

30 October 2014

By Dr. Mustafa Kamal Sherwani,

About 17 or 18 years back, we had a big convention of All India Muslim Forum at Sahkarita Bhavan, Lucknow, in which, Mr. E. Ahamed, M.P. of Indian Union Muslim League was among the prominent participants, and I translated his speech from English to Urdu. As usual, some of the Muslim skeptics had raised the concerns that if 'Muslim-based' political parties are established, it may strengthen fascist forces, endanger secular values, alienate the community from the mainstream, and so on, so on.

Answering these concerns, queries and doubts, Mr. E. Ahamed said, "There is not even a single regional or national party in the country which is not having a caste, creed or religion as its epicenter, then why the 'Muslim-based parties' should be treated as communal and against the secular ethos. If it is so, why aren't the 'Minority Cells' in every party discarded as communal? The reason is quite clear. 'Minority Cells' are secular because through them the parties want to organize the Muslims as 'vote bank slaves' for their respective camps, while Muslim-based political parties are called communal because they aim to organize the community as an independent electoral force within the democratic framework of the country, and seek their emancipation from the slavery of these fictitious secular parties."

I have personally experienced this truth for about two decades on the platform of All India Muslim Forum – a political party we formed after the demolition of Babri Masjid. Wherever, we contested the elections, we used to be the main target of almost all the parties - their Muslim and non-Muslim stooges including 'paid Maulvis', calling us the agents of BJP, accusing us of having received money from it to divide secular vote so as to ensure its victory. Many a time, I was declared 'an open enemy of Muslims', and what not, from the pulpits of the mosques.

I used to explain this dilemma in my public speeches with the following example:

"It is the situation like the one, when hundreds of cocks (murgey) are locked in an enclosure, and dozens of purchasers are fighting with each other 'bhoora murga mera hei, kalaa mera hei, itney merey hein etc.' Meanwhile, the door of the enclosure opens, and the cocks (murgey) start running from it. Immediately, all the bidders and purchasers will stop fighting and scramble to put the 'murgey' back into the enclosure, because if these 'murgey' become free, for what will they fight? So the same is the situation of Muslims. The existence of all these so-called

secular parties is depending on 'Muslim vote bank slaves', and if somebody tries to bring them out of this 'slavery', he will have to face all the charges, threats, imprecations and even intimidation."

This phenomenon may well explain why only two seats of Majlis-e Ittehadul Muslimeen in Maharashtra are ringing alarm bells in political circles, and threatening the existence of those Muslim stooges including paid 'maulvis' of different political parties who always play the role of brokers for 'Muslim vote bank slaves'.

It is not the matter of two seats, but the bigger question is: 'ke kaheen murgon (cocks) ka darbaa na khul ja-ey, aur murgey bhaagna shuroo kardein.' Or you may say 'marney waley kaa gham naheen hei, balke gham yeh hei ke maut ne ghar dekh liya.' Now the brokers and maulvis of different parties will be engaged, though on higher remuneration, to discourage the Muslims to establish their political party.

The real problem is the existence of these political parties who had been thriving on Muslim vote bank, and the survival of Muslim brokers. Every Indian caste, section or creed has become 'paaltoo' (pet) with one party or the other. It is only the Muslims who still enjoy the status of 'junglee kabooter' jo har shikaree ke nishaaney par hein. These parties are much worried that if these 'junglee kabooter' become 'paltoo' under some Muslim-based political party, what will they do? While everybody laments that there is no political leadership among Muslims, but can anybody suggest any means other than the electoral process through which it can be developed? This process has to be under the distinct banner, and not under the Muslim stooges of different parties.

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<http://www.indiatomorrow.net/eng/why-muslim-parties-are-communal>