

"Violence Against Women"

- 1) The most important thing to understand is identification of what caused any violence against women. That cause must be rectified soonest possible before matters worsen. It is very important.
- 2) Violence against women also applies to the wife. Countries' Laws (on Crimes) and countries' Constitutions cannot be over-ruled by misguided religious practices. In addition to the Crimes laws, women are also protected in specific Chapters of the Constitutions under the Bill of Rights provisions, regardless of their gender. An important point to note is that most Constitutions are gender neutral, so it cannot be stated that women are protected any lesser than men, notwithstanding that common terms like "he, him or his" may have been used in structuring the clauses of those countries' Constitutions.
- 3) There is also need to understand that criminal matters affecting women, including the wife, such as violence or assault, manslaughter or murder are matters for the Police and the court system of the country concerned. Religious matters and religious leaders for Muslims cannot overrule fundamental criminal acts such as violence.
- 4) If as result of violence, and sometimes the victim gets killed, then the matter must be reported to the Police soonest possible.
- 5) There is unfounded belief by some Muslim women in some Muslim dominated countries that if they fell to be victims of violence by their spouse, then because they are fasting, they are prevented by their fasting in Ramadan, not to report against their husbands to the Police. In the case of Muslims, the month of fasting (*Ramadan*) should not become an excuse not to report such criminal matters to the Police.

- 6) There is no provision neither in the Holy Qur'an nor in the Hadith that the month of *Ramadan* should become an obstructive hurdle for women not to report violence against them to the Police. Women, who are victims of violence, must report violence against them to the Police soonest possible. This is very important, so that medical reports may be secured as incriminating material evidence for the purpose of prosecution.
- 7) Throughout the ages since Creation, in almost all communities, violence against women have been on record. The classifications of violence against women include but not limited to murder, battering, and beating with objects, sexual assault and desertion. In most cases the victims were either well-known to assailants as current wife; or in many cases closely related; or also in many cases, the victims are former spouse or partner of the men.
- 8) The impact of violence against wife on young children, who have witnessed such violence in their formative years, have sometimes confused them and those children can easily assume that violence against wife, women and children, is the expected rights of the stronger and senior persons, such as the father or the husband.
- 9) Accordingly, these scenes are indelibly recorded in the minds of young children and in years to come, there is probability that they will also resort to such violence when similar circumstances occur.
- 10) It matters little to the foul-tempered assailants, whether or not women may be pregnant and both the mother and the unborn child may have their lives easily endangered.
- 11) Women are made of the same essence as men. The Holy Qur'an informs Muslims at **HQ4:1** "*O people, keep your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind), and spread from these two many men and women. And keep your duty to Allah, by Whom you demand*

one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship. Surely Allah is ever a Watcher over you."

- 12) The Holy Qur'an informs all communities of the world at **HQ49:13** *"O mankind, surely We have created you from a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other. Surely the noblest of you with Allah is the most dutiful of you. Surely Allah is Knowing, Wise."*
- 13) It is narrated that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, *"The most perfect of believers in belief is the best of them in character. The best of you are those who are the best to their women."* In another tradition, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, *"The best among you are those who are kindest to their wives."* (Hadith Sahih Bukari).
- 14) The Prophet (pbuh) also taught that a husband's treatment of his wife reflects a Muslim's good character, which in turn is a reflection of his Faith. The character of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) exemplified how one should be good to his wife. He should smile at her, not hurt her emotionally or physically, remove anything that will harm her, treat her gently, and be patient with her. He should communicate effectively with her, involve her in decision making and support her in times of difficulty.
- 15) Almighty God instructs men to be nice to their wives and to treat them well to the best of their ability.
- 16) A devout Muslim should always remember that pleasing his wife is part of Faith and earns the pleasure of Almighty God, whilst dealing with her unjustly will earn Almighty God's displeasure. The Holy Qur'an informs Muslims at **HQ4:19** *"Live with them in kindness; even if you dislike them, perhaps you dislike something in which Allah has placed much good."* A man's wife is the mother to his own children.

- 17) Realistically, some human beings are slightly imperfect and, in this regard, Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) said, “A believing man should not hate a believing woman. If he dislikes something in her character, he should be pleased with some other trait of hers.” (Hadith, Abu Dawood).
- 18) A companion asked Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) what is the right of a wife over her husband? He replied, “That you feed her when you eat and clothe her when you clothe yourself and do not strike her face. Do not malign her and do not keep apart from her, except in the house.” (Hadith, Abu Dawood).
- 19) There are numerous narrations of the Prophet (*pbuh*) which clearly discourage and even prohibit beating, hitting, and use of any brutal force against wives, such that would cause bodily harm or injuries (criminal matters). He, being the most distinguished role model for all husbands, himself never resorted to such a measure with any of his wives. Hence all men should emulate his character as husbands. There are many Hadith on this aspect.
- 20) Police statistics on domestic violence in many countries are alarming. Muslims believe worship of Almighty God is the sole reason for their existence. That all-encompassing concept also applies equally to one’s relationship with Almighty God, as well as with His creation.
- 21) In Islam, one cannot perfect their worship to Almighty God, unless they perfect their relationship with others. The kind treatment of others, including one’s spouse, can therefore not be ignored as an obligatory act of worship and a sign of piety to Almighty God.
- 22) Islam teaches the individual to constantly consider which deeds and behaviours will be pleasing to Almighty God and to interact

with others in ways that will be pleasing to Almighty God. As Prophet Muhammad (*pbuh*) related, *“The best amongst you in the sight of Almighty God are those who are the best to their wives.”* It is through attaining a higher level of God-consciousness that Islamic principles can contribute to a better elevation of society, such as protecting of violence against women. These have been clearly stipulated as Ordinances in the Holy Qur’an.

23) As a believer sincerely contemplates on how his deeds will be viewed by Almighty God, he learns to improve his conduct with others, including his spouse. If after several attempts to adjust both married partners to each other continues to fail, then Islam also allows for periods of separation as a healing agent.

24) However, if several periods of separation repeatedly still continues to fail reconciliation, then their divorce is the logical solution. Continuous periods of violence against the spouses by their menfolk is not recommended in Islam.

25) It is for all correct thinking Muslims to guide and assist other Muslims. This sanction is given in the Holy Qur’an at **HQ3:104**, as *“And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful.”*

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