideology, we find that the adventure of one of the companions of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), Abū al-Baṣīr, was the first example of the private Jihād in Islām. He started his private activities outside Madīnah. The Prophet (ﷺ) overtly disapproved his venture:

«وَيْلٌ أُمَّهُ مِسْعَرٌ حَرْبٍ لَوْ كَانَ لَهُ أَحَدٌ» (14)

*"Woe to his mother, this man is a provoker of war.
If some men join him.*

The Prophet (ﷺ) did not join him, nor did he support him. But our historians present his venture in a sympathetic way, which over-shone the disapproval of the Prophet (ﷺ). Then, the campaigns against the tyrant regimes of Umayyad and Abbasids, by some individuals, have been treated in the Muslim history as the champions of freedom and truth, who rendered their life to revive the true system of Khilāfah, in line with the ways of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). A point worthy to note is that the official or the state religion of these Islamic dynasties of Umayyad

and Abbasids was Islām, and their constitutional laws were Islamic, yet, their regimes were considered not true Islamic regimes, so, some self-righteous individuals or some groups tried to overthrow them to establish the true system of Khilāfah. Although, all of them fell short of achieving their goals, but, their heroic legacy carried on. Moreover, our fiction and poetry, too, fantasized these heroic characters and created awful inspiration of them. This inspiration kept influencing the Muslim generations all through the previous centuries till now. It encouraged the self-righteous ambitious individuals and private groups, which, time to time, raised the standard of the revival of Khilāfah against their tyrant or even democratic Muslim governments, which were not truly Islamic in their conduct. We find that a good number of such military campaigns enjoyed the sympathies of the eminent Muslim scholars. (15) So, we can say that the sympathetic treatment of our historians with such individual political activists is one of the reasons, which caused the idealism of the revival of Khilāfah al-Rāshidah in the Muslims and they embarked upon achieving it with whatever sources were available to them, and in their frenzy, they did not mind the difference of the proportion of the power between them and their opponents.

Now, we have a look at the classical Fiqh, in this regard. The classical Fiqh maintains mainly three reasons for an Islamic state to be at war with the non-Muslims:

1. **Just their being non-believers: (كفر)**

Their stance is the following verse of the Qur'ān:

﴿ وَقَنَلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِئْتَنَةً وَيَكُونَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
لِللَّهِ ^ع (16)

And fight them until there is no Fitnah and [until] the religion, all of it, is for Allāh.

They interpret 'al-Dīn' as the Islamic monotheism, which is to prevail upon polytheism. Wherever there is polytheism, the Muslims need to fight to finish it, until Islām prevails upon the whole world.

In this perspective, they bring the above-mentioned Ḥadīth of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) (see reference no. 5) to support their stance.

The whole military expeditions of the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions were interpreted to support this view that unless there are non-believers, the Muslims are to fight against them until they come into the fold of Islām or they must perish. However, this stance did not get much favour with the majority of the classical Fiqh.

2. To end the political rule of the non-Muslims in any part of the world: (شوكة الكفر)

Again the same verse:

﴿ وَقَدْ جَلَّوهُمُ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةً وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ ﴾⁽¹⁷⁾

And fight them until there is no Fitnah and [until] the religion, all of it, is for Allāh.

The proponents of this jurisprudential stance maintain the meaning of ‘al-Dīn’ as the Islamic state power. It implies that the non-believers are not meant to rule the world. They should accept Islām as their religion, if they do not, then, they must accept the rule of Islām over them. The same expeditions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and those of his companions were interpreted to support this view that their battles were meant to abolish the political power of the non-believers and to subjugate them. It implies that the non-believers are free to choose to become Muslim or not, but they have no right to be in power while disbelieving their Creator.

3. Hostility: (المحاربة)

This is a natural right of human beings to defend themselves against any transgression or hostility. Islām also acknowledges this natural human right. The following Qur’ānic verse is the foundation of their stance:

﴿أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظُلِمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ﴾ (18)

Permission [to fight] has been given to those who are being fought, because they were wronged. And indeed, Allāh is competent to give them victory.

And

﴿وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ وَلَا تَعْدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ﴾ (19)

Fight in the way of Allāh those who fight you

They interpret all the related Qur'ānic verses and the Aḥādīth of the prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) in this perspective that since the prophet (ﷺ) and his companions were wronged, so they fought against the hostile non-believers, only. Wherever there is the mention to fight the non-believers, they should be considered as the hostile or aggressive ones.

In addition, the classical Fiqh does not approve any such peace treaty with the non-Muslims, which does not benefit the Muslims. If a treaty does not benefit the Muslims, no treaty should be signed.

Among the modern scholars, Abu al-A'lā Mawḍūdī (1903-1979) legitimated the military Islām further by presenting the term 'al-Dīn' as a political system. He equaled the meaning of 'Ibādah to obey and of al-Dīn to political State.'⁽²⁰⁾ According to this interpretation of al-Dīn, the following verse makes it obligatory upon the Muslims to dominate the political system of Islām upon all the political systems of the unbelievers.

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظَاهِرَهُ عَلَىٰ الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ﴾ (21)

It is He who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to manifest it over all

religion, although they who associate others with Allāh dislike it.

The term اقيموا الدين, to establish al-Dīn, would, then, mean to establish the political system of Islām. This interpretation of the term, Iqāmah al-Dīn, as the establishment of the Islamic political system, got immensely popular and almost all the later Muslim military campaigns find their legitimacy from this peculiar interpretation of the term Iqāmah al-Dīn.

Mawlānā Taqī Usmani, who is supposed to be a moderate Muslim scholar, presents almost the same view in his own simple way. He deduces that since God is the Master and the Lord of the universe, His Lordship must prevail upon the earth, too. So it is binding on the Muslim to establish the system of His Lordship on the earth, but, through peaceful means. ⁽²²⁾ He presents the following verse to support his viewpoint:

(23) ﴿إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ﴾

The decision is only for Allāh.

These are the premise, by and large, from which the ideology of the modern Islamic militants gets its legitimacy. Now, the author of this paper presents his critique. The author begins his criticism in the ascending order of the arguments presented before, i.e., he will first talk about the latest argument and then the preceding ones.

To discuss Mawlānā Taqī Usmani's deduction, there is no single verse in the Holy Qur'ān that enjoins the Muslim to establish an Islamic polity. Allāh despite being a Hākīm (Master) never asked His believers to establish a political system to run His rule. This viewpoint can further be understood with the help of an example. Allāh asks the believer to pay Zakāh and it is obligatory. But He never obliged them to earn money, so that, they should pay Zakāh. The same way, He asks the Muslim to run His rules and His laws in their political system, if they are in power, but He never asked them to create, establish or carve out a state to run His laws in it. But if Taqī Usmani means that it is good to have a political Muslim power

in a territory with the majority of the Muslims, to practice Islām peacefully, then, the author finds himself in agreement with his stance.

The idea that Islām is as a system, rather as a political system, as presented by Mawdūdī, was refuted by some eminent Islamic scholars, for example, Mawlānā Wahīduddīn Khān. According to him, Mawlānā Mawdūdī reversed the order of the juxtaposition of the meanings of the words ‘al-Dīn’ and ‘Ibādah’. Ibādah is the name of the feeling of fear and love of God, whose demonstration is that man starts worshiping Him and tries to please Him with his obedience; and ‘al-Dīn’ is essentially the way to establish a relationship with God. In order to please his God, man obeys Him, too, in all spheres of his life, including the political one. But if al-Dīn is taken as merely or mainly a political system, the priorities of religion go inverse. To obey becomes first priority and a feeling of fear and love to worship God went into the backdrop. If a man places God as a king, first, and His religion as a system, it subsidies the spirit of religion, which means to create a strong bond of fear and love between man and his Creator. System, in fact, is an outward phenomenon of the inner feeling of a man that al-Dīn, indirectly, creates in man through addressing his conscience. It comes from inward, not from outward. Mawlānā Mawdūdī makes the outward demonstration the basis of his postulation of al-Dīn and treats the rest of the religion as its offshoots. So, the whole scheme of al-Dīn goes upside down.⁽²⁴⁾

This critique implies that Islām does not give the system. Systems are made by men. Islām just wants his followers to move in any of his systems the way his God pleases and man should refrain from the ways, which displeases God. So, to establish al-Dīn would not mean to establish some Islamic state, it means to obey Allāh in all the spheres of life, consciously and conscientiously; in the political sphere, too. The meaning to establish the Islamic state does not fit the meaning of the Qur’ānic term Aqīm al-Dīn⁽²⁵⁾

A viewpoint forward by some contemporary Islamic scholars is that, both private and the state militancy with the ideal to dominate the world in the name of Islām is based on some misconceptions and misinterpretations of the certain verses of the Qur'ān and Aḥādīth. On the basis of these misconceptions the expedition of the Prophet (ﷺ) and those of his companions were misinterpreted.

According to this point of view, there are two laws of war or Jihād in the Qur'ān. One is the general and the other is the specific or exclusive. The exclusive law belongs to the Rasūl only, under the law of Itimām al-Ḥujjah. This law is not applicable to others. This view needs a little elaboration:

There were some Rusul (Pl. of Rusūl) among the prophets. Every Rasūl was a special prophet, who was sent to establish a sign of God in the world to make people believe with a tangible sign of the divine truth with which he was sent by Allāh. This sign was that he and his followers definitely won over their opponents and stood victorious in this very world and their opponents were destroyed with humiliation in this very world, so that, this win and defeat became the sign of the Doomsday that the same will happen to the believers and the deniers at a larger scale, in the life hereafter. That worldly victory of Rasūl against his deniers based on the following Qur'ānic rule:

﴿ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَأَغْلِبَنَّ أَنَا وَرُسُلِي إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴾⁽²⁶⁾

Allāh has written, "I will surely overcome, I and My messengers." Indeed, Allāh is Powerful and Exalted in Might.

According to this law, once the truth is communicated to a people through their respective messengers in a conclusive manner and they still deny it, in spite of being convinced about it, they are punished in this very world. At times, this punishment appears through earthquakes, cyclones and other calamities and disasters, as the Qur'ān states:

﴿فَكَلَّا أَخَذْنَا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ حَاصِبًا وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ
 أَخَذَتْهُ الصَّيْحَةُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ حَسَفْنَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ
 أَغْرَقْنَا وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ
 يَظْلِمُونَ﴾⁽²⁷⁾

So each We seized for his sin; and among them were those upon whom We sent a storm of stones, and among them were those who were seized by the blast [from the sky], and among them were those whom We caused the earth to swallow, and among them were those whom We drowned. And Allāh would not have wronged them, but it was they who were wronging themselves.

While, for others, it is brought about with the swords of the believers. As a result, those who have denied the truth are totally annihilated from their land and the truth reigns supreme in it. In the case of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), the divine scourge took the form of swords of the companions of the Prophet (رضي الله عنهم). The Qur'ānic verse goes:

﴿فَقَاتِلْهُمْ يَعْذِبُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ وَيُخْزِهِمْ وَيَبْصُرْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ
 وَيَشْفِ صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾⁽²⁸⁾

Fight them; Allāh will punish them by your hands and will disgrace them and give you victory over them and satisfy the breasts of a believing people.

This was actually a divine plan, executed through the human beings. It should be viewed as the divine practice (Sunnatu'l-lāh) and cannot be initiated by the human beings on their own in any manner. It was not a part of the al-sharī'ah; this was a special law of war in the Arabian Peninsula and it was specifically against the direct opponents of the Prophet (ﷺ). The above-mentioned Ḥadīth (see reference No. 5) should be viewed in the perspective of the following verse under this exclusive divine law:

﴿ فَإِذَا أَسْلَخَ الْأَشْهُرَ الْحُرْمَ فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ
وَخَذُوهُمْ وَأَحْضُرُوهُمْ وَأَقْعُدُوا لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصَدٍ فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا
الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوْا الزَّكَاةَ فَخَلُّوا سَبِيلَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴾⁽²⁹⁾

And when the sacred months have passed, then kill the polytheists wherever you find them and capture them and besiege them and sit in wait for them at every place of ambush. But if they should repent, establish prayer, and give Zakāh, let them [go] on their way. Indeed, Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.

Only, the people of the Book, the Jews and the Christians, of the time of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) were spared from the total annihilation, as a special case, because they had been a special people to Allāh, and holders of the previous divine books. They were destined to be subjugated by the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) and his companions as the sign of humiliation and Allāh's wrath on them. This was stated clearly in the Qur'ān:

﴿ قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا
حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ الْحَقِّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا
الْكِتَابَ حَتَّى يُعْطُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَدٍ وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ ﴾⁽³⁰⁾

Fight those who do not believe in Allāh or in the Last Day and who do not consider unlawful what Allāh and His Messenger have made unlawful and who do not adopt the religion of truth from those who were given the Scripture - [fight] until they give the Jizyah willingly while they are humbled.

Another aspect of this exclusive divine law is that the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) wrote letters to the kings and rulers of his time to invite them to Islām. Thus, he made them his direct addressees. Moreover, the sign of his prophet-hood with the establishment of his victory over his opponents according to the open challenge and the prophecies of the Qur'ān and the prophet (ﷺ) was known to the other lands, as well. So those areas, too, became

his direct addressees and truth communicated to them conclusively, but they denied it. So, his companion waged the divine wars against them, too, after the demise of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). They treated them as they treated the opponents of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) in Arabia.

But, now, after, that the exclusive law of the fight was over, the Muslims are not supposed to fight the non-Muslims on the basis of kufr or denying to accept Islām. Now, the only way to fight is the natural law of survival and conflict of human rights. In other words, the Muslims can fight against Muḥārabah (transgression) only, as is the stance of the Hanafid school of thought. Now, we are not in need to wage the divine wars against the non-Muslims to subdue or subjugate them to accept Islām or to pay Jizyah. Presently, the Muslims can fight against the persecution, atrocities and violation of human rights, as the verse of the Qur'ān goes:

﴿ وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ
وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَاجْعَل لَّنَا
مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا وَاجْعَل لَّنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ نَصِيرًا ﴾⁽³¹⁾

And what is [the matter] with you that you fight not in the cause of Allāh and [for] the oppressed among men, women, and children who say, "Our Lord, take us out of this city of oppressive people and appoint for us from Yourself a protector and appoint for us from Yourself a helper?"

Still, Allāh does not ask the Muslims to go to war without material preparations. We notice that at the time, when the support of Allāh and his angels had been promised to the companions of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) against their enemies, the Muslims were asked to make material preparations against their enemies:

﴿وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهِبُونَ
 بِهِ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَءَاخِرِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ لَا نَعْلَمُونَهُمْ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُهُمْ
 وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا
 تُظْلَمُونَ﴾ (32)

And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrify the enemy of Allāh and your enemy and others besides them whom you do not know [but] whom Allāh knows. And whatever you spend in the cause of Allāh will be fully repaid to you, and you will not be wronged.

And

﴿وَدَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ
 عَلَيْكُمْ مِيلَةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ بِكُمْ أَذَى مِنْ
 مَطَرٍ أَوْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى أَنْ تَضَعُوا أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ وَخُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
 أَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا﴾ (33)

Those who disbelieve wish that you would neglect your weapons and your baggage so they could come down upon you in one [single] attack. But there is no blame upon you, if you are troubled by rain or are ill, for putting down your arms, but take precaution. Indeed, Allāh has prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating punishment.

Also, Manpower was a matter to consider with due importance, Allāh says in the Qur'an:

﴿يَتَأْتِيَهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرَضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى الْقِتَالِ إِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ عَشْرُونَ
 صَدِيرُونَ يَغْلِبُوا مِائَتَيْنِ وَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفًا مِنْ
 الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ أَلَنْ خَفَفَ اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ

وَعَلِمَ أَنَّ فِيكُمْ ضَعْفًا فَإِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ مِائَةٌ صَابِرَةٌ يَغْلِبُوا مِائَتَيْنِ
وَأِنْ يَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أَلْفٌ يَغْلِبُوا أَلْفَيْنِ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ
الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

O Prophet, urge the believers to battle. If there are among you twenty [who are] steadfast, they will overcome two hundred. And if there are among you one hundred [who are] steadfast, they will overcome a thousand of those who have disbelieved because they are a people who do not understand. (65) Now, Allāh has lightened [the hardship] for you, and He knows that among you is weakness. So if there are from you one hundred [who are] steadfast, they will overcome two hundred. And if there are among you a thousand, they will overcome two thousand by permission of Allāh. And Allāh is with the steadfast.

If the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) were given relaxation in terms of manpower due to their said weakness, despite the certified help of the divine powers at their back, then, how the modern Muslims, without adequate technological skills and manpower, can think of fighting their enemies, who are far superior to them in power.

Secondly, we find that all the directives of Jihād in the Qur'ān are given to a collective system of the Muslims, if it is established in a peaceful manner, as the state of Madīnah was established on the basis of Da'wah through a peaceful process and consent of the native people: both the Muslim and the non-Muslim.

In the light of Aḥādīth of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), it becomes quite clear to us that no individual militant quest is allowed at the expense of the peace and integrity of collective system of the Muslim, no matter how much this campaign is righteous in its stance and character and the rulers are bad, except that rulers bend upon committing the blatant kufr. The following Aḥādīth are the evidences of this statement. Ibn 'Abbās narrates from the Prophet (ﷺ):

«مَنْ كَرِهَ مِنْ أَمِيرِهِ شَيْئًا فَلْيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ خَرَجَ مِنَ السُّلْطَانِ شِبْرًا مَاتَ
مِيتَةً جَاهِلِيَّةً» (35)

The prophet said who sees in his ruler, something which he does not like, he should tolerate it because the one who leave the group of the Muslims a little, he will die a death of ignorance

However, to rise against a Muslim government, which bends upon committing the blatant kufr, is valid under certain conditions: That the people, who want to rise should have the majority of the Muslims in their favour on the principle:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ﴾ (36)

“and whose affair is [determined by] consultation among themselves”.

The principle of majority vote can be inferred from the above verse, which is the foundation of the social and the political affairs of the Muslim community. It is inferred that there can be two situations in consultation: either the Muslims will agree upon a single unanimous opinion or there will be a difference of opinions. If it is unanimous, the consultation is done, but if there is a difference of opinions, the common sense favors that the majority opinion should be taken as final.

The second condition is that the people who, legitimately, go to rebel against a Muslim government, which is bent on doing some blatant kufr, they must be unable to change their rulers through peaceful, democratic means; this can also be understood from the preceding verse, that the matter of dismissal of a ruler should also be done through mutual consultation. If there is no such peaceful procedure to dismiss the ruler, then armed struggle can be launched, but, with another condition: the third condition, that is, the people should be united under a single leadership, and fourthly, they establish their government in an independent piece of land, because the directives of armed struggle are given to a collective system of

the Muslim, not to a crowd or a group without a system of government. However, in the absence of a territory, according to some contemporary scholars, a unanimous leadership against a Muslim tyrant Kāfir government is possible without geographical land, as it was practiced in some political cases in the contemporary world; such a campaign can be driven from outside the country, where the change has to bring in. Yet, it is never a religious obligation to rise to arms to bring a political change, no matter how worse the condition is.

Another, issue is of the freedom movements of the Muslims masses in different parts of the world, where they are in the majority and still oppressed by the non-Muslim tyranny. The Qur'ānic guidance, in such cases, according to the author's understanding of the following verse of the Qur'ān, is:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ نَوَقَهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا فِيمَ كُنْتُمْ قَالُوا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضَ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةً فَهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَأْوَهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا﴾ (37)

Indeed, those whom the angels take [in death] while wronging themselves - [the angels] will say, "In what [condition] were you?" They will say, "We were oppressed in the land." The angels will say, "Was not the earth of Allāh spacious [enough] for you to emigrate therein?" For those, their refuge is Hell - and evil it is as a destination.

The Muslim masses, in such conditions are instructed to migrate from the land of oppression, if peaceful living or living according to Islamic ways is not possible. However, in the present scenario, which has provided more possibilities for human beings to struggle for their rights, they should launch a peaceful political struggle to win their freedom; and, if they find that their peaceful political struggle is not allowed, and it is not working anymore, only then, they can resort to armed struggle on the condition that they must be united under a single leadership and establish a self-

conceived state within their own land if possible, or if it is not possible, then, outside the boundaries of their country, and finally, they must have enough material power and manpower, in the light of the verse 65 and 66 of Sūrah al-Anfāl, which states that they should have enough power, which makes it probable for them to defeat their opponents. On these conditions, a Muslim community, deprived of their basic human rights, can launch organized military activities, to win their rights and freedom.

In addition, the Muslim governments, which are in an agreement of peace with such oppressive non-Muslim government, are not supposed to help their oppressed Muslim brothers, as the Qur'ānic verse goes:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يُهَاجِرُوا مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ وَدَائِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُوا وَإِنِ اسْتَنْصَرُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ فَعَلَيْكُمْ النَّصْرُ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ﴾ (38)

But those who believed and did not emigrate - for you there is no guardianship of them until they emigrate. And if they seek help of you for the religion, then you must help, except against a people between yourselves and whom is a treaty. And Allāh is Seeing of what you do.

But if any Muslim government, which is in a peace agreement with such an oppressive non-Muslim government, finds it necessary to help their oppressed Muslim brothers, it should declare the peace agreement with them as null and void, overtly.

﴿وَإِنَّمَا تَخَافُونَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ خِيَانَةً فَانِدْ إِلَيْهِمْ عَلَىٰ سَوَاءٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْخَائِنِينَ﴾ (39)

If you [have reason to] fear from a people betrayal, throw [their treaty] back to them, [putting you] on equal terms. Indeed, Allāh does not like traitors

A foreign Muslim governments, which are not in a peace agreement with the oppressing governments, can help their oppressed Muslim brothers, rather, they must:

﴿وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَاجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيًّا وَاجْعَل لَّنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ نَصِيرًا﴾⁽⁴⁰⁾

And what is [the matter] with you that you fight not in the cause of Allāh and [for] the oppressed among men, women, and children who say, "Our Lord, take us out of this city of oppressive people and appoint for us from Yourself a protector and appoint for us from Yourself a helper?"

If a Muslim community faces threats, directly to their very lives and property, they are allowed to resort to arms, even, individually, as a matter of self-defence, as the Ḥadīth of the prophet (ﷺ) goes:

«مَنْ قَاتَلَ دُونَ مَالِهِ فُقِتِلَ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ وَمَنْ قَاتَلَ دُونَ دَمِهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ وَمَنْ قَاتَلَ دُونَ أَهْلِهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ»⁽⁴¹⁾

The prophet (ﷺ) one who fights for his property and gets killed, he is shed, and one who fights for his life (and gets killed) he is Shahīd, and one who fights for his family (and gets killed), he is Shahīd.

CONCLUSION:

Militancy in the name of Islām has become a matter of great concern for the Muslim, as well as, the non-Muslim countries. These militant groups find the legitimacy of their activities from the academic sources of Islām and the Islamic history. Their ultimate goal is to establish such an Islamic government so as to launch a worldwide military campaign against the non-Muslim world to bring them into the fold or rule of Islām.

A modern criticism is required to provide a counter narrative. The author is of the view that there are two laws of Jihād

in the Qur'ān: one is the exclusive to the Rasul and the other is the general. The exclusive law was directed to eliminate and/or humiliate the direct deniers of a Rasūl in this very world, and to make the direct followers of a Rasūl victorious and prosperous in this very world, to establish a tangible sign of the truth of Allāh and His religion. The misconceptions start when the exclusive law of Jihād is generalized and applied to other.

While the general law of Jihād allows the Muslims to fight against persecution and injustice, but with the state power, not individually. Private Jihād is completely disapproved by the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ), except, when any rulers bend upon committing the blatant kufr. But, such private armed struggle is allowed with certain conditions. Same conditions apply to the oppressed communities of the Muslim that they should have a majority of the Muslim masses in their favour to launch armed struggle, they are united under a single leadership, change of dismissal of the oppressive ruler through peaceful and democratic means is not possible and they establish a real or self-conceived state within or outside their land.

The Muslim government in an agreement of peace with the oppressive non-Muslim government cannot help their oppressed Muslim brothers, unless they end the agreement, openly. The Muslim governments, which are not in a peace agreement with such oppressive non-Muslim government, must help their Muslim brothers. If a Muslim community faces direct threats to their life and property, they can resort to armed struggle, individually, as a matter of self-defence.

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- 7) Sūrah al-Tawbah: 123.
- 8) Asad, Muḥammad, *Islam at the Crossroads* (Andalus: Dār al-Andalus Gibraltar), 52.
- 9) Ibid.
- 10) Ibid, 53.
- 11) Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 44.
- 12) *al-Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ḥadīth No. 7056.
- 13) Zāhid al-Rāshidī, "Dehshat Gard kā Mawqaf us kī Zubānī", *al-Sharī'ah*, 25:4 (Gojrān Wālā: al-Sharī'ah Academy, Kanganī wālā Road).
- 14) *al-Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ḥadīth no. 2832.
- 15) For example, the campaign of Imām Zayd was supported by Imām Abū Ḥanīfah.
- 16) Sūrah al-Anfāl: 39.
- 17) Sūrah al-Anfāl: 39.
- 18) Sūrah al-Ḥajj: 39.
- 19) Sūrah al-Baqarah: 190.
- 20) Mawdūdī, Abū al-A'lā, *Dīn kī Chār Bunyādī Iṣṭalāḥāt* (Lahore: Islamic Publications (PVT) Limited, 13 E, Shāh 'Ālam Market, Pakistan), 132, 17-104. (The same concept was forward by Dr Ḥamīdu'llāh, he named it the idealistic wars: see Mawlānā Faḍal Muḥammad, *Da'wat-e-Jihād, Faḍā'il, Masā'il, Wāqī'āt*, (Karachi, Bayt al-Jihād, 1999), 393-398; Ḥāfiẓ Mubashir Ḥusayn Lahōrī, *Islām mayn Tasawwur-e-Jihād awr Dōr-e-Ḥāḍir myan 'aml-e-Jihād* (Lahore: Da'wat-o-Iṣlāh centre . 2003), 66-72.
- 21) Sūrah al-Tawbah: 33.
- 22) Taqī Usmani, *Islām or Siāsī Nazriyāt* (Karachi: Maktabah Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān), 173.
- 23) Sūrah al-An'ām: 57.
- 24) Wahiduddin Khan, *Ta'bīr kī Ghalaṭī* (New Delhi: Maktabah al-Risālah), 140 & 152.

- 25) Javed Aḥmad Ghāmidī, *Burhān* (Lahore: al-Mawrid, 51 k Model Town), 178.
- 26) Sūrah al-Mujādalah: 21.
- 27) Sūrah al-‘Ankabūt; 40.
- 28) Sūrah al-Tawbah: 14.
- 29) Sūrah al-Tawbah: 5.
- 30) Sūrah al-Tawbah: 29.
- 31) Sūrah al-Nisā’: 75.
- 32) Sūrah al-Anfāl: 60.
- 33) Sūrah al-Nisā’: 102.
- 34) Sūrah al-Anfāl: 65-66.
- 35) *al-Ṣaḥiḥ al Bukhārī*, Ḥadīth No. ۷۰۵۳.
- 36) Sūrah al-Shūrā. 38.
- 37) Sūrah al-Nisā’, 97.
- 38) Sūrah al-Anfāl: 72.
- 39) Sūrah al-Anfāl: 58.
- 40) Sūrah al-Nisā’: 75.
- 41) al-Nisāī, Abū ‘Abd al-Reḥmān Aḥmad Ibn Sho‘yb, *al-Sunan al-Suḡhrā*, . 2nd ed (Ḥalb: Makatab al-Maṭbo‘āt al-Islāmiyah), Ḥadīth no. 4094.
