

Press Release

Ephpheta Paul VI Institute and Racist Extremism

(Translated)

Ephpheta Paul VI Institute (Iftah Paul VI School for Special Needs) in the city of Bethlehem in the West Bank has sparked widespread controversy following its administration's decision to prevent female students wearing hijab from entering the school, threatening to expel them and considering them absent from school if they insist on wearing the hijab.

In the fifteenth year of the Hijrah, the Amir ul-Mu'mineen, Umar (ra), wrote a covenant for the Christians of Bayt al-Maqdis (بيت المقدس Jerusalem), securing for them their lives, their properties, their places of worship and their rituals, and that they should not be harmed. Before that, the Messenger of Allah (saw) had instructed us not to harm a dhimmi from the People of the Book. And they lived with us while we preserved their covenants.

Yet today, in Bayt al-Maqdis, despite the many centuries during which Christians have lived in our lands in security and safety, we see this school for special needs, whose social function is to educate children, prepare them, and help them integrate into society and participate fully in society - confront us with a racist decision that contradicts every custom and religion and has no legal basis.

O Muslims in the Blessed Land who are protective of their Deen and their honour! This decision, taken by the school under the pretext that it has its own regulations and official uniform, and from which it did not retract despite all the mediation and interventions from Muslim and Christian notables who approached the administration, reveals an abhorrent racism and openly declared hostility towards you, your Deen, and its rulings.

First: The hijab worn by Muslim female students is an obligation imposed by the Lord of all worlds and the Christian faith acknowledges the headscarf for women, and nuns still wear it to this day.

Second: The regulations of the Ministry of Education prohibit any such action; a student's observance of religious rites is, in principle, a right guaranteed by law.

Third: The female students have been accustomed to wearing their hijab for years, so why does the school now insist on opposing the hijab, which is a symbol that holds sanctity for Muslims?

In whose interest does the Ministry of Education remain silent about such an offensive decision and about depriving female students with special needs of their

right to education, while they are being pressured and bargained with over their hijab, which is an obligation from Allah, Glorified and Exalted?!

Did that girl, who suffers from speech and hearing difficulties, not stir your sense of honour when she pleaded with you, saying that she wanted to return to her school and education from which she has been deprived for some time, through no fault or wrongdoing of her own but simply because she and her fellow students refuse to disobey the Command of Allah (swt) by removing their hijab?!

By Allah, if the situation were reversed and a Christian female student were prevented from entering a commercial establishment, for example, because she was wearing a cross—not a school, but a shop—would the matter have passed unnoticed? Or would the media and the authorities have stirred up an uproar over it, turned it into a case of terrorism against Christians, hammered people's heads with slogans about coexistence and rejecting extremism, and imposed immediate penalties on those who disturbed civil peace?!

Why do we not see a stance or hear a voice from the women's associations spread across the Blessed Land of Palestine—those who oppose violence against women and clamor for equality, freedoms, a girl's right to determine her own future, and even her right to abortion?! Or does the right to education cease to apply when there is a hijab on the head?!

By the Permission of Allah (swt), this situation will not last long. We shall give bayah (of allegiance) to the Imam who is a shield (junnah), who will eradicate the remaining of the kuffar (disbelievers), hypocrites, and all those who oppose Islam and the Muslims or prevents them from performing their religious rites. And that is not difficult for Allah.

**Women's Section
in the Central Media Office
of Hizb ut Tahrir**

