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Topic: Pluralism and Islam: An analytical approach and its relevance in present times

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FINDINGS

- In the globalized world of today the importance of religious pluralism has exceeded than ever before.
- Religious pluralism as an ideology started in the context of Christianity and is closely linked with the ideologies such as Liberalism and Protestantism.
- The purpose of the ideology of religious pluralism at its inception was to tackle the attitude of intolerance between the sects of Christianity.
- The proponents of the Western idea religious pluralism such as John Hick overemphasize on the eternal divine reality, a position which he believes facilitates cooperation and concord among people of different religious beliefs. This attitude renders the specific beliefs and practices of all religions as somewhat less important.
- The ideology of religious pluralism, owing to sharing its roots with ideologies which were anti religion resulted in relegation of religion. It may even be seen as a strategic procedure to decipher religious codes as nothing but objects of interpretative, relative, speculative and reductive research with the aim to reach a common point in religions where all of them are devoid of commandments, traditions, rites and rituals.
- Pluralism and secularism have contributed a great deal in diluting the effects of religion while failing to bring much positive changes they intended to as a parallel thought in opposition to the dogmatism of the religions.
- While pluralism provides an opportunity to mitigate differences between different religious groups, it must not be necessarily seen as a standard of value or an index of moral and ethical appropriateness or as something promising a just social order.
- According to the Islamic understanding of pluralism, tolerance of the 'other' does not come at the expense of one's own commitment to their religion.
- Islam acknowledges the brotherhood of all mankind – a bond and a point of commonality which is intrinsically pluralistic in nature and demands a certain code of conduct towards fellow human beings despite their religious associations and dispositions.
- Islamic idea of pluralism comes from the fundamental teachings of Islam of justice, fairness, compassion, forgiveness and love.

- Islamic history is a testimony to the fact that religious pluralism was not only championed but also truly practiced by prophet Muhammad ﷺ and pluralistic ethos can be found throughout the history of Islamic civilization.
- Interfaith dialogue is a necessary tool in making a society more tolerant of the different groups found in it and it is proven that increase in social contact of various groups based on their faiths is directly proportional to increase in the value of tolerance and understanding between these groups.
- Islam does not merely teach tolerance of the 'other' but advocates active engagement with them through '*dawah*' which comes with its own set of prerequisites of excellence of manners and sincere care for one being engaged.