Collective Ijtihadi Work – Its Importance at the Present Age

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As a matter of fact, ijtihad is a definite necessity in the details and minute issues or affairs, and the events and the infinite occurrences. It is so in order to help the Islamic Shari‘ah not to stop at the performance of its task in legislation and enactment of laws, and to make it fitting and proper for including the newly originated events and developments. The system of collective ijtihad is one of the urgent necessities of the present age, because of the presence of meticulous specialization and diversity of the issues which are to be dealt with carefully, so as to include with care all of the aspects of each question or affair, and to avoid falling in a mistake or error in the case of individual ijtihad.
The collective ijtihad was practised in the ages of the noble Prophet's companions, and after them was practised through the principle of the consultation and the exchange of opinion.

The institutions of the fiqhi assemblies form one of the aspects of the collective ijtihad which fits our time, and has a lot of developed lively fiqh (jurisprudence). In fact, the ‘ulama’ in the fiqhi assemblies are required to possess the spirit of revival, accompaniment , and modernity which is disciplined by the Islamic Shari‘a and its purposes. They should hold the banner of revival without changing the fundamental texts of Religion but in the way or manner of understanding them to fit and be proper to the present contemporary situation and state of the Muslims.

Certainly, coordination between the various fiqhi (jurisprudential) assemblies maintains and strengthens their work , and increases their animation and vitality , and help them to perform the task of taqrib (rapprochement) among the Muslim schools of thought. Moreover, it is very helpful in the work of ‘ulama’s ijtihad. It also forbids the presence of contradiction happening in the fatawa (Shari‘i opinions) or the resolutions or statements issued by any fiqhi (jurisprudential) assembly or centre.