

**ANSWERS TO COMMON
QUESTIONS ON ISLAM**



HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM



Since God is the absolute and the sole master of men and universe, He is the sovereign Lord, the Sustainer and Nourisher, the Merciful whose mercy enshrines all beings; and since He has given each man human dignity and honour, and breathed into him of His own spirit, it follows that, united in Him, and through Him, and apart from their other human attributes, men are substantially the same and no tangible and actual distinction can be made among them on account of their accidental differences such as nationality, colour or race. Every human being is thereby related to all others and all become one community of brotherhood in their honourable and pleasant servitude to the most compassionate Lord of the Universe. In such a heavenly atmosphere the Islamic confession of the oneness of God stands dominant and central, and necessarily entails the oneness of humanity and of the mankind.

Although an Islamic state may be set up in any part of the earth, Islam does not seek to restrict human rights or privileges to the geographical limits of its own state. Islam has laid down some universal fundamental rights for humanity as a whole, which are to be observed and respected under all circumstances whether such a person is resident within the territory of the Islamic state or outside it, whether he is at peace with the state or at war. The Qur'an very clearly states:

"O believers, be you securers of justice, witness for God. Let not detestation for a people move you not to be equitable; be equitable that is nearer to God fearing." (Al-Qur'an 5:8)

Human blood is sacred and cannot be spilled without justification. And if anyone violates this sanctity of blood by killing a soul without justification, the Qur'an equates it to the killing of entire mankind:

"..Whoso slays a soul not to retaliate for a soul slain, nor for corruption

done in the land, should be as if he had slain mankind altogether.”
(Al-Qur’an)

It is not permissible to oppress women, children, old the sick or the wounded. Women’s honour and chastity are to be respected under all circumstances. The hungry person must be fed, the naked clothed and the wounded or diseased treated, irrespective of whether they belong to the Islamic community or are from amongst its enemies. When we speak of human rights in Islam we really mean that these rights have been granted by God; they have not been granted by the kings or by any legislative assembly. The rights granted by the kings or the legislative assembly, can also be withdrawn in the manner in which they are conferred. The same is the same is the case with the rights accepted and recognised by the dictators. They can confer them when they please and withdraw them when they wish; and they can openly violate them when they like. But since in Islam human rights have been conferred by God, therefore, no legislative assembly in the world or any government on earth has the right or authority to make any amendment or change these God given rights. No one has the right. No one has the right to abrogate them or withdraw them. Nor are they basic human rights conferred on paper for the sake of show and exhibition and denied in actual life once the show is over. Nor are they like philosophical concepts which have no sanctions behind them. The charter and the proclamations and the resolutions of the United Nations cannot be compared with the rights sanctioned by God; because they are a part and parcel of Islamic Faith. Every Muslim or administrator who claim to be Muslims, will have to accept, recognise and enforce them. If they fail to enforce them, denying the rights that have been guaranteed by God or make amendments and changes in them, or violate them while paying lip service to them, the verdict of the Holy Qur’an for such government is clear

unequivocal: "Those who judge not by what God has sent down are the disbelievers."

HUMAN RIGHTS IN AN ISLAMIC STATE

- 1. Security of Life and Property:** In the address which the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) delivered on the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage, he said: *'Your lives and properties are forbidden to one another till you meet your Lord on the Day of Resurrection.'* The holy Prophet has also said about the dhimmis (the non-Muslim citizens of an Islamic state): *One who kills a man under covenant (i.e. dhimmi) will not even smell the fragrance of Paradise.'*
- 2. The Protection of Honour.** The Holy Qur'an lays down the following injunctions:
 - i) You who believe, do one (set of) people make fun of another set.
 - ii) Do not defame one another
 - iii) Do not insult by using nickname
 - iii) Do not backbite or speak ill of one another" (49:11- 12)
- 3. Sanctity and security of Private Life:** The Qur'an has laid down the following injunctions"
 - i) Do not spy on one another.
 - ii) Do not enter any house unless you are sure of their occupant's consent."
- 4. The Security of Personal Freedom:** Islam has laid down the principle that no citizen can be imprisoned unless his guilt has been proved in an open court. To arrest a man only on the basis

of suspicion and to throw him into a prison without proper court proceedings and without providing him a reasonable opportunity to produce his defence is not permissible in Islam.

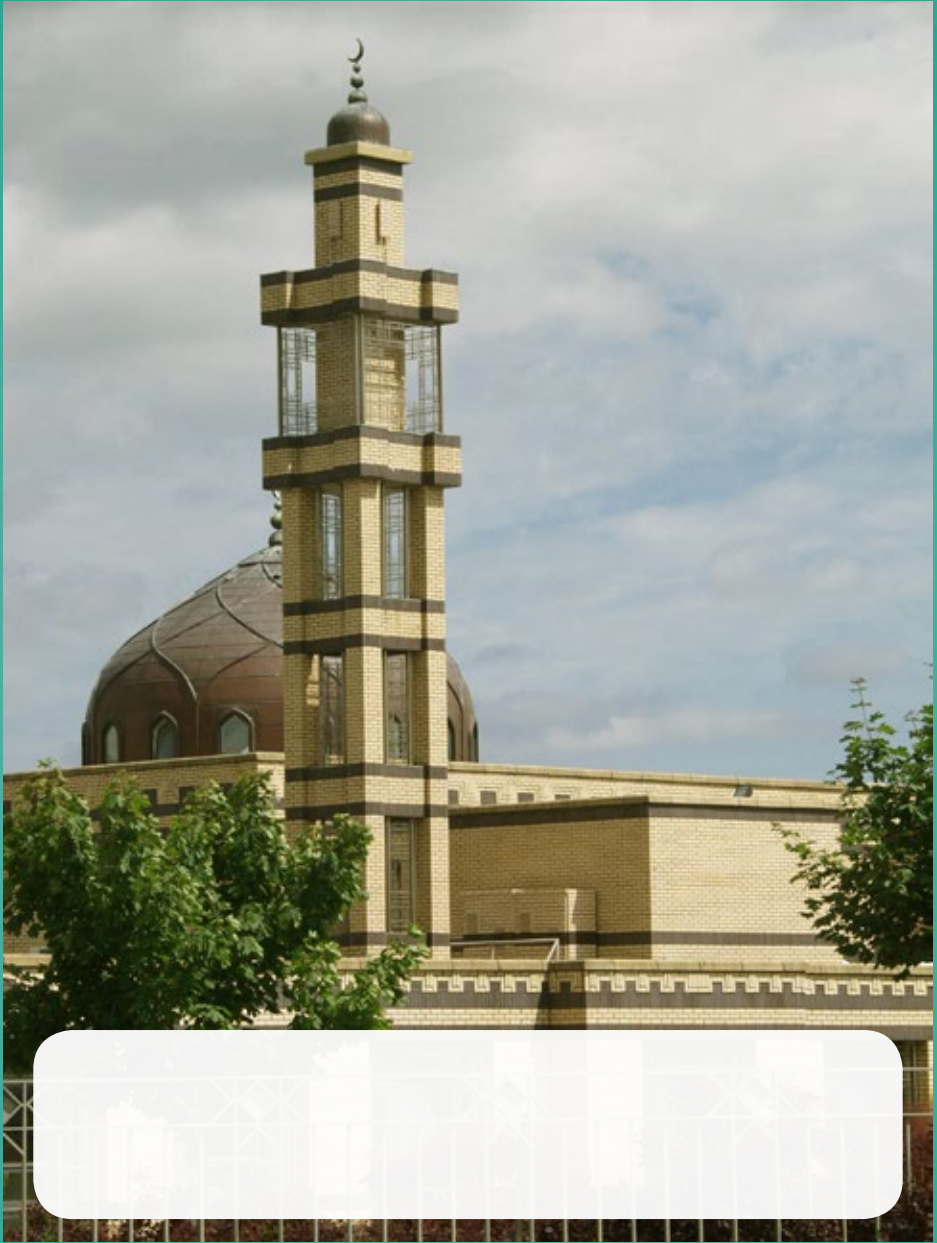
5. **Right to Protest Against Tyranny:** Amongst the rights that Islam has conferred on human beings is the right protest against government's tyranny. Referring to it the Qur'an says: "God does not love evil talk in public unless it by someone who has been injured thereby." In Islam, as has been argued earlier, all power and authority belongs to God, and with man there is only delegated power which becomes a trust; everyone who becomes a recipient or a donee of such a power has to stand in awful reverence before his people towards whom and for whose sake he will be called upon to use these powers. This was acknowledged by Hazrat Abu Bakr who said in his very first address: 'Co-operate with me when I am right but correct me when I commit error; obey me so long as I follow the commandments of Allah and His prophet; but turn away from me when I deviate.'
6. **Freedom of Expression:** Islam gives the right of freedom and thought and expression to all citizens of the Islamic state on the condition that it should be used for propagation of virtue and truth and not for spreading evil and wickedness. The Islamic concept of freedom of expression is much superior then the concept prevalent in the West. Under no circumstance would Islam allow evil and wickedness to be propagated. It also does not give anybody the right to use abusive or offensive language in the name criticism. It was the practice of the Muslims to enquire from the holy Prophet whether on a certain matter a divine injunction had been revealed to him. If he said that he had received no divine injunction, the Muslims freely expressed their opinion on the matter.

7. **Freedom of Association:** Islam has also given people the right to freedom of association and formation of parties or organization. This right also subject to certain general rules.
8. **Freedom of Association: Islam has laid the injunction:** *"There should be no coercion in the matter of faith."*
On the contrary totalitarian societies totally deprive the individuals of their freedom. Indeed this undue exaltation state authority curiously enough postulates a sort of slavishness on the part of man. At one time by slavery was meant total control of man over man- now slavery has been legally abolished but in it's place totalitarian societies impose a similar sort of control over individual.
9. **Protection of Religious Sentiments:** Along with the freedom of conviction and freedom of conscience, Islam has given the right to the individual that his religious sentiments will be given due respect and nothing will be said or done which may encroach upon his right.
10. **Protection from Arbitrary Imprisonment:** Islam also recognizes the right of the individual that he will not be arrested or imprisoned for the offences of others. The Holy Qur'an laid down this principle clearly:
"No bearer of burdens shall be made to bear the burdens of another."
11. **The right to Basic Necessities of Life:** Islam has recognize the right of needy people that help and assistance will be provided.
"The God ordains thus in their wealth there is acknowledge right for the needy and the destitute"

- 12. Equality Before Law:** Islam gives its citizens the right to absolute and complete equality in the eyes of the law.
- 13. Rulers Not Above the Law:** A woman belonging to a high and noble family was arrested in connection with theft. The case was brought to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and it was recommended that she might be spared the punishment of the theft. The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied, "The nations that lived before you were destroyed by God because they punished the common man for their offences and let their dignitaries go unpunished for their crimes; I swear by Him Who holds my life in His hand that even if Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad, had committed this crime, I would have amputated her hand."
- 14. The right to Participate in the Affairs of the State:** *"And their business is (conducted) through consultation among themselves."(42:38)*

The Shura or the legislative assembly has no other meaning except that: The executive head of the government and the members of the assembly should be elected by free and independent choice of the people.

Lastly, it is to be made clear that Islam tries to achieve the above mentioned human rights and many others not only by providing certain legal safeguards but mainly by mankind to transcend the lower level of animal life to be able to go beyond the mere ties fostered by the kinship of blood, racial superiority, linguistic arrogance, economic privileges. It invites mankind to move on to a plane of existence where, by reason of his inner excellence, man can realize the ideal of Universal Brotherhood.



For any further queries, information and tours, please feel free to contact

The Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland,

19 Roebuck Road, Clonskeagh, Dublin 14, Ireland

T +353 1 2080000 F +353 1 2080001

Web: www.islamireland.ie E-mail: info@islamireland.ie



هيئة آل مكتوم الخيرية
Al Maktoum Foundation

**ANSWERS TO COMMON
QUESTIONS ON ISLAM**



HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM

