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Mobilizing People's power

Dedicated to American Ideals, a progressive and politically stable Pakistan, and strong US-Pakistan relations.

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Community Integration & Civic Promotion

Community integration, promoting the concept of citizenship, and highlighting pathways to achieve the "American Dream."

When successful, community integration and civic promotion begin with the individual and then advance collectively, usually through socialization with informal groups and professional and cultural associations and with the support of Federal, State, and municipal programs. However, due to regional, organizational, and programmatic differences, the catalytic potential of civil society organizations often goes underutilized. Such organizations have the capability, as well as a responsibility, to enhance the process of community integration and identify supplemental methods and frameworks to advance government and nongovernmental efforts to integrate new communities within American society.

INDUS — Mobilizing People's Power convened several local associations in January 2016, highlighting this need. We are pleased to announce the Community Integration & Civic Promotion program. It is our effort to facilitate and deepen community integration, promote the concept of U.S. citizenship, and highlight

pathways to realize the “American Dream.”

INDUS — Mobilizing People’s Power (www.induspk.org) is a Washington, D.C.-registered 501(c)3 tax-exempt think tank and advocacy group dedicated to a progressive and politically stable Pakistan, strong U.S.-Pakistan relations and community integration and civic promotion in the United States. INDUS has no political affiliations in the United States or political ambitions in Pakistan.



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Keeping Faith Where it Belongs

Athar Javaid, President of INDUS

According to the American poet Robert Penn Warren, “History cannot give us a program for the future, but it can give us a fuller understanding of ourselves and our common humanity, so that we can better face the future.”

As concerns religious history, Warren’s words suggest that the followers of major faiths might learn from the periods of pointless religious war and become enabled to keep religion from the affairs of state and public governance. If mankind had struck a balance between worshipping the creator and service to humanity, as intended by each and every faith, for all the centuries gone by, the world today would be no less than a Paradise.

The Muslim world tells a tragic story. The majority of Muslim states are not only rife with contrasting sectarian beliefs but are also consumed by the desire to legislate Islam, ignorant of the fact that differences have persisted from the first century of Islam. Just like any other major religion, the ingrained and inherent diversity among believers renders any religion impossible to legislate for the purposes of public governance and nation building.

What is more surprising is the fact that Muslims have forsaken the fundamental tenets of Islam (Rights of the individual and Huqooq Al Ibaad along with Huqooq Allah) and drowned themselves in meaningless interpretations of faith, rituals, and complex belief systems.

Today, from Iraq to Indonesia and from Bahrain to Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, there is not one Muslim country where sectarian strife does not pose a threat to the peace and stability of Muslim civilizations, to people’s ability to progress and prosper on a footing comparable to other nations.

It is time for Muslims to begin a deep self-examination.

In the Arabic newspaper Al-Mada, Iraqi writer [Adnan Hussein offered a suggestion](#): We must overhaul the educational system. In a piece published just two days after the Paris attacks on Nov. 13, he said that from elementary school through university, our young people are taught — sometimes with a stick — that Islam is not only great, but also better than other religions, and that those who are not like us belong in hell. What has emerged, he wrote, is a “savage faith that stirs up decapitation, spills blood, and instigates plunder and rape.” As for the real Islam, he lamented: “It has no place in our lives, or in the best of cases, it has a barely audible voice that almost nobody hears.”

On the same day, celebrated Lebanese writer and editor of the Al-Hayat newspaper [Ghassan Charbel wrote](#) that, to rescue itself, the Arab and Muslim world must participate in the struggle against Islamism. Charbel called for shutting down platforms of hate and said the Middle East needs to undertake “a deep re-examination” of its society. He called for “universities, schools, mosques, TV and electronic sites to reclaim their platforms from that handful” of destructive ideologues who control them. “What threatens the Arab and Islamic world today,” he said, “is no less dangerous than the threat that Nazism posed to Europe.”

Similarly, Yasmine Bahrani, a professor of journalism at American University in Dubai, [wrote in a recent Washington Post op-ed](#) that people in the West, where many blame Islam itself, and people in the Middle East, who struggle with violence in their everyday lives, both desperately want to understand the root cause of the carnage. Many Arab and Muslim writers blame Iran and Israel; others point to the West’s policies in the Middle East and the Muslim world. But more self-critical voices have arisen as well. Such writers are asking Middle Easterners to examine their institutions and society more broadly, to assess its share of responsibility for ongoing violence.

Ms. Bahrani’s students are already doing as much. After asking them whether French and British policies gave Islamism an entrée into isolated Muslim communities, nearly all of her students rejected that premise, arguing that immigrants were responsible for their own actions, whether isolated or not. “Why then,” she asked them, “don’t Muslims march in the streets of London, Paris and New York loudly condemning the Islamic State?” Because, the students answered, “Mainstream Muslims are too scared that the extremists would come after them.”

All faith and belief systems, from Judaism to Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Bahais or Jains have their origins in the fundamentals of humanity, compassion and respect for rights of the individual. All religions, including Islam, clearly outline that excesses in our dealings with fellow human beings and other creatures can only be pardoned by the victims of such behavior. God will not intervene; everyone is left completely accountable for his or her own actions toward fellow human beings and other creatures.

Since the beginning of recorded history (c. 3100 BCE), humanity and the world have struggled with faith mongering and religion. How much blood shed and destruction has humanity had to face, justified by differences in religious beliefs and faith since the [Mesopotamian city-states](#), [conquest](#) of [Canaan](#) by the [Israelites](#) in the [Book of Joshua](#), the [Muslim conquests](#) of the 7th and 8th centuries, and the [Christian Crusades](#) (11th to 13th centuries) and European [Wars of Religion](#) (16th and 17th centuries)?

Unfortunately, the only solution that religious leaders and devotees have created for inter-religious conflict is the concept and practice of “Interfaith Relations,” which is as old as religion itself. And despite strong expressions of support from dignitaries throughout the ages, it has solved little and – in terms of creating universal peace, understanding and respect – achieved less.

Instead, if everyone were to keep their faith where it belongs – within themselves – then all religious faiths, in combination, can effect greater world peace through the common efforts of all, irrespective of race, color or religious denomination.

Whatever your faith means to you and whatever its profound impact on your life, behavior, social, and monetary dealings, worship and spiritual solace – whether bowing to God’s will and commandments is your chosen way of life for here and the hereafter – please remember: your faith is a very powerful tool. And like all powerful tools, its practice requires skill and the utmost sensitivity to avoid the slightest intrusion or imposition upon others.

Then and only then can centuries-old inter- and intra-religious conflict be rendered obsolete, affording the chance to remake our world and global community as a miniature version of the promised paradise.

**God created mankind for
compassion and service to humanity**

**As opposed to His vast creation in
His dévot worship at all times**

دردِ دل کے واسطے پیدا کیا انسان کو
ورنہ طاعت کے لئے کچھ کم نہ تھے کریمیان



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MEDIA REVIEW

Religious narratives and practice

Zubair Torwali

"The dominant discourse among the majority of Pakistanis is now overwhelmingly religious while the true practice of religion has long since faded away. Political Islam has generated this discourse, often wrapped in ignorance, while 'modernity' has given birth to an extreme form of avarice among common Muslims." The shift of religion from the private to the public sphere has created a situation that facilitates religious and ethnic divides throughout the country. [[DailyTimes](#)]

The head scarf, modern Turkey, and me

Elif Batuman

A Turkish-American author reflects on her time in Turkey and the growing dichotomy within the country between Westernized and secular elites in Istanbul and Ankara and the more pious Muslim middle and lower-middle classes of Anatolia. [[NewYorker](#)]

Afghanistan-Pakistan: Obama Needs to Urgently Rethink-Analysis

Seema Sirohi

"A resurgent Taliban has turned a hopeful declaration by the Obama administration into a premature one. The levels of U.S. troops stationed in Afghanistan, currently at 9,800, are expected to increase as a result. But with more than half a trillion dollars spent trying to stabilize the problem, perhaps it's time to rethink the Af-Pak region." [[EurasiaReview](#)]

US Commission on Civil Rights Appoints Maryland State Advisory Committee Members

Zainab Chaudry is the first Muslim to be appointed to Maryland State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR). "USCCR is an independent, bipartisan agency that was established by Congress in 1957 to focus on matters of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, or national origin. It is charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights matters, studying civil rights issues, and issuing federal civil rights enforcement report." [[USCCR](#) / [Facebook](#)]

Pakistan's Risk Surges to One-Year High Amid Global Turmoil

Fareeh Mangi and Divya Patel

Following a reduction in the number of terrorist attacks Pakistan has begun to increase investor interest in the country. However, since a majority of Pakistan's outstanding debt is due to mature in 2016, there is a worry that the country might default on its debt.

[[Bloomberg](#)]

A faith hijacked

Irfan Husain

From fatwas barring Muslims from playing chess and practicing yoga to edicts that prevent girls from receiving formal education or using a cell phone, Muslim clerics all around the world seem to have their priorities skewed. Instead of looking to the economic and political development of the Muslim world the clergy seem to have "hijacked" the faith to perpetuate an oppressive interpretation of an inherently progressive faith. [[Dawn](#)]

30 Years an [North] American

Affad Shaikh

Caught between two worlds, the author analyzes the feelings of belonging and isolation inherent to the immigrant experience. Perceived as an outsider in his country of birth and unwelcomed in his country of citizenship, a Pakistani-American is left to wonder: Where do I belong? [[AffadShaikh](#)]

Islamicide: How the Mullah Mafia Is Destroying Pakistan

Maajid Nawaz

The growing hegemony of the clergy in Pakistan is perpetuating oppressive and destructive values across the country. "Their definition of blasphemy gets broader and broader, starting with a direct insult; yet now encompassing 'heretical' sects such as Shia and Ahmedis; and, wider still, being deployed to protect pedophilia." However, within this milieu of violence, the ordinary Pakistani citizen calling for change is a glimmer of hope. [[DailyBeast](#)]

MIT and Harvard Graduates Helping Pakistani Farmers to Make Big Money

Sonia Motwani

Five graduates from MIT and Harvard banded together to find a technological solution to a pressing social problem. They started Ricult, a U.S.-based startup that aims to help farmers "use a virtual market place to reduce information asymmetry and work their way out of poverty." [[Pixr8](#)]

Pakistan Climbs Up IT Ladder, Catches Global Attention

The Citizen Bureau

Pakistan's IT sector "is carving out a niche for itself." Pakistan has managed to climb up market ranks to become the No. 3 country for supplying freelance programmers, behind only the United States and India. "And while constraints such as bureaucracy, shortage of land/space for offices, power shortages, etc. remain a challenge, they are offset by positives – most importantly cost. "Overall, entrepreneurs in Pakistan as well as the world watching them are optimistic, and rightfully so." [[TheCitizen](#)]

Pakistani scientist develops device to diagnose cancer early

News Desk

Samir Iqbal, a Pakistani electrical engineer at the University of Texas at Arlington, "has developed a new cancer cell detection method that will be able to improve early diagnosis of cancer." The device, which tracks cellular behavior in real time has the potential to identify cancer cells before they metastasize, increasing the likelihood of survival. [[Tribune](#)]

Pakistani startup Sukoon closes seed investment round from multiple investors

Asra Rizwan

"Sukoon, a Karachi based online home repair company, has successfully closed its seed investment round and has become the highest valued startup from The Nest i/o as well as the highest valued online company dealing in home improvement, repair and maintenance services in Pakistan." "The company is an online, one-stop solution for hiring highly skilled and background verified home repair workers (electricians, plumbers, masons, carpenters and painters)." [[TechJuice](#)]

OUR FOCUS

Youth Leadership Development

Creating campus-based, strictly nonpolitical Student Government Associations that offer Executive, Legislative & Judiciary functions experience within the campus environment. Elected student representatives, as Members of Parliament, Senators and judges manage all aspects of student affairs, in conjunction with campus administration.

Pakistan Civil Liberties Union

Civil liberties are personal guarantees and freedoms that the government cannot abridge, either by law or by judicial interpretation. However in today's Pakistan, rising violence, intolerance, weak rule of law, endemic corruption, lack of social and economic justice, and religious freedom, social exclusion of the vulnerable and the marginalized are a common phenomenon that the people of Pakistan face on a daily basis. Pakistan Civil Liberties Union – PCLU is a watchdog organization intended to combat all the above issues at every cross section of our society.

Community Integration & Civic Promotion

When successful, the processes of community integration and civic promotion begin with the individual and, alongside support from Federal, State, and municipal programs, advance collectively, often through socialization with informal groups and professional and cultural associations. However, due to regional, organizational, and programmatic differences, the catalytic potential of civil society organizations is underutilized.

Partnerships with local, regional, and national civil society organizations will advance community integration, promote the concept of citizenship, and highlight pathways to achieve the “American Dream.”

Policy Research – As It Happens

Campus-based political and social sciences research. Graduate Student and Faculty focusing on policy issues for possible social, cultural, and political reform, followed by advocacy action and awareness creation by the same researchers for the purposes of legislative reform as appropriate.

Cultivating Early Awareness

Aimed at increasing youngsters’ awareness of rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and building a national bond at a very impressionable age, leading to real benefits to the nation in evolving future leadership.

As always, thank you for reading, and thank you for your efforts. If you have questions or comments, or desire to participate in any way, please don't hesitate to contact us at induspk.usa@gmail.com.

Registration and tax-deductible donations can be made through our website: www.induspk.org



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