

The Raging Fire of **XENOPHOBIA**



The savage & barbaric xenophobic attacks of the last few days in South Africa is a source of national embarrassment to the country. We hang our heads in shame. This act surely presents a very negative image of our country globally.

The xenophobic attacks are also a cause of grave concern for every single person in this country. How can the looting, maiming, injuring and killing of foreigners be justified in a constitutional democracy such as ours? The foreigners, mainly refugees who fled their own strife torn countries, were the people who supported our liberation struggle against the oppressive apartheid government and helped to free our country. Today, when it is our turn to assist them, we have reciprocated their hospitality by attacking them and driving them out of our areas.

Factors:

Undoubtedly, there are underlying factors that have contributed to the simmering tensions between locals and foreigners. However no amount of justification can legitimise the savage attacks that occurred.

However, the underlining causes need to be urgently addressed as the frustration and disenchantment stems from these. Factors such as unemployment, poverty, poor living conditions, the rising cost of basic commodities, etc. are matters of grave concern and need to be addressed urgently.

Action required:

1. The government must be commended for announcing a conference to address this issue. This should be an urgent priority. Muslims should participate and play a meaningful role in the conference & the initiatives that will be proposed.
2. Muslim NGO's and charitable organisations need to step up and intensify their welfare activities so that the crippling poverty and other contributing factors can be alleviated. Muslim businesses & the Muslim community should donate generously for this cause.
3. Every citizen has to bring about a change in attitude towards foreigners and not to view them negatively, despite the involvement of a small percentage of them in criminal activities. It is not fair to generalise against all because of the actions of a few.
4. The business community should not exploit foreigners as cheap labour and thereby exclude locals from employment opportunities.
5. Whilst the country is in the midst of a crisis, it is of paramount importance that we increase in our Aa'maal. Muslims are urged to repent sincerely from all sins, to make Taubah and Istighfaar, return to Islamic teachings, give Sadaqah (charity) and engage in fervent Duas. Yaseen Khatm & Aayate-Karimah should be arranged at Masajid, Madaris, etc.

-May Allah have mercy and protect one and all-

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