**Women, Pakistan and Islam**

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International Women’s Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. Among other demands, the day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. Significant activities are witnessed all across the world–including Pakistan.

Some people wrongly claim that Islam deprives women of their basic rights. In fact, Islam was the first religion which not only liberated women from evil practices that are still being followed in many societies of the world today, but also protected and granted basic rights to them –some of which other religions and societies have just recently adapted to. Thus, it is safe to say that Islam was the first religion that gave women rights, like that of inheritance.

Islam, however, does not allow women’s exploitation. An Islamic society discourages for daughters and sisters to be presented as a product up for sale or advertised in a similar manner. Islamic laws could not allow for the publication or airing of vulgar content in TV dramas and films. Furthermore, it discourages the trend of exploitation of woman in the name of equality and gender parity. Islam has given an equal status to both genders but has divided them in term of their responsibilities.

[Manchester Utd end Man City's 21-match winning streak](https://nation.com.pk/08-Mar-2021/manchester-utd-end-man-city-s-21-match-winning-streak)

Islam recognises a woman’s role in nation building, human development and the upbringing of a family. A woman, as a mother, is a shadow of kindness and compassion. As a wife, she is a faithful companion and as a sister or daughter, she is a symbol of virtue and benevolence. Considering the importance of a woman’s responsibilities, Islam makes full arrangements for the protection of her self-respect and dignity in a society. It describes principles on how a woman could contribute in the development of a nation.

Women make half of the world’s population. A large number of international NGOs and human rights organisations work for the protection of women rights and still, females are deprived of basic rights in many countries. It is regretful that the agenda of the majority of these organisations is self-serving profitability that facilitates the creation of anti-Islam lobbies and damages the institution of a family. Rather than to work for the protection of the rights of women, their target is Pakistan’s Islamic society. A secular mentality is bent upon damaging the family institution of the country. The ratio of divorces is increasing with every passing day. Women feel harassed at work places and at educational institutions due to the culture of co-education.

[US says no decision on Afghan forces after letter leaks](https://nation.com.pk/08-Mar-2021/us-says-no-decision-on-afghan-forces-after-letter-leaks)

Considering the severity of the situation, the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) launched the ‘Istehkam-e-Khandan’ campaign on February 11 for the protection of family institutions. The campaign, which is aimed at creating awareness amongst the general public for the protection of family and woman—the roots of our society—was set to continue for a month. The JI women’s chapter would organise conferences and seminars on the subject and forward recommendations to the government to engage women in the process of nation building. I hope that the campaign would attract momentum in the future and that every woman in the country would be prepared to counter any planned attacks to destroy the sanctity of the institution of a family. The recommendations would be prepared in light of the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah.

March 8, the International Women Day, would be marked by the JI women with the objective to attain a safe environment for women and the protection of family institutions. The JI women’s chapter is determined to counter the westernisation of society in a peaceful manner, with the power of debate and logic.

[Security Forces launch two IBOs in North, South Waziristan](https://nation.com.pk/07-Mar-2021/security-forces-launch-two-ibos-in-north-south-waziristan)

Unfortunately, the practices of displaying dowry articles, demands from the groom’s family, depriving women of inheritance, marriages of women with the Quran, honor killings, and others are still intact in the society despite comprehensive legislation against them. Through this article, I demand for a complete ban on dowry and other un-Islamic and anti-constitutional traditions in society. Islam strictly prohibits these corrupt practices.

On International Women’s Day, I also demand that the government implements Article 35 and 37G of the constitution that provides protection to women. I appeal to the government to ensure that the protection of women at workplaces and educational institutions becomes an important agenda for the future.

The JI believes that the debate about women rights, in the context of the present-day needs in our global village, should continue.