CONCLUSIONS
Re-emergence of religious consciousness in recent decades not only revealed the return of the Muslim people to Islam but also the inadequacy of imported ideologies based upon the separation of politics from religion in the Muslim societies. It is a new phenomenon in the history of Islam in the present time. Appearance of religious consciousness can be observed not only in the Muslim but also the non-Muslim societies. Its re-emergence and evolution in Muslim societies is not uniform and equal because historical, socio-political, economic and cultural situations in each society are different.

Each development has a specific character with its own historical background, socio-economic conditions and conceptual references. Islamic resurgence expressed its political outlook in the form of an internal Islamic discourse. Its appeal suggested a certain intellectual stance that drew political inspiration and principles from the divine text. The ideological feature created a variety of problems such as who shall hold power and how should the ruler be given that power. The other problems appeared to be the rulers' lack of faith or commitment to genuine Islamic principles and objectives. Then there was the grievance over the maldistribution of wealth and creation of a group of small upper class of dominant consumers. The moral objection was
over the corrupt rulers and the ruling class as well as their excessive indulgence in the enforcement of distorted public morality. Islamic history witnessed several Islamic movements against the foregoing grievances.

The Islamic world has passed through different phases of struggle which had a great impact on the Muslim masses particularly the young generation. The Islamic reformist movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries especially the movements of 1960s and 1970s significantly contributed to the rise of Islam as a political force in the Islamic world particularly in the states of the Persian Gulf region.

Islam, since its advent, has remained a socio-political movement and it created a consciousness among the people which was in line with the divine will. Islamic institutions exercised authority on behalf of the Creator.

Islam being the religion of overwhelming majority of the people of the Middle East, particularly the Persian Gulf region, played a crucial role in the Muslim societies in determining the attitude and behaviour pattern of the people. It totally governed the social, political, economic, cultural and legal aspects of lives of the Muslims. It did not stand for reform in a region alone as its sweep covered the entire human society. It provided a complete social and
political system and demanded faithful adherence and respect by its followers. Its rejection of any territorial, ethnic, social, political, racial or colour division among the mankind had a deep impact on the religio-political perception of the Muslims.

Since its advent, Islam as a religio-political ideology, still retains its basic creed and it continues to be a powerful and dominant force in the socio-political, economic and cultural lives of the Muslim masses. It opposes the separation of politics from religion as well the domination by a group of people with vested interests. In reality, it never opposed democracy or representative form of government. However, it has always opposed principles and concepts which are harmful to mankind and society. It is held by the Muslim that the ideologies which are man-made can not compete with Islam since the latter is a universal system of political, social, economic strength, equity and justice as well as the only legitimate ideology to run the government.

The Islamic ideologues believe that the ulama as a united entity should strive to bring back a system based on Islamic principles and values without admixture of alien ideas. As a system of thought and social organization, Islam created a vast following stretching from Arabia to Spain. Having spread into a vast empire its administration
slowly became very lax and gradually the empire disintegrated.

Historical ethical Islam gave way to a new type of political, social, economic, legal and cultural Islam, the Persian administrative norms and the Turk's military standards set the pace of feuds which affected the state and dominated its economy. Crusades against the Muslim and Islam served to promote inclination towards militarization of Islam. Consequently, the Sufi order emerged as a force against official Islam as well as a popular opponent of the establishment.

Modern Islam derived some specific features from the three contemporary empires of the Ottomans, the Safavids and the Mughals. At the same time Sufi orders and artisan guilds intertwined as entrenched means of spiritual and material endeavours.

In the eighteenth century Islamic revivalist spirit sprang up within Islam and its lines were similar to those in the earlier periods. Islamic reformist movements began just before European dominance over the Islamic lands. Social groups, organizations and associations were established within the Muslim communities and they began their struggle against the adaptationists within the Islamic societies. These adaptationists who endeavoured to bring
secularization failed in their bid for reforms giving the revivalists a chance to emerge as a counter force.

Islamic revivalists of the eighteenth century drew the support of the political leaders and they succeeded in creation of a new state order based on the Islamic values and rules. The ulama were the main backbone of this development. They travelled throughout the Islamic world and preached the gospel of Islam.

Whatever may be the historical background of revivalist movements in any given region or their difference from each other by and large, there were direct lines of interaction among the revivalist ulama. For instance, the Naqshbandiyya order which gradually expanded from South Asia into the Eastern Mediterranean region was one of these lines. Similarly, the Islamic teachers from North Africa influenced the Muslim masses in Central Islamic lands. Such a flow carried Islamic revivalist idea and it insisted on implementation of Islamic laws. The teachings and activities of the non-state ulama and Islamic intellectuals within the Ottoman empire spread far beyond the pale of official institutions.

Furthermore, the Sufi tariqahs also had a significant impact on the political life of the people in the Ottoman empire, mainly in the Arab provinces. That was the manifestation of most visible changes. As a result of these ef-
forts Naqshbandiyyah and Khalwatiyyah tariqahs developed among the ulama.

The different perceptions of Islam such as the Islam of the community and the Islam of the state created rift and tension in some fundamental areas. Thus grew the developing roles of the non-state ulama and ongoing evolution of the tariqahs. The ulama and tariqahs as well as the independent Islamic institutions pursued their own lines of operation in the general life of the Muslim masses.

The independent ulama, by interpreting the sociological dimensions of Islam, significantly influenced the masses and received their support. These ulama preached the revival of true Islam, independent of the existing political establishment and emerged as the most influential force in the heartland of Islam.

In Iran also during the beginning of the eighteenth century an important development took place within Shi'ism. The proclamation of Shi'ism as the religion of the state by the Safavid rulers led to increasing involvement of Shi'i Islam in political life of the people. By the end of the eighteenth century a group of Shi'i ulama, independent of the establishment, emerged. The Mujtahids' independent interpretation was accepted by a majority of the Iranian
people. These Mujtahids emerged as a major Islamic force and competed with state ulama and the Shahs as well.

Consequently, when the Safavid power collapsed these ulama dominated the political system. By liberating itself from state institutions, Shi'ism emerged as an Islamic expression of the Iranian identity without reference to a particular monarchical structure. Through its teachings and institutions this segment of Shi'i ulama focussed on the existing political and social decay in their bid to acquire influence in the state.

The Wahhabi movement, on the other hand, too had a significant impact on the Islamic consciousness as well as Islamic revivalism in the Islamic world. This movement gave added emphasis to the eighteenth century spirit of socio-moral reconstruction along strictly Islamic lines. This movement as well as the increasing political activities of the independent ulama in the core land of Islam and Iran inspired the Islamic movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Eighteenth century was largely a formative period of Islamic revivalism which helped to determine its course in the following centuries. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries' Islamic revivalist experience suggested that Islam could become the basis for assertion of an authenti-
cally indigenous identity opposing the emerging alien polit-
ical ideas and institutions.

The trend of adopting and assimilating Western ideas
and models, particularly in economic and military fields,
was opposed by indigenous Islam-oriented groups. This
challenge was largely non-governmental. It was a response
to the challenges posed by Western overall encroachments in
Islamic society and polity.

As a result of European penetration in the Muslim
societies the historical context and intellectual perspec-
tive of Muslims changed. The European norms and concepts
were inevitably borrowed in this comparative endeavour and
the self-sufficiency of Islam was irredeemably shattered.
In the wake of direct occupation of Islamic territories by
European forces and the collapse of state authority, a
vigororous public opinion emerged. It had different shades
varying among rejectionist, adaptationist and reformist
courses.

As a result of increasing domination and influence of
European powers over the Islamic world, the Islamic socie-
ties witnessed the birth of new tensions. The colonial
powers who were deeply interested in the natural and materi-
al resources of the Islamic world tried to destroy the
Islamic spiritual power of the Muslims. They used the
existing or newly created regimes as instruments for attain-
ing their objectives. They launched the "modernization"
programmes whose latent objective was to uproot the influ-
ence of indigenous socio-political culture.

The pro-Western groups strove to uproot the revolution-
ary aspect of Islam. This task by the puppet regimes and
the Western imperialism was not an easy mission to be
achieved within a short period. For achieving their goals
and preventing the possibility of eruption of religious
sentiments of the Muslims against their long-term mission
the imperialist powers and their puppet regimes attempted to
eradicate the fundamentals of Islam and its principles and
values through a gradual and well-orchestrated process.
Reacting to it, the ulama and Islamic intelligentsia as well
as the masses raised their voice against alien encroachments
and they thought of plans to reform their societies.

The ruling class and Western imperialism were intent on
safeguarding their positions and dominance. They strove to
separate religion from the state. The increasing despotism
and oppressive measures by the ruling class and also Western
dominance and influence in the socio-political, economic,
military, legal and cultural life of the Muslims created
rift and tension among the ulama, Islamic intellectuals and
scholars. Each fresh attempt by the rulers and imperialist
powers caused serious as well as deeper conflicts in these societies.

After a few decades of stagnation in the Islamic societies Islamic reformers began a search for viable cultural paradigms to check the Western cultural onslaught and its domination. The despotic rules of the regimes and increasing Western imperialist dominance and influences in the sphere of socio-political, economic, legal and cultural lives of the Muslim societies forced the ulama and Islamic reformists to call the Muslims to return to the origin and fundamental of Islam. These developments contributed to an awakening and increasing Islamic consciousness among the Muslims.

The Islamic reformists tried to purify the thinking, opinion and thought of the Muslims from unscientific superstitions and they presented the real picture of Islam as the only solution for all problems of the Muslim societies. These Islamic reformists who were particularly active in Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, North Africa and the Indian sub-continent significantly influenced the masses. The Islamic reformist movement was a sort of revolutionary upsurge which emerged in the Islamic societies.

Inspite of their different approaches the Islamic reformist leaders from Syed Jamaluddin Afghani to Ayatollah
Khomeini, through their activities, teachings and perceptions, created Islamic awakening and consciousness as well as various Islamic movements aimed at giving a perfect shape to their societies based on Islamic principles and values.

The Islamic reformists such as Syed Jamaluddin Afghani, Sheikh Mohammad Abduh, Abdur Rahman Kawakebi, Rashid Ridha, Syed Qutb, as well as other non-Arab reformists played a vital role in spreading the Islamic consciousness and movements against the despotic rulers and Western imperialists and their influences. Their endeavour and activities, by and large, resulted in the emergence of Islamic awakening and consciousness in the Muslim societies. This occurred at a time when nationalist movements were struggling for sweeping institutional changes.

The Islamic reformist-revolutionary activities influenced the young generation and those who were combatting against the un-Islamic regimes and Western influences. As a result of their works several Islamic associations, organizations and educational institutions were established for educating the masses.

During the inter-war period the Islamic consciousness reached its height, and several Islamic revivalist movements emerged in response to the intensification of imported ideologies. The ideologues of these ideologies particularly
the nationalists, in order to gain power, not only used Islam but also promised social justice, economic well-being, freedom of expression and political parties. But when coming to power they not only deviated from their lofty promises they also denied the participation to the masses in the administration of the government.

The imported ideologies which were irrelevant to the need and aspirations of the Muslims seriously jeopardized the unity of the umma. The whole phenomenon witnessed complex tensions and rifts between the ruling class and the masses. The incorporation of alien ideologies and legal, cultural, political and economic concepts and values into the socio-political, economic, legal and cultural systems and institutions of Muslim societies created serious fissures and dissatisfaction among the masses.

Further, due to increasing suppressive measures, discrimination, and failure of all imported ideologies to provide social justice, economic well-being, freedom of expression and political parties as well as failure of the regimes to solve the increasing problems of the people the masses lost their faith in the ruling class and these imported alien ideologies were discredited in the eyes of the politically conscious Muslims. The situation reached a boiling point by the 1960s when people in isolated cases
began to agitate against the status quo and ruling elites and slowly turned towards Islam for amelioration of their conditions and solution to the existing problems.

Modern education, development of communications and also economic factors also significantly contributed to the increasing Islamic consciousness and revivalist movements. Besides all this the activities of the ulama, Islamic intellectuals and thinkers and their works as well as the Islamic organizations also played an important role in the re-emergence of Islamic consciousness. The victory of Islamic revolution in Iran and establishment of the Islamic Republic boosted Islamic consciousness and revivalist movements in the Islamic societies particularly in the states of the Persian Gulf region.

Furthermore, the despotic rule, elimination of the masses from the decision making and administration of government, adoption of alien concepts and values and the increasing Western dominance and influences in the Persian Gulf region resulted in a rift and tension between the rulers and the people. The rulers resorted to oppressive policies to silence the masses particularly the ulama and Islamic intellectuals. For controlling the power of non-state ulama the governments nationalized the religious establishments and institutions which resulted in a serious
as well as deeper conflict in these societies. The absence of freedom of political parties and true parliamentary form of government forced the masses to return to Islam. The ulama and Islamic thinkers, scholars and Islamic organizations raised their voices against the regimes. Their devotion kept the masses attached to Islam and the governments could not succeed in their attempts to control the upsurge.

The accumulation of wealth in the hands of one group, increasing economic gap, urbanization which led to increasing migration of the rural people to the cities in search of jobs, and lack of justice as well as the government's failure to come up to the expectation of the masses created serious socio-economic fermentation. These factors contributed to the re-emergence of Islamic consciousness which acquired the form of armed struggle by the Muslims in almost all the Islamic countries.

Besides these, the occupation of Palestinian homeland by the Israelis with the full support of Western imperialist powers particularly the United States of America and defeat of Arab/Muslim forces in wars with Israel, created profound distrust among the Muslims vis-a-vis existing establishments. As a result, the Muslims turned to Islam and, consequently, Islamic consciousness significantly spread all over the Middle East.
The emergence of Islam as a strong ideological political force in the 1970s reinforced fears of an Islamic revolution in the Persian Gulf region. Resurgent Islamic consciousness out its popular appeal was taken as a serious challenge by the existing governments.

Further the victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran boosted the Islamic consciousness and inspired as well as encouraged the Muslims in their demand for the change of existing political systems. To meet the challenge and sustain their legitimacy, the governments sought to mobilize counter-support by introducing certain cosmetic and superficial reforms and slowing some indulgence towards Islam. That could hardly pacify the sensitized people.

Consequently, the works of the ulama, Islamic associations and organizations and also widespread publication of literature on Islam in different languages and its distribution all over the Muslim societies created fresh consciousness among the Muslim masses particularly the young generation. The conscious Muslims demanded reform programmes based on the fundamental principles and ethical values of Islam as a solution to the existing problems in their societies.

Since the Muslims in the Persian Gulf region have strongly followed Islamic ideology in their life it is very
difficult to claim that they have had no reaction towards the Western influences, corruption, exploitation and suppressive measures by the ruling class. The oppressive policies of the rulers to silence the Islamists could not quieten the masses to give up their religious beliefs and duties. They were not indifferent to the Western influences in the socio-political, economic, legal and cultural aspects of their societies. Consequently, several Islamic movements by the ulama, Islamic activists and organizations sprang up in the region and they called the masses to unite and combat against the un-Islamic rulers and imperialist powers. Further, the increasing Islamic consciousness and demand for the implementation of sharia as well as ever increasing literature on different aspects of Islam strengthened the growing belief that Islam is the only vital force that can solve the existing problems and meet the aspirations of the people.

The Islamic revivalist movements throughout the world particularly in the Persian Gulf region stand for a comprehensive re-Islamization of their societies and restoration of all traditional values and socio-political institutions as originally constituted. Consequently, they are striving hard to remove all vestiges of Western culture from their societies and for achieving their goals they resorted to
jihad against the despotic rulers and Western powers. This trend would eventually shape the powerful Islamic movement in the Islamic world particularly in the Persian Gulf region.

The mass-oriented speeches of the ulama and Islamic intellectuals and their call to wage jihad against the oppressive rulers and Western influences intensified the Islamic revivalist movements. The Muslim masses stand for the eradication of all Western influences and transformation of the socio-political, economic, legal and cultural order under the Islamic principles and values.

Reacting to the increasing Islamic revivalist movement, the Western imperialists branded them as "fundamentalist" or "Islamic terrorist". Actually, these terms are alien to Islam and Islamic ideology. These terms are Western and they are not appropriate to describe the Islamists because Islam does not preach militancy. The Islamic movements in the Islamic world are "fundamentalist" in the sense that they believe in the fundamental principles of Islam and are struggling for transformation of the socio-political, economic, legal and cultural order based on the Quran and Sunnah.

The Islamic movements are "fundamentalist" to the extent that they reject the alien ideologies which disturbed
their societies and they insist that the Muslims must be subject to Islamic principles and values. The Islamic revivalists attempt to overthrow the existing political system and establish Islamic government in its place. They reject aggressive, atheist and pagan rulers but not modernism and change.

Due to the increasing Islamic consciousness and revivalist movements, Islam appeared as a political force. The re-emergence of Islamic consciousness at present is essentially an ideological movement which will lead to more serious developments in the Islamic societies. The deep influence of Islam and the commitment of Muslims to the teachings of Islam as well as the works of Islamic reformists, the ulama, Islamic organizations and the victory of Islamic revolution in Iran prepared the ground for the emergence of Islam as a political force.

The main reason for a mass revolution in Iran was that Shi'is have always been more revolutionary than other sects of Islam who have generally gone along acceptance of the status quo and closed the doors of Ijtihad. In the Iranian society, since long time, the ulama's institution became the center of socio-political activities based on Islamic principles by virtue of a system of checks and balance. It operated informally without being an organ of state. This
position and role of the Shi'i ulama of Iran does not have a parallel in Sunni societies. Shi'i ulama have always been at the forefront of the revolutions as well as national and religious changes and movements taking place over the centuries in Islamic countries. In the Shi'i thought the doctrine of Imamat is of great importance. Shi'i ulama's conception of the Imam is pure revolutionary leadership guiding the umma and the constitution of society. In Iran and elsewhere Shi'i ulama, since long time, played a significant role in socio-political life of the people and largely they never supported or accepted the government. This kind of tendency could be seen in Iran against the regime since the Qajar dynasty. In Shi'i Islam, Islamic institutions functioned independently of the state apparatus. The institution of Marjaiyat occupies an important place in socio-political life of the people. The Marjaiyat emerged out of the continuous struggle for authority among the representatives of speculative thought in Shi'i Islam. It has not existed in Sunni Islam.

The Shi'i ulama, due to their economic independence from the state, wielded greater influence than their Sunni counterparts. The Shi'i ulama have always been in close contact with the dissenting sections of Shi'i community. These ulama also played the role of intermediary between the
rulers and the ruled and voiced people's demands and public opinion. The Shi'i Mujtahids exercised their judgement freely with much greater authority than the Sunni ulama. The most important point that distinguishes the Shi'i ulama from clerics in other societies is that they have never been and even are not dependent on government and rulers of the time. The classical Sunni ulama have believed in obeying their rulers. They viewed the revolution against oppressive government as incompatible with Islam. Because of this limitations expectation of the Sunni Muslims had also been limited. Another important point is that among the Sunnis the door of Ijtihad was closed but among the Shi'is the gate of Ijtihad is open and following and obeying of Mujtahid is obligatory. That is why their position on socio-political, economic and cultural issues were entirely different. Whereas the Sunni ulama believed that even an oppressive ruler must be obeyed. The Shi'i have always been uncompromising and radical in their policy and attitude towards the despotic rulers.

The Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979 had a tremendous impact on the Islamic world in general and the Persian Gulf in particular. This revolution was entirely different from the French, Russian and Chinese revolutions. Since it stood for salvation of mankind, it aimed at eliminating
ignorance, preaching unity among the people, establishing brotherly love, and guiding mankind towards light and enlightenment. It has negated the supremacy of material values, despotic rulers, undemocratic order, and alien values and concepts. It rejected the imposition of Western values on the Muslim masses. This revolution was directed against both internal and external powers. It stood for the establishment of true government of Muslims based on Sharia. At the same time it rejected the modern capitalist system which is the product of several centuries of exploitation and plunder in vast parts of the world.

Like other revolutions it spread beyond the Iranian borders and its ideas spilled over especially in the Arab states of the Persian Gulf region. In fact, the Islamic revolution was not exported by the Iranian regime. Basically, it aimed at amelioration of the socio-political, economic and cultural plight of the Muslim masses. It inspired the intelligentsia, Islamic thinkers and ulama as well as revolutionary leaders. The Islamic revolution in Iran revived the hope of the Muslim masses around the world in general and in the Persian Gulf in particular where the local governments have been totally alienated from their own roots and depend for survival on external support.
The most important contribution of the Iranian revolution has been that it prompted revival of a number of Islamic movements in the world particularly in the Persian Gulf region. Its immediate impact was on the neighbouring countries and those of the region. They included Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt, Algeria, Lebanon, Jordan, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Central Asian Republics.

The main reason for the immediate impact on the neighbouring countries was that their socio-political, economic, legal and cultural problems have not been different from those of pre-revolutionary Iran. The pattern of such socio-political, economic and cultural penetration generated several problems. The rulers did not pay any attention to the people's demands and continued their oppressive policies. In the meantime the rulers, instead of building up institutions facilitating political participation of the masses, tried to neutralize pressure by introducing half-baked reforms. These could not ameliorate the socio-political and economic conditions and the reforms did not promote any kind of political institutions for mass participation. This led to the demand of Islamization of the Arab societies based on Iranian model.
The Islamic revolution of Iran in 1979 precipitated the situation and several Arab scholars and thinkers not only supported this revolution but they also considered this event as one of the most significant developments in the present century. The message of the Islamic revolution that the deprived and Mustazafin of earth would be the final inheritors of this world has significantly influenced the masses and drawn their attention towards Islam. Consequently, the alienated, distressed and dispossessed Muslims have turned to Islam and the ulama and Islamic organizations to chalk out a solution to their socio-political, economic, legal and cultural problems.

The Islamic government of Iran's moral support contributed to the growing Islamic revivalist movements in the region. This led to the eruption of a number of Islamic revivalist movements in the Muslim societies, particularly in the Persian Gulf region. Since the victory of the Islamic revolution the Muslim societies witnessed a widespread Islamic upsurge and opposition to the existing political systems. Since the imported ideologies failed to solve the socio-political and economic problems splitting the Muslim world, Islam has emerged as a strong political force. The political culture of Islam motivated the Muslims and a new
language of political expression emerged in the Islamic societies.

In fact this event, irrespective of the sectarian Shi'i-Sunni divide, drew attention of the Muslim people especially the Islamic organizations and associations which were already struggling against the un-Islamic rulers and Western imperialist powers. The increasing activities of Islamic organizations such al-Ikhwan al-Muslimeen, Jama'at-e-Islami, Hezbullah, Al-Jihad, Al-Da'wa, and other organizations and turning of the Muslim masses towards Islam showed the dilemma of Muslim societies in the modern world. These organizations called the masses to revolt against the corrupt and un-Islamic regimes as well as influences of the West.

In the Arab world a large number of intellectuals and political groups turned towards revolutionary Islam and they involved themselves in the struggle against the oppressive regime. Arab scholars not only consider the Islamic revolution in Iran as one of the most important events, in this century but they also believe that the message of Iranian revolution that the deprived and wretched of the earth would be the final inheritors of this world has made an abiding impact on the Muslim masses. It gave to the Muslim masses a
new language and a fresh political debate and dialogue has set in.

After the victory of the Islamic revolution the masses in the Persian Gulf region gave widespread support to it. In fact the Iranian revolution was a direct outcome of the drive for a change in the status quo and political revival of Islam. The Islamic organizations which were deeply involved in preaching revolutionary Islam spontaneously supported the Iranian phenomenon. This was particularly apparent in their perception of socio-political, economic and cultural issues and sources of threat to them. The message of the Islamic revolution reached the masses in the states of the region and influenced them. Such Islamic upsurge was considered as a threat by the Arab rulers of the region as they felt that it would destabilize their regimes. Because of this threat perception all the Arab regimes of the region especially those in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait supported Iraq in its war against the Islamic Republic of Iran in the 1980s.

The policies of the Arab regimes and imperialist powers aimed at limiting and neutralizing the Islamic movements and Islamic organizations were manifest when they announced adoption of Sharia as a source of law but that was not faithfully implemented. Such a duality propped up the
Islamic movements which had their defined objectives and revolutionary aims. Despite the anti-Islamic movement repressive policies of the regimes, the young generation, particularly the students, grew much inclined towards Islam and they joined the Islamic organizations or themselves established independent Islamic groups with the aim of overthrowing the despotic regimes and bringing an end to the Western influences. Consequently, a network of Islamic organizations in the Arab states of the region emerged during the 1980s. This development gave a glimmer of hope for the restoration of Islam as a way of life among the masses.

The Sunni Islamic groups and organizations, irrespective of their differences of view related to the ideological background of the Iranian revolution, saw in the Islamic political ideology a new hope and strength in exploiting the socio-political, economic and cultural grievances of the masses. Their objective was to capture political power under the cover of Islam. The Muslim masses considered the Islamic government of Iran as an alternative model to the existing political system in the region. The announcements of the Iranian government giving moral support to the oppressed and wretched Muslims of the world intensified the activities of the Islamic revolutionary movements. This
development led to several anti-government demonstrations and mass defiance in the region. For example, the Ka'bah revolt in Saudi Arabia, the attack on the life of the Amir of Kuwait, the revolt in Bahrain, and the killing of Anwar Sadat, the Egyptian president, and demonstrations in the UAE all revealed the increasing Islamic upsurge after 1979.

The Islamic organizations like Ikhwan al-Muslmeen, Jamiiyat al-Takfir wal Hijra, al-Dawa, Hizbullash, Al-Jihad etc stand for a full-fledged Islamic government in many Arab states and Shaikhdoms in the Middle East. The Islamic Rhetoric in almost all the Muslim Societies has acquired a more ominous character. In the Arab states of the region where the governments failed to meet the aspirations of the masses particularly in the UAE and Saudi Arabia the Islamic revivalists denounced the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam as alien to true belief. The June 1980 and December 1981 revolt in Bahrain and the Shi'i revolt against Saddam Hussein indicated the intensification of Islamic revivalist movement.

In Saudi Arabia the Shi'i Muslims revolted against the regime. An important and a significant feature of this revolt was that it reflected the simmering socio-political fermentation in Saudi society. Not only the Shi'i Muslims but also the Sunni army officers, civil servants, students,
intellectuals and the ulama resorted to the anti-establishment and Western influences activities.

Because of absence of any genuine political party freedom of expression and parliamentary form of government as well as prevalence of social discontent, economic hardship, oppressive traditional, social and political institutions in Saudi Arabia the masses turned to the ideology of political Islam. Thus, in the face of these un-Islamic policies of the regime, the Islamic activists resorted to armed struggle. The Ka'bah revolt of 1979 by Juha'man Utaibi and violent demonstrations in the Qatif and al-Hasa regions were the most serious political upsurges in Saudi Arabia after the Iranian revolution.

Similarly in Kuwait, the Islamic revivalist movements picked up. Because of repressive as well as un-Islamic policies of the regime, the Islamic revivalists attacked the royal family. Responding to these developments the regime announced its decision to hold elections in 1981. The latent hope was that such a palliative would quieten the people and neutralize the Islamic thrust. However, the move failed in its objectives as it was late and inadequate. The Shi'is who were excluded from any significant post in the government establishment drew inspiration from the Iranian revolution. The Salafiyun, a Sunni group, also began in-
sisting on implementation of Islamic principles, values and ethics. To curb the activities of Islamic revivalists the government resorted to more oppressive measures. That proved counter productive as it resulted in further discontent among the people.

In Bahrain, where the Shi'is constitute a majority and yet are dominated by the Sunnis, the Iranian revolution had an added emotional impact. In the wake of developments in Iran, the Shi'i segment grew more vocal. The Islamic revivalists, particularly the members of the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain which was supported by Iran, attempted to overthrow the regime. The government's oppressive measures and brutal policies buttressed Islamic activism in this city state. The course of Islamic movement in Bahrain has not been deterred by the government's brutal policies. On the contrary, the measures made the movement violent and aggressive.

The Islamic resistance movements in Iraq reflected the message of Islamic revolution of Iran. This movement created more radicalism among the ulama particularly the Shi'i. The oppressive policies of Saddam Hussain forced the Shi'i Muslims who were denied due political participation to resort to armed struggle. The revolutionary Shi'i ulama established a revolutionary group which called for the
establishment of an Islamic republic in Iraq. It injected a revolutionary spirit in society. Government's oppressive policies and execution of the ulama and leaders of the Islamic organizations like al-Da'wa could not silence the revolutionaries in Iraq. Strong measures by the government were followed by massive violent demonstrations and struggle against the regime throughout Iraq.

Along with its oppressive policies and execution of Islamists, the regime expelled thousands of the Iraqi Shi'is. In order to control the Islamic activists the government expanded its control throughout the country. It also played the Iraqi-Iranian and Sunni-Shi'i divisive cards. But, the move did not succeed. The Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SAIRI) which received moral support from the Islamic Republic of Iran called the Iraqi Muslims to revolt against the un-Islamic regime of Saddam Hussain and establish an Islamic government in Iraq. The Islamic Action Organization, the Soldiers of the Imam and Muslim warriors who were deeply influenced by the Islamic revolution of Iran continued their struggle against the despotic regime. In the early 1990s several attempts to overthrow the Ba'thist regime in Iraqi were made by the Islamic revivalists. Despite all types of brutal suppression, execution and murder of the Islamists, the Islamic
revivalists still continue their armed struggle against the
regime in Iraq.

The revolution in Iran also considerably affected the
existing security arrangements in the region. Immediately
after the success of its revolution Iran's relations with
its neighbouring Arab states suffered a setback. This was
so because the rulers of the latter perceived that the
revolutionary developments in Iran was a destabilizing
factor and that new Iran was the instigator of revolutionary
agitation in their countries. The new fears added to the
already lingering irritants such as the issues of ethnicity,
sectarian divide, political and ideological incongruence,
border dispute, Haj ritual and attitude towards the Western
linkages and influences. Thus apprehensive, the Arab re-
gimes thought in terms of certain defensive measures. At
the diplomatic level they propped up the divisive sectarian
point and depicted the Iranian revolution as a Shi'i phe-
nomenon and also raised the bogey of "Shi'i irridenta". In
the wider security perspective, they devised a regional
grouping to combat subversion. Thus, on 26 May 1981, the
Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) was formed. Apart from
regional measures for collective security they also thought
of boosting their individual security through entering into
bilateral defence agreements with the USA and other Western
powers. Such buttressing of their political and military capability by the GCC states made Iran wary and it initiated its own counter defensive measures. In the political domain it included extending active support to the dissident Islamic groups in the GCC states. Such moves and countermoves made the security situation in the Persian Gulf highly tense and murky.

The GCC was developed as a "third pillar" to contain the Islamic revolution. It was shaped under U.S. inspiration. The "Peninsular Defence Force", located in Saudi Arabia, was the military arm of the GCC. Because of the perceived anti-Iranian policies of these states, particularly the reduction of oil prices, revival of the issue of three islands (Abu Musa, Greater and Lesser Tunbs) in the Strait of Hormuz, increased arms purchase by the GCC governments and their bilateral defence pacts with the USA, GCC - Iran relations were seriously strained. Although some of the GCC governments made friendly gestures towards Iran, the latters attempts to join the grouping were thwarted mainly under the influence of Saudi Arabia.

The outbreak of war between Iraq and Iran presented a dilemma as well as an opportunity to the Shaikhdoms of the Persian Gulf. It is significant to note that they perceived regime security threats from Iraq and Iran in equal measure.
The apprehension from Iraq was manifest when it was kept outside the newly-constituted GCC. In fact, the threat from Iraq was latent and long-term but the one vis-a-vis Iran was patent and immediate. The war provided an opportunity to the GCC rulers to adopt a Machiavellian course. Fixing their priorities and under the cover of Arabism and Arab solidarity they extended political and financial support to Iraq. It was hoped that the war would not only divert the thrust of Iran but it would also make a dent on Iraq blunting its revolutionary edge and making it indebted to the oil-rich Shaikhdoms. Thus, in one move two objectives could be achieved and the pressure at home could be eased as well.

The main reason for the formation of GCC was self defence. However, it failed in its objective. The coordination of defence strategies of GCC members against impending threats were a complex and difficult task. Mutual differences centered on the source and severity of threats as well as varying opinions about the degree and manner of connection with the West especially the United States of America. At the same time the major weakness of this security arrangement was the exclusion of Iran and Iraq - the two major states of the region.

When the GCC security system displayed its inefficiency and inability during the 1991 Persian Gulf War, the U.S.
encouraged the GCC states and Egypt and Syria to create a new security system. This new security system which came to be known as the Damascus Declaration aimed at evolving an exclusively Arab security and defence order in the region. It also excluded Iraq as well as Iran. This security system, apart from economic cooperation, was mainly directed towards the forming of a security arrangement in the region through the establishment of a land and sea link with the Western world. The obvious flaw in the proposed security system under the Damascus Declaration was that Egypt and Syria had asymmetrical state systems when compared to those of the GCC states. In fact, the latter were apprehensive of the former. Moreover, Egypt and Syria had little tangible political and security interests in the Persian Gulf region.

Like the GCC security system this arrangement also faced many obstacles in achieving its aims. The withdrawal of Egyptian forces from Saudi Arabia clearly indicated the prevailing differences of opinion as well as lack of mutual trust between the Arab States about their security and their future plans and relations. It transpired that individual members of the GCC had little faith in the existing or proposed indigenous security system and they put more trust in bilateral security pacts with Western powers, particularly the USA. Such security pacts were signed in the wake of
the multinational war against Iraq. Under the new U.S. dominated security system, the original GCC security order was overhauled and each member of the Council became a willing partner subservient to the U.S. command. Iraq and Iran were isolated and made the object of the comprehensive policy of "dual containment".

The exclusion of Iran and Iraq which are the two major actors from this security arrangement or any future system is bound to lead to tension and instability in the Persian Gulf region. Similarly, the involvement of Western powers especially the U.S. and their support for creating any type of security arrangement in the region would create further rivalries and hostilities.

Because of the Iranian policy towards Iraq during 1990-91 as well as the negotiations for a new regional security system by the states of the region the latter paid greater attention to Iran. They realized that the Islamic Republic of Iran was a powerful and influential state in the region. No durable security system could be set up in the Persian Gulf without the cooperation of Iran (Iraq).

Iran's call for withdrawal of the extra-regional forces from the region and also preservation of the regional security by the regional states did not receive any favourable response from the GCC states. Because of their abiding
perception of threat from the Islamic revolution, the GCC feared that the withdrawal of the extra-regional forces from the region would facilitate the hegemony of Iran over the region. Even though Iran has maintained low-level bilateral relations with some of the GCC states, the tension and instability in the region will remain alive unless they do not arrive at a mutual understanding.

The exclusionist policies of the GCC states would lead to continuance of rivalries, tension, disputes and arm race as well as increasing dominance of extra-regional powers in the region.

The United States committed itself to the defence of the Persian Gulf region against attack by any outside force. In order to protect its national interests, the U.S. administration went ahead by declaring that it would not permit Saudi Arabia "to be an Iran". In pursuit of its latent desire to extend Pax Americana to the Persian Gulf region the USA continued to maintain significant influence in the region through its Arab allies.

The Western powers too, for their self interests, insisted that in order to counter any threat from outside the GCC states should develop their own defence capabilities. The abiding objective of the Western powers has been to establish their strong military presence in the region so
as to protect oil supplies and to neutralize the Islamic revivalist movements in the area. In pursuit of their policy the Western countries sold huge quantities of military hardware to the states of the region particularly Saudi Arabia. At the same time they extended their support to the GCC states and established close relations with them.

The Western powers particularly the U.K. and the U.S. were interested in creating a regional security by the GCC states. This was totally contrary to the principle stated by the GCC states that the security of the region is the responsibility of the peoples and countries of the region. By signing security and defence pacts with the GCC states the U.S. attempted to directly involve itself in the Persian Gulf region.

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait resulted in more involvement of the Western powers in the region. The assembling of the multi-national force under the U.S. umbrella not only created serious divisions among the Arab governments but it also evoked strong anti-American feelings among the people of the region. The Iraq-Kuwait crisis undermined the security apparatus of the GCC states leading eventually to their seeking greater cooperation from the Western countries.
The GCC state's close ties with the West, particularly the U.S., and their intention to provide regional security on behalf of the West as well as creating a political and military front against the anti-West forces resulted in increasing involvement and dominance of Western powers in the region.

The "Desert Storm" by the U.S. and its allies and the Arab states to liberate Kuwait and the creation of a new security arrangement excluding Iran and Iraq were aimed at securing a permanent security arrangement and not just to safeguard America's friends there. They were also intended to ensure the expansion of U.S. control in the whole Middle East.

In the post-Persian Gulf war phase the GCC-West relations aimed at the dual containment of Iran and Iraq. For this purpose they signed elaborate defence pacts with the U.S. These pacts enabled the U.S. and its allies to counter the perceived security threat emanating from the Islamic Republic of Iran. The system was designed to avoid a repetition of what happened in Iran in 1979, as well as to ensure the security of the Western countries particularly the U.S. in the region. This security system was directed against the anti-Western and anti-Israeli sentiments as well
as the spread of Islamic revivalist movement throughout the region.

Such agreements and increasing arms build-up by the GCC states resulted in an arms race throughout the Middle East in general and in the Persian Gulf in particular. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other Shaikhdoms began importing huge quantities of modern weapons and they were also engaged in large-scale military modernization. Iran was blamed for developing nuclear arms. However, it could be said that Iran showed keenness in acquiring nuclear capability. Its reason for the move was to develop its deterrence. It was to counter the military potential of its regional adversaries and tightening noose by the United States. As a matter of fact, Iran's nuclear search and potential were and much exaggerated.

It must be kept in mind that Islamic movements in the Persian Gulf region are on the defensive. Their actions and programmes are to defend the Muslim communities in multi-ethnic states where they are perceived to be under threat. Such movements are also reformist as their aim is to change society by changing government. It is the governments which have undermined Islam and introduced un-Islamic system and institutions. Islamic activism and Islamic organizations in almost all Islamic countries are fighting their own govern-
ments. They believe that Islam lost its pre-eminence because it absorbed too many foreign elements which corrupted it. If these corrupting elements can be removed and Islam restored to its pristine state then a perfect society can be created based on the holy Quran and the Sharia.

The activities of Islamic organizations can not be branded as terrorist or extremist. They are the vanguard of Islam fighting against ignorance, dynastic rule, vulgarisation of Western culture and puppet regimes as well as exploitation of their natural resources by foreign companies. This path was not conceived as simply being a narrow spiritual one, rather Islam was seen as representing an all-encompassing system of guidance in social, political and economic conduct. The close links between the Islamic organizations with the government of Iran and the latter's moral support to these organizations led to emergence of Iran as a center of Islamic movements.

It would be wrong to say that the Islamic movement wants to take back the Muslim societies to the early days of Islam. What it wants is a society based on the holy Quran, the Hadiths and the Sharia. It is reformist in character. Its aim is to change society by changing the un-Islamic and corrupt governments. After decades of cultural dominance of the West the Islamists have turned anti-Western in almost
all Muslim societies. This phenomenon should be seen as a reaction to various alienating policies that were enforced by the ruling classes in the name of modernization.

In the long term the vulnerable regimes in the region will experience Islamic takeover or at least gradual Islamization under the great social and political pressure from Islamic revivalists. This would happen because of the continued intensification of crisis conditions in the Arab-Islamic societies, the inability of the Arab rulers to confront the ideological challenges posed by the Islamic revivalists, and the absence of any indigenous ideological alternative and framework for social protest and revolutionary action. As an attractive alternative Islam provides an indigenous and authentic identity, an ideology of protest and a medium of revolutionary mobilization for Muslims.

The Arab rulers may have succeeded in suppressing some of the Islamic organizations, but Islamic radicalism will persist in the foreseeable future.

It is essential to find the reasons for an increasing number of Muslims joining the Islamic organizations and the potential radicalization of Muslim societies. A reasonable understanding of, adjustment with, Islamic concepts, principles, and values could remove major catalysts of Islamic radicalism and maximize the capability of the existing
regimes to arrest the drift towards radicalization of masses.

But the present regimes have resorted to a variety of measures ranging from co-operation to repression, not all of which have been successful. This process has propped up the Islamic movements. Islam came to be recognized as a major political force sidelining secular formulations such as Arab or Persian nationalism or even individual state nationalism. A new trend of thought in religious circles which were opposed to the subservient role of clerics to the governments and also critical of the regime's un-Islamic policies emerged in almost all the Arab states of the Persian Gulf region. Sensing the challenge, the ruling classes resorted to eliminate the anti-government ulama and organizations by suppressing them. But it could not prevent dissent from coming to surface. In the wake of increasing suppressive policies, executions and killing the leading ulama and leaders of Islamic organizations, protest and opposition to the regimes grew much stronger in the region.

The government's strategy to check the growth of Islamic revivalist movements in the region has been two fold: a) to suppress them through the use of brutal force; b) gradual introduction of religious doses into legislation, education, media and elsewhere. Neither method has proved effec-
tive to check the growth of Islamic revivalist movements in the region.

The ruthless suppression of Islamic movements by the regimes is bound to boomerang with full force against the ruling class as it happened with the Shah's regime in Iran in 1979. The second option will encourage the Islamic revivalist movements to interpret the government's actions as revealing its weakness. This, in turn, will exert more pressure for yet more concessions.

Furthermore, it is quite possible that the increasing coverage of Islam and Islamic affairs in the government media may prepare the ground both educationally and intellectually for a wider Islamic movement as well as the acceptance of the Islamic organization's call for establishing an Islamic state system based on the teaching of Quran and Sharia.

Thus the Islamic revivalist movement, represented by various Islamic organizations and leaders, is a reality and not just euphoria in the Persian Gulf region. Islam is steadily emerging as a viable socio-political, economic and cultural ideology and it appears destined to acquire an over-riding influence in the Islamic world at large.