

E-update: 1 February 2008

To All Muslim Women Network Attending and e-Network Members

In The News....

1. "Violence fear over Islam film"

"Counter-terrorism alert as a Dutch right-winger launches a movie that will denounce the Koran."

<http://film.guardian.co.uk/news/story/0,,2243865,00.html>

2. "An End to Female Genital Cutting?"

"These are busy times for Pakhshan Zangana. Head of the women's caucus in the Iraqi Kurdish parliament in Arbil, she is on the verge of pushing through a piece of legislation that is the first of its kind in the Middle East — a law criminalizing female genital mutilation (FGM)."

<http://www.kwrw.org/index.asp?id=126>

3. "Muslim women advise on extremism"

"Leading Muslim women are being brought together to advise ministers in a new tactic to root out extremism."

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7203925.stm>

The National Muslim Women's Advisory group (NMWAG) was formally launched on the 31 January 2008 by the Prime Minister. The group attended the Prime Minister's Eid reception at Downing Street.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/680335>

4. "International: Film: Irshad Manji's "Faith Without Fear"

Irshad Manji is the internationally best-selling author of "The Trouble with Islam Today: A Muslim's Call for Reform in her Faith". Through a new lens, this questioning Muslim takes a journey to reconcile her faith in Allah with her love of freedom." (PBS)

Along the way, she reveals the personal risks — emotional and physical — that come with such an urgent mission. The result is "Faith Without Fear".

[http://www.wlumf.org/english/newsfulltxt.shtml?cmd\[157\]=x-157-559897](http://www.wlumf.org/english/newsfulltxt.shtml?cmd[157]=x-157-559897)

5. India: Caste Difference Contributes to Violence Against Dalit Women

"Madhya Pradesh has perhaps the highest number of gang rapes in the India. Shockingly, in the last 1,300 days — from Dec 7, 2003 to June 30, 2007 — 1,217 gang

rapes were reported in the state as per the Madhya Pradesh State Assembly records." (Women's News Network)

Because of their caste Dalit women, also known as Scheduled Caste women, are often given very few equal rights or protections.

[http://www.wluml.org/english/newsfulltxt.shtml?cmd\[157\]=x-157-560023](http://www.wluml.org/english/newsfulltxt.shtml?cmd[157]=x-157-560023)

6. Judge warns on Britain's forced marriage toll

"Official statistics on forced marriage reflect only the "tip of the iceberg" of a much larger problem in Britain, a district judge has warned.

Judge Marilyn Mornington called for a campaign to raise awareness of forced marriage in the media and schools, in the hope of changing attitudes in communities of Asian origin and encouraging victims to come forward."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml;jsessionid=AQ5MXQTAEPSJQFIQMFCFFWAVCBQYIV0?xml=/news/2008/01/24/nmarry124.xml>

Consultations and Publications

Empowering Muslim Women: Case Studies

These case studies provide a snapshot of some of the good work that is taking place across the country to empower Muslim women to play a more active role in both their own communities and in wider society.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/669801>

Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission

"Evaluation report on General Situation of Women in Afghanistan"

This report has been prepared on the basis of a study on general status of Afghan women made by the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission.

Women rights are enshrined in most international human rights treaties to which Afghanistan has joined, such as International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Thus Afghan government has an obligation, also mentioned in the constitution, to observe and respect women rights.

http://www.aihrc.org.af/rep_eng_wom_situation_8_march.htm

The Ministry of Justice has launched a consultation on the court rules for applications made under the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007.

The Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 (the Act), received Royal Assent in July 2007. The Act is a hugely significant step forward in tackling the harmful practice of forced marriage and protecting the rights of women, in particular, but of all individuals to choose whom and when to marry.

For more information call 020 7210 8320 or e-mail Forced.Marriages@hmcourtsservice.gsi.gov.uk

A copy of the consultation may also be found at:
<http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/consultations.htm>

Training and Events

IRR training workshop on how to work with the media

Venue: Institute of Race Relations, 2-6 Leeke Street, London WC1X 9HS

Date: 11am-4pm, Friday 29 February 2008

How can community organisations working with refugees, asylum seekers, Muslims and other demonised groups make the best use of newspapers and broadcasters which are often hostile or indifferent to Black and Minority Ethnic concerns?

WHAT can be learnt from earlier struggles against media racism? This one-day course on working with the media will teach skills such as compiling press releases, handling interviews and developing a campaign strategy. The course is free to community groups but registration is required.

Facilitated by Arun Kundnani

To register or for more information, please email mit@irr.org.uk or phone 020 7837 0041. Events listing is provided for information only. Inclusion in this listing should not be taken to imply that the Institute of Race Relations supports an event or is involved in organising it.

<http://www.irr.org.uk/2008/february/ak000005.html>

Imkaan Event

Briefing meeting and reception on Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee (BAMER) Domestic Violence refuges, outreach and advice services

Venue: MacMillan Room, Portcullis House London SW1A 0AA

Date: 6.30pm - 8.30pm, February 6th 2008

Funding cuts and policy changes are leading to a loss of expertise and services dedicated to the needs of women and children from BAMER communities and endangering the lives of women and children

Imkaan has launched a campaign and an Early Day Motion (EDM) has been tabled by Linda Riordan MP in support of these concerns. You can access this on the following link: <http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=34848&SESSION=891>

Imkaan would be very grateful if you could support us by passing this e-mail onto other MPs who you think would be willing to sign-up to the EDM.

Imkaan are holding a public meeting, hosted by Linda Riordan MP and John McDonnell MP, to highlight these issues on February 6th 2008 and we hope that you can lend your support by attending. The meeting will consist of a panel discussion from key domestic violence organisations in the sector including Imkaan, Southall Black Sisters, Newham Asian Women's Project and the Nia Project.

Please RSVP via email to Rapinder Virdi at finance@imkaan.org.uk