

1. INTRODUCTION

On June 3, 1989 Imam Khomeini, described as the "great Islamic scholar, philosopher, respected gnostic and a great religious authority of the Shia World and who was also the grand leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran" died, leaving behind him a legacy of a historical personality that will take in any scholars of our time a long time to unravel. He had in February 1979, through mobilizing the discontented masses of Iran managed to over throw the unpopular government of the Shah and in its place laying down the foundations of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Years after the victory of Imam Khomeini his aspirations are still alive and the ardent followers of his path are aware of his aims and the number of his followers increases day by day while the global Islamic Movement started by Imam Khomeini has gained momentum. This paper is an attempt to look at Imam Khomeini and the Universally desired systems. These desired systems are the systems where there are no poor people, there is equality or dignity for human life, unity and education for all.

Imam Khomeini and Poverty Alleviation

The Imam's profound knowledge in theology and Islamic sciences and current affairs enabled him to stabilize the society to organize itself religiously and thus distribute the national resources equitable to all the communities instead of being in the hands of the Shah or King. He introduced Islam as an ideology with a complete governing system which can fit in the current political scene of the World. When Imam Khomeini introduced Islamic political thought to the world he firmly maintained the roots of Islam as laid down in the Quran and Sunna which emphasizes the importance of sharing the wealth with the other Muslims.

Equality of all mankind

This is one of the universal desired systems in the world. On 11th February 1979, the Iranian masses, led by Imam Khomeini finally overthrew the rule of the Shah and established the rule of Islam based on Islamic rules. This brought hope to the Muslims and to the oppressed of the world. It is reported that there is love and respect of life of humanity irrespective of race or where you come from. This was retained by Imam Khomeini where the emphasis was on the brotherhood of mankind, an idea which those who are clamouring for equal opportunity and affirmative action have been trying to attain for a long time.

Suffice to quote one of the sayings of the Imam "The Foreign Policy of Iran is based in Mutual respect with all Governments without Discriminating among them."

Imam Khomeini and Unity

"As long as you maintain your unity, God is with you. God's hand is with the group" the Imam is quoted as having said the above words. This quotation shows that Imam Khomeini laid emphasis on unity first as the secret for victory. Unity is of different features you could talk of social unity, political unity, economic unity or ideological unity. Islam with its belief in one God (Allah) and unity in prayers becomes a great weapon universally.

Unity has been cited as of profound importance in human community and members of the human race always universally wish to have unity among themselves. What did the Imam see as the way to bring unity?

Since he knew people in the human society had different racial background, ideologies, tribes and sects he encouraged open discussions between scholars of different religions for the purposes of getting understanding and cooperation, to have dialogue with the other communities. This is a universally desired system and the Imam will be remembered for this.

Education as Universally Desired Systems

The Imam was himself a respected scholar in various fields. During his time numerous educational institutions from primary, high school, college to universities were started thus a clear indication that the education sector is highly developed to meet the needs of the people. It was during the Imam's tenure that many scholarly discussions were held in the Mosques. He encouraged intercultural debates across religious domains.

Conclusion

The Imam will be remembered most for his unswerving faith in religion in whatever he did. Unity which is the universally desired system to him was to be achieved through the will of Allah. He was a champion of Islamic unity. He taught Muslims of all sects the importance of unity and worked towards it.

His thoughts have greatly contributed towards a better understanding of Islam by non Muslims and Muslims alike. He will forever be remembered by generations to come. He was one of the great leaders of this century who universally decided to have nothing to do with the apartheid regime of South Africa.

He will be universally remembered for championing the cause for the poor. He inspired the poor people to struggle for independence from their oppressor.