

## **PTI and the mulla**

*New York and Islamabad; September 2019 and November 2018:* The words ‘the mulla’ in the heading above refers specifically to Mulla Ahmad Ali Siraj of Madinah University in Saudi Arabia. There is a very interesting but fateful, even ruinous link between him and the ruling PTI leadership. It is on the issue of *Riasat Madinah* (The State of Madinah, established by the Holy Prophet of Islam (p.b.u.h.) in Madinah soon after *Hijrah*). Re-establishment of some sort of *Riasat Madinah* is a declared motto of the PTI regime led by Mr. Imran Khan, the Prime Minister.

Mr. Imran Khan visited the U.S. in the last week of September 2019. There he addressed the UN General Assembly, Asia Society and other gatherings and gave interviews. All these events were very important and Mr. Khan referred to *Riasat Madinah* a number of times. We produce below some extracts from his talks, as these are significant and most relevant to the present story:

- **State (of Madinah) announced: all humans were equal; ...**
- **In Islam, it was a sacred duty to protect places of worship of all religions. It was announced that all human beings were equal.**
- **When a Muslim community is unjust to a Minority, it is going against the teachings of our religion.**
- **What is radical Islam? There is only ONE Islam and that is the Islam of Prophet (p.b.u.h.)... there is no such thing as radical Islam.**
- **... (T)he basis of ALL religion is compassion and justice.**

*(From the Prime Minister’s address to the UN General Assembly)*

- **We (in Pakistan) have laws protecting the weak, the minorities. And at times when these violations take place it’s because our enforcement, our implementation is weak.**
- **... (W)e have taken steps to protect our minorities. We have taken steps to protect the worship places of our – of the minorities.**

*(Interview with Richard N. Haass, President Council on Foreign Relations)*

Also the following:

- *Riasat Madinah* was the most modern state.
- *Riasat Madinah* was the first social welfare state in the world.
- **In *Riasat Madinah* people of all faiths enjoyed equal rights.**
- India’s religious bigotry is dangerous for others (peoples).

*(Address to Asia Society in New York on September 26, 2019 as reported on state PTV Global at 14:15 the next day)*

It was good of Mr. Imran Khan to say the above noble words and place his vision of *Riasat Madinah* on record at world forum. It is however problematic and significant if *Riasat Madinah* means different to his advisors and what the authorities in Pakistan arrange for the public to hear on this issue, during his watch. For instance:

The Federal Ministry of Religious Affairs organized a moot on November 20-21, 2018 in Islamabad, called it *Rahmat ulil Aalameen* (Mercy for the Universe) Conference but the given theme was glaring: **‘Khatme Nabuwat (End of Prophethood) and Muslims’ Responsibilities...**” In this grand conference held at public expense a number of clerics were invited to speak, including mulla Ahmad Ali Siraj from Saudi Arabia. He harangued the large crowd assembled in the Jinnah Convention Centre, and said the following, in the presence of Prime Minister Imran Khan seated a few feet away in the presidential chair at this auspicious and blessed occasion (extracts):

“PM Imran Khan, you deserve plaudits that you claim following the Islamic State of Madinah, and in that state the first consensus was to launch an armed operation from Madinah against one who claimed to be a prophet ... . In this campaign 1200 Companions were martyred in the name of Khatme Nabuwat and the honour of Prophethood. I am making you register that in a single action in support of the end of prophethood fought against Musailmah the liar, 1200 Companions were martyred to destroy him, as per decision of the State. In these words, Mr. Prime Minister, our responsibilities are to make the people conscious (*sha’ur*) of Khatme Nabuwat... . With these words I request the Prime Minister that the country is descending into chaos; we need to make the public aware (*sha’ur*).

“In this (drive for) awareness, my foremost demand is that whatever restrictions are imposed on Qadianis in our Constitution should be implemented by the Prime Minister; also he should implement the penalty (*of death*) imposed on blasphemers as per the law of 295-C. We are with him; our prayers are with him...”



Mulla Siraj lectures Mr. Imran Khan the Prime Minister.

This mulla, in a huge public conference, with the Prime Minister seated nearby, directly and indirectly demanded and exhorted him to launch an armed operation against a small peaceful group of citizens and nationals of Pakistan and to shed blood. Mulla Siraj told him of the high priority merited by this issue if he was sincere about his aim of following the *Riasat Madinah*. The mulla assured him total support in this.

When this mulla moved away from the podium, nobody, neither the Prime Minister nor his minister of religious affairs told this mulla and the audience that he had quoted the campaign against Musailmah out of context and with no relevance. Musailmah had risen in armed rebellion against the nascent State of Madinah. His claim to prophethood was only ancillary in nature. That situation was not even remotely similar to the case in Pakistan.

Siraj was also horribly wrong in assuming that the *Riasat Madinah* came into being with the installation of the First Khalifa Abu Bakr (RA); it came into being when the Holy Prophet p.b.u.h. was acknowledged as the local Head by all the religious, tribal and ethnic communities residing at Madinah. In fact that was its most golden period. It is a pity no one pointed that out to Mulla Siraj in that Conference attended by great scholars and politicians.

A YouTube video of the Islamabad event shows this indiscreet mulla unabashedly asserting his most wrongful understanding of *Riasat Madinah* and pointing his finger repeatedly at the Prime Minister as if he was addressing an underling, a supporter. He appeared drunk with the power voluntarily surrendered by the state of Pakistan to Islamist clerics. Also, he knew that he had come from the land of petro-dollars – Saudi Arabia.

Mullah Siraj did a great disservice to PTI by stating his distorted views in public on this important issue. It is said that a man is known by the company he keeps. Surely, had Mr. Khan known in advance of what this mulla was going to say, he would not have been invited by the Ministry. These clerics cost a good deal on invitation to such events.

It is hoped that after this bigoted outburst Mulla Siraj is marked in red, never to be invited again by any government in Pakistan. His understanding of Islam is grossly different than that of Prime Minister Imran Khan, according to whom “There is only ONE Islam...there is no such thing as radical Islam.”