

Press Release**Inflation Leaves Muslim Women in India Abandoned in a Dangerous Health Crisis**

On the 14th of May, the Times of India published a report regarding how inflation rates have severely affected the economic life of Muslim women and in turn, left them vulnerable to severe health problems. Hundreds of Muslim women are lining up outside clinics with chronic conditions needing social and financial assistance. However, their needs are not being met and many have no access to any form of support to elevate their circumstances. Many women who have been divorced and have no appropriate system to care for their needs are often left in dire situations due to the un-Islamic stigma that divorced women face. Anaemia, tuberculosis, polycystic ovaries, diabetes, skin ailments and vitamin deficiencies are commonly reported conditions. Many of the women have grossly basic diets, often only eating rice-dal or chai-roti on a daily basis, with no access to fruit, meat or fresh vegetables, eggs or dairy. Dr Aseema Mumtaz, working with these women for over a year now said she has dozens of women coming to her who are severely anaemic. She states: "Though we give them protein, calcium supplements, that can never compensate for the nutrition one gets from food." Mujtaba Hasan Askari, founder of the Helping Hands Foundation explained: "High food prices have led to a substantial reduction in the nutritional content of food. It has directly resulted in malnourishment particularly in children."

This dangerous state of affairs has one singular cause that cannot be blamed on the war in Ukraine or global instability. The fact is that when the entire social and political system is based on serving the needs of the elite and deleting the needy as a priority, then the weak only get weaker. Furthermore, the capitalist economic system has proven to be utterly flawed and incapable of fulfilling the needs of the masses.

Guaranteeing the needs of women, especially single women like widows, are the responsibility of the Khalifah (caliph) under the Islamic political system, the Khilafah (Caliphate). The Prophet (saw), as leader of the state in Madinah, said: «مَنْ تَرَكَ مَالًا فَلِأَهْلِهِ وَمَنْ تَرَكَ دِينًا أَوْ ضَيْعًا فَأَلِيَّ وَعَلِيَّ» "If somebody dies (among the Muslims) leaving some property, the property will go to his heirs; and if he leaves a debt or dependents, we will take care of them." Living in the absence of the Khilafah state and without this Islamic ruling has left millions of Muslim women, not just in India but across the Muslim lands exposed to severe financial hardship with life and death implications. Allah (swt) says: وَيُطْعَمُونَ أَلْفَ طَعَامٍ عَلَىٰ ﴿١٠٠﴾ وَيُطْعَمُونَ أَلْفَ طَعَامٍ عَلَىٰ ﴿١٠٠﴾ "And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive." [Al-Insan: 8].

In the great example of the second Khalifah of the Muslims, Umar Ibn Al Khattab (ra), we saw how he would patrol the streets to ensure that the needs of his people were met, and how he carried food upon his own back from the Bait Al Maal (Central Treasury) to feed a mother and her children who were hungry due to poverty. He would lose sleep over even the sheep in the mountains not having adequate sustenance. Under this Islamic system, women had the right to the funds of the Bait Al Maal, to ensure they never had to beg for their basic needs or suffer from financial distress.

Under the shade of the Islamic leadership of the Khilafah, there is no option for the leader to leave the matters of women's physical or financial security to chance or non-Islamic influences. The state is obligated to provide for them their basic needs and a dignified standard of living such that they are protected from struggling a single day to feed themselves and their family. Indeed, the Islamic ruling system exists as a means to lift humankind from all forms of oppression, injustice, neglect and tyranny and to provide the basic needs and financial security for every human being. The only path for Muslims women, and indeed all women of the Muslim lands to rid themselves of this financial strife is to remove the corrupt, incompetent and heartless regimes which rule our lands and reestablish the Khilafah ruled by a righteous Khalifah who will serve as the guardian of his people as commanded by Allah (swt).

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