

**MUSLIM SOCIETY, FAMILY PLANNING
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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Whether an individual or a nation, society or state, there are certain factors that are of central and basic importance to them. The foremost is the objective in life and focus and satisfaction with respect to the purpose of life. The deranged and confused cannot perform great deeds.

In Quranic words:

"They are distracted in mind...being (sincerely) for neither one group nor for another"
(Al-Nisa 4:143)

They are staggering between two paths (of belief and disbelief), neither wholly on this side, nor wholly on that side.

Only those individuals and nations can make history and soar high who have clear vision and are conscious of their objective, which have belief in their ideal and are ready to offer sacrifices of self and material for its realization. Unity of thought and unity of character both are necessary for this to achieve. Understanding of the obtaining situation, looming threats, and contemporary challenges and arrangement as well as best use of moral and material resources to face them is also essential along with the commitment with objective, and unity of thought and character. Whoever – an individual or nation – shirks from hard work, struggle, sacrifice and Jihad cannot reach the desired destination.

This goal can be achieved only through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation between the leadership and the people. If there is a continuous confrontation and tension between a nation's leadership and its people, with people wanting to go in one direction but the leadership wants to take them to another, the mutual conflict dissipates all energies. And the nation becomes an easy prey for the enemy.

While each day, for a live nation, is a day for introspection and self-accountability; the month of August particularly provides an opportunity to the nation of Pakistan for self-accountability so that everyone may remember the gift Allah has bestowed in the form of independence and sovereign rule in Pakistan and may examine as to whether one has fulfilled one's obligations. Everyone should ascertain as to what are the reasons of crisis facing the country and the nation, and how the nation can come out of the mire and march towards its real destination.

To us, the three major ills inflicting the nation are:

1. Absence of belief and satisfaction with the objective, and confusion of thought and action.

2. Ignorance about international conditions and external and internal threats and issues.
3. Non-conformity between the sentiments and aspirations of the nation and its leadership.

Those who are eyewitness of the events of the nascent days after the creation of Pakistan would bear it that government functionaries though had no tables and chairs but were engrossed in building the newly established State and wanted to build this home of theirs at all costs. But the heinous role of political acrobats and self-seekers change the course and those who had no role in the Pakistan Movement gradually became masters and rulers. They were neither the real representative of the people, nor reflected their aspirations and sentiments. This inverse revolution deprived the nation of the fruits of independence and gave birth to such a confrontation that ruined the biggest Islamic state and the fifth largest country of the world in every sphere, political, economic, moral, educational, cultural and civilizational, and bifurcated it. The extent of irony is that despite being the first Muslim nuclear power we have no prestige in political and economic terms, and global as well as regional powers are bent upon tightening us in their clasp and undermining our independence and ideological and civilizational identity.

Frustrated with the self-seeking politicians and their misdeeds, the nation welcomed military coup again and again – but met with despair every time. Now again, disappointment with the forces that had taken over on October 12 is increasing, and the expectations are melting. Accountability, clean interim set-up, economic revival, countering India's regional domination, preparedness against global colonialism, electoral reforms aimed at ensuring that only those who are real representative of the people and are faithful, knowledgeable and learned, honest, and capable come to rule – all seem to be mere dreams. No progress is visible in respect of any of these fronts; rather the same ailments are recurring that have always been inflicting and continuously weakening the national health.

How the incumbent leadership is coming in the grip of these three ailments can be easily seen in the policy blueprint that has been announced on the eve of World Population Day on July 11.

Muslim society has its own religious, moral, cultural, and historical identity. The real objective of the Pakistan Movement and the real mission of the Muslim nation is to strengthen this identity and to strive for establishing Allah's Order on His land. This sentiment is woven into the nation's psyche in such a way that no force could ever suppress it. Internal chaos and external aggression have always collaborated to undermine it, but every such effort met defeat and humiliation. Yet, a small clique, that is a remnant of the colonial era and an agent in today's global colonialism, has been persistent in its effort at annihilating the roots of Muslim society and imposing the West's secular ideas, morally degenerated civilization and life, and capitalism that is based on cruelty and injustice. New stunts are invented for this to achieve.

The latest offensive is in the form of family planning and deceptive financial slogans. It has been resolved to do this on war footing. Those who are dragging the present leadership on this track, and those of the responsible of the state who have taken the ball, are committing the offense of annihilating Muslim society and Islamic values. The economic objectives for which this is being ostentatiously done are mere illusion and deception. The global campaign for family planning is a heinous conspiracy against Deen and Belief, and moral code and norms as well as a program for Western nations' political domination and cultural hegemony over the rest of the world. If this is being done because of not knowing religion's commandments, nation's priorities, and global situation and conspiracies, the ignorance is regrettable and unpardonable. If this is done as being an agent of the campaign, this amounts to a crime against nation and war against Allah, His Prophet, Muslim society and Ummah.

Almost the whole religious and intellectual leadership of Ummah is agreed on that while Shariah gives limited permission for birth control, with quite a loathing, keeping in view the individual situation and with certain conditions and arguments that are permissible in the Shariah, there is no justification for running a campaign about it and impose it on the country and nation forcefully or with persuasion under the official patronage. This has been explained time and again with strong and irrefutable arguments. On being asked by the Federal Government, the Council of Islamic Ideology, that is established under article 227 of the Constitution and consists of experts of law and economics, and women representatives besides the Ulema (scholars), has expressed its opinion in detail and with consensus. In the light of Quranic verses, the Prophet's traditions, and views of the Muslim luminaries, it has stated that:

This posture of the Prophet (pbuh) does not establish justification for exterior ejection without loathing, rather it seems discouraging this. The issue is like divorce. Though divorce is allowed, it has never been liked. Divorce is permitted but a policy to customize it on the national level is disliked in Islam and is harmful for society; hence prohibited. In the same way, a policy to customize birth control methods on the national level and thus promote obscenity is disliked in Islam and is harmful for society; and prohibited. Nevertheless, at the individual level, if pregnancy or child-birth endangers a woman's life, she is allowed according to her peculiar conditions. The above quoted Traditions allow birth control practices only in case of necessity, at the individual level, and with quite loathing. The decrees of scholars in which the adoption of methods for birth control and exterior ejection are allowed pertain to extraordinary individual necessity. But, at the national level, to waste hundreds of millions for customizing birth control methods and thus directly promoting obscenity, cannot be justified. (Report on Population Planning, Council of Islamic Ideology, Islamabad, April 1984, p. 10)

After these arguments, the Council recommended that:

In view of the above mentioned facts and arguments, the Council feels that the official campaign in the country for birth control (population planning) is not only against Islam but also harmful for Pakistani society with every respect. It, therefore, recommends that:

1. The campaign for birth control at the official level be stopped forthwith, and birth control program excluded from economic planning.
2. All drug sellers be directed to provide medicine and instruments for birth control only to those married couples who present 'marriage deed' and a certificate from a registered doctor to the effect that pregnancy may cause mortal injury to the woman and that this cannot be prevented by any other method. Such direction is issued to doctors for sterilization, as well. **(p 20)**

Responding to further queries from the health ministry, that were based on Ms. Anwar Raza's manuscript on Islamic law and population planning, and Dr. Atiya Inayatullah's note, and which included arguments for the justification of population planning, the Council gave a detailed review and once again expressed its opinion:

In the light of clear teachings of Qur'an and Traditions of the Prophet (pbuh), we consider running a general campaign on birth control in the country and trying to control the population under the banner of family planning extremely harmful and injurious to Muslim society and oppose it stringently. It harms women's body and the self, as medical facts prove it. It harms socially, and even economically as well. With the increase in population, the intelligent and able-bodied youth would discover new economic resources and avenues for further industry and effort; and thus increase in population would give rise to more economic activity. A small population would live on small resources and limited scope, and thus economic progress would remain halted. In essence, the reason for our opposition pertains to Shariah (is religious), but, conversely, the religion prohibits such a campaign because it causes these harms. We, therefore, have briefly indicated to these. **(p 76)**

Further, the Council declared its decision in the following words:

In Shariah, birth control (exterior ejection) is permissible in individual cases under the following conditions:

- Pregnancy is injurious to the wife's health;
- The wife is diseased, and pregnancy may aggravate her disease;
- Pregnancy is injurious for the health of child fed on the mother's milk.
- It must be maintained here that 'fear of want' has never been accepted in Shariah as a sound reason for birth control:

"No burden do we place on any soul, but that which it can bear." **(Al-Ana'am:152)**

“Kill not your children for fear of want: We shall provide sustenance for them as well as for you.” **(Al-Asra: 31)**

The adoption of birth control, which is called family planning (and now population planning), as a state policy is against the spirit of Shariah. Due to birth control, the society becomes victim of nullification of faith, vulgarity, and sexual waywardness at the national level, and suffers from the lack of man-force required for national defense and economic development. Furthermore, it is often bad for the health of mother and child because of psychological and nervous tension.

Rejecting the argument that increase in population would reduce national assets, the Council maintained that statistics refute this argument; but the Western propagandists are continuously drumming this up before the Third World countries and nations out of their ill-will. The Council, therefore, recommends abandoning of the family planning program at the governmental level. **(P 80-81)**

Islam gives every Muslim the right to discuss and debate, inquire and pursue. It has established the tradition of respecting divergent views in discordant issues. To accept whole-heartedly the decree of Allah and his Prophet (pbuh) is also the spirit and identity of Muslim society:

“It is not fitting for a believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by God and His Prophet, to have any option about their decision; if any one disobeys God and his Prophet, he is indeed on a clearly wrong Path.” **(Al-Ahzab 33:36)**

While on the one hand references are made to Pakistan’s being an Islamic welfare state, and its ideological and civilizational framework, on the other hand imposition of a policy clearly opposed to Shariah, to be pursued on war footing, is announced. With all his piety-wrapped appearance, the President says:

“According to the experts, the main reason for these problems is the sharp increase in population and relatively slow growth of economic resources. To have a balance between resources and problems, we would have to struggle for bringing the increase in population to a moderate level to ensure progress and prosperity of the common man and, particularly, of the lower strata. Being an Islamic welfare state, this is an obligation of the state.” **(President’s message on World Population Day, July 11, 2000; Ministry of Population Welfare, Islamabad)**

In this booklet, the fourth of the ‘Main Targets’ of the national policy on population mentions "within the religious, ethical and cultural values of the people of Pakistan", and its ‘Highlights’ talk of "voluntary change in behavioral pattern about fertility."

After opening his speech in the name of Allah and with the pious announcement that "I urge that the ultimate objectives of lowering the population growth rate must be achieved within an ideological and culturally acceptable framework", the Chief Executive went on to say that:

"There is ample evidence that the runaway population growth rate has had a deleterious effect on the nation's development efforts and individual well-being. I am therefore pleased to learn that Pakistan though a later starter has entered the fertility transition and its population growth rate has dropped to 2.2 percent; yet there is no room for complacency. In fact to make up for last time we must address the issue on a war footing."

The Chief Executive has urged for bringing the population growth rate to 1.9 percent and has exclaimed with sorrow that had the efforts for population control started earlier, the country's population would have been 80 or 90 million at the most instead of the 135 million. He has repeated the same oft-repeated and worn-out arguments that Western politicians and colonial institutions have been sermonizing about for 50 years, and that are being ruminated by almost all the rulers and NGOs of the Third World.

Ms. Atiya Inayatullah has been member of the circle of close associates of General Zia-ul Haq, and Prime Ministers Junejo and Nawaz Sharif, and is now a member of the Chief Executive's Security Council and heads this campaign. She resolves to bring the population growth rate to 1.9 percent by the year 2003, vows to take birth control medicines and instruments to 40 percent population, and plans to spread population planning education in schools. She is proud of her backing by General Musharraf and assures him about her own good expectations.

On the one hand are claims for adherence to Islam, and the feat of reviving Islamic clauses of the Constitution. On the other is a declaration of war with the Commandments of Allah and His Prophet, and values and identity of Muslim society. It is this contradiction of word and deed, confusion and wretchedness of thought and vision, and conflict and confrontation with the nation's aspirations and sentiments that is eating into the fabric of national life and causing wastage of resources. The Chief Executive is complaining that the exercise of family planning is not meeting success because of lack of people's participation, but he could not understand that people cannot cooperate in an effort that is like a war against their faith and belief, values and civilizational traditions. How can Allah's blessings and aid be bestowed on a system that is hostage to such ills as defiance to Allah's orders, ideological confusion, and civilizational directionlessness. Allah has sternly warned such peoples. It is His beneficence that we are seeing His minor admonitions, as our leadership is openly inviting his wrath:

"They rejected the Signs of God, and God punished them for their crimes; for God is Strong and Strict in punishment. Because God will never change the fortune which He has bestowed on a people until they change what is in their own souls.

(Al-Anfal 8:52-53)

God forbid, Allah may guide the nation and its leadership to refrain from defying His orders and committing injustice, obey Him and adopt that course of action that is in keeping with the taste and tradition of the Muslim society. Allah may spare the nation from His wrath and enable it to strive to change the wrong steps and policies of the rulers. This is the only way to avoid Allah's wrath.

As a Muslim society and nation, the foremost to us is religious and moral aspect, on this rests our fortune in this world and in the hereafter. But an analysis of the political and economic dimensions of the issue seems necessary for the sake of confidence and certainty so that the reality may become clear to the nation and its rulers and the tentacles of the global game are exposed. While we are fully satisfied and happy over each and every command of Allah and His Prophet, we on the basis of firm logical and historical arguments consider family planning an injustice to humanity, a war against civilization and culture, and a lost-bargain. With all humility we also call upon the supporters and champions of family planning to come up with their arguments: Give your argument if you are truthful.

The basic question is: who has the right to determine the size of a family? This is the fundamental point of the campaign for controlling the progeny and family planning. Whether it is the right of the husband and the wife to decide on the family matters freely according to the will of Allah, or it is with a government, world institutions, United Nations or certain superpower to determine for all human beings of the world as to when and how much the family size can be increased. The fact of the matter is that population is planned strictly according to the Allah's given system, and man's interference is only partial and like of a means. However, Allah's will establishes some principles and norms for human dignity according to which marriage and family system have central importance for the preservation and growth of human race.

Just as the marriage under duress is void, shaping family size according to the dictates of a coercive or external order or plan is tantamount to negating individuals' (the husband and the wife) rights, degradation of human dignity, and promotion of a kind of slavery. How can those who talk about human rights, day in and day out, and accept, in principle, the right to establish family as being one of them, adopt this stance. But, their stance is that this right does not rest with the family-makers (the husband and the wife) to seek happiness in the form of their children with Allah's blessings, it is for government, rather world organizations and NGOs to decide on the number of their family members. Why should an external force decide that a family should have one child, or two or three, and that the population growth rate of a country should be 2.2 percent or 1.9 percent, and that a country's population should be 140 million or 80 million?

The most important issue is of human rights and human dignity. In this respect, population control and family planning campaign and governmental policy are a system of slavery and subjugation of a new kind. Just as the slaves of the past did not have the right to marry according to their free will and establish their family, in the same way the individual is being deprived of the right and is being

made a passive subject of government and world powers in spite of all claims of freedom and human rights. These yokes of slavery are put on us with quite attractive names: family planning, and population welfare. On the one hand, there is clamor about reproductive rights; on the other, there is avowal for imposing the reproductive regime as per the government decision, with coercion, and on war-footing!

Islam is so sensitive on this that it teaches the husband and the wife to give one another's rights with mutual consultation and agreement in their marital life, and a number of Muslim jurists considered it necessary to observe that husband needs wife's permission for exterior ejection, which is allowed under peculiar conditions. But the philosophy of population control and its global campaign have attacked at this right of husband and wife; and have advanced the devilish game of subjecting this individual, private, and delicate matter to the orders of population ministry and world organizations. The means that are being suggested would eliminate modesty and chastity from society. The floodgates of free-sex life are opened in the name of sex awareness and sex education so that the family and society become wayward and beset with destruction.

This campaign is harmful for human freedom, family system, and preservation of modesty and chastity in society. This is a system of interference by government, NGOs, and global agencies in family matters, and, in fact, a new snare for slavery.

Apparently this system of family planning is called 'voluntary', but every technique of coercion and persuasion is being employed for this to realize. Foreign aid is conditioned with it. A storm of propaganda has taken the world in its grips, and Hitler's propagandist General Goebble's rule 'to repeat the false in such a great frequency and with such aplomb that it is accepted as truth' is being followed. Sometimes science is used for support, economic considerations are exploited, health and energy problems are cited, and a scare is created about the demon of drought and poverty. Every tactic of cultural colonialism is being employed, and all instruments of coercion are overtly and covertly used because the lesson of the history of a hundred years of this campaign is that:

"Birth control education is now backed by Third World governments, but, apart from China's draconian application of it, it has not yet made an impact on reducing the acceleration of population growth."

**(A History of the World
in the Twentieth Century, J.A.S. Granville, Harvard University Press, 1994, p.12)**

The fact is that all is done at the initiation and with the approval of world organizations especially the World Bank and United Nations' Population program; be it China (post-Mao era) or India (Indira Gandhi's coercive policies), where state power, prison, fine and physical torture were all employed for policies of forced sterilization and compulsory birth control. In the words of Elizabeth Liagin:

“In fact, the notorious Chinese policy of one child per couple – complete with sterilization and late - term abortions on a compulsory basis – has been implemented with massive World Bank support, more than \$ 200 million from its Population, Health and Nutrition sector in the 1980s alone. And the ‘population emergency’ in India that resulted in millions of involuntary sterilization and thousands of deaths followed a 1971 population sector project with \$ 21 million negotiated by the World Bank.”

**(Excessive Force:
Power, Politics and Population Control, Elizabeth Liagin, Washington, 1996, p.82)**

How the World Bank has evaded the issue of human rights is reflected in the debate contained in a working paper "Costs, Payments and Incentives in Family Planning" of this body. Let us first understand the problem:

A crucial aspect of the ethical dilemma is found in the tension between a government’s proper function of protecting the welfare of current and future generations, versus the right of individuals now alive to freely determine the size of their families.

That is why a document of the United Nations "World Population Plan of Action" in 1974 had raised this issue with quite dexterity, and the mentioned working paper too has a reference of this document:

All couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children.

But, after accepting the right, the conclusion and decision reached is:

“The contradictions are apparent. Couples and individuals can decide ‘freely’ but also ‘responsibly’, and in light of other ‘needs’. As with most other human rights, the facts that people have the right to determine its number and spacing of their children does not mean that the government can never infringe it.”

(Ethical Approach to Family Planning in Africa, Fred T. Sai and K.Nerdmen, World Bank Population and Human Resource Dept., Washington, 1989)

Thus, all human rights have come to naught with just one sentence. The real issue, as we would prove afterwards, is not of human rights or human interest but of political interests of big powers, global dominance, and cultural hegemony. The negation of individual’s freedom and subjugation of nations both are imperatives for this. The need is not of the developing countries but of colonial powers and all are being agents for this. Elizabeth Liagin admits in clear words:

“The irony lies in the fact that the World Bank carries out these programs with the explicit ¾ and sometimes explicitly stated ¾ understanding that population control is

unnecessary and potentially harmful to the developing economies of the Southern Hemisphere.” (p 83)

This humiliation of the individual, violation of human rights, and degradation of human dignity all are being done in the name of freedom, democracy, and economic development. Instead of feeling qualms, the ‘truth’ is openly declared that cleansing of others’ races is justified and allowed for world organizations and Western nations. A big champion of the Western civilization and an intellectual Bertrand Russell has said in his *Marriage and Morals* (London, 1985, p. 161) quite clearly and audaciously:

It cannot be expected that the most powerful military nations will sit still while other nations reverse the balance of power by the mere process of breeding.

If they cleanse the populations, ignite and promote internecine conflicts (as done in Rwanda in recent times), or limit a country’s population through optional or compulsory birth control for the sake of their interests and perpetuation of dominance, this is their ‘right’.

The second main question is that how could those who have made to this world and are fully enjoying its resources impose restrictions on others’ coming to this world, and count as to how many humans can be produced. This ‘right’ Allah had kept with Him:

“He it is who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases.” **(Al-e-Imran 3: 6)**

And

“He bestows children, male or female, according to His Will (and Plan). Or He bestows both males and females, and He leaves barren whom He will.”

(Al-Shura 42:49-50)

But now, there are those who claim Godly powers, who think they know as to the coming of how many is beneficial for the world, and the stoppage of how many is their own right. This is what Ms. Atiya Inayatullah says:

On safe motherhood, the theme of this year’s global report, the most direct and immediate effect of a decline in the population growth rate is reduction in infant mortality. Accompanied by proven strategies, with God’s will, by 2003 we can save the life of 490 children and 20 mothers a day.

In her sway, she forgets that how many couples could not have children, how many were stopped from coming to the world, how many were deprived of their future’s protectors and how many parents craved for children but were forced to practice birth control – because of government’s excesses.

This is the claim that all the champions of the population control campaign make with quite arrogance. Their leaders in the West are Kingsley Davis and Paul Ehrlich. Davis says:

"I have never been able to get anyone to tell me why we needed those (additional) 23 million."
(Newsweek, March 30, 1970, p 87)

And Paul Ehrlich declares:

"I cannot think of any reason for having more than one hundred and fifty million people (in the US) and no one has ever risen over to me."
(Saturday Review, March, 1972, p 42)

Prof. Julian L. Simon of the University of Maryland, USA, who is author of tens of books on population and whose research and findings have been declared by Nobel Laureate Prof. V.A. Hayek as the best research books of contemporary times, exposes these claims in the following words:

"The longer I have read the literature about population, the more baffled and distressed I have become that one idea is omitted: Enabling a potential human being to come into life and to enjoy life is a good thing, just as protecting a living person's life from being ended is a good thing. Of course a death is not the same as an averted life, in large part because others feel differently about the two. Yet I find no logic implicit in the thinking of those who are horrified at the starvation of a comparatively few people in a far away country (and apparently more horrified than at the deaths by political murder in that same far away country, or at deaths by accidents in their own country) but who are positively gleeful when the thought that a million or ten million times that many lives will never be lived that might be lived.

I suggest to Davis and Ehrlich more than one reason for having more children and taking in more immigrants. Least important is that the larger population will probably mean a higher standard of living for our grand children and great grand children. (My technical 1977 and 1992 books and a good many chapters of this book substantiate this assertion). A more interesting reason is that we need another person for exactly the same reason we need Davis and Ehrlich. That is, just as the Davises and Ehrliches of this world are of value to the rest of us, so will the average additional person be of value."

(The Ultimate Resource, Julian Simon, University of Princeton Press, 1996, p xxxii)

It is important to note the way Qur'an has warned of stern interrogation about the innocent girls who were buried alive.

“When the girl, buried alive, is questioned – for what crime she was killed.”

(Al-Takvir 81:8-9)

Those who are being eliminated even before their making to this world, would not be questioned about – irrespective of the method of blocking their way of coming into being?

Allah Almighty has sent man on the earth after appointed him as His vicegerent, and has put all what is in heavens and the earth at his disposal:

“We have honored the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favors, above a great part of Our Creation.”

(Al-Asra 17:70)

The keys of resources are in His control and He has forbidden the murder of progeny out of the ‘fear of want’:

“Kill not your children for fear of want: We shall provide sustenance for them as well as for you.”

(Al-Asra 17:31)

The progeny’s murder has always had great appeal to the rebels of Allah, but He declares it a way to destruction:

“In the eyes of most of the polytheists, their partners made alluring the slaughter of their children, in order to lead them to their own destruction, and cause confusion in their religion.”

(Al-Anaam 6:137)

No bigger cruelty can be inflicted to man than meddling with the will of Allah and attempt to block the way for new souls just for the sake of own comfort and luxury and on the basis of such illusive, untenable, and self-contradictory perceptions as ‘resources are limited’, ‘economic progress would halt’, ‘there is no more room on earth for more people’, ‘environment is suffering from over-population’, and ‘quality of life is not improving’. Allah Almighty has provided in this universe more than enough resources for all His Creation. What is needed is human effort to explore these assets.
