

# A Study on Models and Foundations for Nation-Building: An Analysis from the Lense of Prophetic *Sirah*

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## Abstract :

Nation-building is a concept that is widely discussed in the modern world. Today, various disciplines are studying its guidelines. Although guidelines for this can be found in the sources of Islam such as the Quran and Sunnah, this is an attempt to find its practical form in the *Sirah* of the Prophet (P.B.U.H). He was a messenger of God and as well a great nation-builder and the society he created is still admired by scholars today. In the secular environment where religion and state are constructed as two poles, the examples of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) are important. Against this background, this study explains through practical events that the Prophet (P.B.U.H) protected the nation's values in Mecca, Abyssinia, and Medina and guided the Muslims. For this purpose, primary sources and research articles on the *Sirah* have been considered and a discussion has been built. As a result, this study emphasizes that Muslims, whether they live in the minority or the majority, in the country where they were born and raised or in the country where they gained fame, should contribute to the country they live in and establishes that it is included in the tasks of 'Imarah' and 'Khilafah' that man must fulfill in the world from the Quranic worldview.

**Keywords:** *Nation, State, Nation-Building, Prophetic Sirah.*

## Abstrak :

Pembangunan bangsa adalah sebuah konsep yang banyak dibahas di dunia modern. Saat ini, berbagai disiplin ilmu sedang mempelajari pedomannya. Meskipun pedoman untuk hal ini dapat ditemukan dalam sumber-sumber Islam seperti Al-Quran dan Sunnah, ini adalah upaya untuk menemukan bentuk praktisnya dalam *Sirah* Nabi (P.B.U.H). Beliau adalah seorang utusan Allah dan juga pembangun bangsa yang hebat dan masyarakat yang beliau ciptakan masih dikagumi oleh para cendekiawan saat ini. Dalam lingkungan sekuler di mana agama dan negara dibangun sebagai dua kutub, teladan Nabi (P.B.U.H) menjadi penting. Dengan latar belakang ini, penelitian ini menjelaskan melalui peristiwa-peristiwa praktis bahwa Nabi (P.B.U.H) melindungi nilai-nilai bangsa di Mekah, Abyssinia, dan Madinah dan membimbing umat Islam. Untuk tujuan ini, sumber-sumber primer dan artikel-artikel penelitian tentang *Sirah* telah dipertimbangkan dan sebuah diskusi telah dibangun. Sebagai hasilnya, penelitian ini menekankan bahwa umat Islam, baik yang hidup sebagai minoritas maupun mayoritas, di negara tempat mereka dilahirkan dan dibesarkan atau di negara tempat mereka mendapatkan ketenaran, harus berkontribusi pada negara tempat mereka tinggal dan menetapkan bahwa hal tersebut termasuk dalam tugas-tugas 'Imarah' dan 'Khilafah' yang harus dipenuhi oleh manusia di dunia dalam pandangan Alquran.

**Kata Kunci:** *Bangsa, Negara, Pembangunan Bangsa, Sirah Nabawiyah.*

## INTRODUCTION

'Nation' or 'Country' can be defined as a place where a person lives or takes refuge. The Qur'an uses words like 'Arz', 'Dar', and 'Baldah' to refer to a place where a person lives. However, the Qur'an has never used the word 'Watan', which directly refers to the concept of 'nation'. Instead, the Qur'an has used the word 'Mawatin', which belongs to the same word family, in only one sentence. The verse states "He is the one who helps you in many places."<sup>1</sup> In the early days, it was used in the sense of 'stable' where horses are tied up and in the sense of 'battlefield' where wars are fought.<sup>2</sup> In history, due to Countries and nations emerging, the word 'nation' is used today in the sense of 'the land where a person is born and lives or the land where he migrates.'<sup>3</sup>

In contemporary secular societies where the separation of religion and state is prevalent,<sup>4</sup> there exists a significant gap in understanding how Islamic principles can effectively inform and guide nation-building efforts. While the Quran and Sunnah provide foundational guidelines for nation-building,<sup>5</sup> there is a lack of practical frameworks derived from the Prophet Muhammad's (P.B.U.H) *Sirah* that addresses the complexities of modern socio-political environments. This study seeks to analyse the nation-building strategies employed by the Prophet (P.B.U.H) in Mecca, Abyssinia, and Medina, as documented in the *Sirah*, to determine their applicability and relevance for Muslims living in both majority and minority contexts today. By bridging the gap between Islamic teachings and contemporary nation-building practices, this research aims to provide actionable insights for Muslims to contribute meaningfully to the societies in which they reside, aligning with the Quranic concepts of '*Imarah*' and '*Khilafah*.'

In this way, in the contemporary world, 'nation building' has become a topic of conversation among societies. The importance given to the nation in Islam needs to be examined. Similarly, the idea that a Muslim should contribute to the nation he lives in is examined here, along with the practical life of the Prophet (P.B.U.H). Therefore, the principles that a Muslim should adhere to while living in the land of his birth, in the land of his migration, or in a Muslim country or a Muslim minority country are discussed here.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Nation and Nation Building - an Islamic Perspective

When Allah (SWT) sent Adam (p.b.u.h) into the world, the entire world was one nation. Later, families were formed, villages emerged and developed into cities. As the human population increased, nations and states comprising many cities emerged. In the world, the iron hands of colonialism have occupied countries and plundered their resources, and have further fragmented countries, and have even made their own people refugees. This raises the question of whether countries can be defined within national geographical boundaries in Islam. In this way, scholars emphasize the idea that the 'nation building' task is intertwined with the fundamental tasks that man must fulfil in the world, namely '*Imarah*'<sup>6</sup> and '*Khilafah*'.<sup>7</sup> Although these are the fundamental tasks that man must fulfil in the world in general, they also include tasks that he must perform specifically for

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<sup>1</sup> al-Quran, Surah al-Tawbah: 25.

<sup>2</sup> al-Basari, Abu 'Abd al-Rahman Khalil, al- 'Ayn, Vol. 7, P. 455.

<sup>3</sup> Ahmed al-Husri, al-Dawla wa siyasat al-Hukm fi al-Fiqh al-Islami, (Qahirah: maktabat al-Kulliyat al-Azhariyyah) p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Fox, "World Separation of Religion and State Into the 21st Century." *Comparative Political Studies* 39 (2006): 537 - 569.

<sup>5</sup> Abdullah, Mohd Farid Ravi and Muhammad Aizat Syimir Rozani, "Building A Sustainable Nation from The Quranic Perspective." *al-Irsyad: Journal of Islamic and Contemporary Issues* (2020).

<sup>6</sup> al-Quran, Surah al-Baqara: 30.

<sup>7</sup> al-Quran, Surah Hud: 61.

the country where he was born, raised, educated, and has personal ties.<sup>8</sup> From this perspective, the nation and the work of nation-building are viewed in Islam.

On the other hand, a Muslim should not forget the issue of the 'Islamic nation' or the 'Islamic world' that arose based on a policy relationship that transcends geographical boundaries. It is necessary to understand that the 'nation' with narrow territorial boundaries formed by birth and place is different from the 'faithful relationship' or 'Islamic brotherhood' that is achieved through freedom of choice. In general, religious interests and national interests can never conflict. Islam's position is that national interests that conflict with religion are harmful to human society. Similarly, the nation can develop into patriotism. But Islam never recognizes that it turns into fanatical nationalism. Hasanul Banna states this as follows:

*'Islam recognizes nationalism that arises based on the people living in a particular country working together to build the country, living in harmony in a multi-ethnic society and working for the national interest of the country and the well-being of all its citizens.'*<sup>9</sup>

In this way, the Qur'an never prevents a Muslim from loving the place, region, and land where he lives. On the contrary, it rejects racism, regionalism, and groupism. Furthermore, the Qur'an teaches that Allah has created differences in people such as race, color, language, and region so that they can understand each other.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, it is not only inevitable but also welcome for a person to love his motherland by nature and work for its development. A Muslim's love for his motherland will never contradict the principles of Islam. Love, affection, cooperation, and help are expressions of affection. On this basis, Yusuf al-Qardawi states that the work of nation-building is important in Islam, and its pioneers in modern times are Muslim scholars.

*'If we read the biographies of those who fought for Islamic reform, for the independence of the Muslim Ummah, and against the iron fists of colonialism, we can understand that although they all carried the rise of the international Muslim community in their thoughts, they paid more attention to the reform of their own country.'*<sup>11</sup>

Therefore, whether the Muslim community lives as a minority or a majority in a country, they should love the country and be loyal to the country, respect the fair laws of the country, and contribute to the development of the country. Especially, Muslims living as a minority in a country should never live apart from the national mainstream. Rather, they should live as indispensable partners of the nation. Muslims, especially those living in a minority community, should adapt themselves as contributors to the mainstream of the country which especially education and the economy are considered the backbone of the country. They should come forward to fully contribute to them.

### **The Prophet (P.B.U.H) and the Nation-Building Mission**

#### **The Nation of Mecca**

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) lived in Mecca, both before and after his prophethood, although religion was a new element in his way of life, he respected the principles and values of the nation at all times. Religion never separated him from the country, nor did

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<sup>8</sup> Yūsuf al-Qaradawī, al-Watan wa al-Muwatanah, al-Waṭan wa-al-Muwāṭanah: fī Daw' al-Uṣūl al-'Aqīdīyah wa-al-Maqāṣid al-Sharī'īyah, (al-Qāhirah : Dār al-Shurūq, 2010), P.14.

<sup>9</sup> Yūsuf al-Qaradawī, al-Watan wa al-Muwatanah, P.41.

<sup>10</sup> al-Quran, Surah al-Hujarat: 13.

<sup>11</sup> Yūsuf al-Qaradāwī, p.40.

it distance him from its citizens. Ali Juma' relates this as follows: "Observe how the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and the believers who accepted him lived after the revelation. Did they confine their companions, trade, and travel to themselves, leaving behind other people? Or did they conduct business transactions only among themselves? Are those who refused to live together with other believers? Or were they polytheists?"<sup>12</sup>

During the Mecca period, the believers lived by hiding their religion. They did not rebel against the country even though they were wronged. Some of the Muslims were imprisoned, tortured, slandered, criticized, and some were killed and Some of them were protected by the grace of God.<sup>13</sup> Even in this condition, they behaved honestly and truthfully. At that time, the command of Allah (SWT) was revealed: "Indeed, Allah protects those who believe. Allah does not love those who disbelieve and cheat."<sup>14</sup>

While explaining the above verse, Qurtubi (Rah) said, 'This verse was revealed when the believers were severely tested in Mecca, and some were tortured, and others migrated to Abyssinia. At that time, some believers wanted to engage in a conspiracy to wrong some disbelievers and make them suffer. Allah (SWT) did not accept this. At that time, this verse was revealed stating that 'do not engage in fraud' and that Allah (SWT) would protect the believers.<sup>15</sup> Here, Muslims in the national life of the people were patient and did not do injustice to others even if they were wronged. This is the first principle derived from Prophetic *Sirah*.

The second high principle that the Muslims adhered to in the national life of Mecca can be mentioned as being beneficial to others. The Prophet (P.B.U.H) never prevented men of high status like Abu Bakr (Ral) from helping his tribe until the end. This can be understood in terms like 'Ihsan' and 'Birr'. Aaisha (Ral) reported: 'When the Muslims were persecuted, Abu Bakr set out for Ethiopia as an emigrant. When he reached a place called Bark-al-Ghimad, he met Ibn Ad-Daghna, the chief of the Qara tribe, who asked Abu Bakr, "Where are you going?" Abu Bakr said, "My people have turned me out of the country and I would like to tour the world and worship my Lord." Ibn Ad- Daghna said, "A man like you will not go out, nor will he be turned out as you help the poor earn their living, keep good relation with your Kith and kin, help the disabled (or the dependents), provide guests with food and shelter, and help people during their troubles. I am your protector. So, go back and worship your Lord at your home." Ibn Ad-Daghna went along with Abu Bakr and took him to the chiefs of Quraish saying to them, "A man like Abu Bakr will not go out, nor will he be turned out. Do you turn out a man who helps the poor earn their living, keeps good relations with Kith and kin, helps the disabled, provides guests with food and shelter, and helps the people during their troubles?"<sup>16</sup>

From the above incident, we can understand what kind of relationship Abu Bakr (Ral) maintained with that community. The identity of Islam will never be a threat to the country or its fellow man. Rather, it emphasizes that he should be a partner of the country. It explains how a Muslim should contribute to the nation in his own country and how he should maintain positive relationships with his fellow human beings - even if he is wronged.

### **The nation of Abyssinia**

The first country where Muslims sought refuge under the guidance of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) was Abyssinia. The Prophetic *Sirah* teaches that a Muslim should live as a contributor to the country even if he seeks refuge in a country where he has migrated and

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<sup>12</sup> 'Ali al-Jum'a, Al-Hadiy al-Nabawi fi al-Ta'ayush ma' al-Aahar, p.88.

<sup>13</sup> Ibnu Ishaq, Vol. 1, P.317.

<sup>14</sup> al-Quran, Surah al-Haj 38.

<sup>15</sup> Qurtubi, al-Jam'u li Ahkam al-Qur'an, Vol. 12, P. 68.

<sup>16</sup> Sahih al-Bukhari 2297

lives weakly. The land of 'Abyssinia', which is considered Ethiopia today, was at that time ruled by a Christian king named Najjashi. When the persecution and troubles of the Quraysh increased in Mecca, the Prophet (P.B.U.H) ordered Muslims to go and settle in Abyssinia in the fifth year of the Prophethood. Although Abyssinia was a land under the authority of non-Muslims like Mecca, the rights of the minority people were protected there. Justice was established. A situation existed there similar to how Muslims today enjoy their rights and live safely in non-Muslim countries.

Thus, Muslims did not migrate to Abyssinia, where the Christian rule was in place, to seek protection, safety, and justice, but to obtain any other benefits. Islam did not prevent them from migrating from their homeland, the Holy Land of Mecca, to a Christian country - even if there was no obstacle to living in accordance with their religion there. Here, 'the guarantee of living' is considered the first principle.<sup>17</sup>

The *Sirah* explains that the second principle is that a Muslim should be loyal to the country he lives in and participate in the welfare of the country - even if it is a non-Muslim country. This is why the companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) who migrated to Abyssinia stayed there until they migrated to Medina. Some others returned to Medina after the conquest of Khaybar. Still others lived there for generations.<sup>18</sup> This shows that Muslims have lived in harmony with the country they live in.

Additionally, friendly correspondence was exchanged between the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and the Negus. The Negus was impressed by the way of life, culture, and customs of the Muslims. The Prophet (P.B.U.H) sent him two letters. Amr ibn Damiri carried them and handed them over to the King. Bayhaqi<sup>19</sup> explains that in one of the two letters, the Prophet (P.B.U.H) explained Islam to the king, and in the other, he asked him to marry Ummu Habiba. As a result, the Negus married Ummu Habiba to the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and gave her four hundred Dinars as charity.<sup>20</sup>

As a result of the excellent coexistence of the Muslims with the people of Abyssinia, the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and the Muslims expressed their joy and happiness when they heard the news of the Hijrah to Medina.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, the Negus king of Medina showed his support for the Muslims in the Battle of Badr.<sup>22</sup> Likewise, the Negus king sent the Prophet (P.B.U.H) many gifts such as a mule, a vessel, a glass vase, a gold ring, and shoes.<sup>23</sup> The Prophet (P.B.U.H) adorned his granddaughter Umama<sup>24</sup> with a gold ring and looked beautiful. Beyond these, the Muslims of Abyssinia fought alongside the Negus king as a sign of their loyalty to their country, which is an example of the highest nation-building work. Imam Ibn Hisham<sup>25</sup> states that when the Negus king defeated his enemy, the Muslims who had migrated also celebrated his victory and rejoiced.

### **The nation of Medina**

Allah commanded the Muslims to migrate to Medina. Although it was difficult for them to leave Mecca, they migrated to Medina to protect their religion, gain protection from their enemies' attacks, and build a better nation with the Muslims living in Medina.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Hamid al-Marakshi, *Fiqh of Citizenship Through the Lens of Prophetic Tradition and its Role in Understanding the Treats to Social Peace*, Journal of al-Buhus al-Ilmiyyah, Vol. 12, Iss. 4 (2020), p. 92.

<sup>18</sup> 'Ali Jum'a, *al-Namādhij al-arba'ah min hady al-Nabī ṣallā Allāh 'alayhi wa-sallam fī al-ta'āyush ma'a al-ākhar: al-usus wa-al-maqāṣid*. (al-Jizah: Dār al-Fārūq lil-Istithmārāt al-Thaqāfiyah, 2013). p. 23.

<sup>19</sup> Bayhaki, *Dalayil al-Nubuwwah*, Vol. 2, P. 188.

<sup>20</sup> Ibnu Hisham, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah*, Vol. 2, P. 645.

<sup>21</sup> Ali Jum'a, *al-Namazij*, P. 25.

<sup>22</sup> al-Suhayli, *al-rawd al-anf*, Vol. 2, p. 116.

<sup>23</sup> al-Bayhaki, No: 1394.

<sup>24</sup> Ibnu Majah: No: 3644.

<sup>25</sup> Ibnu Hisham, Vol. 1, p. 334-338.

<sup>26</sup> Hamid al-Marakshi, *Fiqh of Citizenship Through the Lens of Prophetic Tradition and its Role in Understanding the Treats to Social Peace*, Journal of al-Buhus al-Ilmiyyah, Vol. 12, Iss. 4 (2020), p. 104.

Thus, the Muslims who migrated to Medina became one citizen with the Muslims of Medina, who were influential in their strength and power. There, Jews, Christians, and polytheists lived with Muslims. The Jews lived with weapons and fortified castles. Among the Muslims, there were two distinct groups, the *Ansar* and the *Muhajirin*, and among the *Ansar*, there were the *Aws* and *Khazraj* branches on a tribal basis.

The Prophet (P.B.U.H), together with the citizens of Medina, paid great attention to building the nation of Medina. Researchers divide this into two. First, the Prophet (P.B.U.H) established healthy relations and brotherhood among the *Aws* and *Khazraj* tribes. Second, the Prophet (P.B.U.H) legally established respectable relations with the non-Muslims who lived loyal to the state of Medina. The 'Madinah Charter' is a good example of this. The 47 conditions contained in it have been recorded by Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah<sup>27</sup> based on many primary sources. Therefore, the brotherhood established by the Prophet (P.B.U.H) among all citizens is considered to be the second foundation of the state of Medina. In this way, the 'Madinah Charter' granted citizenship to every citizen. Peace, tranquility, and security were guaranteed to them. The duties, rights, and responsibilities of each citizen were defined as citizens of the country, whether they were *Ansars*, *Muhajirs*, *Aws*, *Khazraj*, Arabs, Muslims, or non-Muslims. It was guaranteed that a person would be brought before the law if he committed a mistake, regardless of his clan, and that peaceful coexistence would be established.<sup>28</sup> On this basis, all citizens living under the Madinah state were granted citizenship and this charter turned them into indispensable partners of the nation.

In this way, although Madinah was a place where the Hijrah was carried to seek security for religion, the basic system of Madinah was based on Islam as a substitute for the tribal system. The idea is that Islam recognized other communities and granted them the right to live in Madinah as citizens following the religion they believe in. In addition, matters such as the establishment of justice, social security, economic assistance, and coexistence were also guaranteed there. Generally, if a man wants to become a contributor to his nation, he must first be given his rights and be guaranteed security and justice. Otherwise, he will try to live as a third person in his own country or in the country he has settled in. This not only becomes a burden for the country but also a disaster. The Prophet (P.B.U.H) understood this very carefully and made efforts to make everyone a partner in the country. Here, the second foundation of the Madinah nation created by the Prophet (P.B.U.H) can be mentioned as the distribution of duties, rights, and responsibilities in a just manner.

Therefore, a Muslim should be a contributor to the nation he lives in, no matter where he lives. Islam emphasizes that he should be a beneficiary of the nation he lives in, no matter where he lives. Once, an old man from another country came to the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and asked permission to leave his country and people and come here to Madinah to live with the Prophet (P.B.U.H), the Prophet (P.B.U.H) said, "Narrated Abu Sa'id: Once a Bedouin came to the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and asked him about the migration. The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Mercy of Allah be on you! Migration is quite a difficult matter. Have you got some camels?" He replied in the affirmative. Then the Prophet (PBUH) said, "Do you give their Zakat?" He replied in the affirmative. The Prophet said, "Do you let others benefit by their milk gratis?" He replied in the affirmative. Then the Prophet asked, "Do you milk them on their watering days and give their milk to the poor and needy?" He replied in the affirmative. The Prophet said, "Go on doing like this from

<sup>27</sup> Muḥammad Ḥamīdullāh, *Majmū'at al-wathā'iq al-siyāsīya li al-'ahd al-nabawīyah wa al-Khilafah al-Rāshidah*, (Beirut: Dar al-Nafayis, 1985), p. 59-62.

<sup>28</sup> 'Abdul Amir Zahid & others, *Wasiqat al-Madinah Dirasat fi al-ta'sil al-Dusturi fi al-Islam*, (Beirut, Markaz al-Hadara, 2014), p.188.

beyond the seas, and there is no doubt that Allah will not overlook any of your good deeds."<sup>29</sup> Imam Nawawi clarifies this in detail in his commentary.<sup>30</sup> Here, a person's work for the country in which he lives and for human society is considered important. The following figure summarizes the models of nation-building according to Prophetic Experiences.



### Fundamentals of Nation Building

In the task of nation-building, the nation and its citizens are both important. Just as a good nation can create a good citizen, a good nation can be built by a cultured citizen. There is a close vertical relationship between these two. Similarly, the horizontal relationship between citizens also becomes important in nation-building. The state and citizens created by the Prophet (P.B.U.H) in the land of Medina are models for the work of building a good nation. Religion serves as the cornerstone of nation-building by establishing moral values, justice, and a shared sense of purpose. The Qur'an emphasizes the importance of governance based on divine guidance. By promoting unity, ethical governance, and social welfare, religion provides a framework that fosters stability and progress in nation-building efforts.

### Patriotism

It is natural for a man to love the land where he was born and lives. This is the first basis for nation-building. The Prophet (P.B.U.H) also loved the country where he was born and the country where he migrated. He expressed that love on necessary occasions. He also lived it in its practical form. When the Prophet (P.B.U.H) migrated to Medina, he looked at the land of Mecca and said, "How sweet of a land you are and how dear you are to me, and if it were not that my people expelled me from you, I would not have lived in other than you."<sup>31</sup> He expressed his love for his country by saying, "And after migrating to Medina, he transformed the land of Medina into a land of peace and economic prosperity. For this, he prayed as follows. "**A'isha said:** When God's messenger came to Medina Abu Bakr and Bilal were prostrated with fever and when I went to God's

<sup>29</sup> Sahih al-Bukhari 3923

<sup>30</sup> al-Nawawi, al-Minhaj Sharah Sahih Muslim, Vol. 13, p. 9.

<sup>31</sup> Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3926, English translation, Vol. 1, Book 46, Hadith 3926, accessed January 2, 2025, <https://sunnah.com/tirmidhi:3926>.

messenger and told him he said, "O God, make Medina as dear to us as Mecca, or more so, make it healthy, bless us in its soil and its mud, and transfer its fever and put it in al-Juhfa."<sup>32</sup>

Therefore, a Muslim should understand that there is nothing wrong with loving the country he lives in or expressing that love. But one should not go beyond the limits in expressing patriotism and sanctifying the country. Even when injustice is being done and rights are being violated, one should be careful not to use the slogan of 'patriotism' to defend the nation. 'Nation' is not just soil. Even though 'soil' is the geographical boundary of the nation, the people who enrich it are important. Patriotism is for enriching the country, but not for destroying the country and throwing it at the enemies.<sup>33</sup>

### **Relationship Between The Nation And The Citizen: Duties, Rights**

The 'Madinah Covenant', which was signed by the Prophet (PBUH) when he migrated to Medina, exemplifies the ideal relationship between the nation and its citizens. It brought together people of many races, religions, tribes, and languages, and clearly defined the duties and rights of everyone. Ali Juma' describes the essence of this charter as follows:

- (a) To ensure the security of all the citizens of Medina and to ensure harmony among them
- (b) To grant them the freedom to follow the religion of their choice
- (c) To provide equal opportunities for all citizens to participate in social, political, and military affairs
- (d) To affirm the principle of individual responsibility<sup>34</sup>

Therefore, wherever a Muslim lives, his rights and duties must be properly fulfilled when they are determined humanely. When justice and fairness are the criteria of the nation, he must obey even if it is a foreign government. He must serve the country loyally. He must protect the country from enemies. He must respect the laws of the country. The foundations of the nation created by the Prophet (P.B.U.H) in Medina were established as justice, trust, serving the nation, collectively defending the nation, equality in the use of national resources, fulfilling duties, and respecting and abiding by the laws.<sup>35</sup>

### **Relationship between Citizens: Coexistence**

When it is said 'nation-building', it means not only the vertical relationship between the nation and its citizens but also the horizontal relationship between the citizens of the same nation. The nation of Medina, founded by the Prophet (P.B.U.H), had a pluralistic social structure with various identities based on religion, race, color, language, and region. There were the *Muhajirin* of the people and the *Ansar* from the *Aws-Khazraj* tribes. Although they all were Muslims, they were also inhabited by people like Quraysh and Kifari based on race and tribe, and by region by people like Yemen, Persia, Rome, and Abyssinia. Among the non-Muslims, there were polytheists from the *Aws-Khazraj* tribes and Jews like Banu Qaynuqa, Banu Nazir, and Banu Qurayda. In addition, many other Arabs and slaves lived in Medina. Here, the Prophet (P.B.U.H) established a high level of brotherhood and tolerance with all of them as his citizens. He also lived in the practical version of what he employed.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Bukhari and Muslim, Mishkat al-Masabih 2734, accessed January 2, 2025, <https://sunnah.com>

<sup>33</sup> Hamid al-Marakshi, Fiqh of Citizenship Through the Lens of Prophetic Tradition and its Role in Understanding the Treats to Social Peace, Journal of al-Buhus al-Ilmiyyah, Vol. 12, Iss. 4 (2020), p. 104.

<sup>34</sup> 'Ali Jum'a, Namazij, p. 44.

<sup>35</sup> Hamid al-Marakshi, Fiqh of Citizenship Through the Lens of Prophetic Tradition and its Role in Understanding the Treats to Social Peace, Journal of al-Buhus al-Ilmiyyah, Vol. 12, Iss. 4 (2020), p. 105.

<sup>36</sup> Munir Mubarkiyah, Mafhum al-Muwatanah fi al-Dawlah al-Dimuqratiyah al-Mu'aSirah, (Beirut: Markaz Dirasat al-Wahda al-'Arabiyyah, 2013), p. 10.



The 'Madinah Covenant' was the first in human history to confirm the legal recognition of coexistence. It strengthened human relations by opposing injustice and oppression. Imara,<sup>37</sup> who studied this, states that the 'Madinah Covenant' is the first social, political, and religious agreement that accepted the others living in one nation, considered them as part of them, and defined their duties and rights.'

Thus, religious freedom, the right to life, wealth, and protection of honor were guaranteed to all the citizens of Medina. Because 'the basic relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims - as long as they want peace - is peace. The principles of truth, justice, cooperation in good deeds, striving for the welfare of humanity, and removing evil from human society are the most important principles that the Islamic State calls for.'<sup>38</sup> Sheikh al-Ghazali states that this Medina Covenant openly declares that Muslims are ready to cooperate sincerely with the Jews living there to spread peace in the land of Medina and to oppose those who violate it and cause chaos, regardless of their religious background.<sup>39</sup>

Therefore, the Prophet (P.B.U.H) invited the people and kings living outside Medina to a peace dialogue. He sent letters and ambassadors to convey the message of Islam. He invited them all to peaceful coexistence. Similarly, he maintained good relations with the Christians of Najran who visited Medina from outside. He allowed them to perform their religious rituals in the Prophet's Mosque.<sup>40</sup> Similarly, the Prophet's act of forgiving<sup>41</sup> and freeing the people who opposed him tortured his companions and expelled him and his companions from their homeland during the 'Conquest of Mecca' promises the highest level of coexistence. Yusuf al-Qaradawi, who has examined all the above events, states the following:

"The basic idea of coexistence in Islam is that a Muslim should give a person his 'human dignity',<sup>42</sup> regardless of his religion, race, or color. This dignity belongs to every human being. It is also in the arrangement of Allah (SWT)<sup>43</sup> that people adopt different religions. He has given those who want the right and freedom to follow the religion they want.<sup>44</sup> A Muslim is not responsible for the disbelief of an unbeliever. A Muslim will not be punished for the misguidance of a person. This is not his right. This world is not the place for it. His judgment is with Allah (SWT) on the Day of Judgment... Allah (SWT) commands justice, loves justice, and calls people to high morals. Even if they are polytheists. Allah (SWT) hates injustice. He will punish the wrongdoer even if he is a Muslim. This is the deep belief of Muslims."<sup>45</sup>

### **Welfare of the Nation**

Before the arrival of the Prophet (P.B.U.H), the land of Medina was an unknown land on the world map. Tribal wars and ethnic conflicts were prevalent in the Arabian Peninsula. Interest was rampant in the economy. Family life was in tatters. Women's rights were denied. People were addicted to drugs. Justice, honesty, brotherhood, and equality were completely uprooted, and injustice and war were widespread. The strong lived by suppressing the weak. The spirit of revenge was ingrained in their blood. They

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<sup>37</sup> Muhammad Imara, *Fiqh al-Hadara al-Islamiyah*, p.144.

<sup>38</sup> Mustafa al-Sibayi, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah*: Durus wa 'Ibar, p.76.

<sup>39</sup> Ghazzaly, *Fiqh al-Sirah*, (Dimashq: Dar al-Qalam, n.d), p. 194.

<sup>40</sup> Muḥammad Ḥamīdullāh, *Majmū'at al-wathā'iq al-siyāsīya li al-'ahd al-nabawīyah wa al-Khilafah al-Rāshidah*, (Beirut: Dar al-Nafayis, 1985), p. 188-189.

<sup>41</sup> Ibnu Hisham, Vol. 2, p.412.

<sup>42</sup> al-Quran, Surah al-Isra: 07.

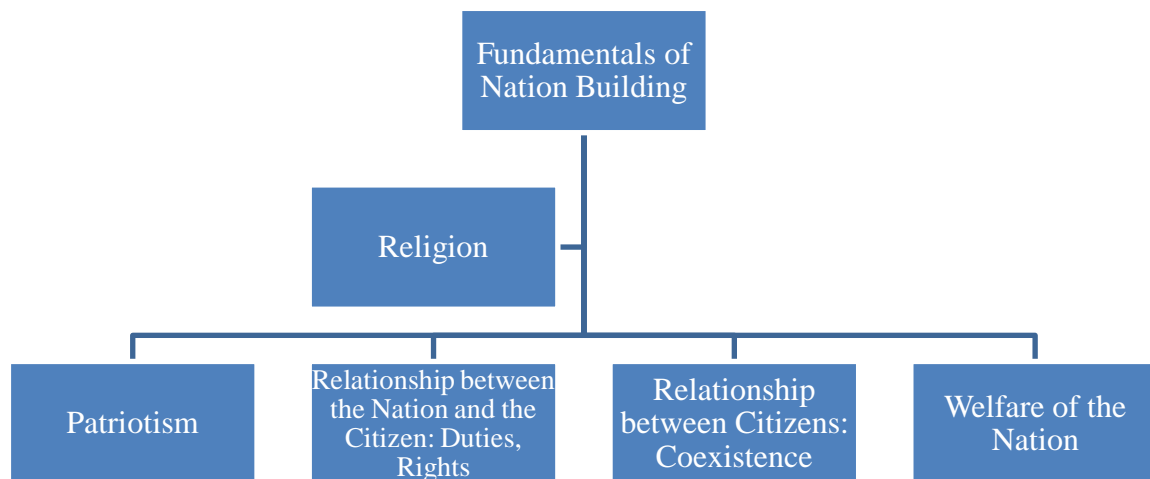
<sup>43</sup> al-Quran, Surah Hud: 118.

<sup>44</sup> al-Quran, Surah al-Kahf: 29.

<sup>45</sup> Yousuf al-Qaradawi, *al-Aqalliyyat al-Diniyyah wa al-Hal al-Islami*, (al-Qahirah: Maktabah al-Wahba, 1996), P. 42-22.

lived as corrupt human beings.<sup>46</sup> It was in this situation that the Prophet (P.B.U.H) appeared and started his contribution to nation-building from the land of Medina. He became a participant in the social transformation process, not a spectator. Through this, he transformed the land of Medina into a model and civilized country.

When the Prophet (P.B.U.H) went to Medina, he brought about changes in its social, economic, family, and political system. Protecting the community from injustice and utilizing national resources appropriately are among the '*Imarah*' and '*Khilafah*' tasks that a Muslim must perform in this world. That is why the Prophet (P.B.U.H) first changed the name of Medina. He established al-Masjid al-Nabawi. He conducted a population census. He created the Medina Covenant for the benefit of the nation. He used the mosque for the development of education. He strengthened social relations. He created market opportunities. He provided health guidelines to maintain the healthiness of the people. He built a well-structured nation. There, people of all races and religions, without distinction, received rights, performed duties, and breathed freedom. Overall, as a result, a civilized society with security and peace was formed on earth. The Prophet (P.B.U.H) and Muslims considered this a high debt of gratitude to the nation in which they lived.<sup>47</sup> The following figure summarizes the idea of the fundamentals of Nation Building.



## CONCLUSION

In contemporary secular societies, where the separation of religion and state is prevalent, Islamic principles often face challenges in shaping nation-building processes due to the perception of their limited relevance to modern socio-political environments. However, the *Sirah* of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) provides timeless nation-building models that address core principles of coexistence, justice, and societal welfare, which remain pertinent even today. The Prophet's strategies in Mecca, Abyssinia, and Medina offer diverse paradigms that align with the Quranic ideals of '*Imarah*' (constructive development) and '*Khilafah*' (stewardship). In Mecca, the emphasis on spiritual resilience and moral rectitude established a foundation for individual and collective identity. In

<sup>46</sup> al-Qaradawi, al-Shariah al-Islamiyah Salihat li Kulli Zaman wa Makan, Beirut: al-maktab al-Islami, 1987, p. 18-38, Ashker Aroos & Mazahir, Islamic Shariah Law: Necessity and Feasibility, Colombo: Islamic Book House, 2014, p. 15-27.

<sup>47</sup> 'Abdul Aziz Bin Ibrahim al-Umari, Binaul Muftam al-Madani Wa Tanmiyatuhu Fi al-*Sirah* al-Nabwiyya, Riyadh: Dar Kunuz Ishbiliya, 2015.

Abyssinia, the Prophet's diplomacy highlighted coexistence and the importance of mutual respect in minority contexts. In Medina, the establishment of the Constitution of Medina (Sahifat al-Madina) set a precedent for inclusive governance, citizenship, and interfaith cooperation, forming a prototype for pluralistic societies. This study underscores that the Prophet's (P.B.U.H) approaches are not merely historical milestones but practical frameworks that can guide Muslims in contemporary nation-building. The principles of patriotism, coexistence, contribution to societal welfare, and adherence to duties and rights provide actionable insights for Muslims to harmonize their religious obligations with their roles as citizens. These principles foster a sense of unity and shared responsibility, promoting a holistic approach to societal development.

A 'nation' is a geographically bounded territory. It can be the land where one was born and raised or the land where one migrates. Even though multi-ethnic communities live in that area, differing in race, color, language, and religion, they are considered one family in the sense of 'nation'. In this way, it is not misconduct in the eyes of Islam for a Muslim to love the country he lives in or to participate in the work of nation-building. But they should fulfill their duties and rights properly and maintain good relations with their fellow citizens. Muslims should become an indispensable force in the development of the nation. There are many examples of this in Prophetic *Sirah*. Through the Muslims demonstrate such examples in their words and deeds, they could give credit to Islam. This study establishes that nation-building is included in the tasks of '*Imarah*' and '*Khilafah*' that Muslims must fulfill in the world. By integrating the *Sirah*'s nation-building strategies with modern governance models, Muslims can effectively contribute to the societies they inhabit, bridging the gap between Islamic teachings and contemporary nation-building practices. This alignment not only enhances the relevance of Islamic principles in secular contexts but also affirms their universal applicability in addressing the complexities of modern socio-political challenges.

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