

## **Prophet's Teaching on Jar: Application of Islamic Ethics of Neighborhood in the New Globalized Society**

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### **Abstract**

This paper delves into the contemporary relevance of Prophet Muhammad's teachings on neighborhood (Jar/Jeeran) within the framework of modern international relations. In today's interconnected world, global interactions are shaped by evolving norms and facilitated by advancements in transportation and communication technologies. This has led to the emergence of a global society or "global village," fostering increased people-to-people contact. Against this backdrop, the Islamic principle of Jar, emphasizing moral responsibilities and ethics towards neighbors, warrants analysis. Prophet Muhammad advocated for fostering positive relationships with neighbors regardless of their religious or ethnic background, emphasizing protection and providing financial and food assistance as examples of Islamic ethics. This paper seeks to elucidate the concept of Jar within the context of contemporary international society and explores the application of Islamic ethics towards neighbors in modern international relations.

Keyword: Prophet Muhammad, neighborhood (Jar/Jeeran), international relations, Islamic ethics, global

### **Abstrak**

Tulisan ini menggali relevansi kontemporer ajaran Nabi Muhammad tentang lingkungan bertetangga (Jar/Jeeran) dalam kerangka hubungan internasional modern. Di dunia yang saling terhubung saat ini, interaksi global dibentuk oleh norma-norma yang berkembang dan difasilitasi oleh kemajuan teknologi transportasi dan komunikasi. Hal ini menyebabkan munculnya masyarakat global atau "desa global", yang mendorong peningkatan kontak antar masyarakat. Dengan latar belakang ini, prinsip Islam Jar, yang menekankan tanggung jawab moral dan etika terhadap tetangga, memerlukan analisis. Nabi Muhammad menganjurkan untuk membina hubungan positif dengan tetangga tanpa memandang latar belakang agama atau etnis mereka, menekankan perlindungan dan memberikan bantuan keuangan dan makanan sebagai contoh etika Islam. Tulisan ini berupaya menjelaskan konsep Jar dalam konteks masyarakat internasional kontemporer dan mengeksplorasi penerapan etika Islam terhadap tetangga dalam hubungan internasional modern.

Kata Kunci: Nabi Muhammad, Lingkungan (Jar/Jeeran), Hubungan Internasional, Etika Islam, Global

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## **BACKGROUND**

Islam is considered by its followers as a comprehensive guideline for believers until the end of this world (Nazi & Ali, 2018). Although the norms and realities of the world change from one century to another, teachings of Quran and Hadees are interpreted by scholars according to new conditions (Yilmaz, 2021). The shift in international politics from empires to nation-states is such a change. Islam teaches various principles for keeping in social and international relations in addition to ways of individual purification and practices of personal life. Accordingly, Islamic ethics influence social norms, individual worldviews, and state policies (Sahin, 2018). So, unlike secularized western European countries, the Islamic world does not separate Islam from the public sphere.

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Received: August 15, 2023; Revised : November 16, 2023; Accepted: November 29, 2023

Since the formation of practice and discipline of modern international relations are shaped in the secularized western context, it is generally seen as a secular arena where national interest, rather than moral principles, drives the policies of states (Chadha, 2022). However, new theories such as social constructivism, have challenged this interest-based narration and emphasizes the role of ethics and values in shaping foreign policy and even national interest of states. Nevertheless, constructivism also has not given enough attention to the role of religion in developing these norms and values. Since still the academic debates are primarily focused on western society, even the literature that focuses on religion ignores Islam or presents it as a threat to world peace (Haynes, 2019). At the same time, Islamic teachings for global peace and harmony are understudied.

Among such teachings, Quranic verses and Hadees of the Prophet Muhammad regarding ethics towards neighbors (Harpci, 2020). The peaceful and decent neighborhood has been promoted by Islam, which presents good behavior with neighbors as an essential part of completing one's belief in Allah. Significance of good neighborhood is reflected in Quranic verse (66:11) "رَبِّ اِنِّ لِي عِنْدَكَ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ" (My Lord! Build me a house in Paradise near You), in which the Asiyah, the wife of the Pharaoh, asked to Allah his neighbourhood before the home of paradise (الجار قبل الدار). The paper analyzes the meaning of jar and application of this word in the context of international relations. As a theoretical base for this paper, the first part explains the role of religion in International Relation. Then, it figures out the hadeeses about ethics towards neighbors and applies these ethics in the modern global context.

The paper examines the enduring relevance of Islamic teachings, particularly those concerning ethics towards neighbors, within the context of modern international relations. It argues that while secularized western frameworks dominate the discourse on international relations, there is a growing acknowledgment of the role of ethics and values, challenging the primacy of national interests. However, existing theories like social constructivism often overlook the influence of religion, particularly Islam, in shaping these norms and values (Abu-Ras et al., 2022; Haynes, 2021; Timol, 2020). By focusing on Quranic verses and Hadiths related to neighborly ethics, the paper highlights Islam's emphasis on peaceful coexistence and good neighborliness as integral to spiritual fulfillment. Drawing from these teachings, it analyzes the concept of "jar" (neighborhood) in the contemporary global arena, offering insights into how Islamic principles can inform diplomatic practices and contribute to global peace and harmony. The paper's novelty lies in its exploration of Islamic perspectives on international relations and its methodological approach combines textual analysis of religious sources with an examination of their application in modern diplomatic contexts.

## Religion in International Relations

Discipline and practice of modern International Relations were developed in Western Europe in the context of the secularization of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. After Westphalia Treaties of 1648, religion was separated from the policies of the states and restricted into the private realm of people, and state leaders were prescribed to follow rational choices rather than moral guidance of religions. The concept of sovereignty gave the ultimate authority to leaders of states. Fox et al (2004) identify various reasons for the marginalization of religion from the discipline of International Relations. First, the origin of social sciences was rooted in the rejection of religion. The scientific revolution promoted rational explanation and positivist framework. Early social scientist rejected religion as an influential factor and even predicted the demise of it. Second, the theories of International Relations and other social sciences were focused on Western European society, where secularization has developed than any other parts of the world. After colonization and the engagement with the rest of the world, social scientists explained the

public role of religion in Asia and Africa as primordial and predicted it would disappear as these societies get modernized. However, ironically modernization caused a resurgence of religion rather than the demise of it in both the West and the outside world. The third reason for the ignorance of religion in International Relations was the influence of behavioralism and quantitative methodology in the twentieth century. Religion was considered as a difficult factor to measure in quantitative terms. Fourth, the frameworks of mainstream theories of International Relations were based on assumptions that exclude religions (Dunne et al., 2021). For example, it is hard to accommodate religion into the realist assumptions of rational state and international anarchy.

However, in the last few decades, religion has been becoming more visible in international politics. There were various factors behind this return of religion. One of the primary reasons was recognition of the non-western world as equal sovereigns in international relations. After decolonization, Asian and African countries became more visible at the international level. Scholars from these countries questioned the Eurocentric Orientalist framework of western scholars. Deviating from conventional Eurocentric and ethnocentric analysis, western social scientists also started to study the rest of the world with respecting their cultural differences. In this sense, the "return of religion" is not just because of change in the relation between religion and politics, but it is also because of the change in frameworks of analyzing it. The religion had continued as an influential factor in the public sphere in the many parts of worlds (Sambo, 2023; Schlesinger, 2020). Religions like Hinduism and Islam had not accepted the western version of separation of religion from the public arena.

The return to religion is reflected in both the percentage share of religious people in the world population and the numbers of academic works related to the role of religion in international politics and security (Herrington et al., 2015; Schlesinger, 2020). However, the focus of most of these works was on the negative aspect of religion, and they presented it as a root of conflict and violence. Huntington (1993) famous thesis of *Clash of Civilizations* is an example of such negative narration of religions, especially Islam. He presented religion as the key factor in the future global order and conflicts. Recently this traditional narration about religion as source violence was questioned, and such a stereotype was termed as a myth (Cavanaugh, 2011). Even though as a counter narration many scholars presented religion as a promoter of peace and humanity, many of these studies do not explain the relevance and application of these religious principles in the contemporary international relations

Even though Islam is a religion of about one-fifth of world population and official religion of about one-fourth of world countries, its worldviews and ethics are understudied. An exploration of the Islamic views on the neighborhood can enrich Islamic contributions to global peace and harmony.

### Jar in Islam

Islam, which is youngest among Abrahamic religion, has promoted many ethics and values that are useful even in the modern age. Denny (2004) pointed out, Islam is a profoundly ethically based religion. Islam emphasizes the value of respecting neighbor that was rooted in Arab culture as inherited from the Prophet Ibrahim's tradition. Identifying Islamic resources for the cooperative neighborhood is significant in the modern world where enmity among neighboring houses and nations leads to wars and bloodshedding. Islamic ethics towards neighbors can be figured out from the Quran, hadees, behavior, and writings of Islamic scholars. Quran (4: 36) commands to be kind towards neighbors. It says,

وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا ۚ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ  
الْجُنُبِ

Worship Allah alone and associate none with Him. And be kind to parents, relatives, orphans, the poor, near and distant neighbors.

Here the words **الْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ** are translated as “near and distant neighbors”. This is the opinion of Zajaj (Tabrisi Tafsir 4: 36), Razi, Qurtubi and Ibnu Abbas (cited in Qurtubi). These words also can mean “relative and non-relative neighbor” as it is reported from Ibn-Abbas and Mujahid (Tabari 4: 36). However, Tabari cites Abu-Jaafar to argue that this meaning is against what is known in common Arabic usage. It also interpreted as “Muslim and non-Muslim neighbor”. It is the opinion of Noufu Shami (Tabari). However, Tabari negates this opinion also. Muhammad Asad (1900-1992) in his commentary *The message of the Quran*, explains the verse (4:36) as “whether he belongs to your own or another community”. Even though it is not clear what he does mean by ‘community’, “from his commentary, it is clear that faith is at least implied” (Leirvik, 2010). However, according to Asad, it does not mean that one has lesser obligations towards those who belong to different communities. At the same time, it enhances the universality of moral obligations in Islam.

Sahl ibn Abd Allah al-Tustari in his tafsir add a Sufi oriented inner meaning for these terms as “neighbor who is near refers to the heart (qalb) and the neighbor who is a stranger is the self in its natural state (al-nafs al-ṭabii)”. Abd al-Razzaq Kashani in his tafsir provides alternative meaning as “neighbor who is near as intellect and neighbor who is stranger as estimation”. Qushairi includes two angels with each person also neighbors of him. Tafsir Kashf Al-Asrar talks about different categories of neighbors: the neighbor of the house, the neighbor of the soul, the neighbor of the heart, and the neighbor of the spirit. The neighbor of the house is the Adamite; the neighbor of the soul is the angel; the neighbor of the heart is the tranquility of recognition; and the neighbor of the spirit is the Real-majestic is His majesty!.

Considering the significance of neighborhood, Hasanul Basari opines that it is allowed to give the meet of Uduhiyyath to Christians and Jews if they are neighbors. Qurtubi in his tafsir (4: 36) differentiates between what is Fard (compulsory) and what is Sunnath (recommended, but not compulsory) among Uduhuyyath, and allows Sunnath Uduhiyyath to be given to Dimmiyy. He cites a hadees, in which the Prophet said to Aisha when they were distributing meat of Uduhiyyath “You start with our Jewish neighbor”.

The open letter to Christian leaders, *A common word between us and you*, which is published by 136 Muslim leaders and intellectuals in October 2017, proposed Islamic teaching of love towards neighbors as one of the two foundations for cooperation between Muslims and Christians. It refers to hadees “None of you becomes a true believer until he likes for his brother or neighbor what he likes for himself” ( **والذي نفسي بيده لا يؤمن عبد حتى يحب لجاره أو أخيه ما يحب لنفسه** ) (Bukhari and Muslim). It commands to consider the interests and needs of neighbors as equal to his/her own interest. While the word ‘brother’, according to the majority of scholars, refers exclusively to Muslims, the word ‘neighbors’ includes other religious communities also. So, ethics in the Prophet’s teaching about neighbors are applied to them all irrespective of their religious and other identities. Muhammad Ali al-Hashimi, a contemporary Saudi author, in his book *The ideal Muslimah* states that “The true Muslim woman does not restrict her good treatment only to neighbors who are related to her or who are Muslims, but she extends it to non-Muslim neighbors too, in accordance with the tolerant teachings of Islam which encourage kindness towards all people, regardless of their race or religion, so long as they do not commit any acts of hostility or aggression towards Muslims” al-Hashimi 1994 in Leirvik (2010).

## Prophet's Teaching on Jar

Hadees is a fundamental source to identify Islamic ethics towards neighbors. Both actions and sayings of the Prophet encompass different aspects of ethics that must be followed by every Muslim (Fakhry, 1991). As Ayisha, the wife of the Prophet once narrated, the life of the Prophet was a reflection of Quranic teachings. So, the Prophet practiced what he taught his followers as good characters. He once said that "Indeed I have been sent to complete the best of character" (بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ) (Muwatta of Malik). The case of ethics towards neighbors is also not an exception from this rule. A good neighborhood is essential for a peaceful life. The Prophet says that "Among the things that bring happiness to a believer in this life are a righteous neighbor" (من سعادة المرء الجار الصالح). Therefore, the Prophet had been praying to be safe from a bad neighborhood in the permanent residency.

The Prophet teaches good behavior with neighbors irrespective of their religious and other identities (أحسن مجاورة من جاورك يكن مسلماً أو مشركاً). According to a hadees, "The best companion to Allah is the best to his companions, and the best neighbor to Allah is the best to his neighbors" (خَيْرُ الْأَصْحَابِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرُهُمْ لِصَاحِبِهِ وَخَيْرُ الْجِيرَانِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرُهُمْ لِجَارِهِ) (Tirmidhi 1944). Once the Prophet said that "Gabriel continued to advise me to treat neighbors well until I thought he would make them my heirs" (مَا زَالَ جِبْرِيلُ يُوصِينِي بِالْجَارِ حَتَّى ظَنَنْتُ أَنَّهُ لِيُورَثَنِي) (Bukhari 6014, Muslim 6685)

Through many hadeeses, the Prophet connects Iman and good behavior with neighbors. The Prophet Muhammad teaches that "be benevolent to your neighbor; then you shall be a believer" (أحسن) (إلى جارك تكن مؤمناً) (Tirmidhi 2305).

He also commands that "Anybody who believes in Allah and the Last Day, should serve his neighbor generously" (مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُكْرِمْ جَارَهُ) (Bukhari 6019, Muslim 173).

As reported in another hadees, the Prophet says that "Anyone who believes in Allah and the Last Day should be good to his neighbors" (من كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر فليحسن إلى جاره).

According to another hadees, the Prophet Muhammad commands that "Anybody who believes in Allah and the Last Day should not harm his neighbors" (من كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر فلا يؤذ جاره) (Bukhari 5185, Muslim 174).

Through these hadeeses, the Prophet connects the ethics towards neighbors with Iman and makes it a condition for completion of belief. Considering this aspect, hurting neighbors will be among major sins. Once the Prophet swore thrice denying the faith to someone whose neighbor does not feel safe from his evil (والله لا يؤمن والله لا يؤمن والله لا يؤمن قيل ومن يا رسول الله قال الذي لا يأمن جاره بوائقه) (Bukhari 6016). According to another narration reported by Muslim, the Prophet says that "He will not enter Paradise whose neighbor is not secure from his evil" (لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ مَنْ لَا يَأْمَنُ جَارُهُ بَوَائِقَهُ).

According to another hadees, the Prophet says, "Real believer is one whose neighbor is secure from him and is not afraid of his evils (المؤمن من آمنه جاره ولا يخاف بوائقه).

Once, a man asked the Prophet, "O Messenger of Allah! There is a woman who prays, gives charity and fasts a great deal, but she harms her neighbors with her speech (by insulting them)" He said: "She will go to hell". The man said: "O Messenger of Allah! There is (another) woman who is well-known for how little she fasts and prays, but she gives charity from the dried yogurt she makes, and she does not harm her neighbors". He said: "She will go to paradise" (قيل للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: يا رسول الله إن فلانة تقوم الليل وتصوم النهار، وتفعل وتصدق، وتؤذي جيرانها بلسانها؟ فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: لا خير فيها، هي من أهل النار. قالوا: وفلانة تصلي المكتوبة وتصدق بأثوار (قطع من الأقط، وهو لبن جامد) ولا تؤذي أحداً. فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: هي من أهل الجنة) (Ahmad).

These hadeeses indicate that good neighborliness is an inevitable condition for both faith and salvation. So, one should not offend neighbors and their properties. The Prophet taught that "If you throw

your neighbor's dog, you definitely hurt him" (إذا رميت كلب جارك فقد آذيتَه). Islam teaches to protect neighbors and their property from all physical and verbal attacks. The Prophet prohibits even to urinate on the wall of one's neighbor.

Islam encourages to be patient if upon bad behavior of neighbors and offers good reward in the hereafter world. The Prophet says "Certainly, Allah loves a person who has a bad neighbor harms him, but he shows patience expecting either Allah will (إن الله يحب الرجل له الجار السوء يؤذيه فيصبر على أذاه ويحتسب) (حتى يكفيه الله أو يموت).

The Prophet Muhammad identifies the bad neighborhood an indicator before the end of this world. The Prophet said, "The hour (of the end this world) will not come till the emergence of indecency (obscurity) and enmity among relatives and neighbors will appear" (لا تقوم الساعة حتى يظهر الفحش وسوء) (والتفاحش وقطيعة الرحم، المجاور (Ahmad).

According to another hadees "The Final Hour will not come until a man kills his neighbor, his brother, and his father" (لا تقوم الساعة حتى يقتل الرجل جاره وأخاه وأباه) (Bukhari in Adbaul Mufrad)

Considering the significance of neighborhood, Islam counts sexual intercourse with the wife of neighbor among major sins and considers an offense against neighbor as more serious than doing same offense ten times against someone else. The Prophet says that "It is less serious for a man to commit adultery with ten women than that doing with the wife of his neighbor. And it is less serious to steal from ten houses than stealing from his neighbor's house" (لأن يزني الرجل بعشرة نسوة أيسر من أن يزني بامرأة) (لأن يسرق الرجل من عشرة آبيات أيسر من أن يسرق من بيت جاره) (Bukhari in Adabul Mufrad 103).

Explaining the duties of a believer towards neighbors, The Prophet says that "You must lend him if he needs a loan, help him if he seeks help, visit him when he is ill, Give him relief if he seeks your relief, Congratulate him if he is met with good fortune, Grieve in sympathy if a calamity befalls him, attend his funeral and take part in burial arrangements when he dies, Do not block his air by raising your building high without his permission, Do not harass him, Give him a share when you buy fruits; if you do not, bring what you buy quietly and let not your children take them out to excite the jealousy of his children" (قالوا يا رسول الله ما حق الجار على الجار؟ قال: إن استقرضك أقرضته، وإن استعانك أعنته، وإن مرض عدته، وإن احتاج أعطيته، وإن افتقر عدت عليه، وإن أصابه خير هنيئته، وإن أصابته مصيبة عزيبته، وإذا مات اتبعت جنازته، ولا تستطيل عليه بالبناء فتحجب عنه الريح إلا بإذنه، ولا تؤذيه بريح قدرك إلا أن تغرف له، وإن اشتريت فاكهة فأهد له، وإن لم تفعل فأدخلها سرا ولا تخرج بها ولدك ليغيظ بها ولده)

If a neighbor asks any help, according to the Prophet's teaching, he must not be denied. The Prophet warns that "How many a neighbor will be brought together with his neighbor on the Day of Rising! He will say, 'Lord, this man closed his door to me and refused to show me common kindness!'" (كَمْ مِنْ جَارٍ مُتَعَلِّقٍ) (بِجَارِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّ، هَذَا أَعْلَقَ بَابَهُ ثُونِي، فَمَنْعَ مَعْرُوفَهُ) (لا يمنع جار جاره أن يغرز خشبه في جداره) (Bukhari 2463, Muslim 4130). This hadees indicates that it is the moral responsibility of a person to cooperate with his neighbors in their needs and allow them for using territory if it not harmful.

It is the obligation of capable Muslims to feed neighbors if they are poor and hungry. The Prophet Muhammad warned that "He is not a believer whose stomach is filled while the neighbor to his side goes hungry" (ليس المؤمن الذي يشبع وجاره جائع) (Bukhari in Adabul Mufrad 194).

Another hadees with a similar meaning is reported as "He did not believe in me who fills his stomach while his neighbor is hungry, and he is aware of it" (ما آمن بي من بات شبعاناً وجاره جائع بجنبه وهو يعلم به) (Tabrani)

Abu Dharr reported that "The Messenger of Allah, (Peace and blessings be upon him), commanded me thus, "O Abu Dharr! Whenever you prepare a broth, put plenty of water in it, and give some of it to your neighbors" (يا أبا ذر إذا طبخت مرقة، فأكثر ماءها، وتعاهد جيرانك) (Sahih Muslim).

Mujahid narrates that Abdullah bin Amr had a sheep slaughtered for his family, so when he came, he said: 'Have you given some to our neighbor, the Jew? Have you given some to our neighbor, the Jew? I heard the Messenger of Allah saying: 'Gabriel continued to advise me to treat neighbors well until I thought he would make them my heirs" (ما زال جبرائيل يوصيني بالجار، حتى ظننت أنه سيورثه) (Bukhari and Muslim). Oddbjørn Leirvik (2010) opines that "This particular hadees is interesting for two reasons. (1) It presents the duty of neighborhood as reaching so far as to approximate responsibilities towards one's own kinsfolk (so that I thought he would make an heir'). (2) This maximum expression of the duty of neighborliness is exemplified by one's duty not towards a brother in Islam, but towards a neighbor who happens to be a Jew".

Islam promotes to treat neighbors as someone care his/her own interests. The Prophet Muhammad warns that 'None of you becomes a true believer until he likes for his brother (or neighbor) what he likes for himself" (والذي نفسي بيده لا يؤمن عبد حتى يحب لجاره أو أخيه ما يحب لنفسه) (Bukhari and Muslim). So, neighbors should be treated as members of the extended family. According to Imam Nawawi, this hadees includes both Muslims and Kafirs. The Prophet had a Jewish neighbor, and he used to visit his son when he was ill.

The Prophet classifies neighbors into three categories. First, those neighbors who are Muslims as well as relatives. They have three rights: one for being a neighbor, one for being Muslim and one for being relative. Second, those neighbors who are Muslims but not relative. They have two rights: one for being neighbor and another for being Muslim. Third, those neighbors but neither Muslim nor relative. They have one right, and that is for being neighbor (عن جابر أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: الجيران ثلاثة: جار له حق وجار له حقان وجار له ثلاثة حقوق فأما الذي له حق واحد فجار له حق الإسلام وحق الجوار مشترك لا رحم له، له حق الجوار، وأما الذي له حقان فجار مسلم لا رحم له، . وأما الذي له ثلاثة حقوق فجار مسلم ذو رحم له حق الإسلام وحق الجوار وحق الرحم)

Muslims need to create goodwill among neighbors. The Prophet Muhammad offers that "If a Muslim dies with good certificates of three nearest neighbors, Allah will say that I accept what my servants know about him and I forgive what I know about him" (أبيات من جيرانه الأذنين بخير إلا قال الله عز وجل قد قبلت شهادة عبادي على ما علموا وغفرت له ما أعلم) (Ahmad 408).

Once a man asked the Prophet "Oh messenger of Allah, how may I know if I am doing good or not". The Prophet replied that "If you hear your neighbor saying that you are good, then you are doing well, and if you hear him saying that you are bad, then you are not doing well" (سل جيرانك فإن قالوا إنك محسن فإنك ) (محسن وإن قالوا إنك مسيء فأنت مسيء) (Baihaqi, Ahmad).

One of the best ways for improving and maintaining a good relationship with a fellow human being is to give gifts. It is applicable in the case of neighbors also. Considering its significance, the Prophet advises that "O Muslim ladies! No one should scorn the gift of a neighbor even it was the hooves of a sheep" (يَا نِسَاءَ ) (المؤمنات، لا تحقرن امرأة منكن لجاتها، ولو كراع شاة محرقة) (Bukhari 2566, Muslim 2379).

For giving gifts, the nearest neighbors should be preferred than others. Once Ayisha asked the Prophet "O Allah's Apostle! I have two neighbors! To whom shall I send my gifts?" He said, "To the one whose gate is nearer to you" (عن عائشة رضي الله عنها قالت قلت يا رسول الله إن لي جارين فيأيهما أبدأ قال: ) (بأدناهما باباً) (Abu-Dawud 5155). Even though the closest neighbors should be the priority, Islam commands to treat all neighbors well.

Another right of neighbor that if someone plans to sell his land or any other asset, first, he should ask permission of neighbor. If the neighbor is willing to buy it, he should be preferred than others. The Prophet says that "If one of you wants to sell a real estate, he should not sell it until he asks for permission from his neighbor" (إذا أراد أحدكم أن يبيع عقارًا فلا يبيعه حتى يستأذن جاره) (Ibn-Majah).

The Prophet also says, "The neighbor has more right to pre-emption of his neighbor, so let him wait for him even if he is absent, if they share a path" (الجار أحق بشفعة جاره ينتظر بها، وإن كان غائبًا إذا كان (طريقهما واحدا) (Abu-Dawud, Thirmudi, Ibn-Majah, and Ahmad).

Another duty towards the neighbor is to respect and protect their privacy. So, it is prohibited in Islam to look into the inside of neighbors' home and to spy on them.

Analyzing hadees about duties towards neighbors, Oddbjørn Leirvik (2010) states that "A recurring feature of hadees pertaining to the neighborhood is their concreteness in delineating the duties of a true believer. It has to do with such issues as sharing food, generous irrigation, and neighborly rights of preemption in connection with real estate transactions. The regulating principle is 'the need of one's neighbor'"

### Defining Jar in International Relations

There is no consensus among Islamic scholars about the boundary of *jar* (Fealy et al., 2019). According to one opinion, the word *jar* is used to mean every house which is located within forty houses in all sides irrespective of whether they are Muslim or non-Muslim, and relative or not. This argument is supported by a hadees "Once the Prophet requested Aboobacker, Umar and Ali to advice people at the gates of various masjids: Listen, definitely, forty houses are neighbors and those whose neighbors are not safe from their evils will not enter paradise". According to Ali, *jar* denotes those can listen to call (من سمع (النداء فهو جارٌ). According to another opinion, whoever can listen to call for prayer from a mosque is neighbor of that mosque. It is also said that *jar* can mean all residents of same mahal o town. This opinion is supported by Quranic verse (33: 60), which uses the term يُجَلُونَ to indicate all residents of a city. (Qurtubi, interpretation of Q. 4: 36). Ibn Hajar Asqalani in his Fathul Bari, the explanation of Sahihul Bukhari says that "The term *jar* includes Muslims and Non-Muslims, Obedient and violator of Islamic laws, friend and enemy, the local and stranger, the beneficial and harmful, the close and foreigner, and the nearest and distant householders. Those who have all first attributes (Muslim, obedient of Islamic law, friend, the local, the beneficial and close householder) are the most significant neighbors followed by those who have most of these attributes and then who have few of them" (Asqalani, Fathul Bari in the book of good manners).

Interpreting the verse 4: 36, Shaukani (Hijra. 1250) opines that this verse negates those who argue the word *jar* applies only to the nearest neighbor and not to distant one. Explaining the boundary of *jar*, Shaukani contends that "To understand the boundary of *jar*, it is better to refer what Shara'a says about it. If there is a description for it such as *jar* denotes a certain number of houses or a certain amount of distance, it can be finalized. If it is not available in Shara'a, it can be determined by referring to literary meaning in Arabic language (لغة) or to common usage (عرف). Nevertheless, there are no concluding remarks about its boundary neither in Shara'a nor in the Arabic language". According to Shaukani, the hadees about forty houses, which is referred to in Qurtubi, is not valid for evidence since it is cited without referring to the proper chain of the report. He also argues, as per its literary meaning, *jar* means *mujawir* (المجاور) that can be used for different meanings such as savior from attack or injustice, business partner, wife, and neighboring houses. Quran (33:60) has used this term to denote residents of a city.

Sometimes, the word *jar* also denotes not only neighbors of the house, but also who are neighbors in work, Masjid, and society (Shareeda). Abdullah Bin JarAllah Bin Ibrahim Al-JarAllah quotes



Abdurahman bin Abdul Kareemul Abeer saying that “meaning of the word *jar* includes not only neighboring homes but also neighbors in work, business, mosque, pathway or general society. Whoever close to you from a human being is your neighbor. It is a very great position in Islam and that is not available in any other systems. This also includes cities and its neighboring cities as well as Muslim countries and their neighboring countries”.

The distance of savior from injustice, business partner and even the boundary of a city can change from one period to another. The residents of different countries can be neighbors in their job. As one house can be the savior of another house, one country can be savior of another (Friedrichs, 2019). In the last century, especially after the formation of the United Nations, countries have been working together for global peace. Development in transport and communication technology creates a global village/society where residents of different parts of the world work together as residents of one village had done in previous centuries. Accordingly, the word *jar* can apply not only to neighboring countries who share a common boarder, but also to those who are neighbors in the functional region even though one's territory is far from other. In the interpretation of the Quranic phrase “وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ” (Quran 4: 36), many scholars have included distant and foreign communities. For example, according to Ibn-Abbas and Mujahid, it indicates those belong to foreign communities (Tabari, Interpretation of Q.4: 36). After citing various opinions, Tabari concludes that “The correct interpretation of it is to mean distant strangers, be he Muslims, polytheists, Christians or Jews”. After citing Quranic verse (13: 4), *وَفِي الْأَرْضِ قِطْعٌ مُتَجَاوِرَاتٌ* (And on the earth there are 'different' neighbouring tracts), Dr. Ahmad Bin Abdil Azeezil Haddad opines that “Allah calls different cities as neighbors. The modern world, compared to previous ages, is like a small village due to the development of communication technology. So, every state in the modern world is a neighbor of another state” (Haddad, 2018).

### ***Jar* and International Relations**

Nature of international relations, especially in the Muslim world, has changed in the last century (Groom et al., 2019). Many factors make the world more interdependent than ever before. One reason is the change in global norms and values. Aggressive imperialistic foreign policy was replaced by more cooperative relations with respect to the sovereignty of other countries (Groom et al., 2019; Wahyu & Aeni, 2023). Formation of the United Nations, prohibition of the use of force except for self-defense or humanitarian assistance, and decolonization of Asian and African countries and their cooperation in resisting the imperialist tendency of the Great Powers were reasons for the change in global norms regarding war and peace.

In addition to international organizations, many regional level institutions are also formed to enhance cooperation among neighboring countries and to resist involvement and dictate of external powers. Arab League, European Union, and ASEAN are examples of such regional organizations. Sometimes, the motive and base behind such organization may be functional or ideological reasons. So, their boundaries go beyond a fixed geographical limit. Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) are examples for these kinds of organizations. Most of the regional organizations are working with a principle of “prefer your neighbor than others and protect them from outside threats”. In other words, the literary meaning of the Arabic word *jar* or *mujawir* as a savior is the foundational principle for modern regional and even international organizations. As for as OIC is concerned, in addition to the principle of *Jar*, the concept of *ikhwah* (Brotherhood) also plays a significant role. Even though in one sense the idea of the Islamic brotherhood is more inclusive as it includes all Muslims irrespective of which century or place they lived, in another sense the word neighbor is more

inclusive as it includes non-Muslims also. So, the relation among these words is common in one regard and particular in another regard (umum wa khusus min wajhin).

The classical Islamic view on international politics was based on the division of the world into Darul Islam (Abode of Peace or Islam) and Darul Harb (Abode of War) (Nuruzzaman, 2018). This classification was based on the reality of the first centuries of Islam since the foreign powers were hostile to Islam. It justified the expansion of the boundary of Darul Islam by converting Darul Harb into Islam. However, gradually, going beyond binaries, terms such as Darul Ahd, Darul Sulh, and Darul Aman added to the Islamic discourse. Muslim rulers made various treaties with other countries and Muslim minorities (as *musta'min*) lived safely in non-Muslim majority countries. However, it was not completely a novel phenomenon since the Prophet Muhammad had signed a treaty with Christians of Najran. The foundation of a relationship with non-Muslim people was *Da'wa* (propagation) not *Qital* (war). War was suggested only if practice and propagation of Islam prohibited in a country. Accordingly, Imam Razi classified the world population into *Ummathul Ijaba* (Muslims) and *Ummathu Da'wa* (Including non-Muslims).

Global situation and approach of Muslim countries towards each other and towards non-Muslim countries have changed in the last century. Even though sometimes the feeling of brotherhood or *Ummah* promotes Muslim countries to shape their approach against common enemies and to form organizations such as OIC, their approach is not based on an assumption of single Adobe of Islam. Similarly, the relationship with non-Muslim countries is also not as Darul Harb. States interact, cooperate and, sometimes, conflict with other states irrespective of their religious identity. For example, the relationship of Pakistan and Bangladesh with India is not guided by principles of Darul Islam, Darul Harb or Darul Ahd, though they may be in treaties of non-aggression as members of the United Nations. Instead, these countries, like Pakistan and Afghanistan/Iran, are neighboring countries. As the recent developments in transport and communication technologies outdo the national boundaries and integrate the world into a global society, people to people contact, and business and other transactions have increased across borders. Globalization facilitates the flow of capital, labor, and ideas across the world. As companies invest in foreign countries, and workers migrate one country to another, the boundary of the functional neighborhood (الجار في العمل) also increases. As a result, the neighborhood relationship develops not only between states but also between people in the different parts of the world. In short, the approach towards global politics has been shifted from the approach of *Dar* to approach of *jar*. Abdullahi Bin Yoouf Jadee'a (2018) and Dr. Ahmad Bin Abdil Azeezil Haddad (2018) also have identified a shift in the Islamic approaches of international politics from *Dar* to *Jar*.

### **Ethics of *Jar* in the International Context**

As the foreign policies of Islamic countries shifting from *Dar* to *jar*, many ethics can be figured out from the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. For example, his teaching "No one should prevent his neighbor from fixing a wooden peg in his wall" indicates the necessity of cooperation among neighbors, including neighboring countries. In the international context, it can be through allowing neighboring countries to use its territory, if it is necessary and not harmful to hosting country, for various purposes such as water supply, access of landlocked countries to oceans, international air routes, and pipelines (Ali, 2020). Islamic teaching against attack and injustice towards neighbors is another aspect of ethics in the *hadees*.

Although Islam prohibits all kind of violence, that against neighbors is more serious. The Prophet's teaching that compares adultery with the wife of a neighbor and stealing from the house of neighbors as equal to do similar wrongs ten times with others shows the seriousness of offense against neighbors. After

telling the seriousness of harms against neighbors, Abdullah Bin JarAllah says that violence against neighboring countries also similar to that against neighboring individuals. Accordingly, the relationship with neighboring countries should be as benevolent as it is with neighboring individuals. So, the war among neighboring countries is a violation of this noble principle. Such conflicts among neighboring countries can be seen as a sign of the end of the world. In the international context, sharing geographical borders should not be treated as an opportunity to wage war against neighboring countries. However, it is a responsibility to protect the neighbor from all modes of violence. The Prophet's warning of denial of paradise to those whose neighbors are not secure from their evils also indicates this aspect. Accordingly, Prophetic ethics require policymakers of a country to keep away from attacking and threatening neighboring countries (Septiadi, 2023).

Moreover, Islam requests to be excellent and benevolent towards neighbors. So, Islamic ethics go beyond mere non-aggression and maintenance of sovereignty. In Islamic tradition, the cooperation among neighbors is not a choice, but a religious duty. The degree of this duty may vary depending on whether the neighbor is Muslim or relative, as it is classified in hadees as: who have three rights, who have two rights and who have one right. Abdurahman bin Abdul Kareemul Abeer says that "Islamic respect towards neighbors is not limited to neighboring houses and workers, but it includes neighboring states and societies, especially Islamic states which is the primary deserver of good neighborhood and dignity" (Abeer 613). However, all neighbors, including non-Muslims deserve some fundamental rights such as proper treatment, safety from physical and verbal aggression and help if they are hungry.

Since natural resources and economic power of the state is different from another, it is a reality that one rich country may be a neighbor of an underdeveloped country (Mien & Goujon, 2022). According to Islamic tradition, the richness and poverty are planned by the Almighty Allah, and humans have a minimal role. So, it is the duty of rich people to help and feed poor especially if they are in neighborhood. This principle can be applied in the context of international relations also since the economically backward countries are dependents on rich countries. The Prophet has warned against filling one's own stomach while his neighbor is hungry.

As for as foreign aid is concerned, neighboring countries should be preferred, especially if they are economically backward, as the Prophet Muhammad suggested Ayisha to prefer one whose gate is nearer. As neighboring houses are considered as part of the extended family, neighboring countries can be considered as part of the extended boundary of a nation. Accordingly, national interest should not be at the cost of neighbor's interests. Additionally, each country should love for his neighbor whatever it loves for itself and should consider neighbors' interests as its own national interest.

Additionally, each country should help its neighboring countries if they seek help, provide financial support if they need it, praise them for good activities, congratulate them if they met with good fortune, and rescue them if a calamity befalls there. One country should not block flowing rivers from one country to another and should not pollute rivers and atmosphere of neighboring countries. The Prophet has prohibited even urinating at the wall of neighbors. Respecting the privacy of neighboring countries, one country should not spy there unless it is inevitable for the security of its own people at the time of war.

## **CONCLUSION**

Technological developments and normative changes have transformed interactions of people across the world. People round the world, as well as states, are interconnected and dependent. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Muslims states also have adopted the western idea of nation-states with respecting to the sovereignty of other states. As the division of the world into the binaries of Darul Harb

and Darul Islam is challenged, this paper explored the possibility of application of the ethics of jar in the international relations of modern Muslim states.

The Prophet has taught many ethics in dealing with neighbors. Considering the reality and nature of new international politics and global society, such neighborly ethics can be applied to these spheres. As success and failure of a person, according to the Prophet's teaching, is dependent upon behavior with neighbors, the success and failure of states also depend upon its dealing with neighboring states. As Dr. Ahmad Bin Abdul Azeezil Haddad says, none of the states has succeeded or failed without cause of goodness and evilness of neighboring states (Haddad 2018: 143). The famous phrase in Arabic لا تصلح الدار حتى يصلح الجار (One's home will not be peaceful until it has peaceful neighbors) is very suitable in the case of international relations also. So, embracing of the Prophet's teaching on ethics of neighborhood can boost global quest for peace.

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