

Even with Record Hurricanes, America Refuses to Face Climate Change

News:

The United States is facing record-sized hurricanes that have intensified because of climate change. According to the NPR:

Hurricane Irma is hovering somewhere between being the most- and second-most powerful hurricane recorded in the Atlantic. It follows Harvey, which dumped trillions of gallons of water on South Texas. And now, Hurricane Jose is falling into step behind Irma, and gathering strength.

...Scientists are quick to point out that Harvey and Irma would have been big storms before the atmosphere and oceans started warming dramatically about 75 years ago. But now storms are apt to grow bigger. That's because the oceans and atmosphere are, on average, warmer now than they used to be. And heat is the fuel that takes garden-variety storms and supercharges them.

Meanwhile, its politicians, particularly in the ruling Republican Party, refuse to accept that climate change is caused by man, or even that climate change exists. Meanwhile, according to CNN:

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt told CNN in an interview about Hurricane Irma on Thursday that the time to talk about climate change isn't now.

Comment:

It is not only the case that climate change is really happening, as Western scientists acknowledge; it must also be accepted that it is the Western Capitalist economic system that is fully responsible for climate change, through uncontrolled industrialisation feeding off of the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources, and the releasing of unprecedented levels of pollution into the air, water, and soil destroying both health to living things and the environment.

Even before climate change, the Capitalist economic system proved to be a uniquely destructive force that brought misery to hundreds of millions through the worldwide colonialist exploitation of labour and resources; economic colonialism continues at full force despite the formal disbanding of Western empires. The vast riches of this exploitation only accrue to the Western elite; the poor in the West work gruellingly long hours but remain under heavy personal debt despite a standard of living that is extraordinarily minimal compared to the Western elite. It is a materialistic life of beguiling artificiality where everything is mundanely pleasant to the sight but painfully bitter to the taste.

Islam is not opposed to the market system. Indeed, Islamic scholarship has discussed supply-demand effects over a thousand years ago, as Islam prohibits government interference in pricing, leaving this to market determination alone. However, Capitalism's mistake is to confuse market principles with economic

freedom, which Islam is indeed fully opposed to. Man must live his life not according to the principle of freedom but according to the principle of responsibility. Allah (swt) says in Surah Al-Baqarah: ﴿وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً﴾ **“And when your Lord said to the angels, we are going to put in the Earth a Khalifah.”** [2:30]

A ‘khalifah’ is responsible for what has been left to him, whether this term is used for the head of state, or individual men and women.

He (swt) also says: ﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾ **“I did not create jinn and man expect to worship me.”** [51:56]

Man is not free to do as he pleases in this world. Man must act responsibly towards all that he has been given, whether in the environment, or within his own self, and he will be accounted for all this.

The Western concept of freedom, in contrast, unleashes all of the desires of man without motivating self-restraint. The greed of the powerful, the resourceful, the intelligent then proves too strong for Western systems to contain; indeed these man-made systems become enslaved to the elite, their laws crafted in accordance with elite interests.

Among Western countries, America is particularly troubled by discussion of climate change, as can be seen in US President Donald Trump’s rejection of the Paris Climate Agreement. The reason for this is the heavy dependence of the American capitalist elite on oil wealth, and their fear that discussion of climate change threatens this. Economic power is not merely a consequence of domestic productivity; it is strongly linked to control over natural resources. Disruption of the oil industry strikes at the foundation of American economic power. The previous commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement under Obama came only after he had reshaped ongoing discussions to call for voluntary efforts only, while also sharing the burden for solving climate change more widely amongst other countries of the world. However, even this much diluted agreement was rejected by Trump.

The world has been dominated by Capitalism and the secular liberal West only for the last two centuries or so. Yet, this ideology has succeeded in spreading corruption of every form imaginable throughout every corner of the world, while their propaganda would have you believe that man has never achieved the level of progress that exists today.

By Allah’s permission, the return is imminent of the Islamic Khilafah State (Caliphate) on the method of the Prophet (saw), under which man will again be motivated to act with responsible self-restraint towards himself, his fellow man, and his natural environment, employing progress in technology to deliver widespread prosperity for all as happened under the Khilafah state of the past.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Faiq Najah