

# Uniform Civil Code: Clerics poison everything

October 25, 2016, 11:21 AM IST [Arshia Malik](#) in [Stepping Out](#) | India | TOI

There is a huge controversy surrounding the triple talaq raging in India these days. It has brought people to their feet with political parties taking positions and even individual victims of this draconian practice brought on various national TV debates to make points.

One can also see a robust democracy in progress with the Law Commission of India putting out a questionnaire online and asking for the opinions of the citizens. The questions cover all religions and are wide-ranging.

As usual, the clerics have started their usual stubborn tricks even down to threatening politicians of the ruling party with a subtle “things going bad” (read riots) if they persist with what they’re calling – interference in their personal religious laws which they insist guarantee them the right to practice their religion under the Constitution of India.



It is sad and pathetic to see the Muslim Personal Law Board being adamant about a practice which has been banned by 22 countries, including Pakistan. One can only conclude that the clerics want to keep the Muslim women under their patriarchal power with a draconian, regressive practice and at the same time hold the entire country hostage by bringing up the spectre of communal riots and the right-wing nature of BJP.

Muslim women having faith in the secular Constitution of India have knocked on the doors of the highest court of the land and demanded that it protects them from this exploitative and oppressive practice.

At this crux of history, the clerics, with their hold over the Muslim community by imprisoning and poisoning the minds of the Ummah have even started manufacturing consent in favour of the triple talaq by galvanising local mosques to get signatures on pamphlets that are shifty and don't give the full picture as was evident by the investigative reporting by Alok Bhatt.



When the victims of this barbaric, Damocles sword over all Muslim women are brought face to face with the likes of Kamal Farooqui of the AIMPLB on National TV, all they do is sympathize with them and go into obfuscating the whole issue. When told that the practice has no Quranic sanction or that it predates pre-Islamic Arabia they either do a melodrama of walking off the air or don't listen or shout down the women lawyers and experts with ad hominem attacks.

The road to change is long and the bravery and courage of women who have taken on the clerics-politician nexus, a remnant of the dynastic rule of the 70s, 80s and 90s by the Indian National Congress, is commendable. The triple talaq abolition could pave the way for the Uniform Civil Code eventually which is about one law for one country, unifying Indians in the fight against misogyny and injustice with a vision of a truly secular country leading in gender equality.

It is very important to understand why the clerics and especially the Muslim Personal Law Board is opposed to it. It comprises mostly of men and hence the need to bring in the devious optics of women supporting what keeps them in the medieval age.

The Holy Quran was sent to a pious and steadfast man who brought out a savage (jahalat) culture from darkness to light with the spiritual message. In his last sermon, the Prophet (PBUH) reiterated the need to uphold the rights and dignity of women. But considering the fledgling Muslim Ummah started bickering even when his body was being washed by his favorite companion after his demise, one can see how much the testosterone-powered ambition of the clerics poisoned that beautiful divine message.

With their own interpretations and iron hold over the custody of the text, jurisprudence, and its meanings, they have found a perfect way to keep the Muslim community enslaved. Add to that already fragile relationship of the Indian Muslims with the state since partition and you get a self-perpetuating oppressive system feeding itself of the vote bank politics of the dynastic political party.

In 2016, there is not much room to hide all the obfuscating efforts or the trickery being applied to manipulate the public into believing all is hunky dory in the Muslim world. With social media and the medium of television and radio, nuanced discussions can be held about the future of the Indian Muslims and their status in a country that continues to disprove the two- nation theory that tore it into three states and continues to hammer at its integrity.



The Sachar Report (2005), a truly comprehensive report on the status of Muslims is a very revealing report and is often cited, quoted, used as a prop to show how much the state has lagged behind in uplifting the Indian Muslims. But let it also be drilled into the Indian Muslims' minds that along with asking what the country has done for them, they also need to introspect and reflect what all they could do for the country and eventually their own communities. Pushing the clerics-politician mafia back, supporting the abolishing of regressive practices like the triple talaq, and participating in the discussion of the Uniform Civil Code is a start.

Let's free ourselves of the poison of the clerics!

*This article was published in the Times of India and the original link can be found [here](#).*