

Every Intoxicant is Khamr (Wine) and every Intoxicant is Forbidden

News:

On May 22, 2024, through an executive order, Mombasa Governor Abdul Swamad Shariff Nassir banned the entry, distribution, sale, and consumption of muguka (a variety of the popular stimulant known as Khat or Miraa) or its products in Mombasa. A similar directive was issued by the governors of Kilifi and Taita Taveta counties who vowed to crack down on its sale and use. Later, President William Ruto reversed a contentious ban imposed in parts of the country. The consumption of the freshly plucked buds and soft leaves has been blamed for a rise in mental health issues and increased social ills, including crime.

Comment:

The banning of mugokaa has sparked protests in the muguka-growing county of Embu, with farmers and traders decrying the risk of closing businesses due to the ban. However, the ban has gained a massive support from religious organizations with the Muslim Clergy calling for Mugokaa to be categorized as restricted drug. The stimulant is a legal crop under the Crops Act 2013 and the Miraa Regulations 2023. President Ruto has said his Government has allocated \$3.7m (£3m) in this financial year to expand khat farming in the country.

In a secular and capitalistic point of view, there is no reason for any government to ban mugokaa and all alcoholic substances. As long as khat farming and alcohol industries comply with the law, then they are encouraged to expand so that they can contribute back to the economy. Since the farming of Khat and mugokaa is legal in this country, then the trading, as well as its consumption is allowed to expand like other industries as long as they comply with all related legal provisions. It is within this context, leaders from Mugokaa farming areas have cried foul on the ban! This shows the corrupt measure of the capitalist system when it comes to good and bad as the system only considers the benefit that it begets. In this regard, mugoka is a danger to human life but the capitalist system allows its farming and trade to flourish to the possible extend in the simplest manner. Contrary to Islam, the view and measure of human deeds is based on either halal or haram. In this case, if something is haram, then it is strictly forbidden regardless of the benefits than can come from it.

Most of those chewing mugokaa and drink alcohol are among the poor and even the rich claim to do so to relieve stress. Though this reason does not justify a noble human being to indulge in such acts, it is true that many poor Kenyans indulge in consumption of alcoholic substances as 'a way out' from the economic hardships. This is the adoption of a corrupt capitalist ideology with a faulty economic system that just views production of resources that ends in the hands of a few powerful individuals and leaves the rest of the citizens staggering in poverty. Islam, on the other side, has forbidden humans from losing hope in life and its economic system ensures proper and equal distribution of resources to all and sundry and not allowing only a few powerful individuals to benefit.

In conclusion, the solution to this vice is in Islam. Islam as an ideology forbids the consumption or use of anything that affects the human race be it health-wise or socially. According to Islam, consumption of any intoxicant i.e. alcoholic drinks as well as every intoxicant is haram and is considered as one of Satan's deeds that leads to abhorrence in the community not to mention sending humans far away from the righteous path of abiding by the wish and whims of our Creator.

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