

Grooming of Young Girls: Improvement in Media Treatment but Other Concerns Remain

Thursday 10 August, 2017

We wish to commend the UK media for its treatment of the recent news that members of a gang in Newcastle have been imprisoned for grooming young girls for sex. ***So far as we know, no media outlet mentioned the perpetrators' religion.*** A criminal is a criminal and as such does not have a religion, though criminals might like to place religious labels upon their chests. The criminal's religion did not teach him to act in this manner.

We would also urge the communities to which certain of the men involved belong to take a long hard look at their attitude towards women. There are many countries in the world where women are held in low esteem and denied their basic human rights. *All of us must stand up and speak up against such behaviour.* When people from such communities came to the UK, they brought their misogynist and racist views with them. We urge friends in these communities not to bury their heads in the sand and deny facts that are obvious to everyone else. Such behaviour does no credit at all to these communities.

We urge the government not to shy away from speaking the truth and saying that these were racist crimes and we note that the same view has now been expressed by Lord Macdonald. Had the situation been reversed and a gang of white youths had groomed for sex girls of some other race, members of these communities would be up in arms. Racism is not just white people mistreating members of other communities. For members of these communities to hold young white vulnerable girls in low esteem and misuse their vulnerabilities is also racist behaviour.

- **The Ahmadiyya Association for the Propagation of Islam** (*Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam*) was established in 1914 at Lahore to promote the informed understanding of Islam in the West. In the UK it operated the Shah Jehan Mosque in Woking until the early 1960s. Its new UK headquarters is at the above address. In 1924, it built the first mosque on the Continent at Berlin. This mosque is now recognised by the German government as part of the German national heritage. From its European and other centres around the world this organisation has taught that Islam promotes peace, harmony and mutual respect between all communities and nationalities.

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