Islamic Public Administration – A Brief Introduction Essay, Research Paper

Islamic concept of Public Administration:

The Shariah prescribes directives for the regulation of our individual as well as collective lives.

These directives affect such varied subjects as religious rituals, personal character, morals, habits, family relationships, social and economic affairs, administration, the rights and duties of citizens, the judicial system, the laws of war and peace and international relations.

It tells us various aspects like what is good and bad; what is beneficial and useful; what is injurious and harmful; what are the virtues, which we have to cultivate and encourage; and what are the evils, which we have to suppress & guard against. What is the sphere of our voluntary, personal and social action and what are its limits; and, finally, what methods we can adopt to establish a dynamic order of society and what methods we should avoid.

The Shariah is a complete way of life and an all-embracing social order.

Another remarkable feature of the Shariah is that it is an organic whole. The same spirit animates the entire way of life propounded by Islam and hence any arbitrary division of the scheme is bound to affect the spirit as well as the structure of the Islamic order.

In this respect, it might be compared to the human body. A leg separated from the body cannot be called one-eighth or one-sixth man, because after its separation from the body the leg cannot perform its function. Neither, can it be implanted in the body of some other animal with the aim of making it human. Likewise, we cannot form a correct judgment about the utility, efficiency and beauty of the hand, the eye or the nose of a human being outside the context of their place and function within the living body.

The same can be said about the scheme of life envisaged by the Shariah.

Islam signifies a complete way of life, which cannot be split up into separate parts. Consequently, it is neither appropriate to consider the different parts of the Shariah in isolation, nor to take any particular part and bracket it with any other ‘ism’. The Shariah can function smoothly only if one’s whole life is lived in accordance with it.

Legislation should be within the limits prescribed by Shariah. No legislative body can alter or modify the injunctions of Allah and his Prophet, which must be accepted and obeyed.

In Islam the judiciary is not placed under the control of the executive. It derives its authority directly from Allah and is answerable to Allah.

Islam stands for equality and adheres to this principle in the social, economic and political realms alike.

Keeping in view the above characteristics, the public administration should have persons who have the confidence of majority of people, in respect of knowledge and grasp of the spirit of Islam. They can retain office as long as they enjoy the confidence of the people and must resign, if they lose trust in him/ her.

The attribute of fear of Allah should be present. All organs and functionaries of the government should come within their jurisdiction.

Public administrators should be able and virtuous, and endowed with the quality of statesmanship.