



Western Based Modernity is Not the Solution for Muslims

News:

It's the day before the grand opening of Shaden, a luxury desert camp in Saudi Arabia where air-conditioned tents look out on sandstone cliffs. A princely delegation is on its way. But the place isn't quite ready.

Saudi Arabia as a whole isn't ready for tourists either. But its rulers are intent on revolutionizing the economy, and tourism is high on their list. They figure it can create jobs for a youthful population, earn revenue to reduce oil-dependence, and help open the kingdom to the world. Which it might — if anyone can be persuaded to come. (Dawn, February 27, 2017)

Comment:

Saudi Arabia is trying hard to change its image and move into the 21st century and be accepted as a 'normal' state in the accepted narrative set by western standards. In Feb 2017 Saudi Arabia, announced the country's first ever Comic-Con festival in the coastal city of Jeddah, where young Saudis enjoyed music, videogames, film and art. But the occasion sparked condemnation from some of the Saudi society. Tweets such as, "Comic Con is an event that goes against Sharia and Islamic values and the General Authority for Entertainment plans to go ahead with it in a few days time in Jeddah."

Despite a struggle between so called liberals and conservatives Saudi is realizing that it cannot be dependent only on oil for its wealth and ideas of how to increase income are being looked into.

As part of tourism drive, Prince Sultan bin Salman, head of the Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage has also planned to use museums of Islamic heritage and history to calm down religious clerics.

There was a time in the history of this land that people would flock to this area and a time when people were entertained by the poets. They were looked down on and backward and shunned by their Arab neighbors. Then there was the time when a man came with a message that transformed this land and the whole world- a message not to be ignored then and today. RasulAllah (saw) and Islam is what put this land on the global map! Today we are once again witnessing the rise of Islam and the Ummah's readiness to be the next superpower yet our rulers are seeking the recognition and status that the West seeks to award.

Bans on alcohol, free mixing, the rules on women attire are reasons stated for Saudi possibly failing in this venture of tourism. In reality the failure will result for one reason and the same reason that all Muslims lands are failed, not implementing the holistic and true solution of the Caliphate based on the method of the Prophethood and always thinking within the set acceptable parameters set by secular liberal ideas. Do we as an Ummah need tourism, entertainment and everything else on Western lines to feel we are something?! Surely not, Alhamdulillah we have a solution for world poverty, inequality, illiteracy and so on, yet our rulers are telling us to be content in raising our status as next summer's holiday destination!

The Prophet (saw) said: **«لَتَتَّبِعَنَّ سُنَنَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ شَبْرًا شَبْرًا وَذُرَاعًا بِذُرَاعٍ حَتَّىٰ لَوْ دَخَلُوا جُحْرَ ضَبٍّ تَبِعْتَهُمْ قَلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ قَالَ فَمَنْ»** **'You will indeed follow the ways of those before you, hand span by hand span, and an arm's length after another. Even if they enter into a lizard's hole, you will follow them.'** We (the Sahabah) asked, 'Is it the Jews and the Christians?' He replied, 'Who else!'" [Bukhari]

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
Nazia Rehman