

[From the speeches of the Annual Khilafah (Caliphate) Conference organized by the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir on Saturday, 21 Rajab 1447 AH, corresponding to 10 January 2026 CE, broadcast via the TV channel of the Hizb, Al-Waqiyah TV under the title, "The Khilafah (Caliphate): The Vital Issue of the Ummah"]

## **Minorities Are Trapped in Poverty and Discrimination: From the Material Loss to the Khilafah System and Divine Justice**

(Translated)

**By: Ustadh Dr. Mohammad Malkawi**

Today we live in an age of "materialistic supremacy," in which Western civilization has reached its technological zenith, while, at the same time, sinking into a state of "moral bankruptcy." The predicament confronting the world today is not a shortage of resources, but a malfunction in the minds and systems that have managed those resources. The Westerner has buried his intellect in the "dust of materialism," coming to view the world through stock-market figures and growth indices while ignoring the "human being," who is the very axis of existence.

Before we begin unpacking the crises facing minorities, we must understand who it is that the West labels as "minorities." In Western political thought, a minority is a group distinguished by race, religion, or language that differs from the dominant group. Yet the striking paradox in the United States today is that "minorities" collectively – Afro Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and others - have statistically begun to constitute more than half the population in many states and major cities, and yet they continue to be treated as "marginalized" groups in centers of financial and political decision-making! That marginalization is even clearer when measured by the share of wealth they hold, compared with the class that actually controls America.

When people speak of minorities in America, the imagination immediately turns to recent immigrants, yet they forget the great crime upon which the skyscrapers of "Wall Street" were built. It is the story of Native Americans, who were not a minority at all, but a nation that owned the land, the water, and history itself.

The United States was built through what was known as "Manifest Destiny," a supremacists doctrine that buried the Western mind in the illusion of "racial superiority," thereby legitimizing the extermination of millions of the land's indigenous inhabitants, known as Native Americans, and the forced displacement of those who survived, along what came to be called the "Trail of Tears." They stripped them of everything, even the right to exist on the land, and herded them into "reservations" that are, in reality, open-air geographical prisons.

Worse still, the injustice did not stop with that painful chapter, in which millions of America's inhabitants were annihilated. Today, in 2026, at the heart of the richest country on earth, there are still Native American people in parts of Nevada and California living in shocking, primitive conditions! Due to unjust laws that bar them from utilizing their ancestral lands, and because of deliberate financial marginalization, families from the Paiute and Shoshone tribes live in dwellings resembling caves and mountain hollows, or in dilapidated trailers, lacking electricity and clean water. These people are not poor by accident; they are victims of systemic, structural racism that sought to erase them from memory so that no one would demand their stolen rights.

While America spends billions on the colonization of space, the owners of the land live in "caves," the very pinnacle of "civilizational blindness" and the burial of reason in materialism. They safeguard the "property rights" of major corporations while violating the very "right to exist" of indigenous minorities!

«اَتَّقُوا الظُّلْمَ فَإِنَّ الظُّلْمَ ظُلْمٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ» **"Beware of oppression, for oppression will turn into excessive darkness on the Day of Resurrection"** [Sahih Muslim].

In Islam, it is impermissible to strip people of their land even in wartime, and nothing illustrates this more clearly than the 'Umari Covenant signed by 'Umar (ra) with the rulers of al-Quds at its conquest, a document that remains a jewel on the crest of world history. Likewise, the Islamic system of "reviving dead land" grants ownership to whoever develops the land, not to whoever seizes it by force. Divine justice, as embodied in Islam's economic system, recognizes no such thing as a "right of conquest," that justifies genocide. Instead, it recognizes the human's ownership rights and the revival of land.

This historical injustice perpetrated by white cowboy hordes in America paved the way for the path America later took against the Afro Americans and other minorities. Once the collective mind grew accustomed to seeing natives living in "caves," it became easy to bar Afro Americans from entering a "university" or a "restaurant." It is an unbroken chain of "racial supremacy" that can only be shattered by "Iman-based humility," and the just system brought by Islam, which enabled Bilal al-Habashi, the African former slave in the pre-Islamic era, to stand atop the Kabah, and demonstrate to the world that **no Arab has superiority over a non-Arab, and no white over a Black, except through piety.**

With this intellect illuminated by revelation, we emerge from the "caves of racism" into the vast horizons of Islamic justice, which makes no distinction between landowner and migrant, rich and poor, white and black.

We fully understand that racism and brutality against minorities, past and present, are not merely emotions but the product of an unjust system in which racism is foundational rather than incidental. Until recently, prestigious universities in America, such as Mississippi and Alabama, barred Afro Americans from entering their campuses, only opening their doors under the force of arms and the National Guard. Even in the most basic human rights, such as entering restaurants, there were explicit signs stating "Whites Only!". Today, despite the disappearance of the physical signs, the "invisible signs" remain. Recent studies show that people with dark skin and Arab names face "unjustified rejection" in employment and at prestigious universities. The recently repealed "affirmative action" laws, which mandated a specific percentage of admission for minorities to universities, effectively reset the competition for opportunities for minorities. Opportunities remain available only to those with money and power, further depriving those already lacking in wealth and resources.

This discrimination against minorities is not a recent phenomenon; it is rooted in a Western economic philosophy called "relative scarcity." Adam Smith argued that resources are scarce and insufficient for the population of a given country, hence the struggle to acquire resources before they are depleted. This philosophy justifies the exclusion of minorities and the poor today, because, in their view, the "share" is not enough for everyone. And the strongest or the richest get the resources first, depriving the rest.

According to Oxfam reports, the richest 1% in the world own more than double the wealth of 7 billion people! This disparity is not due to a scarcity of resources, but rather to monopolies and intellectual backwardness!

In America, the three richest people own as much wealth as the lowest-income half of the US population. This is an inevitable consequence of the capitalist system, which imposes relative scarcity, as if telling the powerful rich to hurry and consume the wealth before the poor can take any.

This is where Islamic law came in, to change the concept of "ownership." In Islam, wealth is "Allah's (swt) wealth," and humankind is entrusted with it. Allah (swt) says: **وَأَنْفَقُوا مِمَّا جَعَلَكُمْ (مُّسْتَحْلِفِينَ فِيهِ) "and spend from what He has entrusted you with"** [Surah Al-Hadid: 7].

Being entrusted means that you have the right to "benefit" from it. It is not "monopoly." When Islam forbids "monopoly," it opens the arteries of the economy to everyone—the majority and those falsely labeled as the minority alike.

While poverty in the West is treated as a result of the laziness of an individual or a particular race in acquiring what they consider scarce resources, Islam states that poverty is a result of a flaw in the economic system that must be eradicated.

Thus, poverty was completely eliminated in the Islamic Khilafah (Caliphate) State in less than three decades. Today, more than 200 years after the establishment of the capitalist system, the poverty rate among Afro Americans in America is approximately 17.1%, and among White people, 8.2%. This proves that the capitalist system, in addition to inevitably creating poverty, makes minorities the poorest and most suffering among people.

Islam, however, eradicates poverty itself, rather than killing the poor. Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (ra) said: "If poverty were a man, I would kill him."

Islam eradicated poverty by encouraging work, making the productive worker more worthy than the idle worker who is capable of working. It prohibited discrimination in employment opportunities, whether based on race or personal connections to those in power, as is common today, where the son of a minister becomes a minister, the son of a ruler becomes wealthy, and so on...

Then it instituted Zakat (alms), money taken from the wealth of the rich and distributed to the poor in a structured manner. If someone failed to pay Zakat, the leader (imam) would fight them until they paid, as Abu Bakr (ra) did after the death of the Prophet (saw).

Furthermore, Islam legislated ownership, establishing individual ownership, public ownership, and state ownership; and made the basic facilities that people generally need public property, which no company or individual has the right to monopolize or use for private interests. This is the ultimate guarantee against poverty. If a person cannot meet their needs through their work and effort, they are cared for from the Zakat of the wealthy. If that is insufficient, they are cared for from public funds, to which they have a right, and no one has the right to bestow it upon them and make them feel like a marginalized minority.

In less than 30 years since the establishment of the Islamic State, Islam was able to completely eradicate poverty. In fact, during the rule of Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz (ra), Zakat collectors searched and did not find a single poor person to receive zakat, because the governing law focused on "satisfying needs" and not "accumulating wealth." Umar famously said, "Scatter grain in the mountains so that it will not be said that a bird went hungry in the land of Islam."

Islam provided "comprehensive justice" regardless of color or gender. So, Islam grants women a share in inheritance, whereas Capitalist systems disregard such matters. A male heir may inherit the entire estate, and in Britain, the wealth of those called "lords" goes to the eldest son, depriving others.

When Islam established systems to eradicate poverty and ensure equality among people regardless of race, religion, or color, it added the importance of good character so that the poor do not feel any sense of inferiority when receiving what they need. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: **«إِنَّمَا بُعْثُتُ لِأَنَّمِّ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ» "I was sent only to perfect good character."**

The West today is experiencing a state of "moral decay" behind a facade of material glamour. They have buried their minds in the "dust of materialism" and forgotten the "Lord of materialism." The coming financial collapse is not a collapse of technology, but rather a collapse of "justice." The solution today is not to emulate a model mired in the quagmire of decadent materialism, but rather to return to a system that protects minorities under Allah's (swt) protection, eradicates poverty through the right of Zakat, the right to property, and the right to social welfare, and safeguards society through noble morals. The time has come to lift injustice not only from Muslims in Muslim lands but from the entire world, where most of the population has become enslaved to those who possess wealth.

It suffices to say that Allah (swt) sent down His messages so that humanity might live under a just system, as He says: ﴿لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا إِلَيْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَأَمْرَزَنَا لِيَقُولُ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ﴾ "Indeed, We sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and with them We sent down the Scripture and the balance 'of justice' so that people may administer justice" [Surah Al-Hadid: 25]. Furthermore, there is a need for a system with the power to achieve this justice wherever it is required, as He (swt) said: ﴿وَأَنَّزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ لِلنَّاسِ﴾ "And We sent down iron with its great might, benefits for humanity" [Surah Al-Hadid: 25].

Therefore, we call upon all people to embrace the Khilafah (Caliphate) system on the Method of Prophethood, to eliminate the system that discriminates between people based on their color, race, and religion, and to embrace a system that tells them that Allah (swt) created them from a single soul and made them into nations and tribes so that they may know one another, not so that they may be distinguished by their color and race.

A system that restores rights to their rightful owners without the need for a revolution by the poor, or Afro Americans, or Latinos, or others. And far removed from the bullying of wealthy rulers, as Trump does today when he describes Somali women as filth, Hispanics as a source of filth and crime, and those of Arab or Muslim origin as a plague upon America.

A system that made Bilal al-Habashi (ra) a master, Umar ibn al-Khattab (ra) a servant, and Usama ibn Zayd (ra) (the servant) a beloved one of the Messenger of Allah (saw) and the son of his beloved (ra).

I ask Allah (swt) to bestow upon us and upon the entire world the establishment of the Khilafah Rashidah (Rightly Guided Caliphate) on the Method of Prophethood, sooner rather than later, so that all humanity may enjoy a justice they have never known, a goodness they have never before witnessed, and a security whose taste they have not experienced, for more than a century.