



■ The Union government should work with Muslims to usher in a uniform civil code and the community should step forward to embrace it

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Three talaqs at one go has no validity in the Quran

Instead of enforcing the law properly, the Centre wants the Supreme Court to annul the practice

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The Supreme Court's comment on the triple talaq system as a practice too "abhorrent" to be legal, and the direction it hints at, is akin to throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

Critics of Islamic systems should know that Islam upholds the equality of sexes, caste, creed or colour. The institution of marriage is fundamental to a harmonious society. Talaq in Arabic means an oath taken to proceed for 'slow' release from a marriage, and as a system triple talaq provides ample scope for reconciliation. Research shows that most divorces in India take 10-12 months even when both parties are amenable. The triple talaq, if followed right, is a wonderful system that cuts down on expenses and preserves the dignity of women.

For the majority of Muslims, ignorance is bliss, and they blindly follow the predominantly male clerics. Research has found that more than 85% of Muslims have not read the Quran in full to understand the value system prescribed in it for the betterment of humankind.

They recite it as part of prayer rituals but it is in Arabic and very few have read a transla-

tion. The Sura Al Baqra, on which Islamic personal law is almost entirely based on, elaborates on triple talaq in verses 226 to 241: For those who take the oath for abstention from their wives (the first talaq), a waiting of four months is ordained but during that time reconciliation should be made feasible.

If not, proceed to the next stage of talaq, after which women shall wait for three months. During this time husbands have the right to take the wife back, if they wish for reconciliation. Women have similar rights. During the seven months between the two talaqs, family and friends shall intervene and make attempts to effect a reconciliation. If everything fails, pronounce the third talaq. Clearly, Quran prohibits three talaqs at one go. It is apparent that triple talaq is mistaken for instant talaq, which is unIslamic.

The government's stand on triple talaq is only partially correct. Instead of enforcing the law properly, they want the Supreme Court to annul it. The government should work with Muslims to usher in a Uniform Civil Code, and the community should step forward to embrace it. Opposition parties see the move to annul triple talaq as anti-Muslim in the guise of safeguarding the dignity of women. They may do better by taking a narrative around abandonment as an even more "abhorrent" a system than instant triple talaq. The latter, at least, gives women an option to remarry.

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