

Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan

Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan (BMMA) an autonomous, secular and right based mass organisation of Muslim women across the country was formed in January 2007 with the aim to become the alternative progressive voice of the community to raise their social, political and economic concerns. It is a movement for the rights of Muslims in India led by women .Its objective is to fight for the rights of Muslims emanating from the Constitution. It believes in building alliances with other movements and networking with those that are fighting for social equality and human rights.

From the inception it has been campaigning for the rights of Muslim women and have been taking steps to ensure their social , economic ,political, civil legal and religious rights for which they profess to draw inspiration from the constitution and the Holy Quran .

The Strategy of BMMA to create a mass movement to meet its aims and objectives is:

- 1) Identification of local leadership
- 2) Capacity building and Support to local leadership
- 3) Cadre building and creating pressure groups
- 4) Encouraging pressure groups to do local state and national advocacy.

The Andolan has set up district units which report to the state heads .It has been working actively in 15states viz Bihar Delhi Chhattisgarh, Haryana ,Gujarat Jharkhand ,Karnataka , Madhya Pradesh Maharashtra/ Mumbai , Orissa, Rajasthan Tamilnadu, Utter Pradesh, West Bengal .The structure of the organisation is two tier :one at the national level for policy making and the other for implementation of national level decisions and policies at state level The national Council which meets quarterly and comprises of the Founding members and the state heads takes policy decisions.

A major campaign carried out by the Andolan in recent times is to hold demonstrations to pressurise the government for implementation of the Sacchar Committee recommendations and also to get a national Study commissioned on the issues facing Muslim women and girls .It is also working towards the codification of Muslim Family Law and the draft law prepared was discussed in a meeting organised by the Andolan with Dr Zeenat Shaukat Ali ,Advocate Kirti Singh , Javed Anand .The draft law deals with important issues concerning the Age of Marriage , Polygamy, Mehr Maintenance in Divorce etc,

A major function of BMMA is to support the Nyaya Panchayats which function as dispute resolution forums providing legal aid and help women to solve their family problems and disputes .These panchayats are run by Muslim women and the litigants are mostly Muslims Though the women who provide this legal aid are semi literate they are trained on issues of gender, domestic violence and Muslim law.The Nyaya Panchayats over a period of time have organised themselves in teams and have evolved their own procedures, systems such as maintenance of registers, proper filing of client

applications with proper follow up, negotiating with lawyers from the husband's, negotiating with the Qazis for helping her to get her financial rights and applying pressure on police in cases of violence and abuse.

But since they cannot dispense justice the way in which the Islamic Shariat courts do and as they felt that in these courts women were sidelined and the judgements issued by these courts were fair to women , the BMMA decided in July 2013 to set up Shariat Courts on the lines of Daar Ul Qaza Islamic Courts .These courts , the first of their kind in the country will handle cases relating to Muslim Family Law specially concerning divorce ,marital discord ,property matters etc and dispense speedy justice to the applicants which need not be only women .Men can also take recourse to these courts .

In pursuance of this decision it set up such Shariat courts in Dindigul in Tamil Nadu, Mumbai and Ahmedabad .The Shariat Court in Pune was set up in October 2013 with Zubaida Khatri and Saeeda Jamedar as Judges .These courts will be a part of Alternate Dispute Resolution (ASR) mechanism of the judicial system

BMMA proposes to set up in the next six months such Shariat Courts in the other states where they are actively involved such as Karnataka ,MadhyaPradesh etc.

For more details visit BMMA website or contact