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THE COVID-19: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES IN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

The outbreak of Covid-19 has taken the entire planet in to its fold, and has caused severe devastation and agony to mankind. This has inflicted grave implications on the cultural, social, religious and economic dimensions, and has changed the way the world operates. Today we dealing with social and economic devastations along with loss of life due to Covid-19 pandemic. This crisis has brought attention to the special value of human life and the revealed inability of States and international organizations to effectively protect it. In this context, there is dire need to explore potential pragmatic solutions in the light of Islamic sources including (but not limited to) Quran verses, teaching and practices of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW); fiqh-ul-hadith; maqasid-e-shariah; and the thoughts of prominent Muslim scholars. The article is conducted through a review of literature in classic and contemporary books and documents such as paper reports. This is a review of economic challenges brought by covid-19 pandemic as well as this paper discusses the help provided by Muslim Scholars to address the issues regarding Islamic ritual practices.

INTRODUCTION:

Last half century has seen a large number of scientific achievements. Our way of life has been completely changed due to ongoing technological advancements. Science has been successful in adding years to human lives. Scientist are now claiming to find the cure of death and almost near to develop immortal human beings. A number of recent scientific advancements during past decade has claimed to bring humanity near immortality. At the dawn of

year 2020 there were all these promises of longer and better lives and even the claims of finding a way to immortality. But 2020 changed the views of human beings about humanity itself. The uncertainty of human life and death revealed itself in very dramatic way.

The president Frank-Walter Steinmeier of Germany, while addressing on a televised speech on 11 April 2020 said that “Covid-19 pandemic is not a war zone of combat and competing interests, but a test of our humanity”. Covid -19 has brought humanity to readdress the ethical norms that help us to make policies and principles of our society. We are brought to investigate how these laws and principles help in maintaining a humane society. As well as how we should deal with dilemmas of human society. Covid-19 has brought a sense of uncertainty to humanity. Society as a whole is brought to take some actions that have very deep impact on human lives. All our social norms and practices are being re-evaluated and screened as a result of fear of an unknown virus. From the way we greet each other to the way we pray and connect with a higher Deity via religion is being changed.

Humanity has recently celebrated the right to live by own free will as a fundamental right for every human being on earth. Although we are far away to accomplish such feast. Covid-19 has brought a new challenge for humanity. The parts of world that claim to be champions of human rights have been under pressure because of restrictions implemented due to Covid-19 pandemic. This dilemma has given rise to many ethical questions. Dose being denied some liberties bring a danger to society or paradoxically is it the duty of a good citizen to sacrifice some privileges for the greater good of society. Development of vaccination against Covid-19 has given rise to more questions. Is it a civic duty of every citizen to come forward and get vaccinated to develop a shield against this virus. How should policies be designed to make sure every citizen can get vaccinated and what steps should be taken to alleviate the fear surrounding vaccine? How to make sure everyone in the society understands the importance of vaccine as only tool to combat a deadly disease that has brought humanity near extermination.

Religion is most powerful tool to give one’s life a meaning. Religion is defined as an organized, community-based system of beliefs and practices that connect people in a community and provide an anchor to connect with a higher Deity to bring purpose and direction to life. Islam is the way of living of some 1.8 billion adherents. It makes about 1/4th of total world population. Covid-19 pandemic has brought about a lot of changes in the religious practices of Muslims and have huge impact on lives of followers of Islam. The development of Covid-19 vaccine has been surrounded by many myths and doubts. Due to these false claims and doubts there is some reluctance in getting vaccinated. It is utmost important to remove the shroud of mystery surrounding Covid-19 vaccine. This study is attempted to look into influence of Covid-19 pandemic on the social and religious aspects of lives of common Pakistanis. This study will further shed light to the help and guidance provided by religious scholars at the time of pandemic. This guidance provided by out worthy religious scholars have paved a way for common person to perform his religious rituals and remain connected with the Allah Almighty. This study further aims at finding supportive evidence

from teachings of Islam via Quran and Hadith regarding covid-19 vaccine. This study critically analyses the Islamic sharia and jurisprudence to support the civic duty of every Muslim to get vaccinated so that we can move towards a corona free world.

Covid-19 Effects on Economic Activities:

There have been huge repercussions of covid-19 pandemic around the globe. Covid-19 has caused not only loss of life but this pandemic has posed great danger to food security and workplace safety. The socio-economic effects of covid-19 has been seriously debilitating. Due to covid pandemic millions of people are on verge of drastic poverty. Moreover, the malnourished individuals in the world that were about 83 million before outbreak of Covid-19 may reach an unprecedented 132 million in 2021 (1). It is estimated that in year 2020 due to economic restrictions millions of companies faced foreclosure. In the world 3.3 billion people are identified as workers, and it is estimated half of them may lose their job due to direct or indirect effects of covid-19 (2). Particularly, the illegal immigrants and workers doing unrecognized, unlisted jobs are most endangered. Because their jobs have no social or governmental support, and most of the time they are not protected by any law. Such workers also have no access to better health care facilities and livelihood means. People who are daily wagers and need a source of income on daily bases to sustain themselves and their family are also adversely effected by restrictive work routines caused by covid-19 pandemic.

Covid-19 pandemic has severely impacted the food supply system in the world and has exposed instability of food system. Restrictive movements across borders, closure of trade markets, and confinements of traders due to lock down has prevented the approach of produce from fields to markets and eventually to consumers. This has negatively impacted the domestic as well as international food supply chain. Moreover, the income of farmers and harvesters is also severely diminished. Eventually the quality of food reaching the consumers is also compromised. Covid-19 has obliterated many jobs and work place security. As wage- earners are impacted by covid-19, they may lose their livelihood, they may lose their lives, or become too ill to continue earning a livelihood. This may endanger food security and nutritional health of millions of those who are dependent on these workers such as family members and next of kin (3).

Due to covid-19 outbreak millions of daily wagers, hired helpers, agricultural workers are facing poverty, debilitating health conditions and malnutrition. They are also facing a lack of lawful protection at their workplace and also have to deal with physical abuse. They are left with no choice but work in most hostile and difficult situation in order to make a living and it puts them and their relatives at great risk (4). In the situation of a pandemic, when these workers face starvations and are not able to make both ends meet, they are prone to engage in illegal activities and child labor. Among these the agricultural workers are especially targeted as they have most limited access to basic amenities such as transport, health, education and other government sponsored helping schemes. It is necessary to ensure security of workers in the food industry from the farmers to other workers who deal with food processing,

storage, transport, and vending to become available for consumers. Doing so can ensure a healthy society and improved quality of life (4). So it is necessary to protect people's livelihood and food.

During the corona pandemic, the issues of food security, food gap, health of public and job security including a worker's health and betterment has emerged in a new light. In order to deal with the humanitarian crisis that has been brought about by covid-19, it is utmost important to ensure access to secured workplace, implementation of all safety measures to ensure safe and better health conditions of workers. It is also necessary to take steps to ensure universal health facilities made available for everyone in the society despite his or her social class. Another step is needed to be taken in this regard is to support those who have already limited social means in financial terms (5). Another group of most vulnerable individuals due to corona pandemic are the women who work as house helps and other low-earning jobs. This group is also in dire need to receive help from governments and other philanthropist organizations. Many issues are needed to be dealt with by policy makers and governmental organizations. These issues include child support, providing access to subsidized food item to maintain nutritional support, providing financial aid to address various issue such as housing and small businesses. It is necessary that governments should work with all stake holders while designing such strategies (6).

The situation due to covid-19 has become emergent and has lead governments take quick actions to deal with people who need emergency help in terms of financial aid. This is the time to bring solidarity among nations and identified all the vulnerable groups in our societies so that in-time help can be provided to these groups. The underdeveloped and third world countries require most assistance to combat with emerging humanitarian crisis. By only joining hands we can deal with this situation and avert a long term socio-economic and food security catastrophe.

The secretary general of United Nations has issued a policy statement that addresses the member countries of UN and states that all countries must grab this situation as a chance to bring about a change in the infrastructure of governmental policies and improve lives of their citizens. We should commit ourselves to support each other at this time of crisis and achieve realistic and long standing goals in the terms of social and economic growth. It is necessary to design and implement policies to address the challenges that are emerging in healthcare as well as agriculture sector. The policies should deal with variant issues such as food security, poverty in villages, job availability for citizens, giving social support to everyone on a priority basis (7).

We must take into consideration the environment of our planet and must move ahead to prevent changes in our climate and biosphere. We must take responsibility to protect our healthcare system, our food supply and maintain better nutritional status of people, so that we can see a better tomorrow when humanity will finally succeed over this pandemic (8). Having discussed the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on humanity. We should have a look on historical back ground of pandemics and how our societies have dealt with pandemics in the past.

A historical review of plagues and pandemics in Islamic world:

Al-Nawawī (d. 676/1277) has chronicled 5 major plague outbreaks at the time early Islamic history. During the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the city of Madain in present day Iraq there was a plague outbreak which was named plague of Shirawayh (9). During the khilafat of Umar in the year 639 the famous plague of ‘Amwās occurred which claimed about 25000 lives. (10). In the year 688, during the reign of Abdullah ibn al-Zubair the sweeping plague occurred. During this plague about 70,000 deaths occurred daily for three consecutive days across the Islamic world (11). Iraq and Syria in 706 were hit by another plague that mainly killed young girls due to which it was named as the plague of the girls (12) In the year 749 another major plague outbreak occurred across Muslim world. Historical references have shown a constant recurrences of plague outbreaks in African and Middle Eastern Muslim countries.

Quran and Hadith are the foundation of ethical consideration on the issues of pandemics and plagues. These sources can guide believers to answers of several ethical questions, such as: why these incidents happen, what should be the behavior shown by a true follower concerning such events, what kind of human actions are permissible and/or obligatory, how these incidents can change ritual performance, and how interpersonal and social interactions are affected by these events. We hope that having a look on these resources can help us understand the Islamic point of view on Covid-19 pandemic.

There are various references in Quran of plagues and pandemics being a form of torment for earlier nations when they refused to follow the guidance provided by the Prophets of Allah. For example, Quran says: “But those who wronged changed [those words] to a statement other than that which had been said to them, so We sent down upon those who wronged a punishment from the sky because they were defiantly disobeying” (verse 2:59). Many commentators such as Al- Tabari have interpreted the term rijz in this ayat as “torment” and a form of plague (13)

Messenger on Allah said, **"Five are regarded as martyrs: They are those who die because of plague, abdominal disease, drowning or a falling building etc., and the martyrs in Allah's cause, Sahih al-Bukhari 2829."** (14). This Hadith characterizes the plague as a form of test of one’s faith and death due to plague is regarded as divine mercy and receives highest ranks such as rewards of a martyr.

There is another hadith narrated by Abu-Hurairah (R.A) who said that the Prophet (peace be upon Him) said, ‘Do not bring the ill animals (who are suffering from any disease) near the healthy animals.’ (**Sahih Al Bukhari, 5774**). This hadith also helps us to formulate the idea of contagion and guides us to avoid contact with contagious diseases. This hadith implicates that placing of ill animals with healthy ones may lead to spread of sickness that can happen only with Allah’s permission. Similarly, in another hadith the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him) said, ‘Run from the leper as you will run from

a lion'. (**Sahih Bukhari, 5707**). Hafiz IbnHajar Alasqalani has commented that: 'This order is relied on advocacy and precaution. (15).

During the Era of Umar the plague of Amwas occurred in Syria, this happened at a time when Islamic forces were advancing in Syria. According to the Islamic traditional sources, Umar, summoned the top commander of Muslim army Abu Ubayda to Medina; Abu Ubayda refused to abandon his men and stayed in Syria. Umar eventually traveled to Syria to assess the conditions of army. He held a meeting with leaders of army at border of Syria. After many consultations and deliberations, he ordered the Muslim forces to withdraw from affected areas. Abu Ubayda opposed the withdrawal of army on the ground of a suggested prohibition by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him) on Muslims leaving or entering a plague-stricken area. Umar answered that he will be leaving from God's destiny and will move towards God's destiny. This incidence was used by many Muslim scholars as a precedent justification to leave an area that is stricken by an epidemic. The summit at border of Syria concluded with Umar decreeing Abu Ubdaya to lead the army to areas with healthier environment and the then he returned back to Medina (16).

In a more recent historical back ground there were many recurrent epidemic outbreaks in Egypt during 19th century that led to gradual implementation of public health measures in Egypt. When objections were raised by some religious bodies against the implementation quarantine measures on religious grounds believing that any such intervention will be an act of meddling with Gods Will, the Egyptian ruler, Mehmed Ali Pasha responded with debate arguing the necessity of taking precautionary measures to combat the epidemic. Finally, fatwas were decreed in favor of restrictive laws aiming at preventing public health, while highlighting the importance of upholding relevant Islamic rules pertaining the proper treatment of ill citizen as well as respectful burials of the dead bodies of victims of epidemic (17).

Islamic Guidance and Fatwas during COVID-19 Pandemic:

Since the start of Covid-19 this epidemic affected every aspect of a common man. A quest to answer various ethical, ritualistic and social questions in the light of guidance provided by Quran and sayings of Prophet Muhammad began. Muslim scholars have been trying to answer these questions in the forms of individual and collective fatwas, institutional statements and guidelines. While some fatwas addressed a single issue for example prayer, others dealt with multiple problems.

Islam is a religion of connectedness and congregation. From the daily prayers to special Friday congregations, from greeting one another to having large family meals together, the life of a common Muslim revolves around being together, it is a common practice to hug, kiss or shake hands with family and friends. While offering prayers, Muslims are accustomed to stand with each other shoulder to shoulder to mimic a firm wall of believers. We celebrate our joys and mourn our sorrows by touching each other and giving each other a physical presence which helps us to mediate our emotions. However, Covid-19 has disrupted our ways of existence due to its shear fear and anonymity.

Religion is a very crucial aspect to a Muslim and for every difficulty and calamity in life Muslims look towards their religious scholars for guidance. In the wake of Covid-19 pandemic Muslim scholars, law makers, physicians and governments have worked together to make bring a sense of normality in the lives of believers. For this article we shall discuss some aspects of Covid-19 restrictions implemented in Pakistan along with fatwas issued by various religious scholars that provided a guidance towards implementation of these public health measures.

First case of Covid-19 was reported in February, 2020 in Pakistan. By Mid-March there was a full blown wave of Covid-19 cases affecting all major cities of Pakistan. From 18th March government of Pakistan announced lock down across the country. At that time a major issue raised about opening of mosques, and commencements of daily as well as Friday congregational prayers. On 17th March, 2020 Pakistan Ulma Council issued a fatwa regarding guidance about congregational prayers in mosques (18). It was advised to hold the prayers in open areas and courtyards of mosques. Ablution before prayer is to be performed at home. There should be gap between people standing for Farz Namaz, whereas part of prayer that is non obligatory/ Sunnat should be performed at home. Elderly and very young children are advised to offer prayers at home. This fatwa was further endorsed by a gathering of Muslim scholars on 25th March, 2020 (19). In the meeting of Muslim Scholars from different school of thoughts it was encouraged to seek forgiveness form Allah. It was also suggested to offer prayers to seek repentance and hold day of repentance at government level. In another Fatwa issued by Dar al-ifta, Jamiat Ulum al-Islamiya, Banouri town, Karachi, guidance was provided regrading Friday prayers (20). It was suggested that closure of places of worship is not advised and mosques should remain open for daily five time prayers and Friday prayers. It is however necessary to stop patients with confirmed Covid-19 infection to perform Friday prayers as such a patient may pose a danger to community, and this is against teachings of Islam to bring harm to anyone.

By the start of April number of Covid cases raised to such an extent that government had to implement stricter restrictions on gatherings. Congregation of more than five persons even for Friday prayers was prohibited. Jamia Naeemia in Lahore issued a fatwa regarding legality of Friday prayers with three to five believers in an open area (21). More over this fatwa clarified that stopping of people from attending Friday prayers is not against Islamic teachings keeping in view that spread of Corona virus is imminent by gathering of people in any way.

However, by Mid of April,2020 the governmental orders of 3-5 persons at prayers in mosques proved impractical. And in a gathering by various ulema in Karachi it was demanded to allow more people in daily prayers and Friday prayers (22). However, importance of maintaining social distancing and facilitating worshipers while performing religious rituals was emphasized. These meetings and guidance provided by religious leaders and scholars formulated the shape of Islamic rituals and interpersonal interactions in ethical and safe way.

The Covid-19 outbreak stirred another important discussion which involved health care providers, policy makers and religious scholars. This discussion addressed the precautionary measures that must be implemented to reduce the spread of corona in a community. The main gist of these preventive measures surrounded the ways to prevent or atleast limit social gatherings and minimize physical and/or interpersonal contact. From a religious point of view, these preventive measures had a profound impact on almost all Islamic rituals.

Islamic faith is defined by five pillars of Islam. These pillars of Islam define almost all ritualistic activities surrounding Islamic believe. Now we should see the impact of Covid-19 pandemic on these Islamic rituals in the life of a common Muslim Pakistani. Having a firm believe on Oneness of Allah Almighty and Prophethood of Muhammad (peace Be Upon Him) as the last messenger of Allah is the first and primary pillar of Islam. This is a most pivotal believe and is an intrinsic feature of unassailable believe. No external factor can influence this believe.

Five-time congregational prayer and obligatory Friday prayer is the second pillar of Islam. Most of decrees and statements released after the outbreak of covid-19 were concerned with process of offering prayers and how to avoid or minimize gatherings and physical contact among people. Some of fatwas issued in Pakistan concerning prayers has already been discussed above. Now we can look into some other fatwas that were issued elsewhere in world. On 15th March, 2020 a fatwa regarding legitimization of suspending Friday and daily five congregational prayers was issued by Al Azhar's counsel of scholars (23). This fatwa used examples form life of Prophet Muhammad that showed that in case of extreme danger or life threatening condition visit to mosque can be suspended. Moreover, the prophetic guidance shows us that we must not leave or enter a plague stricken area. And third example is the order of prohibition from entering the mosque of a person that can bring harm or inconvenience to others. Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) has prohibited a person from entering the mosque even if he has eaten garlic and his mouth smells of garlic. Based on these three examples the fatwa issued by Al Azhar declared that it is permissible for authorities to suspend daily and Friday prayers to avoid spread of disease in a community. It was however postulated that the call to prayer should be commenced with an additional line guiding people to stay at home and offer the prayers from home.

On 17th March a similar fatwa citing Quranic and Hadith references was decreed by major religious scholars in Saudi Arabia (24). This fatwa also favors suspension of daily and Five time congregational prayers in order to prevent spread of disease. Both fatwas implement that a substitute to Friday prayer can be the offering of zohar prayer at home along with one's family. However, these fatwas and other such fatwas negated the idea of offering Friday prayer at homes after listening to online sermon on TV or internet. As such an idea would negate the spirit of Friday prayer.

Another issue raised after outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic was the issue of Fasting in Ramadan. Fasting in Ramadan is obligatory every adult and physically fit Muslim man and woman. The question was raised in the context

of Covid-19 pandemic that prolonged fasting and chances of dehydration during the day time while fasting can bring a decline in immunity of a person. This can lead to that person having higher chance of getting Covid-19 infection. In such a context is it allowed to a person to not to fast in the month of Ramadan?

To answer these questions in Saudi Arabia an online session was held included all members of OIC and all major religious scholars from across the world (25). This was “Second Medical Fiqh Symposium”. The recommendations issued after this symposium was as follows:

“Medical professionals and specialist have confirmed that fasting during the day does not alter the immune system of a man and there are no increased chances to catch a virus during fast. There is no evidence that dry mouth may cause susceptibility to catch the virus in any way. Therefore, the duty to fast during Ramadan is an obligation, and it is not allowed to drop fasting due to fear of corona. Every able bodied, non-traveling and healthy person should fast during the month of Ramadan.

An attending physician can assess the condition of any infected or suspected covid patient and guide him about fasting or not. In any case, if a physician declares that fasting may bring any harm to an individual’s health, he may not fast. Health practitioners that are involved in providing care for patients with covid may also drop fasting if they feel that they might not be able to perform their duties with full energy. However, everyone must pay compensation for every missed day of fast as prescribed by sharia. If someone is unable to pay compensation, then he must feed a poor person for each missed day as a form of compensation. Moreover, the tarawih and qiyam prayers should be arranged at homes and family should perform prayers together at home”.

This fatwa was greatly followed by major Muslim nations. In Pakistan also religious scholars issued guidance to follow the same way. In April and May 2020, Muslims in Pakistan and everywhere else celebrated the month of Ramadan with usual zest however family get together and meeting of people at iftar parties was prohibited by government.

Another issue raised at the end of month of Ramadan, that was the issue of offering Eid prayer. In all Muslim world Eid prayers are the most festive activity of the year. Muslims in all over the world congregate during Eid prayer and after offering prayer they greet each other by hugging three times. But nature of spread of Covid-19 infection negated allowance to such gatherings and greetings. Again religious scholars came to rescue the Muslim community and provided guidance for Muslims. Different approaches were used in different countries according to the spread of virus and local community guidelines. For example, a fatwa issued by Dar-ul Uloom Deoband in India advised Muslims to offer Eid prayers at home (26). In Pakistan and many other Muslim countries like Saudi Arabia Eid prayers were allowed, however proper guidelines were issued to be followed during prayers. Rules of social distancing were implemented and at least a distance of one meter between devotees were maintained at all times. No handshakes and hugging after prayers was allowed. Only in Gaza at the time of Eid there were zero cases reported. So only in Gaza in Palestine Muslims celebrated Eid as before the outbreak of Covid-19.

The fourth pillar of Islam is Zakat, that is an obligatory annual charity that should be paid by every Muslims who have assets exceeding a certain preset limits. This charity is paid to support different underprivileged families in society. In the wake of covid-19, council of Islamic ideology in Pakistan urged Muslims to come forward and make early zakat assistance to deserving people (27). It was guided to withdraw zakat fund earlier than the one year required period before making these donations. Moreover, all most all religious scholars encouraged the Muslims to make maximum donations other than the obligatory alms to support the part of society that was negatively affected by Covid-19 pandemic. Making early zakat donations proved to be very helpful for economic stabilization of marginalized parts of society. Similarly, in Pakistan many philanthropic institutes and individuals came forward to support the people that were affected by lockdown or other restrictions implemented due to Covid-19. These acts not only improved the overall economic situation in the country but also made possible a proper implementation of covid related restrictions to prevent further spread of disease.

Hajj and Umrah are very important ritual practices that include pilgrimage to holy mosques in Mecca and Medina. Covid-19 pandemic seriously impacted these rituals, because implementation of restrictions to prevent spread of corona virus had made impossible to hold these events. In year 2020 a questions raised that keeping in view of all the travel ban and limited freedom of movement the annual haj will be held or not. In late February, Saudi government closed all the mosques in the country including both Holy Mosques in Mecca and Medina. Till the start of June, it remained a big question in the minds of believers whether they would be able to perform Hajj in 2020 or not. Finally, on 22nd June, 2020 Saudi government took the decision to allow hajj with a limited number of hajjis (28). As air travel was not allowed, permission to perform hajj was given to only those people who were already residing in Saudi Arabia. Holy mosques were also opened for Umrah but it was required by Hajjis to maintain required one-meter social distance among themselves. And only a limited number of people were allowed to enter the mosque at any given time.

Covid-19 Vaccine and Conspiracy Theories:

By the end of 2020 world has been considerably changed due to horrors of pandemic. Every single human being living on earth has felt the impact of covid-19 infection in some way. Since the start of pandemic it was clear that only way to end this nightmare of pandemic is to develop an effective vaccine against corona virus. Many big pharmaceutical giants and governments started working on development of vaccine from the start of pandemic. By June 2020 news of development of vaccine started emerging. In June, 24th 2020 china first allowed the use of vaccine for military personnel. In August, 2020 Russia also approved use of locally manufactured vaccine for emergency purposes. Finally, on December 8th 2020, Margaret Keenan a 90 years old Briton received the first shot of vaccine at University Hospital Coventry in England, he was the first person who received vaccination officially outside of a medical trial in the world. And this event initiated vaccination campaign in United Kingdom. Soon other countries followed suit and vaccination started in other countries.

In Pakistan first shot of vaccine was injected to a health care worker on 2nd February, 2021. With initiation of vaccination program Pakistan entered in the next phase of fight against covid-19 pandemic. There is now hope of finally seeing an end of this pandemic on the horizon. However, the process of development of vaccine and its permissibility in the context of religious point of view is shrouded in the veil of conspiracy and mistrust. Initially a major part of population was skeptical about vaccine. Theory of installing a chip to control human mind prevailed among masses to a degree that many people accepted as a fact. Having parts of pig DNA in the vaccine also circulated. An attempt to sterilize Muslims via vaccine was also a common believe in many communities. (29)

Islamic Views about Vaccination and Covid-19:

Opposition and doubts surrounding vaccinations has a long history in contemporary Islamic society. Selected communities in different Muslim countries have shown strict opposition to immunization programs against poliovirus. There has been strong antagonism against polio vaccine programs in Pakistan, Nigeria and Afghanistan (30). Many Islamic scholars and researchers have worked hard to provide understanding about lawfulness of vaccination in the context of Islamic jurisprudence. In a very interesting article from Malaysia authors have discussed Islamic laws to explain permissibility of vaccination (31). Six points have been discussed that allow the vaccination program in a Muslim country.

Every action, food, drink is permissible as long as there is no religious decree prohibiting it. In context to vaccine, as there is no religious decree specifically prohibiting vaccine so it is allowable to get vaccinated.

Doubt without proof is insufficient to negate an established fact. It means that if there are any doubts about the contents of vaccine but there is no proof verifying these doubts, it is not permissible according to Islamic law to stop vaccination.

Any action required to complete a religious obligation become an obligation in itself. According to Islam saving a man's life is an utmost obligation. Any action that is required to save a man's life becomes an obligation in itself. So if vaccination is necessary to save a person's life, according to Islamic sharia it is an obligation for every Muslim to get vaccinated.

In an emergent situation, when one's life is in danger, an unlawful act becomes lawful, provided it is necessary to save his life. It means even if the contents of a vaccine are proven to be haram in any way, if the vaccine is necessary to save a person's life. He is allowed to get vaccinated.

In a situation when one is caught between two problems. One should choose that thing which brings harm to minimum people. It means if getting vaccination shot causes some discomfort or problem to a small group of people but a major

part of population is saved from a debilitating disease, this vaccine should be allowed for the greater good of society.

Ruler's decision should be followed if it is for the benefit of people. If in a Muslim state the ruler issues a decree to implement a law, and that law is beneficial for general population, ruler is allowed such an act. In this context if a ruler decrees mandatory vaccination of people, it is completely permissible according to Islamic sharia.

Keeping in view of Islamic law and Jurisprudence, once again our religious scholars came to forefront to remove the ambiguities surrounding corona vaccine. After a number of meetings held under chairmanship of Imam-Kaba and after a series of consultations held among all leading religious scholars of Pakistan, Darul Ifta Pakistan issued a fatwa on 22nd March, 2021 (32). This fatwa decreed that vaccination against corona virus is permissible according to Islamic law. Moreover, this decree urged every individual to get himself vaccinated. This fatwa further declared that get vaccination shot during fast dose not breaks fast. Lastly this fatwa urged people to make zakat donations to help poor people get vaccinated if they need monetary assistance for this task.

CONCLUSION:

A study shows that treatment of viral disease leads patients to adopt religious coping strategies, it is suggested that if people have more religious guidance from worthy scholars they will have better quality of life by using religious coping strategies (33). Religious beliefs are a major element to drive fear and doubts surrounding corona vaccine. We suggest that enlightened Islamic scholars should be given the opportunity to address these issues and run an awareness campaign to promote knowledge of people regarding Islamic law and sharia regarding necessity of getting corona vaccine. Most of the population in Pakistan give very high regards to religious scholars and pay heed to the advice made by them, government should invite highly respectable scholars at different forums to clear the doubts to people especially in regions where resistance to vaccination is high. In the end we must pay our regards to our most respectable religious scholars and teachers who have worked hard to provide us with religious guidance at the times of uncertainty and confusion.

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