

# Election Khutba

## **Vote: Stand up and be counted**

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Election 2019 is near and I wanted to make few points from Muslim perspective.

### **Why should we participate?**

The Muslim community is diverse. Comprising of several generations, some Muslims have been here since late fifties, while others have only arrived within the past few decades and some even couple of years back. Regardless, whether immigrant or British born, each individual understands our wants, our needs, our reservations, our frustrations and our issues. Because of global policies some may have develop anger and mistrust.

### **Muslim Vote Matters**

Even if your vote has zero impact on current election then still you have to vote as your vote will determine how much is the strength of Muslim community in this area and then may be in the next election political parties will consider and think about Muslim issues and choosing Muslim candidates.

One of the reasons why voter turnout is lower in Muslim communities is a general lack of belief that their vote makes any difference. There is a sense of disempowerment and one of the things we have to do is to give people a sense of belief that their vote matters.

### **Verdict on vote**

### **Elections are not a battle between Islam and Disbelief.**

Living in a civilised society vote is a democratic right and most powerful tool to gain political success.

Voting is not only acceptable in Islam but it is a duty and it is an obligation to protect of our own rights and also the rights of others. "Almost all major Muslim organisations say it is a civic obligation for us to participate in the electoral process because we have an opportunity to make our societies better, not just for Muslims but for everyone."

### **Why don't we vote?**

Unfortunately, there is a propaganda campaign about our religion which has tarnished our belonging and identity as a community, and allowed alienation and stopped us towards integration and positive contribution to this country. They are painting all Muslims with the same brush. There is a danger that Muslims will be cut out of the society and go further away from the process of integration. The language of radicalism,

extremism, Islamism and so forth is creating an environment where there is less and less space for Muslim community to express their legitimate views. This is very worrying.

### **Why should we vote?**

Voting, and becoming politically active, is a step in transforming from a dead community to a proactive one.

### **What happens after you vote?**

We also must understand that the process of change will take time, and our community needs to abandon the idea of instant results. We should work with patience in order to get community benefits. We have to integrate in the society to get better future for our young generation. Success and equality are long and hard goals and we will have to work for them continuously. By doing this we may be able to resolve issues of racism, hate crimes Islamophobia, poverty, unfair treatment, discrimination at work and businesses etc. We as a community need to get out of this mentality that we can sit around and wait and things will change.

**Two Options.** Sit a side and get annoyed

or

get involved and engaged in the political process.

### **Important point**

Forget all arguments that why we should vote. Just keep one thing in your mind, if you will not take part in elections then fascist parties will make their room and will win but if you contest you may stop such Islamophobic organisation from gaining power.

Finally, I would like to say that just because we as Muslims should participate in the democratic system, our community **needs to work with the system and not against the system.**

Alhamdulillah majority of Muslims are law abiding Citizens. In addition to this, we need to become active in our community, using our abilities, and our morality to do the good and forbid the evil within the limits of the law. As Muslims, we believe that we have the best moral values within our religion so it is our responsibility to spread that moral values beyond our Masajid into communities. We can't do this by just sitting around and complaining about our government, **we should support the people and organisations who support and serve the Muslim community whether they are Muslims or not Muslims.**

Malcolm X has famously said, "You are either part of the problem or part of the solution", and we as Muslims need to be part of the solution and should not be part of the problem.

Britain is a great country and we are proud to be citizens of this country. This country gives us the best opportunity to earn halal earnings for ourselves for our families and children and even we support our relatives and poor families in our home countries.

### **Muslim Issues**

**Please note that we are living in this country as a minority. We are not a majority in this country but some time our demands are like that we are a majority. So let's be realistic.**

- to measure and to tackle Islamophobia and hate crime.
- issues of racism, hate crimes, poverty, unfair treatment, discrimination at work and businesses, Discrimination in education system.
- Other concerns include the disproportionate impact of some laws on the Muslim communities.
- We highlight a range of issues affecting British Muslims. They are by no means exhaustive. In essence, we seek a compassionate and caring society, one where no groups are left behind through disadvantage and discrimination. We want a society that is vibrant and successful.

### **Our responsibility**

Living in any society, we have obligations and responsibilities. We should actively take part in the British democratic system to protect our own rights.

**I would request everyone to cast your vote, stand up and be counted. I am not asking you to vote for a specific party or candidate. This is your choice and your decision.**