

1	 <p style="text-align: center;">WOMEN HONOURED, SOCIETY RESPECTED <i>IN CONJUNCTION WITH WOMEN'S DAY 2017 CELEBRATIONS</i> 18 August 2017AD / 25 Zulkaedah 1438H</p>
2	<p>إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ، مُحَمَّدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينَهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَتَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا، مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا.</p>
3	<p>أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ،</p>
4	<p>اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَمَنْ دَعَا بِدَعْوَتِهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ.</p>
5	<p>أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ، أَوْصِيكُمْ وَنَفْسِي بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَطَاعَتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُقْلِحُونَ.</p>
6	<p>قَالَ تَعَالَى: أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٧١﴾</p>
7	<p>Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah, On this auspicious day, let us together seek to increase the level of our conviction in Allah SWT. Together, we must be determined to carry out all that He has commanded and instructed, and avoid all that He has prohibited and disallowed. May we be raised among His righteous servants on the Day of Judgement.</p>



8	In conjunction with the National Women's Day celebrations on 25th of August, today's sermon shall discuss the topic, "Women Honoured, Society Respected".
9	Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah, Once upon a time, during the period of ignorance (<i>jahiliyah</i>), women were looked down upon and despised by society. They had no right whatsoever, be it the right to present opinions even if it concerned themselves, the right to inheritance of property, and so on.
10	Most unfortunate was that newborn female babies were killed by their own parents because they were considered a disgrace to the family.
11	The grace of Allah SWT is plentiful indeed, as history bore witness to Islam emerging at a time when society rejected the humane treatment of women, a time when some people were in doubt about such humane treatment,
12	And a time when some others considered women as mere creatures to serve men.
13	Islam came and raised the dignity of women. In fact, Islam does not differentiate women from men. They need each other, and have to help one another.
14	This was stated by Allah SWT, in Surah al-Taubah, verse 71, which was read at the beginning of this sermon: Which means: <i>"The Believers, men and women, are protectors one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, practice regular charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is Exalted in power, Wise"</i>
15	Islam introduced many things, including the respect for women's rights, the recognition of their humanity and their ability to carry out religious obligations, responsibilities, equitable punishment and opportunity to enter paradise.
16	Islam considers women to be noble creatures. Women have the same rights as men, equal with regards to the aspect of origin, equal in religious



	requirements, and identical in terms of retribution and final resting place after death.
17	Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah, We must realise the fact that today we cannot deny a woman to be the cornerstone of a family. This is because women's roles and responsibilities are huge indeed within the family institution. Women have to undertake simultaneous responsibilities in their role as daughter, wife and mother
18	To ensure the best for their families. They complete our lives, and vice versa. The creation of women is proof of Allah SWT's greatness.
19	They function as the backbone and the pillar of family harmony. They play the supporting role to the husband, always by his side in bad or good times, as well as being a responsible mother in providing a child's initial education.
20	All this is done to ensure that children are prepared to face the challenges of life. She is also the one who will be the role model and example for the children.
21	In that regard, Allah SWT declared in Surah al-Rum, verse 21: <p style="text-align: center;">وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾</p>
22	Which means: "And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect."
23	The verse above strongly rejects the views and beliefs of those who regard women or wives as only servants of men. In fact, Islam considers a pious wife as the most valuable asset in this world,
24	And regard it as one of the factors of happiness. More than that, Islam has raised the status of women as wives and considers their work as a holy cause (<i>jihad</i>) in the path of Allah SWT.



25	<p>Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah,</p> <p>Time passes by so fast and things change. Previously, women were seen to play a core and basic role in the household, but it is no longer just that.</p>
26	<p>In line with the development of women's capabilities in education and economics, they are now regarded as human resource assets or skilled manpower of the nation.</p>
27	<p>Women of today are involved in important and more challenging roles, such as ministers in the government, elected representatives of the people, ambassadors, military officers, pilots, and so on. Women's involvement today can be seen in various fields,</p>
28	<p>Starting at the support level right up to the decision-making level. It is in fact not contradictory to the nature and the teachings of Islam itself.</p>
29	<p>Imam al-Tabrani r.h recorded the observation narrated by Yahya bin Sulaym RA, where he was reported to have said:</p> <p>رَأَيْتُ سَمْرَاءَ بِنْتَ نَهْيَكِ، وَكَانَتْ قَدْ أُدْرِكَتْ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: عَلَيْهَا دِرْعٌ غَلِيظٌ، وَنَحْمَارٌ غَلِيظٌ، بِيَدِهَا سَوْطٌ تُؤَدِّبُ النَّاسَ، وَتَأْمُرُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ، وَتَنْهَى عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ.</p>
30	<p>Which means: "I saw Samra' binti Nahik, who had the opportunity to be with the Prophet SAW. She wore strong armour and a thick face cover. In her hand there was a whip used to hit (for the purpose of educating) the public. She invites the righteous and prevents the evil."</p>
31	<p>Besides Samra' binti Nahik R.A, there were many other women figures at the time of Rasulullah SAW who had also contributed in various fields, such as education, medicine, military, management, administration, business and so on.</p>
32	<p>Therefore, in reality, their contribution is essentially comparable to men, perhaps even more. This is because it is not based on gender, but in fact, based on the ability of thinking, education and talent.</p>



33	<p>Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah,</p> <p>Observing today's reality, we can still see a handful of people whose minds are still stuck in the period of ignorance. They, as despicable husbands - are willing to beat their wives for minor mistakes;</p>
34	<p>As fathers - abuse their daughters; as neighbours and members of the community - exploit women, restrict their freedom, deny their right to education, to work and so on.</p>
35	<p>If not contained, it will cause the spread of the virus of ignorance, tyranny and oppression against women. The increase of crimes such as rape, adultery, sexual harassment, and the like, in society indicates our weakness in defending the fate of women.</p>
36	<p>We forget that their dignity is actually our dignity as well. We forget that they are the mothers of our future generation. Therefore, in raising the status of our <i>ummah</i>, women should be honoured and exalted, rather than used and abused.</p>
37	<p>Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah,</p> <p>A nation's development today is not based on the gender of its builders. The development of the country is essentially accomplished by all citizens, be they men or women.</p>
38	<p>Each has their own way of contributing to the nation. Therefore, the National Women's Day celebration is organised and held in appreciation and recognition of women who have</p>
39	<p>Contributed to our country's development. It is also a platform for women to share views and issues as part of the agenda on women's development.</p>
40	<p>Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah,</p> <p>To end the sermon today, the khatib would like to present some conclusions as reflection for all of us:</p> <p>First: Islam is a religion that defends and promotes women's dignity.</p> <p>Second: We must recognize and appreciate the women who have contributed to the development of the community and nation.</p>



	Third: We must defend and elevate women's dignity as part of the people's responsibility.
41	<p>Allah SWT declared in surah al-Ahzab, verse 35:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ</p> <p>إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْخَشِيعِينَ وَالْخَشِيعَاتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّابِغِينَ وَالصَّابِغَاتِ وَالْحَافِظِينَ فُرُوجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٥﴾</p>
42	<p>Which means: "For Muslim men and women, - for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in Charity, for men and women who fast (and deny themselves), for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise, - for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward."</p>
43	<p>بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ بِالْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ. أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، الْأَحْيَاءِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْأَمْوَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.</p>