

End Capitalism, End Modern Day Slavery

News:

Modern-day slavery is not new, it has been happening in UK cities for years, and around the world. In fact, it is estimated that there are at least 40.3 million people worldwide are currently in enslaved, which is more than those exploited by the transatlantic slave trade. (Independent, 7/7/2020)

Comment:

Despite laws for minimum wage and adequate work conditions in the UK, there are many exploitative practices of employment. Especially when individuals are trafficked, they become prime targets to work in sweatshops and, recently, barbershops in major UK cities. No matter how hard they work, they do not receive fair wages.

Further away, in less developed countries, workers are exploited in factories owned by large companies that can make huge profits and pay the workers very little. Companies based in the West take advantage of local laws and lack of accountability as well as the existing poverty that forces people to venture out seeking work.

Recently, Covid-19 has resulted in exposing how workers who are not paid well already have been further exploited during the pandemic.

Solutions to this problem come down to raising awareness and urging consumers to exercise choices by refusing to support companies when they become aware of such practices. This fails to recognize the root of the problem as the exploitative nature of Capitalism.

To gain maximum profits is encouraged in the free market, so companies will strive to increase their revenue. Consumers are also targeting by sales and good deals all year round. To call out companies or appeal to individuals is a limited action. The real solution is only possible with a shift in ideas not just practices alone. Since these practices are part of the ideology. When society is based on the correct ideology, Islam, which teaches accountability to the Creator as the basis of all actions, exploitation too will be shunned.

The Prophet (saw) said, «قَالَ اللَّهُ ثَلَاثَةٌ أَنَا خَصْمُهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، رَجُلٌ أُعْطِيَ بِي ثُمَّ عَدَرَ، وَرَجُلٌ بَاعَ حُرًّا فَأَكَلَ، وَرَجُلٌ اسْتَأْجَرَ أَجِيرًا فَاسْتَوْفَى مِنْهُ، وَلَمْ يُعْطِ أَجْرَهُ» **Allah says, 'I will be against three persons on the Day of Resurrection: -1. One who makes a covenant in My Name, but he proves treacherous. -2. One who sells a free person (as a slave) and eats the price, -3. And one who employs a laborer and gets the full work done by him but does not pay him his wages.'** (Sahih Bukhari)

The Islamic economic system alone recognizes that all things are a trust from Allah (swt) and man is responsible for how he dispenses of this trust. How we treat those who work and also how we utilize all resource. This idea will have a profound effect on the lives of so many who today face harm, exploitation and abuse just for seeking their provision in the current man-made system.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Nazia Rehman