Chapter V

Islamic Resurgence

Husni Mubarak Era
HUSNI MUBARAK: HIS SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS POLICIES

After the assassination of Anwar al-Sadat on 6 October 1981, his deputy, Husni Mubarak, who was also on the reviewing stand but survived, succeeded him. He assumed the office as the new president of Egypt through a smooth constitutional transition, referendum, on 13 October 1981.

Husni Mubarak was appointed as Air Force Officer by Jamál ‘Abd al-Nasser, after the 1967 defeat of Egypt by Israel, to reorganize the Egyptian Air Force. He had never appeared on the political scene throughout al-Nasser era and in the early years of al-Sadat. The latter chose him as a member of his entourage so that the air force might be controlled by the regime itself, as was the case with the army and police. His efficiency and dedication made him a reputed negotiator in the Arab countries, who liked and respected the style of working, and the moderate approach of Mubarak. Due to all these characteristics, al-Sadat selected him as his deputy and everyone was sure that he would become the successor of al-Sadat unless any untoward incident would happen.

In the beginning, he faced a number of challenges. Firstly, Israel did not keep things easy for him. Secondly, economic situation was very tough. Thirdly, the increase in unemployment was more. Fourthly, Islamists were gaining tremendous momentum in each and every field of life.

When he came to power, many Egyptians hoped that he would bring Egypt back into the Arab fold, since his personal relations with the Arab leaders were quite satisfactory. He could not re-enter the Arab fold because Israel threatened any such move as dangerous to her
relations with Egypt. He wanted to keep the relations with Israel. Consequently, he did not enter into the Arab fold in the early years. He desired to visit Israel but the Israeli leaders insisted that he must visit Jerusalem too or not come at all. Consequently, he did not visit Israel. Two years after signing the Camp David Agreement, Israel had started building a hotel at Taba, a one-square mile section of Sinai, Egypt strongly protested and Israel evacuated the site after uprooting the trees and every other green thing. However the relations with Israel worsened when they attacked Lebanon, Egypt protested and called back its ambassador from Tel Aviv. The Arab world readmitted Egypt into the Arab league.

Mubarak attempted to change the face of the regime by selective reforms. Despite his best intentions, however, the new President possessed neither the ideological tools nor the dedicated cadres to address comprehensively the ills of Egyptian society. The economy was deteriorating. In order to repair the abuses of open door policy of al-Sadat, he tried to limit the import of consumer goods. In order to raise the capital, he taxed the richer citizens, but for the time being the only groups, which were taxed, were the bureaucrats, who were underpaid to begin with. Much of the foreign capital in Egypt is supplied through banks, which have mushroomed in the last two decades. Some of these banks are called ‘off-shore banks’ and are not subject to Egyptian currency regulations, and this poses a potential threat to the economic well being of the country.

In the 1980s ‘Islamic banking’ was introduced in the form of investment companies (Sharīkat Tawzīf al-Amwāl), attracted the public insisting that their funds were invested in accordance with Islāmic principles and offered high rates of return. These companies succeeded in providing
financial assistance for Islamic publications and Islamist candidates for parliament. They collapsed resulting in the loss to investors and the government accused some of the major companies such as al-Rayyan, al-Sa'ad and al-Sharīf of corruption in order to exploit the Islamists.

Government moved against these companies in order to protect private investors and to suppress the contradiction, pointed out by the U.S. commercial banks as a result of profits accumulated by investors in these companies. These companies were able to provide an alternative to government institutions by offering Islamic banking and investing national savings in the country to motivate people including nationalists and Islamists to earn profit as well as by fulfilling Islamic tenets. No doubt they failed, but they gave a signal to the government that banking can be done for profit, which is religiously legitimate.\(^3\)

Certain Egyptian Muslims who earned money in the Gulf countries and in Egypt donated it to Islamist welfare projects in addition to providing them for such welfare activities. In this way Islamists gained public support especially of the poor and the needy by providing essential service in the areas, which were neglected by the government. The Islamists also worked with dedication during the times of crisis, such as, during the earthquake in 1992. The economic situation of the country played a vital role for the support to the Islamists by the public. Though the country has made some progress in the economic field but failed to reduce the increasing rate of unemployment.\(^4\)

It was Infitah, introduced by al-Sadat, which is responsible for the increased gulf between the rich and the poor, increase in unemployment and the spread of fasād. There was 20% increase in unemployment in 1994 in Egypt
due to the failure of economic policies. Government is also involved in corruption and it is in practice at higher levels of the society. Meagre salary to the government servants compels them to accept bribes. The government is trying to win hearts of the public by exposing cases of corruption, but it cements the public belief that the corruption is in practice at higher levels.

He wanted to continue the policies of al-Sadāt, his predecessor, including softness with al-Ikhwān. He continued to strengthen the presence of official Islām in public life. He showed tolerance and liberalization, but at the same time, reacted firmly, when his authority was challenged. He was careful while tackling his opponents – Islāmists as well as politicians. He himself intervened in clashes between Muslims and Coptic Christians and crushed Islāmist militants, who were held responsible for riots.

Despite the fact that he punished al-Sadāt’s assassins after a noisy public trial on 15 April 1982\(^5\), he also showed liberal approach towards the opposition and asked the exiled leaders that they could return to Egypt, if they desired so. He encouraged the dialogue with the opposition and invited them to the presidential palace for discussions so that hostility towards the government be replaced by a friendly environment. According to him, opposition is a part of the masses. Consequently, they should be invited to participate in decision-making because they are conscious of their rights and their obligation.

He sent religious experts into the jails to convince the youth militants that their interpretations of Islām are faulty. According to a report, the Azharite ‘Ulama have cooperated in this effort of reconversion, while the Ministry of Awqāf has been reluctant to participate. During the prison discussions, some militants have feigned
acceptance of the government's position only to resume their Islamic militancy after release. The government reports a 70% success rate in this programme.

Government organized a 'national dialogue' in 1994 with some opposition leaders, labour leaders and academics, to seek condemnation of the activities of Islamic activists. However it has sought acknowledgement that more time is needed in order to improve the economic situation, while baring discussion on constitutional reform.  

Government built 45,000 mosques at a cost of more than £262m and appointed 23,916 Imāms.  

Since 1970s, Egyptian government has been trying to assume Islamic credentials by using the media and al-Azhar to promote accurate and moderate interpretation. The government viewed it as its participation in the Islamization of the society, but the Islamists viewed it as secular nature of the government.

The government claims that most of the laws are in conformity with the Shariah. The Islamists both moderates as well as radicals called upon the government to apply Shariah as the sole source of law in conformity with Article 2 of the 1971 constitution, as amended in 1979.

Islamic organizations in Egypt have been receiving close attention from the government, ever since President Husni Mubarak assumed office in 1981. Senior officials connected with such organizations have said that their organizations have made tremendous strides in various fields of life. They explained that these organizations have set up their projects in order to spread religious enlightenment and Islamic da‘wah, and at the same time have been able to counter any slanderous accusations against Islam and Muslims.
All the political parties and religious organizations were allowed to operate. More liberalization was given to the mass media and the opposition was allowed to publish newspapers and criticize the government through media but not use abusive language against leaders of the Arab world. Television debates were organized by the government in which religious scholars of al-Azhar University, Islamist militants and scholars from other religious establishments participated. Television and radio broadcasted religious programmes and newspapers regularly published religious columns. At the same time state-supported religious establishments issued *fatwās*, declaring militants as ignorant and misguided.

According to the official Middle East News Agency, Husni Mubārak said that Muslims who die while defending their rights are martyrs. He further said:

“For whosoever dies while defending his God given rights, freedom, human dignity, wealth, religion, land and holy sites...he shall be a martyr.”

The speech was delivered during the opening session of a seminar entitled *This is Islām* organized by al-Azhar University. Muslim leaders and scholars from all over the world aimed at to present ‘the true Image of Islām’ to the world attended the seminar.

The rector of al-Azhar University warned United States of interfering in the internal affairs of the university. He said:

“We told them that al-Azhar influences others and is not influenced. We do not accept anyone to interfere in our business.”

He added that he supported the *fatwa* of boycotting American and Israeli products. The sale of these products in turn supports Israel. Speaking to nearly 15,000 demonstrators recently, he announced that the door for
jihād is open for the entire Islāmic nation’s youth to defend Islām and the land of Palestine. He said:

“Strength is life and weakness is death,”\(^{12}\)

Proposals for measures to Islāmize the laws were put forth in the 1980s. During the period of Anwar al-Sadāt, Article 2 of the constitution was amended in 1980 to make Shariah the principal source\(^{\ast}\) of legislation rather than ‘a source’.

In 1985 an attempt was made in the high constitutional court that interest should not be charged if the loan repayment is delayed as being contrary to the amended Article 2 of the Egyptian constitution. The court rejected the petition, providing the reason that the article had no retrospective effect on existing legislation, that was in conflict with the Shariah. Various Islāmic laws were drafted under the government auspices. After the presentation of the drafts before the ‘Peoples’ Assembly’ in 1992, none of them were enacted into law. Mohammad Sa’īd al-‘Ashmāwī and Faraj Faudah (d.1992), proponents of the idea that the unity of the religion and state under modern conditions was harmful to both and they opposed the Islāmists calls for making the state and its laws more Islāmic.

Modernists are of the view that Islām should be confined only to personal matter and faith because they saw in Islām a threat to their existence. Certain intellectuals had same type of thinking in 1930s in Egypt. They argue that the West had the religious control of the state in the middle ages. These intellectuals counter the fundamentalist call for rejection of Western culture, declaring that Sunni Islām had never had the direct imposition of religious ideology. Unknown gunmen assassinated one of the
Modernist, Faraj Foudah, a journalist and professor, in 1992.

Ban has not been lifted from al-Ikhwan because the government is not ready to accept its political and legal position because the former is committed to the implementation of the Shariah.\(^{13}\) The New Wafd Party was reestablished in 1983 under the leadership of Sirāj al-dīn.\(^{14}\) Feeling the party’s potential for popular support, Mubārak government refused to recognize it. In January 1984, the court ordered its legality for its establishment. In the Peoples’ Assembly election on 27 May 1984\(^ {15}\), the party won 57 seats with 15.1% of total votes casted, crossed the threshold of 8%\(^ {16}\). The party had alliance with al-Ikhwan in the election. NDP, government party, achieved clear majority with 72.9% of the total votes casted by winning 389 seats. In the election only 1/3 of the total voters actually exercised their franchise mostly aged and women, youth remained away from the practice.

In the 1987 elections, al-Ikhwan made ties with the Socialist Labour Party (S.L.P.) and the Liberal Socialist Party (L.S.P.) in order to overcome the requirement of 8% of the total votes casted, compulsory for the quanlification for seats in the Peoples’ Assembly. Hundreds of opposition workers mostly al-Ikhwan members were arrested on the eve of election, still the Alliance won 60 seats and al-Ikhwan was the largest opposition with 37.\(^ {17}\) The New Wafd won six seats.

The election manifesto of *al-Tahlūf al-Islāmi* (The Islamic Alliance)\(^ {18}\) in the election of April 1987, contained the following points:

(i) Faith in God as the basis of solving economic problems;
(ii) an end to the state of emergency, restoration of civil liberties, and the guarantee of fair elections;

(iii) the Shariah as a comprehensive system of government and way of life. According to Shariah 'The Copts are citizens whose rights and duties are like those of Muslims.'

In July 1987, Mubārak was nominated for the second six-year term and confirmed on 5 October. Al-Ikhwān could not contest the parliamentary elections held on 29 November 1990 at its own, being technically illegal. The turnout was low because main opposition parties the New Wafd, the Liberal Party and the Socialist Labour Party boycotted the election, which resulted in another victory to Nationalist Democratic Party (NDP) of Husni Mubārak. The opposition parties boycotted provided the reason that they would only participate in free and fair elections. Al-Ikhwān was also among the boycotting parties being a unit of SLP and the Liberal Party Alliance.

The Advisory Council of Political Parties Committee denied registering al-Wast as a political party in May 1994. Although, Mada and two other founder members were released after trial by a military court, however, 7 al-Ikhwān members were punished three years’ imprisonment for supporting al-Wast. In this way, the regime wanted to broaden the gulf between the liberals and the conservatives of al-Ikhwān. Consequently, 13 members including three founder members of al-Wast, resigned from al-Ikhwān in October.

Just days before the November-December 1995 elections to the Peoples Assembly, some 54 of al-Ikhwān members, including many parliamentary candidates, received prison sentences of three to five years for 'unconstitutional activities' from a military court which
also closed down the movement's Headquarters in central Cairo. Minister of the Interior claimed that he had evidence of close links among al-Ikhwān, al-Jamā'ah and al-Jihād. More than 1,000 al-Ikhwān members were arrested. The NDP won 316 of the total 444 seats. The Egyptian Centre for Human Rights and Legal Aid recorded that 51 people were killed and 878 injured during the election campaign. ICER received 1,240 complaints of irregularities from candidates, party agents and voters.

In June 1998, mid-term elections were held to the Shūra council. Most of the opposition parties boycotted the poll and NDP won 85 seats out of 88. In May and September 1998 and again in June 1999, al-Wast was denied legal status on the grounds that its political agenda was not fulfilling the criteria of the Advisory Council of the Political Parties Committee. In June 1999, Mubārak was formally nominated for the fourth term.

The general election of 2000 was held in three phases i.e. 18 October, 29 October and 8 November. Al-Ikhwān fielded 100 candidates as independents. The Islāmist parties who renounced violence in 1999 were denied recognition. The New Wafd contested the elections under the leadership of Nu'mam Jum’ah, following the death of Mohammad Fuad Siraj al-dīn on 1 September 2000.

Once again NDP got the overwhelming majority of 353 seats out of 444, independents secure 72, independent al-Ikhwān supporters won 17, the New Wafd 7, the NPUP 6, the Nasserist Party 3, and the LSP one. Voting for 2 seats in Alexandria was postponed following the arrest of 20 al-Ikhwān activists 15 to 40 percent voters exercised their right to franchise. 14 people died and hundreds of others were injured in election related violence.
Islamic Resurgence

Islam has played a vital role in the development of Egyptian public life and maintained relationship with Egyptian state and society. The Islamist intellectuals and groups always criticized modernism and the West. However they are not against modernism if it influences Egypt in Islamic terms.

Since 1970s, there has been an increase in the religiosity expression in the society. Attendance in the mosques has been gradually increasing, people like to wear Islamic dress, and a number of books have been published containing religious material on Islam as faith, language, law and history.

Islamists have been able to foster and direct religious current through dedication and organizational ability. They have been struggling for the purification of the society from 'un-Islamic' practices, and its Islamization. Al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun profoundly contributed a lot from the time of its founding and its emphasizing on the Tarbiyya (education or Training) so that an individual will become a true-Muslim. Their struggle has borne fruits and they were able to spread religious fervour among the people especially in youth and we are noticing that a number of organizations are struggling for the same purpose.

By the mid-eighties, al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun emerged as a major force due to the liberal policies of Husni Mubarak. It has been major political opposition in the parliamentary election in alliance with other parties. During 1980s and 1990s it has been major problem for Mubarak government because of its effective social and economic activities. It is demanding greater democratization, political representation and checking of human rights violations. It is dominant along with other
Islamist organizations in student groups, faculty, clubs, professional organizations, and syndicates of lawyers, doctors, engineers and journalists.

Al-Jamā'ah al-Islāmiyyah and al-Ikhwān operated a network of social services, which includes schools, clinics and banks. Al-Ikhwān’s dual call for the restoration of civil liberties (hurriyat) and implementation of the Shariah is being appreciated in the society. At the same time secularists, Islāmists professional syndicates, student groups, lawyers and writers are continuously demanding the restoration of basic liberties and denouncing the violation of human rights. Al-Ikhwān and other moderate Islāmists demand restoration of right to freedom of speech, protection against torture, access to due process of law, an end to corruption and implementation of the Shariah. In this way they promise greater democratization through implementation of Shariah than that of the existing government.

Over the past two decades, there has been a mounting pressure from the Islāmists for women to wear the hijāb. But at the same time the government wanted to strengthen the secular character of Egyptian society. It attempted to discourage the hijāb by excluding the women who wear it, from study missions and if possible discriminate against them in state controlled employment. In this way, the government creates hatred not only between the Islāmists and the state but also between the religious Muslims and those who are in favour of secularization of the Egyptian society.

Islāmization of Egypt is in progress but the political views of the people differ from person to person and from organization to organization. Among the Islāmists, militants are active against the regime, moderates criticize
certain policies of the regime and some favour it. Likewise opponents and supporters of the regime also exist among the secularists. Both the Islamists and secularists oppose the government over certain common political issues such as the rule of law, the Arab-Israel peace process, the Gulf-war and the clashes within Bosnia. Egyptian state faces a big ideological challenge of Islamists for the emergence of alternative government deadly based on Islām.

The Islamists and their sympathizers demand from the government that the latter should not make political and economic cooperation with the West, especially with the U.S. and Israel. They claim that the West undermines the growth and development of Muslim states. In the shade of political support and financial assistance, the U.S. and the European Union are doing anti-Muslim activities in the Muslim countries. That is why the Islamists are opposing the Muslim rulers of Islamic countries and treat them their enemies and wage *jihād* against them e.g., the Islamists of Egypt, Afghānistān etc. To remain in power these so-called Muslim leaders are undermining the Islāmic trend.

The impact of the resurgence has been seen in the religious, political, social and economic fields of life. Certain organizations were established in the form of sufi mystics, moderate Islamists, conservative Islamists and social welfare associations. The desire to lead a more Islāmically informed way of life can be found among the middle and upper class, uneducated and educated, peasants and professionals, young and old, women and men. Both *ahli* and government controlled mosques were filled with these Islamists. Men and Women were active in studying Qurān in Sufi gatherings, mosques, and private associations. They not only perform religious practices but also organized social service camps in the form of offering

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psychiatric and drug rehabilitation centers, dental clinics, day-care centers, legal aid societies, provide housing and food on subsidies, run-banks and investment centers.

Religious programming and Islāmic literature has been witnessed in the government-controlled media, in newspaper, bookshops, secular magazines and books of street vendors. Religious preachers Shaykh Mohammad Mutawalli al-Sharawi (1911-1998) and ‘Abd al-Hamīd Kishk (b.1933) became media stars in Egypt and in the Arab world. They were allowed to appear on the television and wrote newspaper columns. Their audiocassettes, pamphlets and books were sold on bookshops, at airports and hotels, and by street vendors. One find religious materials in magazines, audio taps and books though the coverage of politicians and movie stars.

Ahāli and non-government mosques and their Imāms were allowed to criticize government. ‘Abd al-Hamīd Kishk, who has been regarded an extremist and imprisoned by both al-Nasser and al-Sadāt, criticized certain policies of the government. The sermons and speeches of al-Sharawi and Kishk could be heard in mosques, religious gatherings, on cassettes-played in shops, taxicabs, on the streets, and in the homes of the poor and the middle class.

Islāmists have been also surging into scientific and technical faculties. Bright lower-middle-class youth, who do not get jobs easily, join the on going movement. Islāmists increasingly carried out student, faculty and syndicate elections. They won board elections at the doctors syndicate for the third time in 1990 and in 1991, they white washed in the engineering syndicate. They also won majority of the seats on the board of the lawyers syndicate in 1992.24
Islamic student organizations dominated university student unions in Asyūt, al-Minya, Cario and Alexandria. They pressurised authorities to ban Western music and concerts; reform curriculum, restriction of mixed socials, segregation of gender in classes, and implementation of Islamic laws.

Islamic critics claimed that Mubārak failed to provide a dynamic leadership, a sound economy, jobs to educated youth and not showing confidence in political liberalization programmes. They offer the solution to these problems by not depending upon the West, cancellation of ‘Camp David Accord’ and the implementation of Islamic laws. Egypt vitally depends on financial support of the United States. In return the latter plays a key role in shaping the policies of Cario, which are serving the interests of the Americans. On the other hand the regime claims that the Islāmists have no specific, sound, concrete and alternative programme. They want to change the fate of the state and society through religio-social programmes. Even al-Ikhwān failed to provide political reform programmes and rely on educational and socio-economic programmes. The regime criticized the Islāmist movements that they have not defined the nature of an Islāmic state and its institutions and are lacking specific programmes and could not long last if handed over the reign of the state. The fact is totally reverse. Instead of allowing al-Ikhwān to become a political party, the state from time to time suppresses it vehemently.

A number of clusters of non-violent activities have arisen in Egypt today. The intellectuals and anti-Western young militants, who are attracted to al-Sha‘ab newspaper, is one of the circles. When the labour party adopted an Islāmists orientation, the party newspaper became a
powerful voice of Islāmist opposition under the energetic leadership of Ādil Hussain and Ibrāhīm Shukri. The Labour Party registered 8% of the elected vote in 1984 elections and 18% jointly with al-Ikhwān as the Islāmic Alliance in 1987. Al-Sha’ab circle is considered the most radical and uncompromising of three circles, which criticized the Egyptian role in the U.S. sponsored peace process and cultural and economic dependency. During the Gulf crisis in 1990-91, al-Sha’ab criticized the Egyptian official failure to advance an Arab alternative to the U.S. commitment to a military strike against Iraq. Hussain emerged as an effective critic of the government policy from an Islāmist perspective. When the government failed to support for a peaceful resolution by the Jordanians, the Yemenis, the French, and the Russians, the Islāmist circle around Ādil Hussain and Ibrāhīm Shukri mounted their own mediation effort. Mājidī Hussain (on Algeria) and Ādil Hussain (on the Sūdān) took positions that supported developments in those countries.26 They were condemned and defamed by the government press and al-Sha’ab was labeled as “an Iraqi publication in Egypt” by the government supporters.27 On these developments, there was a dissent within the Labour Party, strains with al-Ikhwān in the Islāmic Alliance, and repression by the government and finally Ādil Hussain was arrested in January 1995 and released after a short period of time. But he was rearrested in March 1995 on the charges of supporting terrorism. Ādil Hussain narrates the story of harassment on him by the government, in al-Sha’ab of 18 February 1991.28

After the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in August 1990, Islāmist movements held an International Islāmic conference in Amman which continued for four days from 12-15 September 1990.29 Al-Ikhwān leaders from Egypt,
Jordan and Syria, National Front of Sudan, al-Nahdah of Tunisia, Jamā’at Islāmi of Pakistan, Islamic Party of Malaysia, Labour Party of Egypt, delegates of HAMĀS of Palestine, leaders of al-Irshād wa al-Islah of Algeria and prominent figures from all over the Muslim world took part in conference. All the participants of the conference tried their best to evade the war, military of Western countries should vacate from Muslim countries, end to blockade of Iraq and people of Kuwait live freely in their own country. So the issue could be solved in the light of Islam. To act practically on these suggestions, a delegation was formed which met Shah Hussain of Jordan, Shah Fahd of Sa’ūdi Arabia, Saddām Hussain of Iraq and Rafsanjani President of Iran. Though these efforts bore no fruits but the delegation presented an applicable plan.

The second group of Islamist activities opted work within the professional associations and other civil society institutions treatise their dream of a more just and humane Islamic society in Egypt. This group is doing an impressive social service in the university campuses. One of the most influential was Essam al-Aryan of the Medical Association during al-Sadāt era. Their aim was to work within the structures of civil and state institutions. They have worked to extend medical insurance to syndicate members and their families, establish social and recreational clubs, increase the stock of housing available to members at lower prices, and assist the families of those members, arrested or detained by the regime. In this way the syndicate activists have renewed the legacy of social Islam, pioneered by al-Ikhwān for a new generation of Egyptians.

Medical Association led by Essam al-Aryan acts as a national platform where the important issues faced by Egypt are discussed and debated. The Islamists have
significantly made the associations the vehicle to extend the message of social Islām and to define its larger vision of centrist Islāmic elements for Egyptian society. The extraordinary earthquake relief effort, spearheaded by syndicate activists, proved so effective that the government forced the Islāmists to lower their visibility. The government uses power to manipulate and control the syndicates. To curtail the Islāmists, the government makes changes in the electoral laws and even arrest the Islāmists.

Third group is of religious intellectuals and scholars who have organized themselves as a ‘School’, with the aim of providing non-authoritarian ‘right guidance’ to the varied groups of the Islāmic body, including both al-Sha‘ab and syndicate circles. This group calls itself, ‘The New Islāmic Trend’. The prominent figures of this ‘School’ are Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Kamāl Abū al-Mājidī, Mohammad Salīm al-Awa, Mohammad al-Ghazāli (1917-1996) and Fahmī Huwaydī. These authors have written a large number of books and articles, which binds them together and creates an intellectual and cultural environment within which their followers move. They have large number of supporters in the general public. When al-Qaradawi or al-Ghazāli speak publicly, more than a quarter of a million gather to listen their speeches.

They avoid official attack by defining their group as an intellectual school. They have been able to expand the scope and richness of the legal political sphere by issuing statements on national as well as on International issues such as communal violence, Egypt’s role in the Gulf-crisis etc. They condemned the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait but at the same time criticized the government stand in support of the American led-military resolution, calling for an Arab and Islāmic diplomatic solution. Prominent leaders of this
group accept Egypt’s Christians as members of the political and social community and express solidarity with them at the time of communal violence. They also showed their solidarity with the youth during the deteriorating conditions of 1990s. It was Salīm al-Awa who condemned the government repression against leaders of *Hizb al-Wast*, who was arrested on the charges of ‘Conspiring’ to establish a party.

The New Islāmist figures are unknown to the West. Consequently, misleading articles use to appear in the Western press comparing Shaykh Mohammad al-Ghazālī with Imām Khomeini or with Shaykh ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Rahmān, leader of al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyyah. In fact al-Ghazālī was prominent scholar in the Muslim world, a central figure in moderate Islāmist ranks, and quite frequently a target of attack from ignorant, extremist quarters till his death in March 1996.33

A manifesto containing the commitments to democracy and pluralism; and moderate views of the group was produced by Kamāl Abū al-Mājidī in 1982. However they were not allowed to publish it for a decade despite its moderate thrust. It stressed on a rational interpretation of the Qur’ān and the *Sunnah*. It expressed deep concern over the miserable condition of the Egyptians and Muslims not only in the fields of beliefs and religion, but also to their social, political, cultural, economic and psychological well being. They claimed that the Egyptians and Muslims could come out of this miserable condition if there exists a true resurgence of Islāmic ideas, spirit, and way of life, and they have a clear, rational knowledge and understanding of the modern world.34

The New Islāmists’ tried their best to preserve their existence in Egyptian society and attempted to offer
enlightened leadership. Tariq al-Bishri prominent intellectual and distinguished jurist, Hussain Amin, a prominent diplomat and intellectual joined these groups. The latter insisted on fully acknowledging the historical forces that had shaped the religious inheritance in interpreting Islam and taking account of new conditions wherever necessary.

The ‘New Islamists’ discussed the issues of women, minority and human rights and the struggle for more just national and international orders within the Islamic tradition. According to them, the Islamic resurgence possesses the message of universal importance. In their view a global dialogue should be conducted on behalf of the human principles that all the great religions and cultural traditions share.

They believed that complete overthrow of existing institutions and laws are not necessary because many of the laws in Egypt do not contradict Islamic laws in their judgment. They insisted that those areas where changes must occur can and should be approached consistently and gradually, to avoid chaos and confusion in the society.

The ‘New Islamists’ insisted that direct social action was the duty of all those involved in the Islamic movement, including both the body and the leadership. They claimed that the practical activity was the right path to spiritual and worldly salvation. They called for a healthy Islamic body that will help create an open environment of tolerance, understanding and dialogue that will yield a current understanding of both Islam and the modern world and that can guide the steps to renewal and change.

The ‘New Islamists’ succeeded in advancing these goals to a great extent during 1980s. They engaged themselves in peaceful intellectual and political struggles.
aimed at creating an enlarged and tolerant Islamic consciousness open to the world. Throughout the 1980s and in the early years of 1990s, they interfered in the controversial national and international issues such as communal violence and Gulf-crisis.

By the mid 1990s, violence and repression disrupted their efforts for holding national dialogue. The militants strike both the civil society and the government and in retaliation the latter adopted the policy of sweeping repression. The regime not only targeted the militants but also the moderates and the 'New Islamists' as well. The regime limited their access to television and censored their writings in the press. The regime believes that there is no difference between the moderates and militants. When the latter become violent and become the focus of attention, the Egyptian regime target the clusters of non-violent Islamists. To strike at the militants, the regime argues, it must dry up the board source of the religious renewal in Egypt.

**Militant Groups**

Being the ends same Islamist movement is ideologically divided into two groups such as militants and moderates. Al-Jihād, al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyyah and other groups which used force as means to spread Islam and struggle for the implementation of Shariah, are called 'Militants', and moderates are al-İkhwān and other Islamists who are against the use of force as a means of spreading Islam. Al-Jihād criticizes al-İkhwān on its denunciation of the use of violence as a means and policy of non-confrontation with the government although certain members of the latter are sympathetic to the more Islamist militants.
The militant groups, al-Jihād and al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyyah rejected the compromise and participation, and considered the political system of Egypt as illegitimate. Concept of *Hakimiyya Li Allah* (sovereignty lies only with Allah) and *al-Farīda al-Ghaiba* (*jihād* the forgotten duty) place the Islāmist militants in a different category than al-Ikhwān. Muslims are called upon to wage *jihād* against the atheist (*kāfīr*) or a Muslim ruler, who is involved in irreligious practices such as not implementing the *Shariah* or hosting moral decadence and economic corruption (*fasād*) or making undue peace with the Jews. These concepts have provided them religious legitimacy for the resort to violence and dismantling of the un-Islāmic political order.

They accuse al-Ikhwān for providing the cooperation to the government in containing the militants because al-Ikhwān criticizes the violet activities of the most radical groups Jamā’at, al-Muslimīn, al-Jihād and al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyyah. Some of the most impressive leaders separated from al-Ikhwān, to form independent Islāmist groups, although maintaining loose ties with it.

Growth of more militant groups has been witnessed since the 1980s and 1990s, which is continuing till date. In addition to above-mentioned major organizations, new groups are being formed continually. A pattern of appearance and disappearance characterizes these societies as they are unearthed by the government, suppressed or contained, only to return to Egypt’s omnipresent underground. Reportedly, the Egyptian authorities place the total number of Islāmist groups at ninety nine, while a Kuwait based fundamentalist periodical puts their number at sixty. These small organizations, are Jund Allah (God’s Warriors), Shabāb Mohammad (Mohammad’s Youth), Jund
al-Rahmān (Warriors of the Merciful), Qif wa Tab'ayyīn (Halt and Expound), Talā'i al-Fath (Vanguards of the Conquest—a breakaway group of Islamic Jihad) etc. The last one joined al-Jihād in 1993. Detailed list of these organizations is given in Appendix-III. Among the major organizations al-Jihād and Jamā’at al-Muslimīn has been discussed in detail in Chapter IV. Al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyyah is discussed in this chapter.

**Al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyyah**

The European oriented developments of Khedive Islāmist’s period nourished al-Afghāni’s movement and those of the Wafd period nourished al-Ikhwān, so does al-Infitah of al-Sadāt period generate the Islāmic radicalism that is expressed in the young al-Jamā’ah, creating an eager demand for radical interpretations of the past, the present and the future. Al-Islāmiyyah is not a single organization but a conglomerate of Islāmist groups of Egypt, emerged in the 1970s as the result of liberal policies of Anwar al-Sadāt. These groups were active in mosques and universirty campuses in student unions. All these Islāmist groups of this federation were influenced by Hasan al-Bannā’s ideas and thought, and by his al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn. These groups invited Egyptian youth towards the Islāmic resurgence.

In 1971, when Anwar al-Sadāt came in power, he released a large number of prisoners including al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn, who had been imprisoned by Jamāl ‘Abd al-Nasser. As an organization, al-Ikhwān was still illegal, some of its members who were not favouring moderate approach of its leaders, separated from the organization and established their own groups or joined other Islāmist radical groups. Al-Sadāt allowed such groups to work under
the umbrella of al-Jamā‘ah al-Islāmiyyah (The Islamic Community) ʿUmar ‘Abd al-Rahmān, a blind preacher and orator from al-Fayyūm and ex-member of al-Ikhwān, has been acknowledged by the organization as its spiritual guide.\(^{40}\)

Throughout the 1970s these Islāmist groups were regarded as an important counterbalance to the Nasserists and the leftists, as al-Sadāt gave them full liberty to organize and activate. Al-Sadāt reduced state-control from a number of Egyptian mosques, and encouraged privatisation of a large number of mosques. In a decade the number of ahāli mosques doubled from 20,000 to 40,000.\(^{41}\)

These Islāmist groups operated from these mosques in Cairo, Alexandria, Port Said and Suez in Lower Egypt; and Asyūt, al-Fayyūm and al-Minya in Upper Egypt. They were preaching there for the implementation of Islāmic Sharah, performing social services, and ‘organized circles’ were established therein for memorization of the Qur‘ān.

Pressure of rural migration was increasing day by day in these cities and the state decreased its social welfare programmes, which provided these groups chances of organizing social service activities in these areas. Poor and needy families were provided with food and clothing. The members of these groups visited ailing persons and doctors attended them without charging any fees to them. The members of relatives who migrated to Gulf countries funded them.\(^{42}\)

Establishment of new colleges and universities in the 1970s in al-Minya, al-Fayyūm, Sohāj, Qinā and Aswān in Upper Egypt, resulted in founding of new campuses. Under the banner of al-Jamā‘ah al-Islāmiyyah student unions were formed in Asyūt and in these new established institutions.
A number of independent preachers of certain mosques joined this organization and issued *fatāwa* in favour of this organization for its stand against al-Sadāt regime on the issue of signing the ‘Camp David Accord’, which hurt their sentiments and harmed the cause of Palestine issue. The most prominent leaders were Shaykh Ahmad al-Mahālawī at Qā'id Ibrāhīm Mosque in Alexandria and Shaykh Ḥāfiz Salāmah of al-Shuhada Mosque in Suez and al-Nūr Mosque in Ciro.\(^4\) Al-Sadāt made publicity attacks on both, before his assassination in October 1981. Both of them became the prey of state-terrorism before and after al-Sadāt’s assassination and were imprisoned on many occasions.

In the beginning of the 1980s, ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Rahmān criticized al-Sadāt’s policies especially the ‘Camp David Accord’. In retaliation, the state government and official mass media charged him that he had links with al-Jihād, which assassinated al-Sadāt on 6 October 1981, but he always denied such allegation. However, he openly provoked the public through his preaching and speeches against the state by organizing large conferences in cities along the Nile River.

Al-Jamā'ah took part in the September 1981 violence against the regime, two lakh members of the organization distributed anti-government leaflets in Cairo’s Ābidīn Square and another one lakh offered prayer in front of the prudential palace during the month of Ramadān.\(^4\)

By the summer of 1988, a number of clashes occurred between the militant groups of al-Jamā'ah al-Islāmiyyah and state security forces in al-Fayyūm, al-Minya in Upper Egypt and other cities of Asyūt province after the Friday sermons. Government reacted severely, closed down mosques in cities, banned student elections in the
universities and declared all the activities illegal under the name of al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyyah. Tension was mounting in Upper Egypt where thousands were arrested and a large number were killed during the crackdown and house-to-house searches by the security forces. Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd al-Rahmān was twice detained, first in 1988 and then again in 1989.

During his detention and exile, his followers demonstrated further violent demonstration in Imbābah and 'Āin Shams in Cairo which indicated the existence of the organization in Cairo. During the early 1990s he was exiled first to Afghānistān and Pākistān and then to United State.45 His exile created more conflict between his supporters and the government resulted the additional deployment of military troops, armoured care and helicopters to several cities. He was accused by the state authorities of issuing orders for the killing of Rif'at al-Mahjūb, speaker of Peoples' Assembly, in 1990 and of Farāj Foudah, a liberal author in 1992. Attacks and counter attacks continued throughout the early 1990s. Al-Jamā’ah was blamed for the instigation of sectarian clashes between the Muslims and Chritians in several cities of Upper Egypt in 1991. But after the investigations by the state authorities, it came to know that the cause was old social rivalry. The activists of the organization attacked foreign tourists, visiting pharaonic monuments, in Upper Egypt in 1992 and continued in 1993. Assassination attempt was made on the life of ‘Ātif Sidqī, Prime Minister of Egypt, in November 1993.46 'Umar 'Abd al-Rahmān was held responsible for issuing orders to the members of al-Jamā’ah to carry out attacks, in order to destroy tourism and state economy.
Government passed an anti-terrorism law in 1992 to control activities of al-Jamā’ah and announced that all the mosques and preachers would be put under state control. In an organizational meeting in Alexandria in August 1992, two foreign militants—a Südānese and a Jordanian—along with 23 others of al-Jamā’ah, were arrested. With this the government claimed that the organization has some international ties in Irān, the Südān and Jordan. According to the Egyptian political analysts, the conflict between the government and al-Jamā’ah is not only increasing but intensifying since June 1993. Seeing the strength of al-Jamā’ah, the government is hesitating to carry out the execution of Islāmists convicted in military tribunals.

Al-Jamā’ah would not be able to seize the power due to a number of reasons that the regime is shielded by a powerful security apparatus, the army is backed by the ‘Silent Majority’ of the middle classes and intellectuals, and the organization lacks popular leadership which is necessary for organizational strength.

Al-Jamā’ah is responsible for a number of activities in Egypt in the past several years. Its leaders and members are active in the countryside.

Islāmīc Jihād and al-Jamā’ah agreed in November 1993 on greater co-ordination between the two groups and joint action against the security forces. Shaykh ‘Umar was selected the leader of the ‘United Front’ and a committee of members was formulated from the advisory council of the two groups to overcome differences and strengthen cooperation.

It was seen that the federation is not working under a single leadership. The self-proclaimed leader of these groups is Shaykh ‘Umar ‘Abd al- Rahmān, a blind preacher and orator from al-Fayyūm.
‘Umar ‘Abd al-Rahmān was born in a poor rural family in al-Jamāliyah village in Lower Egypt in 1938. He received primary education on traditional religious pattern in regional urban centers, memorizing the Qur’ān. He entered al-Azhar University Cairo in 1960 and graduated from ‘Faculty of Fundamentals of Religion’ in first class in 1965. He wanted to become a teaching assistant at the university but he was appointed as a mosque preacher by the government in a poor rural village in al-Fayyūm, Upper Egypt. He did his master’s degree from al-Azhar in 1967. Alongwith studies, he continued preaching in al-Fayyūm. In 1968, he was appointed at al-Azhar in the ‘Faculty of Fundamentals of Religion’.

In the same year he made the pilgrinage to Makkah, where he met Dr. Said Ramadān, a leader of al-Ikhwān. The latter was exiled by Jamāl ‘Abd al-Nasser because he was one of the critics of al-Nasser. Dr. Ramadān provided ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Rahmān with funds for the jailed leaders of al-Ikhwān but the latter was arrested in the process. Although he was soon released but was dismissed from the university service and appointed to a bureaucratic position in 1969. He treated this as his disgrace and demotion by the authorities. So he refused to join again.

He continued to preach in al-Fayyūm. He called al-Nasser an infidel and prohibited prayers for him at a public ceremony after the latter’s death on 28 September 1970. Al-Sadāt government put him behind the bars for 8 month for issuing such type of declarations.

When al-Sadāt declared amnesty to political as well as Islāmist prisoners, ‘Abd al-Rahmān was also released and reappointed at the Azharite Institute in al-Fayyūm. He was awarded doctorate degree by al-Azhar in 1972 and was appointed as professor there. After a very short period of
time, he was transferred to the religious faculty in Asyūt, a centre of Islāmic fundamentalist activity. He strongly supported al-Ikhwān student outfit al-Jamā'ah al-Islāmiyyah there. It is interesting to mention that regional as well as national government supported the establishment of this group. 50

He married with an al-Ikhwān member's daughter, Ishā Hasan Jūdah in 1977. He went to Saūdi Arabia in the same year, where he was appointed as a professor of Qur'ānic interpretation at Al-Saūd University. He returned to Egypt after four years and was arrested by Egyptian authorities for the involvement with al-Jihād, which assassinated Anwar al-Sadāt on 6 October 1981. He was regarded as leader of al-Jihād and accused of masterminding the assassination of al-Sadāt. He was released in 1984, when the government failed to prove the charges leveled against him.

Three factors are responsible for the popularity of 'Umar 'Abd al-Rahmān during the prolonged detention (1981-84). The first thing is that he wrote a book 'Mithāq al-Āmil al-Islāmi (Charter of Islāmic Action), which became very popular for the Islāmic radical point of view. The book is an explanation of his views of correct Islāmic life. He explained the concept of al-Jihād in it, which his affiliation with the radical forces and detachment from moderate group of al-Ikhwān. He stated that restoration of the principles of the Qur'ān is impossible unless and until the secular type of government is overthrown, second, he remarried Fatin Shu'ayb a kinswoman of several important activities of al-Jamā'ah in Upper Egypt. He issued fatawa in support of the activities of the federation and was called as mufti al-Jihād. Thirdly most of the leaders of al-Jihād organization were executed or sentenced to life
imprisonment, leaving a leadership vacuum that he readily filled. He was called by the media and his opponents as the high priest of radical fundamentalism in and outside Egypt, and had great importance to radical Iilāmists in the Muslim world. He emigrated to United States in 1990, where he was arrested because he was accused of inciting his followers for bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City in February 1993. Mamūn al-Hudaibi, the then spokesman of al-Ikhwān, dismissed the charge that an elderly man like Shaykh ‘Umar should had given a fatwā to incite his followers to destroy World Trade Center in America. The charge is illogical because there is no fun in destroying it because U.S. could not change its policy towards the Muslims. Secondly Shaykh ‘Umar is not a young hothead, he is an old man who had sought refuge in the U.S. and it was against his own interest to get mixed up with any kind of plot.


Being a conglomerate of a number of groups, it is difficult rather impossible to know about the ideology of al-Jamā’ah. It was seen by their activities that they are against the secular state, non-Islāmic practices, and peace with Israel and relations with United States. They want the restoration of Islāmic traditions and injection of the state. They are against the state control and supervision of mosques through the Shykh al-Azhar and Ministry of Awqāf (Ministry of religious endowments). Shaykh ‘Umar criticised the involvement of al-Ikhwān into politics by
taking part in the electoral process. He also denounced the religious institutions of the state. He urged his followers to challenge the non-Islamic practices of the government and wanted Iranian type of revolution in Egypt.

After coming in power, though Husni Mubarak freed detained, but imprisoned thousands more, did not abolish martial law and the state of emergency. Egypt has been looking in a state of war; Husni Mubarak finished the electoral procedure just in a week contrary to the usual procedure of sixty days.  

Husni Mubarak continued the policies of his predecessor. Clashes between the militants and the police, and security forces, detention and imprisonment; trials and death sentences; and stories of mental and physical tortures are publishing on the foreign media.

Moderate Islamists demanded political recognition but Mubarak provided them limited political liberalization, which resulted in the spread of Militant Islam. Islamists resort violence, since 1970s, as legitimate means of struggle against the regimes. The jihād groups treat the head of the state as unbeliever (kāfīr) and made him his main target, as in the case of president al-Sadāt in 1981.

According to the Islamists, the government has a number of short comings such as violation of political and civil rights’, the government not answerable and accountable to the people; military defeat, poor economic development; socially and culturally demoralized society over the second half of the twentieth century. Instead of providing chances to the Islamists to participate in the mainstream of Egyptian politics, the regime adopted violent tactics for greater control of the political arena, which provided the Islamist militants to become more and more violent.
302 people were arrested on charges of belonging to al-Jihād, which allegedly plotted to overthrow the government in 1981. In September 1984, out of 302 arrested 174 were acquitted, 16 were sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labour and the remaining were sentenced 2 to 15 years imprisonment.

Since the late 1980s the Islāmist militants are engaged in acts of violence targeting foreign tourists, state official security forces and police officers. Revolutionary groups intensified their activities in major cities like Cairo, Alexandria, Asyūt and al-Minya. Muḥārak wanted to discredit these elements, used force against them which infuriated them. Militants attacked Coptic Christian churches and destroyed their shops and property. Symbols of Western influence and immorality like nightclubs; bars, cinemas and video-stores were attacked, burnt or bombed in major towns and cities. People held protest demonstrations demanding the imposition of Islāmic law under the leadership of Shaykh Hāfiz Sālamah. Muḥārak regime reacted quickly and all private mosques were placed under the control of Ministry of Religious Endowments (Awqāf), arrested Hāfiz Sālamah and closed down his mosque in July 1985.

Such type of circumstances widened the gulf between the moderate opposition groups and the government. Al-Ikhwān, opposition newspapers and leaders of opposition political parties described the killing of Israeli tourists by a disturbed border policeman in December 1985 as an act against the enemies of the nation. Leader of the Socialist Labour Party, Ibrahīm Shukri stated: "This young man who has removed the shame from Egypt after Israel has bombarded the P.L.O. headquarters in Tunisia and after the
Americans have hijacked the Egyptian plane (referring to the Achille Lauro incident).”

The security forces reacted quietly to suppress the Islāmist militants even on suspicion basis. Still then militant groups kept on growing and at times confronted government forces.

There was agitation by the students in Asyūt in October 1986, when the university authorities refused to allow women to cover their faces on university premises. Four reserve army officers and 29 civilians were arrested by the authorities in Cairo in December 1986, accused of having links with Islāmic Jihād and were plotting to overthrow the government three or four month earlier. Another such attempt inspired by communists was foiled in December 1986. Thirty-three activists including four military officers alleged as al-Sadāt assassins and having links with al-Jihād were arrested and charged with plotting to wage jihād against the state in order to overthrow the government in December 1986. An attempt to assassinate Major General Hassan Abū Bāshā, former Interior Minister, and two U.S. diplomats in May 1987, and a left wing editor in June, more than 500 Islāmic fundamentalists mostly of Islāmic Jihād and al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyyah were arrested after these incidents. Irānian interests section at the Swiss embassy was closed and accused of links with Muslim militants. Mubārak was nominated president for the second consecutive term in 1987 and confirmed on 5 October.

In December 1988, more than 500 militant Muslim students were arrested on suspicion basis accused of involvement in anti-state activities in Cairo and Asyūt. Members of Egyptian Communist Workers Party, Shīte Muslims and al-Ikhwān were arrested in July August 1989 on charges of subversion.
On 12 October Dr. Rifa’at al-Mahjúb, the speaker of the Peoples’ Assembly, was assassinated in Cairo which resulted in increase in tensions and led to the most comprehensive security operations since the assassination of president al-Sadat in 1981. The security forces arrested hundreds of fundamentalists in Cairo, Asyüt and Bani Suef and the Ministry of Interior claimed that eight al-Jihād militants were arrested at the end of October, who had been responsible for the attack. According to Jane Freedman, ten thousand Islāmic militants were arrested in 1989. The Arab Human Rights Organization accused the government of arresting thousands of innocent people.\(^5^9\)

In the 1990s, the militants targeted tourists, senior government officials, and heads of military courts, security personnel and their informers. Bank, charging interest (ribā), were attacked with bombs. Militants in retaliation of arresting their comrades or awarding them sentence had killed security personnel or heads of military courts.

Militant Islāmists intensified their campaign to overthrow the government to establish an Islāmic state during 1992. They had been most active in Asyüt Governorate in Upper Egypt and in Imbāba, and other districts of Cario. In Asyüt Governorate, 5000 security personnel were deployed to arrest the Islāmic militants in June 1992. Peoples’ Assembly adopted new law, to counter the militancy, which imposed the death sentence for some crimes including militant activities, and the militants would be tried in military courts. Egyptain military courts in December 1992, accused of conspiring to overthrow the government sentenced eight militant Islāmists to death. 70 people were killed in 1992 including foreign tourists. The leader of al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyyah criticized the concept of foreign tourism in Egypt and warned government that if it
would not be stopped, the militants would attack the pharaonic sites, major tourist attraction. By the end of 1992, tourist numbers have fallen by 40%, which resulted in $1500m loss to Egyptian tourism. On 9 June 1992, Islāmic Jihād killed Faraj Foudah, writer and outspoken critic of the militant Islām for his publication, 'The Satanic Verses'. Mohammad al-Ghazāli (1917-1996), a prominent Islāmic Scholar, was among the people charged with Faraj’s murder and tried in 1993. During the trial, al-Ghazāli, stated that anyone who opposed the application of Islāmic law should be killed.

It was reported that leaders of certain Islāmic groups were operating in the U.S. and other European countries. Shaykh ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Rahmān leader of al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyyah was arrested in the U.S., charged with the masterminding of bombing World Trade Center in February 1993 and Egyptian authorities requested the U.S. government for the extradition of ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Rahmān, so that he could be tried in Egyptian courts for his involvement in inciting the militants to violence. Tal’at Mohammad, leader of the Vanguards of Conquest, was reported to be living in Denmark and Egyptian government also requested for his extradition, which was rejected by the Denmark government. Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leader of Islāmic Jihād, reported to be living in Switzerland, was sentenced to death in absentia for his involvement in the assassination of Anwar al-Sadāt. Mohammad Mekawi, the field officer of the Vanguards Conquests in Afghānistān, linked to Ayman al-Zawahiri, was held responsible for the training of Egyptian militants in Afghānistān.

A number of violent incidents occurred in 1993. Militant Islāmists exploded car-bombs at several places in Cairo. Most of the attacks were directed against the police
and senior members of the security forces. Cinemas, videotape shops, Coptic churches and leading politicians were also targeted. The Minister of Information, Mohammad al-Sharif’s car was ambushed in April 1993 but he narrowly escaped death despite the fact that the liberals criticized him for filling the television schedules with religious programmes.

Mohammad 'Abd al-Halim Musa, Interior Minister of Egypt, was willing to start dialogue with imprisoned leaders of Islāmic Jihād and al-Jamā‘ah al-Islāmiyyah. But the President dismissed him in 1993 because the latter was not in a compromising mood, General Hassan Mohammad al-Alfi later on was assigned with the responsibility of suppressing the Islāmic militants and was appointed as Interior Minister.

Use of torture and trials by courts against the Islāmist militants was internationally criticized. Amnesty International, a human rights organization, published report in May 1993 and accused the security agencies for their brutalities and labeled military courts a ‘Travesty of Justice’.

The militants of New Jihād, who threw bombs on his motorcade, attacked Hassan Mohammad al-Alfi, Interior Minister outside his office in the center of Cairo in August 1993. He received serious injuries and was admitted in a Swiss hospital. Government authorities accused ‘Vanguards of Conquest’ a faction of Islāmic Jihād, responsible for the attack. Hasan Muhammad al-Alfi issued a statement from the hospital, which reads, “Islām means mercy, amity, peace and love. It teaches that killing one person is killing all humanity and saving one is like saving all,” He was right but, unfortunately, he belong to that group which is deadly contrary to such faith. The state has no right to kill
people except in accordance with clear rules laid down by the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Husni Mubarak demanded from the people that they should serve him and his companions in the same way that they submitted to the pharaohs of the pre-Islamic Egypt. Few people do but Islamists do not because they do not serve those people who do not want to submit themselves to Islam.

The growing violence is caused by the alienation of the rulers from their society and faith. Instead of giving ear to its subjects, the state has been answering them with guns and repression. The Upper Egypt was fastly slipping into a state of violent revolt. Mubarak’s chances of subduing this revolt were as good as were Brezhnev’s when he sent the Red Army marching into Afghanistan. The Islamist militants do not do all the acts of violence. There are other agencies also which are involved in such type of acts, serving the interest of the regime as well as those of the West. Islamist militants, like Emad Salim and Co. who were created by the regime itself infiltrate, provoke and even do some killings of their own in order to discredit Islamist militancy. Many Egyptians believe that Israeli agents are also involved in some killings because the U.S. and Israel do not want to see a moral, stable and developed Egypt. But, unfortunately, Husni Mubarak does not understand the circumstances well and in desperation, he has been seeking help from every one, including Israelis. It would serve neither Egyptians nor Islam but only violence and counter-violence will continue. He could remain in power for further five years or more but he could neither help himself nor his country as was the case with Shah of Iran twenty four years ago. Mubarak is a Muslim and he should know what is Islam and what is not Islam. He can save himself and his country, not by discriminating Islamist
moderates from those of fundamentalists, but only and only by being faithful to his duties to implement Islām of the Qur’ān and the Sunnah.

Ātif Sidqī, the ten Prime Minister of Egypt, escaped unharmed in a car bomb explosion, one schoolgirl got killed and 18 others injured. Islāmic Jihād claimed the responsibility, although the officials once again accused Vanguards of Conquest responsible for the attack. Foreign tourists were attacked a number of times during 1993, resulted in 30% fall in the number of tourists upto August and a loss of $800m, to $1300m in the year to the Department of Tourism. Security forces took some severe measures to counter the Islāmists. A large number of Islāmic militants were arrested and tried by military courts, 38 were given death sentence, out of which 29 were hanged to death in 1993.

Human rights organizations severely criticized the indiscriminate arrests of the people by the government. It was revealed in August 1993 by a panel of eight judges that 24 people tried for the assassination of Rifa’at al-Mahjoub, were not found guilty of murder. The court criticized the police that 16 of them were severely tortured. The political leader of al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyya Safwat ‘Abd al-Ghani criticized the military courts of doing injustice with the prisoners in the pretext of Risafat’at al-Mahjoub’s assassination. The former was charged in December 1993 that he had ordered in prison the killing of Faraj Fouda. In October 1993, General Hassan Mohammad al-Ātfī was re-appointed as Minister of Interior, denied the charges that security force used torture to extract confession from Islāmist suspects. Although he reaffirmed that the new government, elected in October 1993, would severely dealt with the Islāmic militants. The new government arrested 30
suspected Islāmist militants every day during mid-October and they were tried in military courts.

In November Egyptian security forces were accused by the U. N. committee that they were torturing the suspects severely in ordinary criminal cases. The European Organization of Human Rights (EOHR) endorsed the UN’s accusations and claimed that 13 people have been killed in custody by the security forces during 1993. The organization had also stated that there were 221 cases of torture against the security forces since July 1986. The E.O.H.R. also stated that the Islāmist groups killed 137 people in 1993. It accused the government for promoting Islāmist idea by limiting the state-controlled media and education system. Advisory council warned in November that the Islamists influence is increasing in the mass media and in the universities. NPUP, the only opposition party in the People’s Assembly, also issued the same statement early in the year.

The government presented the Islāmist as seeking to establish a backward looking, uncivilized and undeveloped state concerned only with Islām. The government-instilled fear in the minds of the people through media and cinema by giving the examples of Irān and the Südān, were hudūd (Islāmic sanctioned punishment) are in practice, if a person commits a sin. The regime called the Islāmist militants as ‘terrorists’. Though the regime is itself unpopular, it succeeded in spreading the anger and hostility in the public against the militants.

In 1994, there were regular clashes between the militants and security forces and the latter were highly alert. The moderates challenge the government and gradual spread of Islām by al-Ikhwān and violent political confrontations by al-Jamā’ah and al-Jihād.
Egyptian security forces detained 1000 suspected Islāmist militants in January 1994 in response to attacks on the security forces during that month. Nine members of the Vanguard of Conquest (a faction of Islāmic Jihād) were awarded death sentence in March, allegedly convicted of conspiracy to assassinate the Prime Minister in November 1993.

Militants intensified their activities in February 1994, attacked tourists and foreign investors. Al-Jamā'ah al-Islāmiyyah faxed a message through international news agency warned the tourists and foreign investors to leave the country otherwise face the consequences. They also warned that anyone helping the regime, which is opposed to Islām, would be punished as the oppressors. In a statement from Islāmabad in Pākistān, the Vanguards of Conquest condemned the strategy of attacking foreign investors and tourists, declared that it would harm the interests of the Muslims. It was earlier reported that the coordination, which was established in November 1993 between the two groups, failed.

In Cairo and other towns in Upper Egypt, banks were attacked with bombs by the activists of al-Jamā'ah al-Islāmiyyah and warned the people to close their accounts by 22 February 1994 as the banks encourage ribā. In the same month un-known militants killed the chief prosecution witness in the trial against those arrested for the attempted assassination of the Prime Minister, Ātif Sidqi.

29,000 Islāmist militants had been arrested, as per the reports provided by the Minister of the Interior, 900 were arrested in a single week in February 1994. Seven Islāmist militants were killed in custody, (according to the witnesses) by the security forces in Zāwiya al-Hamra on 1 February. The act was severely criticized by EOHR,
however the security forces claimed that they had been killed in a gun battle with them. Two army officers were executed in March blamed for the plot to assassinate president Mubārak, when the latter was arriving at Sidi Barrani Air Port near the Libyan border, on his way to visit Libya to meet colonel Qadāfī.

The action against the Islāmist by the security forces took the form of Coptic-Muslim clashes in Asyūt and Upper Egypt. When the security forces in Asyūt killed an Islāmist, the formers' whole family sought avenge from the family of the force personnel, who killed him or ordered his killing. It was the situation in Upper Egypt, where the families of state authorities or security personnel killed by the Islāmists have also demanded avenge.⁶⁴

Al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyyah and al-Jihād frustrated the regime by extending their activities. The increasing activities of these militant groups seriously affected the tourism and undermined the credibility of the regime domestically and internationally.

The regime believes that the circumstances in Egypt is a response to economic difficulties, whereas the Islāmists, both moderate and militants, claim that it is a response to the violence of the state. To curb the militancy, the government took a number of measures such as banning welfare activities of al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyyah in the universities, the appointment of preachers to mosques by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Edowments, restrictions on the appointment of al-Ikhwān members to professional syndicates and appointment rather than election of mayors (Umād) for 4000 villages of Upper Egypt.

Tourist Trains were attacked in upper Egypt in February and March 1994, injuring a number of foreigners.
A German got killed, when Nile Cruiseship was fired upon.65

A series of battles took place in the southern province of Asyūt between the security forces and Islāmist militants, 30 policemen, 13 civilians and 11 Islāmists were killed and 67 others were wounded in these clashes between January and March 1994. Outside the Muharraq monastery near Asyūt, an Islāmist gunman attacked Coptic Christians in March killing 5 and injuring three others. The Minister of Interior divided the area into four zones in April; each zone was given under the command of a senior officer, assisted by security forces. Raids were held in April that resulted in the death of Tal'at Yasīn Hammām, military commander of Jamā'ah al-Islāmiyyah along with his four comrades in Asyūt and military commander of Islāmic Jihād Ādil Awad Siyam, in Giza. Almost 100 militants were arrested in May and arms and ammunition was recovered from their custody. The police also raided the office of ‘Abd al-Hārith Madani, a lawyer and arrested him. He was killed in custody and the Minister of Interior claimed that he was an intermediary between the imprisoned Islāmist militants and those still in liberty and imported funds in the country raised abroad for the militant groups. The government agreed to investigate the matter after wide spread protests and demands for public inquiry.

In the same year, the government accused al-Ikhwān for its ideological inspiration of the militant groups, pointed to al-Ikhwān’s Fikr Usūli (fundamentalist thught) in its use of the writings of Ibn Taymiyya and Sayyid Qutb. In this way, the government expressed its anti-Islāmist behaviour and also arrested thousands of people, suspected to be Islāmists or their sympathizers. Such type of activities of government in turn resulted in increase in anti-

Despite the absence of direct attack by the Islāmist for overthrowing the regime, the latter faces the serious and widespread political and ideological challenge by the Islāmists. Though they are disunited, lack leadership and have limited resources.

On 10 April 1994, Minister of Interior was given the powers to appoint *Umād* (mayors) and the local elections were abolished. Opposition criticized the move, although government claimed that many *Umād* were corrupt and refused to co-operate in security matters. Emergency laws were renewed for a further three years on 11 April, in order to provide more powers to the security forces to arrest and detain any suspect. Efforts were made to curb the activities of the militant leaders living abroad. Extradition treaty was signed with Pākistān. Yemen and Sa‘ūdi Arabia were already cooperating with Egypt in these matters. Local and Western jonrnalists were warned, not to write the articles, regarding the Islāmist challenge, after the confirmation of the authorities or face arrest or expulsion. Propaganda was launched against the militants on the television and state-controlled print media, including confession of detained militants. Members of al-Jamā‘ah al-Islāmiyyah assassinated Major General Raūf Khairat, chief of the anti-terrorist branch of the State Security Investigation Section, on 9 April 1994.

By killing Tala‘at Yasīn Hammam, a leader of al-Jama‘ah al-Islamiyyah in April 1994 and his successor Ahmad Hasan ‘Abd al-Jalīl in November, the security
forces claimed that they were confident that the killing of these commanders could help in suppressing the challenge to its security. The militant Islamists, however, succeeded in engaging the security forces in confrontations in Asyût, al-Minya and Upper Egypt.66

In May 1994, Egyptian Peoples’ Assembly unanimously approved Husni Mubarak’s decree extending the state of emergency for three years ending 31 May 1997. It enables the state to adopt quick and necessary measures, in extraordinary circumstances, to defend security, stability, utilities, vital installations and human lives.67

In July 1994, the Ministry of Education prevented the Schoolgirls from wearing the Niqāb (headscarf) in schools. In the same month five members of the ‘Vanguard of Conquest’ were sentenced to death in connection with the assassination of Minister of the Interior, Hassan Mohammad al-Âtfi, in August 1993.

Meanwhile al-Jamâ’ah al-Islâmiyyah continued its activities around the towns of Mallaw, and Samâlût in al-Minya province. Najîb Mahfûz, a renowned novelist and Nobel Prize winner, was stabbed in October 1994 in Cario; the government accused al-Jamâ’ah al-Islâmiyyah responsible for the incident. Intellectuals of all political tendencies condemned the act, however he survived. The Islamists denounced the 82-year-old novelist as an infidel. Government launched a massive hunt against the militants in the wake of hosting U.N. International conference on population and development, which was attended by 10,000 delegates from 156 countries. Islamists warned delegates against attending the conference and al-Ikhwân condemned it as un-Islamic and the agency that encourages abortion and sexual promiscuity. Egypt’s most prominent Islāmic Scholar, Shaykh Mohammad Muttawali
al-Sharawi stated that the meeting was 'hostile to Islam'. However, al-Ikhwan praised the government after concluding the conference for its role and claimed that the final declaration did not offend Muslim values.

Human rights organizations criticized Egyptian security forces against their human rights violations in Egypt. Military Courts sentenced 62 Islamists to death since 1992. The security forces also continued the process of mass arrests. Āḍil Hussain, Secretary General of the pro-Islamist SLP and former Marxist turned Islamist was arrested in December 1994 on the charges of having links with al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyyah and supported its efforts to overthrow the government. He is also a prominent journalist, who has written so many articles on state-corruption. Journalists, intellectuals and opposition party leaders demonstrated against his detention, consequently he was released after a month. In the beginning of 1995, 20 members of the same political party were arrested leveled with same charges. According to Middle East Watch security forces tortured the relatives of the Islamists and arrested more than 8,000 people, suspected to be Islamist militants. In January 1995, eighty-seven people died during the clashes between the militants and the security forces. Officials claimed that 123 people lost their lives in only first three months of 1995 as compared to 77 in the whole year of 1994.

After claiming the victory against the Islamist militants, the government moved towards al-Ikhwān to weaken its political influence in the parliamentary elections of November 1995. President Mubārak and Interior Minister accused al-Ikhwān of having links with the militants and arrested its key leaders in January 1995. At the end of March, five members of the Doctors’
Syndicate, which is controlled by al-Ikhwan, were detained on charges of using medical relief operations as a cover for military training abroad. In order to counter Islamist influence, more control was exerted over other professional organizations. Peoples’ Assembly passed an amendment in February 1995, giving more powers to judiciary to intervene in Trade Union elections and prevented al-Ikhwan members from contesting.

President Husni Mubarak’s motor-cad was unsuccessfully attacked by two gunmen at Addis Ababa Bole International Airport in Ethiopia on 26 June 1995, where he was to be received by Ethiopian President, Meles Zenawi. Both the gun-men were killed on spot by Mubarak’s body-guards. Mubarak was on his way to attend the opening session of the O.A.U. Summit meeting. The Ethiopian authorities accused the Sudan for the attack and Mubarak also blamed the Sudan for harbouring Egyptian militants and supplying them with arms and ammunition and imparting them weapons’ training. However, the Sudanese authorities rejected the illegations of the Egyptian president and Ethiopian authorities. Israel P.M. Yitzhak Robin accused that the ‘Islamist fundamentalists’, supported by Iran, had attempted to assassinate President Mubarak. Al-Ahrar, an independent newspaper accused Israel for planning the assassination attempt, in order to harm Egyptian relations with the Sudan and Iran. However, al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyyah claimed the responsibility in the first week of July 1995.

In September 1995, the EOHR condemned the detention of some Islamists in certain desert prisons, where 20 detainees died in two prisons due to inhuman torture. President Mubarak, while interviewed in Paris (France), denied the illegations and accused the organization of
making propaganda to destabilize the country. However, the arrested militants were tried in military courts rather than in civil courts.

Al-Jamā'ah al-Islāmiyyah exploded a car bomb in the Croatian port of Rajika in October 1995 and assassinated Egyptian diplomat in Geneva in November. Group for International Justice (G.I.J.) claimed the responsibility; it is believed to be a section of al-Jamā'ah al-Islāmiyyah. In the same month, a suicide bomber attacked Egyptian Embassy in Islāmabad (Pākistān) killed 16 people including five Egyptians and wounded 60 others, a few days after the Geneva incident. GIJ, al-Jamā'ah and Islāmic Jihād claimed the responsibility of attack on Egyptian Embassy at Islāmabād.

In November 1995, al-Jamā'ah militants advised all foreign tourists to leave the country or face the consequences. Three Egyptians hijacked an Egyptian Air craft carrying tourists from Luxor to Cario and forced it to fly to Lībya. However no one was hurt and the hijackers were extradited to Egyptian authorities by the end of March 1996.

Pre-election security operations intensified against al-Ikhwān after the assassination attempt on Mubārak's life in June 1995. 19 members of Majlis al-Shūra (consultative council) were arrested from different cities, Mubārak decided that 49 members of al-Ikhwān be tried by military courts by the end of 1995, which was criticized even by political opponents of al-Ikhwān also. Different political parties including Tagammu, the Nasserist Party and the New Wafd Party decided to protest against the military trials. In order to destroy the structure of al-Ikhwān, the government imprisoned prominent leaders and many professionals. Fifty-four members including parliamentary
candidates were imprisoned for three to five years by the military courts for their allegedly involvement in unconstitutional activities. Organization headquarters, in central Cairo, was also closed. The Minister of the Interior claimed that government had evidence of close links of al-Ikhwan with al-Jamā’ah and Islāmic Jihād. In an interview in Paris, Mubārak blamed al-Ikhwan for killing two P.M.’s. and a finance Minister before revolution and assassination attempt on al-Nasser and assassination of al-Sadāt. He called them by ‘Islāmist Extremists’ and stated that their activities were totally against the principles of Islām. More than 1,000 members of al-Ikhwan including poll observers and polling agents were arrested on the eve of elections. Certain opposition candidates complained that they had been given negative symbols like a sword or a pistol, so that the voters would treat them as the supporters of militants.  

By the end of 1995, Egyptian security forces contained militant activities. Several militants including members of Islāmic Jihād were arrested by the end of November, allegedly planning to assassinate leading politicians and explode a car bomb in the Khan al-Khālīlī, Cairo’s main tourist market. In December, some more members of Islāmic Jihād were arrested and the government claimed that they were funded and supplied with arms and ammunition by the exiled Islāmic Jihād leaders in U.K. and the Sūdān. During a visit to Paris, Egyptian President denounced UK and Germany for harbouring Islāmic fundamentalists including Islāmic Jihād. In the same month EOHR warned the government that severe measures of the security forces, would not control violence, it is rather freedom of expression and organization and true practising
of democracy, which would prevent the increase in violence.

The police in al-Minya killed two al-Jamā’ah al-Islāmiyyah members in February 1996. Clashes between the police and al-Jamā’ah militants and between the supporters of security force or Islāmist militants, resulted the death of 24 people by the end of February. In the mid-March, government lifted 20 month old curfew from Mallawi town, in al-Minya. In March and April 1996, 245 people allegedly members of Jamā’at al-Muslimīn, the organization which was silent since 1970s, were arrested on the charges that they were regrouping and planning a campaign of violence.

In April 1996, bar association was charged with mismanagement of finance. Twelve members of al-Ikhwān’s supreme guidance council were arrested in the same month, charged with having links with militant groups and reestablishing the activities of the organization. Among the imprisoned, three were founder members of al-Wast including ‘Abd al-Madā, a ‘former Deputy Secretarial General of the Engineers’ Syndicate, who tried to recognize the new party. They were accused of trying to use al-Wast as a cover for al-Ikhwān activities however they strongly denied the illegation and claimed that they were trying to establish a stage between the state and the Islāmist militants. Al-Wast included young Islāmists, Christians, Leftists and Nasserists.

In the same month, four gunmen of al-Jamā’ah fired upon Greek tourists outside the Europa Hotel, killing 18 including an Egyptian and injuring 15 others. Later on they stated that they wanted to attack the Israelis to take the revenge of Israeli attacks on Hisbullah basis in Lebanon. In retaliation security forces raided the hideouts of the organization and arrested a number of militants.
In mid-1996, Ministry of the Interior claimed that there was a decrease in violence due to tight security despite a series of robberies carried out by al-Jamā’ah activists, which showed that they had been delinked from their overseas leadership. Government rejected the ceasefire offer of al-Jamā’ah in early May 1996 and insisted that there would be no dialogue with extremists. In the same month, government claimed that it had arrested 33 activists of al-Jamā’ah and killed one of its leaders and also arrested 13 members of al-Shawaiyūn (a branch of al-Jamā’ah) and killed a prominent member of this group. In June, some more Islāmists were arrested. Search operations were also conducted in Asyūt and Suhāj province in September and October. Agencies claimed that 16 leading members of Islāmic Jihād and 50 of Shia group were arrested, however the independent sources revealed that the militants manged to escape. Earlier President Mubārak had accused Irān of supporting Egyptian militants and were involved in June 1995 assassination attempt on him. Human rights commissions always criticized the Egyptian security forces for their brutalities.

In September 1996, Egypt criticized the UK for supporting international terrorism by harbouring Islāmist militants, including Yassir Tawfīq al-Sirri of Vanguard of Conquest (a faction of Islāmic Jihād) and allowing the militant Islāmist groups to organize international conferences in the UK.

In September 1996, the Ethiopian Supreme Court for their involvement sentenced three Egyptians who were reported to be Islāmist militants, to death in the assassination attempt on the life of Husni Mubārak.

In 1997, The Arab Organization for Human Rights claimed that 17,000 political prisoners, most of them
Islamists had been detained since 1991. The military courts between 1991 and January 1997, of which 54 had been executed, had sentenced Eighty three thousand Islamists to death.

The Peoples’ Assembly approved extension in Emergency Law Provisions, first declared in 1981, in February 1997 for three more years. The extension included trial of civilians by military courts, lengthy detention without trial and press censorship. There were a number of attacks against Coptic Christians in Upper Egypt in early months of 1997. Guerrillas attacked a church in al-Fikriya in al-Minya Governorate, killing several worshipers and also murdered Copts in nearly village in March. Al-Jamā‘ah denied the illegations for the attack. Militants killed eight Christians and four Muslims in village Izbat Dawūd and fired upon the Aswan Cario train. Al-Jamā‘ah again denied the illegation. In the month of March 1997, Islāmic Jihād and Vanguards of Conquest announced co-ordination for continuing a campaign of violence.

In August 1997, suspected Islāmist militants in Upper Egypt killed a number of people. In mid-September 98 people, suspected to be Islāmist militants were convicted by a military court in Haekstep, in north of Cario, on charges of subversion. Eight of them were sentenced for life-imprisonment and four were sentenced to death. In retaliation in October 1997, a few days later, a tourist bus was attacked with petrol-bombs in Cario killing nine Germans and injuring 11 others. The Higher Military Court convicted two brothers for conducting the attack and sentenced death penalty to them in October 1997 and they were hanged to death in May 1998.

Al-Jamā‘at al-Islāmiyyah killed 70 people including 58 foreign Tourists near the tomb of Qur‘ān Hatsheput in
Luxor, in November 1997. Al-Ikhwan condemned the attack but emphasized the need for dialogue with the opponents for the process of political, social and economic reform.

On 17 November, Vanguards of Conquest killed 74 foreign tourists in Aqsr. Though one of the imprisoned leaders of al-Jamā'ah, Mohammad ‘Abd al-Alīm declared unilateral ceasefire before two months of incident. He appealed his active followers to stop counter attacks. Such types of appeals were coming before also, but unfortunately the regime treated it as weakness of their opponents. Despite this, they continued their oppression on their opponents and killed innocent people. Outsiders make fun of Egyptian people and want to annihilate them in the name of destroying terrorism with the help of Arab states and other institutions. If the government of Egypt, which claims the leadership of Arabs in each and every field, will reconcile with its own brothers, then it would be the guiding step towards the end of terrorism in the Arab world. Local and external forces, which are benefited with this confusion, do not like this reconciliation.72

President Mubārak forced the Minister of Interior Hassan Mohammad al-Atfi; to resign for his failure in tackling the militancy and Habīb Ibrāhīm Adli was appointed as new Interior Minister. President Mubārak ordered tight security at all tourist places to safe guard the tourist industry. In November 1997, government published a list of exiled militants and condemned certain countries for harbouring them, especially the UK. It was reported that prior to the Luxor incident, al-Jamā'ah and Islāmic Jihād jailed leaders were willing for ceasefire. In early December 1997, an exiled leader of al-Jamā'ah also condemned the Luxor attack. It undermines the
government's claim that exiled leaders were behind that attack.  

Severe restrictions were imposed on the freedom of press after wide criticism of the government during 1998. Independent journalists of some newspapers were replaced by pro-government reporters and six journalists were imprisoned on charges of libel between January and October. A new law was introduced under which individuals were prohibited from owning publishing companies and printing restrictions were imposed on two English newspapers. During 1999, further charges were brought against the dissenting journalists.

In February 1998 chief editor of al-Sha’ab, Mājidī Hussain and a journalist were sentenced one year imprisonment each after found guilty on charges of defamation against two sons of Hassan al-Alfi, former Interior Minister. Jad al-Haq, Grand Shaykh of al-Azhar, had been accused of being sympathetic to Islāmist militant groups. After his death in March 1996, Mohammad Sayid Tantawī, formerly the Grand Mufti was appointed as Grand Shaykh of al-Azhar.

During 1998, government intensified its measures to suppress the Islāmist groups. Since 1992, 106 Islāmist militants had been hanged to death by June 1998 including two members of al-Jamā’ah, who had been convicted of the murder of a policeman in 1993. Two senior police officers were dismissed and fined in June 1998, after being found guilty of negligence at Luxor's tourist site at the time of November 1997 incident. In 1998 the Ministry of the Interior released some prisoners, who had left the militant organizations.

In December 1998, EOHR Secretary General Hāfiz Abū Sa’ad was arrested. He was accused by al-Usbū,
weekly newspaper, that he had been paid US$ 25,000 British by a Parliamentary Human Rights Committee, through the British embassy in Cario to write a false report of brutalities on Copts in Upper Egypt in August. There were protests in 1998 and 10 strikes in February 1999 by public sector workers, which affected road, air and textiles. Al-Wast was denied recognition in May and September 1998.74

In February 1999, three men suspected of belonging to al-Jamā’ah were arrested on Uruguayan-Brazilian border for their alleged involvement in 1997 Luxor attack. The Egyptian authorities demanded their extradition in order to face trial in Egypt. Proceedings of 107 Islāmic Jihād militants charged with the overthrow of the government began in February 1999. In April nine accused were sentenced to death for having links with illegal organization and attacks on police and state officials, 78 received prison sentences between one years to life with hard labour, 20 were acquitted including Ayman al-Zawāhiri, a senior leader of Islāmic Jihād. In retaliation, the group announced that it would continue its activities.75 EOHR claimed that the evidence produced before the court regarding the trial was not sufficient.

In May 1999 security officials in Switzerland alleged that the massacre at Luxor, in November 1997, had been organized and financed by the Afghan-based Sa’ūdi militant Islāmist Osāma bin Laden.76

Jamā’ah at Islāmiyyah denied the reports in 1999 that it was planning to establish a political party. It declared one-sided ceasefire in the month of March. Though the government gave no formal acknowledgement of the ceasefire, it went on releasing Islāmist militants from various jails in order to restore peace. 2,400 al-Jamā’ah
members were released including two of its leaders who were accused in al-Sadāt assassination case. However the arrests and trials of Islāmist members continued in 1999. Twenty-three members of the Vanguard of Conquests-breakaway group of Islāmic Jihād were detained in May by the security forces on the charges that they were seeking to revive the activities in Egypt. In June 1999, twenty members of al-Jamā'ah were sentenced to imprisonment for their allegedly involvement to attack President Mubārak at his residence in 1996. However they were not given death sentence due to the ceasefire.

In June 1999, President Mubārak was nominated for the fourth six-year term and approved by 93.8% of the total members on 26 September 1999. In the same month, a triumphal procession by President Mubārak in Port Said was disrupted, when a man armed with knife stabbed President Mubārak but the latter sustained a minor injury and the attacker was killed by his body guards.

In August 1999, human rights groups and political parties demanded political reforms such as abolition of emergency laws, recognition to new political parties and trade unions, more freedom to press and guarantee of free and fair elections. Peoples' Assembly approved a law regarding the activities of NGOs in May 1999. The move was widely criticized by the human rights groups, which claimed that the new law would not allow the NGOs to operate independently.

Government released 5000 prisoners from different jails in September but the human rights groups claimed that 15,000 more are still in detention and out of them 2/3 have no link with any kind of militancy and most of them are held without charge and trial. In the same month four members of al-Jamā'ah were shot dead by Egyptian security
forces including commander of its military wing Farīd Salīm al-Kedwani. Twenty-three members of Vanguards of Conquest (a splinter group of al-Jihād) were detained on the grounds that they were seeking to revive the activities in Egypt.

In September, in Giza, four members of al-Jamā‘ah were shot dead by the security forces including its military commanders, Farīd Salīm al-Kedwani. It was the first blow to al-Jamā‘ah since its unilateral ceasefire in March 1999.79

In mid-October, 20 members of al-Ikhwān were arrested on the charges of plotting to overthrow the government and of infiltrating professional syndicates (doctors, engineers etc.), in order to undermine national security. EOHR claimed that 200 members of al-Ikhwān were arrested between January and October, of whom 100 remained in detention.

At the end of October 1999, Al-Sharq al-Awsat, British based newspaper, claimed that al-Jamā‘ah was reestablished under ‘Ali ‘Abd al-Rāziq, following the killing of Farīd al-Kedwani. In early December 1999 government released 1200 al-Jama‘ah prisoners from different jails. Mustafa Hamzah the prime suspect in the 1995 assassination attempt on President Mubārak, is new Shūra chairman of al-Jamā‘ah.80

The security force arrested twenty members of al-Ikhwān in October 1999 on the charges of conspiring to overthrow the government and posing a threat to national security by infiltrating professional syndicates. EOHR claimed that 200 members of al-Ikhwān had been arrested between January and October 1999.

Keeping pressure on the Islāmists, security forces arrested Dr. Mohammad Badi Sami, a university professor and head of the ‘New Islāmic Call Association’ alongwith
several leading members of the association, accused of possessing leaflets containing the views of banned al-
Ikhwān. Dr. Sami and some others have been imprisoned on the order from the state prosecutor.81

Thousands of Muslims continue to languish in prisons in Egypt for no reason but that they are committed to the Islāmic movement. They are forced to sign confessions after being threatened with the rape of their daughters, sisters, mothers or wives. Such ‘confessions’ are then used to security long prison terms or even the death penalty. Any of them would rather face humiliation of their women folk than bear personal punishment.82

The Egyptian government blocked to win legal recognition as a political party on 9 December 1999. The leader of the proposed ‘Al Shariah Party’ said he would appeal against the decision. The relatives of imprisoned members of Egyptian two largest Muslim groups, the Jamā’ah and Islāmic Jihād.83, also support him

The group also requested for a new party on 2 October. The group is led by Mamdouh Ismail, a lawyer, who was a member of al-Jama’ah until the assassination of Anwar al-Sadāt in October 1981.84

In January 2000, there were rumours that Dr. Ayman al-Zawāhiri had been removed from the leadership of Islāmic Jihād due to his links with Osama Bin Laden.85 In the late of the same month, the draft of ‘Personal Status Law’ was introduced in the Peoples’ Assembly. The draft had proposed that women be given the right to divorce their husbands ‘immediately and unilaterally’, in return for giving up all financial claims upon him. It also proposed that women be permitted to travel abroad without their husbands’ consent. After the declaration of the bill as un-Islāmic by many parliamentarians, certain amendments
were made in it and passed into law. Any provision for independent travel rights was abandoned while a requisite three-month period of arbitration before women could divorce their husband.86

On 26 February 2000 state of emergency was extended to further three years up to February 2003. In March, government approved Hizb al-Wifaq al-Qawmi (National Accord Party). In May, the Arab Organization for Human Rights, a regional group unofficially based in Cairo since 1989, was legalized. In the same month the government suspended S.L.P. and its newspaper al-Sha‘ab on the grounds that party had exceeded its political mandate. The newspaper was accused for calling ‘Banquet of Seaweed’ (Pub. in 1983) by Haider as blasphemous and held the party responsible for the clashes between the police and students outside al-Azhar Islāmic University in May, when the students were protesting against the decision of approving the reprinting of the book by Minister of Culture in November 1997. 50 students and six policemen were wounded, when police used rubber bullets and teargas shells to disperse the violent mob. After that the government banned the sale of the book, which was already banned by most of the Muslim countries. Leaders of SLP and Majīdī Hussain, editor of al-Sha‘ab, were charged in mid-July 2000, that they were disturbing public order and have links with al-Ikhwān. A court ruling in July stated that the action against SLP and its newspaper was unconstitutional. Ibn Khaldūn Center for Social and Development Studies Cairo was closed by the order of the government and its five members were arrested including Sa‘ad Eddin Ibrāhīm, the academic and democracy activist. He was accused that he had accepted more than US$ 220,000 from the European Commission to produce a
documentary on the election process in Egypt ahead of the parliamentary elections scheduled for late 2000. On 21 May 2001, Ibrāhīm was sentenced to seven years imprisonment on charges of defaming Egypt, embezzlement, forgery and receiving unauthorized funds. A further 27 employers of Ibn Khaldūn center were given sentence of imprisonment between one year and seven years.

EOHR claimed that militants killed 99 Copts between 1991-98 in Egypt. In June 2000, trial of 96 Muslims began and in February 2001, ninety-two of them were acquitted and four were awarded one to ten years imprisonment.

In July 2000, the scheduled election to the government council of the lawyers' syndicate was abruptly cancelled by the government-controlled committee overseeing them. More than 100 al-Ikhwān activists had been arrested and detained over the previous month. Finally the elections took places in February 2001. Al-Ikhwān supporters won 22 out of 24 contested seats.87

In February 2002, it was reported that the Islāmic Jihād leadership called upon its activists to stop actions in and outside Egypt and wage jihād for the liberation of al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. In this way first time the Islāmic Jihād leaders had called for ceasefire, which was backed by leaders imprisoned in jails. In mid- July 11 leaders of Jihād's military wing, who were imprisoned in Egypt, officially declared ceasefire against the government.

At the end of February 2002, police arrested eight prominent Islāmists on charges of seeking to revive al-Ikhwān. Among them was Mohammad Ibrahīm Badawi, who had been released in August 1999 after serving a three-year prison sentence for the same. In mid-March 500-840 Islāmists including the members of al-Jamā‘ah and Islāmic
Jihad were released. Again in July, 500 more Islamists were released.

There were violent clashes between the Muslims and Christian Copts in Al-Kosheh village in Upper Egypt in which 19 Copts and two Muslims died and 30 others injured.

Although Mubarak allowed the Islamists in the beginning to criticises the government but overall the state control of media, the enforcement of emergency laws since 1981 and human rights violations have gravely confined democratic freedoms.
Notes and References


(2) Egypt was thrown out of Arab League, when al-Sadāt signed ‘Camp David Accord’ with Israel in 1979.


(11) Ibid.

(12) Ibid.


(14) The New Wafad party is actually ‘The Wafad Party,’ which had led the Egyptian nationalist movement against British occupation between 1919 and 1922. It was founded by Sa’ād Zāghlūl in 1919, when he requested the British and the King to allow Egyptian
Wafd (delegation) to participate in the Paris conference. The request was turned down and Sa'ad Zāghlūl was arrested and sent to Malta. The Party was banned in 1952 and reformed as New Wafd Party in February 1978 and again disbanded in June 1978. It was reformed in 1983 under the leadership of Fuād Seraj al-din and Ibrāhīm Faraj as its Secretary General. It is comprised of Copts, Nasserites, Muslim fundamentalists, former army officers (both pro and anti-al-Nasser) and Socialist and liberal businessmen. After the death of Fuād Seraj al-din in August 2000, Nu'mān Jum'ah was elected its leader.

(15) Marsot, op. cit., p. 144.

(16) In July 1983, law was passed that the political parties who would like to contest 1984 elections would require to secure a minimum of 8% of the total votes in order to represent in the Peoples’ Assembly.


(26) Baker, Raymond William, ‘Invidious Comparisons: Realism, Postmodern Globalism, and Centrist Islāmic


(28) Baker, Raymond William, *Invidious Comparisons* ... *op. cit.*, p. 132


(32) Mohammad al-Ghazâlî was born in 1917, the last days of the Ottoman Caliphate, and grew up in the age of Arab nationalism, yet he himself as an 'Egyptian, Arabised by Islâm.' His forte lay in his intellectual vigour: his relationship with political grassroots was indirect. His experience of politics had been brief, and in the 1940s. As a member of al-Ikhwân he spent a few years in prison during al-Nasser's regime. Then he differed over the election of Hasan al-Hudaibi as the new guide and resigned in 1951. But he had resigned from the organization and not from its message. He was an establishment man: Imâm and Khateeb in Masjid al-'Atabâ al-Khadra in Cairo (1943); advisor of mosque affairs in the ministry of awqâf; religious guide and Wa'iz (religious teacher) at Al-Azhar; supervisor of the secretariat of the Supreme Council of Islâmic Affairs; deputy director, department of mosques; director of da'wah and training in the ministry of awqâf; director general of Islamic guidance; and deputy minister for Islâmic da'wah affairs in the ministry of awqâf (1981).

He was professor at 'Umm al-Qura University Makkah al-Mukarramah, and the University of Qatar. He was also Chairman of the board of studies at Amîr 'Abd al-Qâdir University, Constantine, Algiers.

His message to Muslim rulers was that they should not behave as if they were infallible but
encourage criticism to know the truth, because true security lies only in freedom. He did not try to dodge the real issues raised by the publication of *The Satanic Verses*; he appeared in court to say that those who had killed a self admitted apostate, Faraj Fouda, had done so because the state had failed to do its own duty to punish apostasy and so the defendants had committed manslaughter, not murder. He died on 11 March 1996.

(34) Esposito, J. L. and al-Kheir, Karen Abu, *'Islām Without Fear'* , Harvard University Press.
(42) Ibid.
(43) Ibid.
(45) Ibrahim, Ibrahim, op. cit., p. 355.
(46) Ibid.
(47) Ibid.
(48) Ibid., p. 354.
(49) Auda, Gehad, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 10.
(50) Ibid.
(51) Ibid. See also Regional Surveys of the World: ME/NA, op. cit., 1999, p. 408.
(58) Ibid., p. 405.
(61) Ibid., p. 47.
(64) Azam, Maha, The Islāmists and the State under Mubārak, op. cit., pp. 113-114.
(69) Ibid., p. 30.
(70) Ibid.
(72) Nadvi, Masūd al-Rahmān, Sarkari Dehshatgardi Aur Musalah Gruh: Misri Tajrubah; in Zindagi Nav, Monthly, New Delhi, April 1999, p. 65.


(78) Ibid. p. 295.


(81) Ibid., p. 292.


(83) Ibid., p. 2.


(86) Ibid., p. 297.

(87) Ibid.

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