

ARABS BEFORE THE ADVENT OF ISLAM (JAHLIYA PERIOD)

“Never in the annals of history of the world was the need so great, the time so ripe, for the appearance of a deliverer.” (Ameer Ali)

1. **POLITICAL CONDITIONS:** Politically Arabia was the under great chaos and unrest due to following reasons:

- The absence of a central government.
- Tribal wars on petty issues resulted into unending bloodshed and barbarism.
- The nomadic Bedouins were land pirates. They plundered their neighbours, caravans, the helpless and the weak.
- Political power depended solely on availability of man to kill and be killed.

2. **MORAL CONDITIONS:**

“War, Women and Wine were the three absorbing passions of the Arabs.”

(Khuda Bux)

- Before the advent of Islam, the Arabs were indulged in all vices; drinking, debauchery, robbery, murder and infanticide.
- Polygamy and polyandry were in vogue.
- Prostitution was a recognized profession.
- Women had no inheritance in property.

3. **SOCIAL CONDITIONS:**

“For them, there existed only tribe and family but no Arab nation. What they further lacked was the sense of subordination.” (Joseph Hell)

- Socially, the Arabs had collapsed the fabric of society.
- Chaos, disorder, violence was rampant.
- Building a civilized and rule based society was regarded by them as hindrance to their freedom.
- Slavery was immanent in Arab society.
- Slaves were treated most inhumanly.

4. **RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS:**

- Religiously, the Arabia painted a lamentable picture.
- They were indulged in idolatry and nature worshiping.
- They did not believe in oneness of God and life hereafter.
- The house of Ka’aba had become the house of idols.
- Only it had 360 idols.
- Magicians exploited the poor who believed in evil spirits and superstitions.

5. **ECONOMIC CONDITIONS:**

- Barren soil and non-navigable rivers and dry climate made cultivation of Arab desert impossible.
- Poverty made the most penniless Arabs to commit infanticide.
- Bedouins mainly reared flock and cattle.
- Camel acted as ship of the desert.
- In **TRADE**, Makkah was the a great commercial centre.

- South Arabia supplied super fine leather and valuable materials for dress.
- North Arabia supplied corn and weapons.
- Trade was carried out through barter system.

6. INTELLECTUAL CONDITIONS:

- The Arabs excelled the whole world especially in their poetry, memory power and eloquence.
- They had wild love for their language, Arabic.
- Amral Qais was the most prominent pre-Islamic poet.
- Education in the modern sense was yet to develop.

7. CONCLUSION:

“The stage was set; the moment was psychological for the rise of a great religious and psychological leader. The Prophet came as a mercy towards the creatures and raised the Arabs from a fallen state to the highest pitch of glory.”

(Philip K. Hitti)