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Islamization of knowledge in Bangladesh with special reference to International Islamic University Chittagong (IIUC)

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Abstract:

The agitation for Islamization of knowledge is now becoming a popular demand among the Muslim intellectuals and academia globally. A various number of lectures, seminars, symposia, workshops and conferences have been conducted by different bodies on this issue. This paper intends to discuss about the historical background of Islamization of knowledge in Bangladesh, and what are the problems and the challenges in the way of Islamizing knowledge. The paper will therefore discuss on a particular university (IIUC) which is playing a key role in Islamizing knowledge in Bangladesh presently. This paper aims to look into the new proposal for IIUC to run it towards excellent university in terms of Islamization of knowledge. Finally, this paper will also attempt to come up with some ways and prospects as a guide to overcome these problems.

Key words: Islamization of knowledge in Bangladesh, IIUC, problems, and prospects.

1.0 Introduction:

There is no doubt that Islamization of knowledge nowadays has become a famous issue all over the intellectual world in general and in the Muslim world in particular. People in the intellectual world have given their high attention to realize these issues, whether they have believed in it or not! And Islamization of knowledge has not too many differences, then the Islamic concept of knowledge. In fact, both are interrelated. The concept of knowledge in Islam is totally different than the concept of knowledge in others. In fact, the concept of knowledge in Islam is based on its frameworks, methodologies and sources of knowledge. Moreover, the concept of knowledge in Islam is also differentiating in terms of its purpose or objective of knowledge. Firstly, ' the Islamic view of knowledge takes as its starting point the concept of *Tawhid* in the divinity and attributes of God. It is at the foundation of *Tawhid* that the entire edifice of the Islamic paradigm of knowledge stands.'¹ Secondly, the framework of Islamic knowledge is revealed. In Islam both the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* as counted as revealed knowledge. It clarifies the relationship between God and humanity, and the Universe, and regulates these in such a way as to develop an integrated *Tawhid*- based society.

In addition to the *Tawhid* and revelation, there is also another source of knowledge. That is human reason. Islam does not deny human reason, if the human reason does not overstep the revelation. Revelation is the first step and the reason is the second step. Both are inter- related. Similarly, "revelation needs to be understood through the use of '*Aql* (intellect). The prophet Muhammad explicated and clarified the principles obtained in the Quran, but it is still requires *Aql* to work with these principles in order to resolve problems that emerged through the evaluation of time and in the absence of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h). Thus, *Aql* and revelation are complementary." ²

Islam has emphasized a lot to seek knowledge. 'In Islam the concept of knowledge enjoyed an importance unparalleled in other civilizations. It dominated over all aspects of Muslim intellectual, spiritual, and social life.'³ The prophet (Pbuh) made seeking knowledge an obligation upon every Muslim. He said: whoever follows a path in the pursuit of knowledge, Allah will make a path to paradise easy for him.

¹ Taha J. al Alwani, some remarks on the Islamic and the Secular Paradigms of knowledge: (The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences Vol. 12, No. 4, 1995,) p 540.

² Education Dualism in Malaysia, (*the Islamic philosophy of education*), p, 79.

³ Franz Rosenthal, knowledge Triumphant: The concept of knowledge in medical Islam, Lei den: E.J. Brill, 1970, p. 334.

2.0 Objective of the Study:

My discussion in this paper will be divided into three major areas; first part is about the concept of knowledge in general and the Islamic concept of knowledge in particular with a concluding remark where we will discuss the concept of Islamization of knowledge as an introduction of the paper. The second part of this paper is about the history of Islamization of knowledge in Bangladesh, where we will discuss shortly a historical background of Islamic education of its and finally we will conclude this part by discussing the present structure and the situation of this country. And the third or the final part of this paper is about the Islamization of knowledge in Bangladesh, and what are the problems and the challenges in the way of Islamizing its knowledge? Of course, as a concluding remark of this part, we will come up with some ways and prospects as a guide or a suggestion to overcome these problems and challenges.

3.0 A Brief History of Islamic Education in Bangladesh:

"Islamization of knowledge" program in Bangladesh, is not a new agenda in our country, but the fact is that the education of Bangladesh once was Islamized. But unfortunately, by the time being, especially during the ruling of colonial master, the English, Bangladeshi Muslims were suppressed, oppressed and hatred. And subsequently, they had lost their religious and cultural identity. In our coming pages we will have a brief discussion about it. One thing should be noted here that about this point we are not going to include anything rather only quoting our predecessors historical analysis:

3.1 The First Period of Islamic Education in Bengal (800-1200 A. D.)

The Islamic education was first introduced in the subcontinent with the establishment of Muslim rule in *Sindh* and the *Punjab* in the eighth century. Beginning of this period up to the end of the twelfth century, when Muslim power spread almost all over the sub-continent, a large number of 'mosques, *Khanqahs* and *Madrasahs* were established In various parts of *Sindh*, the *Punjab* and northern India by the *Muslim rulers, Amirs, Noblemen and Sufi saints. Multan, Ajmeer, Lucknow, Dethi* and many other places became 'irious as the great centers of Islamic learning during this period.

Bengal, the Islamic education was first formally and introduced by the Muslim Commander *Bakhtiyar khilji* the year 1197 or 1203 A. D. But it appears from historical evidences that the seed of Islam was sowed and centers of Islamic learning were established in some areas of Bangle as early as the ninth century, long before the country came under

Muslim rule. The pioneers in the field of preaching Islam and spreading Islamic learning in bangle during these periods were the Arab – Irani merchants, Muslim missionaries and Sufi saints who came here from different parts of the Muslim world.⁴

3.2 The Second Period of Islamic Education in Bengal (1200-1765 A.D.) 565 years

Muslim rule was first established in Bengal in the year 1197 or 1203 A.D. by *Ikhtiyaruddin Muhammad b. Bakhtiyar Khalji*. From this time, Muslim sway prevailed uninterruptedly in this country for a period of more than 565 years down to the year 1765 A. B. when the English gained Diwanj or Revenue Administration of the whole of Bengal province from the central authority in Delhi. During this period about 76 Muslim governors, kings and Nazimas ruled over Bengal, all of whom were either of Afghan, Turk, Mughal, Iranian or Arab origin. Lakhnuti (Gaur), Satgram,. Tanda, Firozabad (Pandua), Sonargaon, Dacca and Murshidabad where the headquarters of the Government during this period wider different dynasties.⁵

3.3 The third period of Islamic education in Bangle under British (1757-1947 A. D.—140 years)

a) Beginning of Decadence

The crucial period of decadence, the Muslims or Bengal began from the year 1757 A. D. when the political administration of the country was virtually seized by the British East India Company after the Battle of *Palassey*. The tragic Battle of *Palassey* was followed by a series of fateful events and dangerous situations leading to the decay of the glorious monuments of arts, culture and civilization of the Muslims of Bengal and the disintegration of their cultural formations and educational institutions, and ultimately threatening their very existence and complete liquidation of Islam in Bengal. Wars which preceded the consolidation of the power in India by the East India Company, most of the institutions sank into insignificance,⁶

b) Imposition of English System of Education

It has been mentioned before; the British East India Company in the beginning of their rule adopted a negative attitude towards the education of their native subjects. They established “the Muhammadan College”, better known as the *Calcutta Madrasah*, and also a

⁴ Dr. A.K.M. Ayyub Ali, history traditional Islamic education in Bangladesh, (Islamic Foundation Bangladesh: Dhaka, 1983), p. 8.

⁵ Ibid, p. 12.

⁶ (Report of the Muslim education advisory committee, 1934), p.4.

Sanskrit College in Calcutta in 1820, because they required, the services of the native orientalist to assist them in the administration of the country. After changing the whole economic structure of the country drastically, which caused the economic ruination and social degradation of the Muslim community, the ground was now fully cleared up for changing the indigenous national system of education and replacing it by their own system. The Hindu revivalist who regarded the fall of Muslim rule in Bengal, as “the beginning of a glorious dawn,” and “a Renaissance,” as well as the powerful Hindu zamindars (rich people), wealthy merchants and the influential Hindu employees of the British were strongly eager to receive English education and extended their hand of cooperation to the new ruler. Christian missionaries and Hindu revivalists joined together and made allowances for the abolition of the then prevailing system of national education. ⁷

c) Proposal for abolition of Madrasah Education

A new epoch in the history of English education in Bengal began with the foundation of the Calcutta University in 1857 under Act 11 of 1857. But, as pointed out before, the new system of education did not appeal to the Muslims, divorced as it was for religious education a thing unknown in Islam. Besides, there was no provision for the teaching of Arabic and Persian in the new University system. The introduction of the English system of education, resulting in the abolition of Persian as the official language and the non- inclusion of *the Madrasha* system. The prejudice of the government of Bangle against the Muslims reached to such an extent that in 1858, Sir Frederick Halliady, the then Governor of Bangle, recorded a minute on the basis of a report by Mr. Gordon Young, the then the director of the public instruction, Bangle, in which he recommended the abolition of the whole system of *Madrasha* Education.⁸

d) Islamic Education during Pakistan Period

After years of struggle, the great sub-continent was freed from the British colonial rule and two independent sovereign states under the names of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Indian Union came into existence on the 14th August, 1947. In this position this newly government took some attempts to reconstruct the education system.

Most importantly, they constituted various commissions and committees for the reconstruction of the whole education system in Pakistan. Such as:

1. East Bangle Educational Reconstruction committee- 1949-1951.

⁷ Dr. A.K.M. Ayyub Ali, history traditional Islamic education in Bangladesh, (Islamic Foundation Bangladesh: Dhaka, 1983), p. 48.

⁸ The university commission,(1917; M. E. A. committee, 1931,) p. 6-7;(M. E. C., 1938), P. 9 – 10.

2. Integration of Madrasha System with General Education
 3. The Educational Reforms Commission, East Pakistan, 1957.
 4. Commission on National Education, 1958.
 5. The Islamic Arabic University Commission, 1963-64.
 6. The New Education Policy: 1969.⁹
- d) Education in the Independent and Sovereign State of Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh (From 16th December, 1971)

e) Beginning of New Era (Bangladesh Era)

After much suffering, sacrifices and continuously nine month war of liberation, as an independent country under the name of ' people's republic of Bangladesh' have taken various tasks to repair and reconstruct the educational institutions damaged during the war of liberation. About 18,000 Primary Schools, 3480 Secondary Schools, 320 Colleges and 30 Primary training institutes – in all 21,830 educational institutions were damaged during this war of independence as well as 3 Million people and about 30,000 women and girls were raped by Pakistani bloody, uncultured, uncivilized Troops and Armies!!.

Firstly, as a human being, secondly, as a Muslim, thirdly, as a citizen of Bangladesh I would like to ask the whole world; Oh! My Dear World! Is it fair that even though Pakistan a Muslim country, how they killed more than 3 million innocent people in Bangladesh? Including children and aged people? How it was possible that the uncivilized Pakistani Armies raped about 30,000 Bangladeshi women? Including innocent children, daughters, sisters and mothers? The newly Government, under Sheikh Muzibur Rahaman set up firstly an education commission with Dr. Muhammad Quadrat E- khuda, a renowned secular educationalist as its chairman. But unfortunately the principles of this educational pattern were based on secular principles. Which are – democracy, nationalism, socialism and secularism. Finally, this committee submitted its final report with 296 pages on the 30th May, 1974.¹⁰ And subsequently, the Government set up an education system according to the report of this commission. It will be noted here that until now the same secular education system is working in Bangladesh. However, after Muzibur Rahamans, there were some others education commissions like

1. Education Committee, 1976, under the president Ziaur Rahaman

⁹ Dr. A.K.M. Ayyub Ali, history traditional Islamic education in Bangladesh, (Islamic Foundation Bangladesh: Dhaka, 1983), pp. 160-183.

¹⁰ (the Bangladesh observer, October 25, 1975)

2. Education Advisory board, 1978, under the former Education Minister, Kazi Zafar Ahmad, as its chairman
3. Mazid Khan Education Committee, 1983, under the former Education Minister, as its chairman.
4. In 1987, National Education Commission.
5. In 1997, National Educational Reforming Committee.
6. During the last Government ' Khaleda Zia's Government, (2001-2006) there was a committee with the name of ' National education reconstruction committee".¹¹
7. Finally, the ruling Government has set up a new "National Education Policy- 2009 Formulation Committee". The Chairman of the committee is Prof. Kabir Chowdhury, who is very renowned as a secularist over the country. This education policy also has been criticized by many scholars and philosophers of the country.

Therefore, unfortunately all education committees in Bangladesh, finally, have failed to give a value learning education system for its huge potential population where 90% are Muslim.

4.0 A Need for Islamization of Knowledge in Bangladesh:

As we have mentioned above repeatedly that the education system in Bangladesh is not providing such knowledge that we are required to be. With 90% Muslims, we need such education and institutions where we can enhance our understanding about our Islam, almighty Allah and our responsibilities to our own, to our families, to our societies, to our nations as well as to our God here in this World and in the hereafter. But unfortunately, our educational institutions in Bangladesh are creating such peoples who are Muslims in color and secular and western in their mind. So, the education that could have produced "Muslim philosopher, Muslim scientist, Muslim economist, Muslim jurist, and Muslim statesman, in brief, Muslim experts in all fields of knowledge who would construct the social order in accordance with the tenets of Islam".¹²

Rather, it has been producing secular and backward people in Bangladesh. In fact, there is a wide gap between the Islamic Ummah and the main sources of the Sharia'h (the Quran and the Sunnah), the colonial masters introduced changes in all systems of education in Bangladesh and only allowed the minimum amount of Islamic educational curricula. Moreover, their agents are constantly writing books, Magazines, articles, newspapers based

¹¹ *Sonkat abarte Education of Bangladesh*, Bengali version, (published by: Bangladesh islami chatra shibir, 2002), p. 3-4.

¹² . Maududi, Syaid Abul A'la.; *The Education*, New Delhi: markazi maktaba islami publishers, 2000, p. 6.

on their secularist minds and thoughts. And at the same time they are also dominating all mass media, like TV channels, Cultural institutions, Dramas, Theaters, Cinema houses where our potential Ummah has been visualized wrongly for many years. So, no doubt, there is a need for Islamization of knowledge in Bangladesh.

5.0 Present situation of Islamization of knowledge in Bangladesh:

The present position as regards the attempts for Islamization of knowledge in Bangladesh is not satisfactory, because no comprehensive programme either at private or government levels has been started for Islamizing the courses and syllabi at different levels of education. Although an Islamic university has been established under the patronage of the government with the declared programme of introducing and implementing the Islamic education system in the country, unfortunately, it has completely failed to fulfill its commitments in practice and present it is offering the same secular courses in Economics, Political Science, Accounting, Management, Islamic History etc. like other universities of the country. Further, although a course/paper on Islamic economics has been introduced in bachelor level in some universities, it is not being properly taught. In some universities (like Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chittagong) Arabic, Islamic Studies, and Islamic History and Culture departments are functioning, but their syllabi are not properly structured in accordance with Islamic philosophy and principles of education.¹³

On the other hand, the present Madrasa education system is also not free from faults and deficiencies from Islamic viewpoints on education in as much as that while undertaking the programme of restructuring the traditional religious conception in *Madrasah* some modern secular subjects/courses on science, arts, commerce and social science have been widely introduced there in the same manner and style as introduced in modern schools, colleges and universities. No attempt has yet been made by the authorities concerned to Islamize these subjects in order to inculcate in the minds of the students the Quranic spirits and principles in these subjects.

Professor Atiur Rahman observed that the *Madrasah* education in Bangladesh is subject to the high dropout rate. In addition, prospects of employment for the Madrasah graduate in Bangladesh are limited. However, recently the courses offered in *Madrasah* have been updated and modernized so that the *Madrasah* graduate may have access to higher

¹³ Islamization of Academic Disciplines (proceedings of a National Convention of Subject Specialists held in 1994), Edited by: M. Zahurul Islam FCA,(Dhaka: Banglades Institute of Islamic Thought, 1997), p. 82.

studies in sciences and technologies and find gainful employment.¹⁴ However, there are some signs of satisfaction have been seen from various individuals and private lives. Namely, in capital city Dhaka, Darul Ihsan University, which is founded by Prof. Dr. Sayyid M. Ali Ashraf, a renowned Islamic scholar in the Muslim world, has been initiated with a view to introducing an integrated system of education in the country. And also some other private Universities like International Islamic University, Chittagong (IIUC), Bangladesh Islamic University (BIU), Asian University, Bangladesh (AUB), Sylhet Sahjala Islamic University (SSIU) have been initiated some successful attempts for Islamizing of knowledge in Bangladesh. Even more importantly, these universities have created a big job market for *Shari'ah* based students. Students who have been graduated from Al-Azhar University, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), and some other local and international universities in *Shari'ah* disciplines were hopeless but now they can easily get jobs in those newly founded Islamic universities. Furthermore, it may be mentioned that more than two hundred primary and secondary schools have been imparting integrated education under the guidance of many individuals' societies. Necessary curricula and syllabi have been designed, study materials have been produced and teacher training programme has been organized by the societies.

6.0 Problems of Islamization of knowledge in Bangladesh

The problems of Islamization of knowledge in Bangladesh are associated with two main areas:

- a) General training
- b) Moral training

The problems of Islamization based on general training programmes of the educational institutions are mainly associated with the subjects taught, i.e., the syllabi, textbooks, etc. Together with these the teachers and students also contribute a lot towards non-Islamization in the country. The problems thus divided have been discussed below under separate headings.

a) Problems associated with the subjects

The subjects taught in the educational institutions in the country were not developed properly to suit Muslim students in the country. The syllabi do not direct students towards the

¹⁴ Rahman, Atiur, *Education for Development lessons from East Asia for Bangladesh* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2002), P. 52.

desired goal. Most of the text books contain no element to direct the students towards Islamic belief. It may, however, be mentioned that although ample opportunity prevails at times to correlate Islamic views side by side with general findings while writing a book but no such attempt has yet been made. The reasons are mainly ignorance of knowledge of Islam in educating people as they are also being educated through a secular system of education. They write books accordingly and possess some hatred about Islam, which is flushed in their activities. Hence it is clearly felt that the problems associated with the Islamization of knowledge in the country are due to the secular educationalists who write books and teach students in different educational institutions.¹⁵

b) Lack of reading materials

There are also some other problems associated with the subject matter can be visualized are reading materials, i.e. newspapers, magazines, articles, books and etc. written in the Islamization view point. There is no doubt that by those materials, students can enhance their understanding about Islamization of knowledge. But unfortunately, in Bangladesh we don't have enough books, magazines, newspapers which are written in the view point of Islamization of knowledge.

c) Lack of libraries

In addition to the above point, most sadly, in Bangladesh we don't have any remarkable Islamic library with enough resources besides, there are hundreds of public libraries which are fulfilled with secular books and resources. As a result, students, teachers, professionals and any interested individuals who want to do their research in this field, It's culture and civilization are unable to resource them. Even those who are doing their research despite the lack of resources are being unable to show their good merits.

d) Problems associated with the biggest number of the teachers

The big numbers of teachers in Bangladesh follow the normal trend to be away from the Islamic way because they normally calculate successes in the materialistic viewpoints and do not find sufficient incentives of materialistic nature around Islamic way of belief. It is felt that in order to attract their minds to fulfill the desired goal that is the Islamization of

¹⁵ Islamization of Academic Disciplines (proceedings of a National Convention of Subject Specialists held in 1994), Edited by: M. Zahurul Islam FCA,(Dhaka: Banglades Institute of Islamic Thought, 1997), p. 83.

knowledge in Bangladesh if there are some materialistic benefits introduced together with convicting them towards this better way of life.¹⁶

e) *Problems associated with the persons having conviction in Islam*

It is also felt that the persons who have conviction in Islam do really stay at a lower position in the society compared to other persons. Uplift programmes will raise up their positions, allowing better scope to control the steering of the society. The problems of these teachers are mostly general in nature, e.g. lack of scope for higher education and training, facilities for research and literary works, computer facilities, library facilities, publication facilities etc.¹⁷

f) *Problems related to the students*

Good students are being attracted through various modes by different national and international organizations in the country, the counterparts of which in Islam has only little been floated. Such measures include scholarships, stipends, and prizes for remarkable/praiseworthy achievements in our eyes. A plan for such incentives for the students of the country has not yet been taken. The students of the country suffer seriously as they do not get an environment suitable for them to become good Muslims. Although it is understood that a problem of such a nature cannot be solved so easily, but it is felt that making some parallel institutions which would work as a model can solve the problems immensely.

There are also some other problems related to persons can be visualized are in terms of lacking knowledge among the leaders of the society and the phobia of general peoples towards Islamization of knowledge.

g) *Lacking knowledge of the leaders of the society*

We are sorry to say that in Bangladesh, most of the society and nation leaders are uneducated. No education qualification is needed to be a society member. It is said that the former president of the country *Hussein Mummmed Irsad* was a normal Diploma holder and later on his fellow Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was a Bachelor Degree holder and most sadly, the last Prim Minister Khaleda Zia had not even any educational certificate except secondary certificate! If the top positions of the country leaders have such low quality of the

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid. p. 86.

education what about the others? It will not be surprising if we say there are a big number of the parliament members in Bangladesh are having no educational qualification. So, can we say it is a big problem towards Islamization of knowledge in Bangladesh? Of course this is! And finally, now the military come into power and we don't know how far they will go along with our education system in Bangladesh.

h) Phobia of General people

Generally people in Bangladesh are religious minded. But when they are told to send their children into religious school they are afraid. They fear about their child's future. They may think religious study could not cover the materialistic benefits of their children's life. So, better send to them to study general studies. Sometimes if there are five siblings in a family, then parents think to send the dump one to the Madrasah felling that they are sacrificing one of their children for the sake of God. May they say O God! This is for you! Not for us!

i) Language problem

The use of appropriate language in the Islamization programme is one of the major problems facing the programme in Bangladesh. It is very open that the English has been the major language in international conferences on Islamization of knowledge programme all over the world. Such a conference held in Makkah, conference held in Switzerland, conference held in Pakistan, conference held in Kula Lumpur even our national conference on Islamization of knowledge held in Dhaka, Bangladesh in 2000 was also in English. And all centers all over the world leading by the Islamization of knowledge association have most of their work in English. On the other hand, Arabic language as the original language of Islamization and as the original source of knowledge in Islam is also most important for the Islamization program.

But unfortunately, the literacy rates of Bangladesh yet to fulfill its desired expectation. English as a second language is quite ok. However, the condition of Arabic language is too bad. Even among those who are doing religious studies a very few number of them can write and speak fluently. Therefore, Arabic – and English both should be adopted as the necessary resources for Islamization of knowledge in Bangladesh.

7.0 International Islamic University Chittagong and Islamization of knowledge

International Islamic University Chittagong (IIUC) is one of the Government approved Private Universities in Bangladesh. It is run by the Islamic University Chittagong Trust (IUCT), which is the founding organization of the University. It got the approval of the

government on February 11, 1995 and was founded in the same year. In 2004 the IIUC was rated as one of the top-graded private universities amongst the 54 private universities functioning at that time by a government-constituted high-powered team led by the chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC). In a recent statement made by the honorable education minister in a press conference, about the affairs of private universities in Bangladesh, IIUC have been put in the green-category best eight private universities in Bangladesh in terms of both quality of education and the infrastructural facilities.

IIUC provides education and confer higher degrees in all branches of *Shari`ah*, Humanities, Social Sciences, Business Studies and Modern Sciences including Computer Science & Engineering, Environmental Sciences, Aqua-culture, Computer & Communication Engineering, Media & Information Science etc. It also award four year Bachelor's Degree with Honors in Qur`anic Sciences & Islamic Studies (QIS), Da`wah & Islamic Studies (DIS), Business Administration (BBA), Computer Science & Engineering (CSE), Computer & Communication Engineering (CCE), Electrical & Electronic Engineering (EEE), Pharmacy, English Language & Literature (ELL) and Bachelor of Law (LL.B). But in the course of time, *Insha Allah*, academic programs will be expanded with all branches of Humanities, Social Sciences or Administrative Sciences, Business Studies and Modern Sciences keep in view the ever-increasing scientific and social needs of Bangladesh in particular and *Muslim Ummah* in general.¹⁸

To this end, Islamization of knowledge is a must and is the right place to do so. Islamic University will support the following activities:

- * To nursing originality of Islamic science and knowledge.
- * Buildup ideal Muslim Citizen.
- * Solving the contemporary problems of the Muslim Ummah.
- * To give institutional shape to Islam.

8.0 The role of CENURC Courses in Islamizing the Knowledge

The Centre for University Requirement Courses (CENURC) constitute the main and most important characteristics of International Islamic University Chittagong (IIUC) as they are playing a vital role in distinguishing IIUC from a traditional university. These courses are equally compulsory for all students of the university regardless of discipline, faculty, race and

¹⁸ . http://www.iiuc.ac.bd/About/iiuc_introduction.php

religion. The students are required to take 12 to 16 credit hours in URC in total to graduate from the University. Language, Islamic Studies and History form the basis of these courses. From the very beginning of IIUC, the University Requirement Courses were considered as an integral part of graduation requirements for all, but these were conducted under the supervision of the Pro Vice-Chancellor of IIUC. Later on, it is proving to be difficult on his part to supervise these courses owing to his multidimensional responsibilities. Under such circumstances, a proposal, initiated by Professor Dr. Abu Bakr Rafique, The Pro Vice-Chancellor of IIUC, was sent to the Academic Council of IIUC to establish a Center for University Requirement Courses (CENURC). The 14th Academic Council held on 10th November 2003 had adopted this proposal and recommended to the Syndicate. The 62nd meeting of the Syndicate (held on 15th November 2003) finally took the decision for the establishment of a Center for University Requirement Courses (CENURC).¹⁹ The following courses have been designed for the purpose of Islamizing knowledge in the tertiary level of the university. The following tables will indicate us details about the subjects:

Table 1- (CENURC) Courses in the Faculty of *Shari'ah* and Islamic Studies

SL	Course Code	Course Title	Credit Hour	Contract Hour
1	UREL- 1101	Elementary English	2	3
2	UREL- 1202	Intermediate English	2	3
3	URAL- 1201	Advanced English	3	3
4	*URIS- 3608	*Biography of Prophet (SAW)	3	3
5	URIH- 4701	A Survey of Islamic History	1	2
6	URBS- 4802	Bangladesh Studies	2	2
Total 6 Courses			13	16

(Source: website: http://www.iiuc.ac.bd/Center/CENURC/about_CENURC.php)

Table 2- (CENURC) Courses in the Faculty of Modern Sciences, Business Studies and Laws [CSE, CCE/ETE, EEE, Pharmacy, BBA and Law (Hons.)

SL	Course Code	Course Title	Credit Hour	Contract Hour
1	URAL- 1101	Elementary Arabic	1	3

¹⁹. http://www.iiuc.ac.bd/Center/CENURC/about_CENURC.php

2	URQS- 1101	Qur'an Studies in Texts & Translation	1	3
3	URAL- 1202	Intermediate Arabic	1	3
4	URHS- 1202	Hadith Studies in Texts & Translation	1	3
5	UREL-1103	Advanced English	2	3
6	URIS-1101	Islamic Aqidah	1	1
7	URIS-1203	Introduction to Ibadah	1	1
8	URIS-2303	Introduction to al Qur'an and al-Sunnah	1	1
9	URIS-2405	Dealings and Behavior in Islam	1	1
10	URIS-3505	Government and Politics in Islam	1	1
11	URIS-3607	Biography of the Prophet (SAW))	1	2
12	URIH-4701	History of Khilafat upto 1258.	1	2
13	URBS- 4802	Bangladesh Studies	2	2
Total 13 Courses			15	26

(Source: website: http://www.iiuc.ac.bd/Center/CENURC/about_CENURC.php)

Table 3- (CENURC) Courses in the Arts and Humanities [ELL]

SL	Course Code	Course Title	Credit Hour	Contract Hour
1	URAL- 1101	Elementary Arabic	1	3
2	URQS- 1101	Qur'an Studies in Texts & Translation	1	3
3	URAL- 1202	Intermediate Arabic	1	3
4	URHS- 1202	Hadith Studies in Texts & Translation	1	3
5	*URMW-2401	*Muslim World View	2	2
6	URIS-1101	Islamic Aqidah	1	1
7	URIS-1203	Introduction to Ibadah	1	1
8	URIS-2303	Introduction to al Qur'an and al-Sunnah	1	1
9	URIS-2405	Dealings and Behavior in Islam	1	1
10	URIS-3505	Government and Politics in Islam	1	1

11	URIS-3607	Biography of the Prophet (SAW))	1	2
12	URIH-4701	History of Khilafat upto 1258.	1	2
13	URBS- 4802	Bangladesh Studies	2	2
Total 13 Courses			15	25

(Source: website: http://www.iiuc.ac.bd/Center/CENURC/about_CENURC.php)

9.0 Proposals and Recommendations for IIUC

To promote the Islamization process and overcome the lapses and difficulties we propose:

1) To expand the Islamic disciplines by establishing more faculties and departments for studying various disciplines related to Islamic revealed knowledge, history, civilization, Languages, contributions and problems of Muslim countries and communities.

2) Special emphasis should be made in 'Islamic Studies' course on Islamic outlook and goal of life and education, so that the students seek their knowledge as 'Ibadat', to obtain divine blessings, pleasure, and peace in this life and atonement in the Hereafter. They seek knowledge to be a good productive member of society who benefit himself and other and is ready to sacrifice his own interest for others.

3) To establish a cell for this purpose comprising experts of all disciplines and Islamic scholars.

4) To establish strong relations with all Islamic Universities and higher educational and Academic institutions all over the world for mutual cooperation in this field.

5) To revive the 'Institute of Islamic Thought' and enable it to play its due role in promoting Islamic thinking and research based on an Islamic conception of holistic or integral nature of knowledge.

6) To arrange training for teachers of 'Islamization' oriented subject. Without a teacher with firm conviction and faith in Islam as a way of life all efforts in this regard may become fruitless or counterproductive.

7) To establish the different departments in various disciplines and branches such as Islamic Leadership management, Islamic economics and Muamalat, Islamic law and jurisprudence etc.

10.0 Recommendations towards Islamization of Knowledge in Bangladesh

The Muslim world is now putting impassion on Islamization of knowledge, to create awareness about the importance and objective of Islamic education. Now we may have some suggestions, recommendations from Bangladesh perspective in Islamizing knowledge:

- a) Moral training programmes may be implemented to raise the moral level of all concerned persons in the country so as to suit our religion.
- b) Existing syllabi of different educational institutions at different levels may be reviewed and revised in the light of Islamic principles.
- c) Non-Islamic views that exist in different subjects are to be located and counter views in accordance with Islamic ideology are to be brought forward.
- d) Arrangements should be made to offer courses based on Islamic issues/subjects into S.S.C., H.S.C., Bachelor's and Master's degree levels.
- e) Textbooks should be written to include Islamic views. It is felt that such views can be developed for many general subjects taught in the universities.
- f) Islamic books on various subjects, syllabi, curricula and such other papers from the Islamic universities of various Muslim countries may be collected.
- g) National and international workshops/seminars on Islamization of knowledge may be arranged.
- h) Some model educational institutions, e.g. schools, colleges, universities to function purely at the private level may be raised in the country where the syllabi, courses offered, books recommended etc. will suit the purpose of Islamization in the country. It is felt that a university made with such an idea kept in mind can achieve immense success in this regard. Most of the other activities can be launched around this.
- i) International cultural and academic exchange programmes may be introduced to attract the attention of brilliant lots.
- j) A list of existing experts in the country along with their biodata should be prepared with a view to using their services for the purpose of Islamization of knowledge at different stages.
- k) Higher education/training programmes, e.g. M.Phil., PhD; Post Doctorate, etc. should be taken for suitable candidates both in the country and abroad.
- l) Arrangements of sufficient financial benefits may be made for selected and suitable supervisors to use their expertise, knowledge for conducting research works to produce M.Phil.s and PhD's in the country.
- m) Arrangement should be made to publish standard journals/periodicals with keynote papers presented at workshops/seminars.
- n) Joint research programmes among university teachers may be developed under the

auspices of “Islamization of Knowledge Fund”.

- o) Provisions for some special facilities like a central reference library, a laboratory, computer, etc. may be raised in the country.
- p) Regional workshops both on Islamic and general nature subjects may be arranged periodically.
- q) Provisions for some awards may be made to recognize brilliant educational, literary, research works etc.
- r) Research projects should be sponsored to suitable departments of the universities of the country to carry out degree and degree research programmes.
- s) Special training programme to produce suitable teachers and experts should be taken who can be able to enhance Islamization of knowledge after being trained.
- t) A central coordination cell has to be established to coordinate all activities on Islamization of knowledge.

Conclusion

To sum up, it is clear to us that the concept of knowledge in Islam has a Universal value with its collective, humanistic and divine objectives. On the other hand, the concept of knowledge in western perspectives has nothing except its individual, materialistic and value free methodologies. Through the above discussion, it is also clear to us that all Muslim countries, including Bangladesh are having western, secular and value free concept of knowledge. And subsequently, they have already lost their religious and cultural identities. Therefore, a group of Muslim intellectuals has been trying to recapture *Ummah;s* religious and cultural identities. Here they suggest that Islamization of knowledge to reform contemporary knowledge with the Islamic views and perspectives would be the best formula for the contemporary world.

But one thing is clear to us that the implementation of this program in the Muslim world now is not easy, but it has to face unanimous problems and challenges. Bangladesh as an example, we have already proved that how many difficulties, problems and challenges it has to face if anybody, any society and any nation want to implement it in his societies and nations. But for years, there are some hopes are ongoing throughout the Muslim world. As an example, *International Islamic university Malaysia* in particular and Malaysia in general, since 1983 is still enjoying its high profile as a one of the champions of Islamization of knowledge agenda. So it is felt that if any individuals, any societies and any nations come forward to implement this divine formula *Insallah* Allah will help them.