

## **Social and political rights**

### **1. To elect and to be elected must be an equal right of men and women.**

Men and women must be entitled to equal rights in election and appointments to legislative, judicial or executive bodies, whether at a local or national level. All regulations which restricts this right should be immediately abolished.

### **2. All rules and regulations which bind the freedom of women in manner of clothing and dress must be abolished**

Choosing one's clothing is a private matter for individuals and no authority or organisation, whether state or private, should have the right to interfere. Women have absolute freedom to wear what they choose. Choosing the type of dress for women and forcing them to have compulsory head-cover [veil], is strictly forbidden.

### **3. Segregating men and women in public gatherings, venues and on public transport is strictly forbidden.**

All restrictions inflicted on individuals must be abolished immediately.

### **4. Gender discrimination with regards to education must be abolished.**

Courses of study and training in schools and higher education establishments must be equal for boys and girls. Statutory division of fields of study into men and women must be abolished. Classes in all levels of education must be mixed. Women are free to participate in all sports and to be able to take part in all sport opportunities.

### **5. Special provision and facilities must be made available so that women can gain literacy skills and to be educated.**

Majority of women have been deprived from gaining literacy and further studies due to their circumstances and their social status. In order to rectify this lagging behind, in addition to establishing free and compulsory education for all under 18, there must be special provision of adult literacy programmes at various levels and to facilitate widespread participation by women in these programmes through free State provisions.

**6. Nursery and pre-school facilities must be established on a wide scale in cities and villages.**

In order to facilitate active participation of women in social life, increasingly, the care and support of children must be assigned to society. Therefore, the workplace, localities in towns and villages must establish nurseries and pre-school facilities on a large scale. Parents should have easy and free access to nursery and pre-school facilities. The state and employers are obliged to provide and to financially maintain these establishments.

**7. Women should be freed from the pressures of house work and their participation in social circles must be facilitated.**

Doing house work and taking care of the family takes up the majority of time and physical and mental energy of women and significantly prevents developments of their skills and seriously restricts their presence in society. Women's individual and social freedom and rights can only be realised when they are relieved from house work.

House work is a joint effort for men and women. In order for men and women to be able to participate in social life and to have individual pass time, in addition to managing their house work, it is essential that society should do some of the house work.

Today, the majority of house work must be organised and undertaken by society. This can be facilitated through more appropriate production and supply and other products and facilities to manage the affairs in the house and also better organisation of social services.

Therefore, the following actions must be undertaken by the state as a matter of urgency:

- The state is responsible to establish public dining and laundry facilities everywhere; these facilities should be easily accessible and usable by all.
- The state must put in place provisions for services, products which simplify house work; without considering their profits.
- The state is required to provide products which facilitate the care of children at home, bearing in mind all health and safety standards and regardless of profit margin considerations. The state must also establish special health and medical centres for children at local level; these centres can advise on nutrition, health of children and caring for them during illness; it even provides services and advice to parents at home.
- The state is required to create playing fields for children in all localities in towns and villages bearing in mind standards of health and safety.
- The state is required to modify and expand the public transport network, building construction and town planning in a way that caring for infants and children can be

facilitated everywhere in a safe manner. This facility can ensure that parents while taking care of their children are not forced to stay at home.

- The state is required to establish local shopping centres in villages and towns, so that buying basic supplies and home appliances can be bought easily in a reasonable time by men or women.

#### **8. Men have to undergo special training in order to challenge patriarchal culture.**

In order to challenge attitudes and traditions which promote inferiority and humiliation of women, it is necessary for men to have special education in this respect. Therefore, patriarchal attitudes and traditions must be continuously challenged in education materials and media and to promote and spread the thought and tradition of equality of men and women. It is also necessary that men are encouraged to complete training courses specific to women such as dressmaking / tailoring, cooking and child care which have traditionally been specific to women. This would help men to share in the house work.

#### **9. Special measures should be put in place to improve the situation of women in villages.**

In villages, due to lack of basic facilities and lack of production, women are forced to take on hard and physically intensive work. In addition to doing all the house work, the village women have the duty of providing and preparing basic supplies under difficult circumstances with the most primitive tools, not to forget their role in production. All of this creates a difficult life for the women in villages.

Therefore, in order to improve the situation of women in villages, the state must put in place specific measures to widen the electricity, water network in villages, creating public bakeries and provision of suitable fuel which can be easily accessed by all, to be established in all villages.

#### **10. Women must be entitled to special health services.**

All should be entitled to free health and medical treatment care. In addition, women should be entitled to specific health services and as such immediate action is required with regards to:

- Examinations specific to women should be done at least once every year, in order to prevent illness or to promptly treat various conditions.
- Maternity wards with advanced facilities should be set up nationally, so that pregnant women can give birth under the supervision of medical practitioners and midwives, in a safe and healthy environment.

- Pregnant women should be under regular monthly examination until their delivery. These examinations should continue after giving birth, until such time that it is deemed necessary by the medical professionals.
- Family planning centres should be established in every town and village. These centres should be managed by experienced professionals and to have adequate equipment. These centres should provide guidance and education and to provide clients with free contraceptives. Production and import of contraceptives should be under full supervision of medical experts.

### **11. Prohibition of abortion must be abolished.**

The capitalist society provides two options to women with unwanted pregnancies. To get rid of the foetus or to keep the foetus and put up with difficult emotional, economic and social conditions. Poverty and inability in providing for children economically, the real and practical barriers which having a child and caring and nurturing him will create for women; stopping them from participating in social, economic and political life and ultimately leads to dilemmas and social and economic and moral stresses for single women and their children. All of this can lead to women wishing to terminate their pregnancy. If this action is not legally permitted, they will arrange for abortion through unprofessional individuals, under insanitary conditions and by paying huge expenses. Therefore, bearing in mind this fact, abortion must become legalised for all women, if it does not pose a health risk for the woman and the foetus is not older than 16 weeks. Abortion must not be carried out with the permission of anyone or any authority except that of the woman.

Abortion must be carried out free of charge, in hospitals and public health clinics under the supervision of a specialist practitioner. Individuals, who perform abortions without having the necessary expertise, are treated as offenders and will be prosecuted.

### **12. Traditions and customs which expose women to insult, physical and emotional abuse must be prohibited.**

In some economically and culturally backward parts, reactionary traditions, such as female circumcision and mutual trading of girls is common. These traditions must be banned immediately. The state must undertake necessary cultural and legal action in order to abrogate such traditions and the perpetrators must be prosecuted and severely punished.

### **13. Women must have legal and social security against rape crimes.**

Committing rape is among the most barbaric and violent offences against the physical and emotional privacy of an individual. In society today, as a result of moral prejudice of male and patriarchal domination and religious beliefs, rape is a violation of honour and dignity of the family and as a result, it means that in many cases this crime is covered up.

Insult and abuse against women or physical abuse by men in the family or official authorities, family vendettas and in some cases, forcing the victim of rape to marry the offender, are some of the outcomes which can often follow rape.

These matters would result in women who have been raped to avoid complaining to the police and judicial authorities and they even keep quiet among their close relations. Therefore:

Rape must be sentenced in the same category as criminal offences. Seeking family revenge with the authority of moral and religious prejudice is prohibited and is an offence. Rape victims must have easy access to judicial authorities. Dealing with issues of rape must not include insulting and humiliating treatment and must be processed at the earliest opportunity. Rape victims must be entitled to receiving medical and psychiatric assistance.

### **14. Social aspects of prostitution must be challenged. In order for victims of prostitution to return to a healthy life, they must be provided with economic and educational facilities.**

Prostitution is one of the forms of oppression imposed on women in a capitalist society. It is essential to fight against prostitution, in order to regain human respect and dignity of women in society. In present societies, poverty and lack of social security and legal and practical restrictions inflicted on women to work and to have financial independence, alongside patriarchal attitudes and culture, are among the factors which preserve and promote prostitution. As shown by the example of Islamic Republic of Iran, religious prejudice and doctrine, in addition to strengthening patriarchal culture and confirming inferiority of women, is in itself the cause of prostitution in society.

Eradication of prostitution is through fighting against all the above factors, furthermore, in order to fight against prostitution, immediate action is required with regards to the following:

- The state is responsible to financially support victims of prostitution and to provide them with educational opportunities and finding appropriate employment.
- Prostitution agents must be prosecuted and sentenced to severe penalties.

**15. Discrimination against women in political, trade and cultural organisations is prohibited.**

Men and women should enjoy equal rights in membership and activities of such organisations.

**16. Organising gatherings on demands and issues of women are free.**

Holding gatherings to promote the rights of women and defending their rights and to address their needs; is free. The state is required to facilitate opportunities so that such gatherings can exist.

**17. Holding gatherings specific to women is free.**

Women have the right to hold independent gatherings in various arenas, discussing numerous issues.

**18. Demands of women must be carried out democratically.**

One of the necessary conditions for fulfilling the demands of women must be free from all distortion, and bureaucratic involvement and must be carried out through democratic participation of people and in particular by the wider participation of women, therefore:

- The state must recognise gatherings and public non-governmental organisations (including special women gatherings, or public organisations such as labour councils and local councils) who work for improving the situation of women, as official executive bodies to monitor the fulfilment of the plight of women.
- The state is required to make available, resources and facilities necessary for advancing the work of these movements.

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