

Preface

The Islamic Revolution 1979 is a watershed in the history of Iran where Islam has played a dominant role in restructuring and reshaping society as a whole. The fusion of religion with politics and working as ideology is a unique in the history of Islam. The occurrence of revolution in the name of Islam shocked the whole world who ignored Islam as a political religion. The galvanisation of Islamic idioms into action was clear indication that Iran is moving toward Cultural Revolution which had been aspired by Iranians for long time. The use of Islamic symbols and precepts and its conversion into action explicitly manifested that Iran is heading toward the Cultural Revolution. This revolution uprooted the monarchy and has established the Islamic government in Iran.

The structural nature and functional scope of the three branches of the government has been changed along Islamic lines since the establishment of the Islamic Republic. Islam's penetration is so extensive that its manifestation has come up in the form of the institutionalised role of Islam. In the aftermath of the revolution, a new constitution was enacted which declared *Twelver Shiism* as state religion. Islam has profound impact on social, political and economic system of Iran.

The conversion of Islamic idioms into Islamic ideology marked the prelude of the Islamic Revolution where all segments of society sank their differences at least for time being against the despotic monarch and dethroned the Shah. The *ulema* mobilised the masses through using their social status and position which the Shah could not curb. The Islamic symbols and precepts were very effectively used by the *ulema* against the Shah.

The concept of *Velayat-e Faqih* is theorised by Ayatollah Khomeini is not his own innovation rather derived by him from the *Shia* political theory that is based on the concept of the *Imamate* system. According to *Shia* political theory, an *Imam's* functions are to guide the community and preserve God's law. It implies

that *Imam* is a representative of God on earth and to run system as a whole. The concept of *Twelfth Imam* and its occultation put all responsibilities on the religious community to govern society because in the absence of the *Imam* leaderless community needs a leader to lead society. Imam Khomeini brilliantly put forward the concept of *Valayat-e Faqih* on this basis. Khomeini's leadership notion reflects that he was very much influenced by the *Maktabi School* (the old style of Islamic School).

The *Valayat-e Faqih* has overwhelming power in the Iranian political system where all branches of the government are under its surveillance. The President who is directly elected by the people yet next to the Leader (spiritual leader). The *Valayat-e Faqih* has vast power in all matters and his word is final. His stature in the Iranian Political system is so high that no one is even parallel to him. The entire system is rotating around this post because it is only source of the legitimacy.

Iranian economy has also been restructured along Islamic line. Its influence has deep and far-reaching in the economic system of Iran. The Iranian economy's changing nature has been perceived clearly different in both pre-plan period and plan period. During pre-planned period, Iranian economy was state-controlled economy the state adopted interventionist policy and created state-capitalism. In the process of creation of state-capitalism, it nationalised the heavy industries and banks etc. because Iranian economy was facing severe crisis due to the revolution and the Iran-Iraq war. During the war, Iranian economy was destroyed, revenues accrued from oil were spent in purchasing war materials and other essential goods. The populist state policy was adopted by state during war to ward off economic severity which was bound to affect the people.

After the Iran-Iraq war and Khomeini's death, the Five-Year-plan began to reconstruct war-ravaged economy. The war with Iraq had profound impact on the Iranian economy. Iran was facing the severe financial crunch during this period when money was badly needed to reconstruct its fragile economy. In the process of

reconstruction of the war-ravaged economy, Rafsanjani government began economic liberalisation policy. Before the government, there was no option other than to liberalise its economy and to invite foreign companies to help in the reconstruction of the war-ravaged economy. In this way the government reversed its many earlier policies which were taken during the Iran-Iraq war and Khomeini era. The process of liberalisation of economy was in the way of integration into world economy. The basic thrust of the economic policy of government during this period was to reconstruct the war-ravaged economy and to mobilise maximum resources for development.

The Islamic Revolution 1979 is not only a political revolution against the monarchy but a Cultural Revolution also which has affected society as a whole. The Islamic ideology has penetrated in all spheres of society. In the aftermath of the revolution, the new regime has Islamised society by divorcing Western culture, norms and traditions which was adopted by the earlier regimes. The intrusion of Western culture, norm and tradition in Iranian society has undermined Iranian culture. So, Islamisation of society has been adopted in all aspects to create a Islamic society. The government has been taking various measures in the process of Islamisation and promoting and strengthening the Islamic culture. The new regime has imposed public veiling to women and has banned alcoholic drink, night club and so on. The Government has brought reform in the educational system and mass media along Islamic lines.

Islamisation of social and political system has its far-reaching impact at all levels. Now Iran has tried to project a liberal face of Islam. Islam's effect in the system of whole is dwindling and have many profound impact.

Words turn stale and pale when it comes to expressing one's intense feeling of thankfulness. Even the appropriate ones convey the sense of gratitude only inadequately. My indebtedness to numerous persons and institutions is in fact much more than I may really express in words, yet I would attempt to do so in my most humble way.

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Shah Alam