

Poverty and Food Deserts Reach Peak Levels in the UK Summer Holidays

News:

The BBC reported on the 25th of July 2019 that the problem of poor British people finding enough food to eat in the summer holidays is greater and are urging people not to forget to donate supplies to their local food collection centres. The Trussell Trust, which runs over 420 food banks across the UK have stated that many children risk going hungry over the six-week break from school. It says demand for emergency parcels for children rose significantly - by more than 4,000 in last July and August. The government have stated that it was helping families meet the cost of living.

Comment:

Internationally it is uncommon for people to assume any kind of food crisis in the West. However, with inequality and the unjust policies of the Capitalist system, food insecurity is a growing consequence that is affecting thousands of British citizens every year. This is a situation where both working families with a regular income and low income families are affected as the money coming in cannot cover all of life's basic needs. As a result, there are children and families that do not have a guaranteed day's food supply and end up suffering from hunger and malnutrition due to a poor quality of lifestyle. Hunger is not just a matter for African or third world nations or those regions suffering from natural disaster. The Trussell Trust is one British charity that offers a service distributing food to poverty-stricken citizens who have been failed by government systems of Social Security. Currently in the UK, the Trussell Trust reported, "Food banks are being used more than ever before, but voluntary organisations alone cannot stop primary school children facing hunger." They organize nationwide food banks and feeding centres for vulnerable individuals and families. The charities say nearly half of the 67,506 food parcels went to primary-school-age children and over a quarter went to children aged four and under. However, increasingly charities have had to feed the mothers and fathers of the children as well. The BBC report states that the need is more so in the summer holidays, as the free meals in schools are no longer available to children. The fact that a food rich nation can have this problem is a result of the fact that the Capitalist system of government does not prioritize the human needs and right of the people in the correct manner as ordained by the Creator to distribute resources fairly. Rather, the profit and loss calculations of business take priority over reality of how the cost of living is often more than the minimum wages and expenses that are a burden on each household. The mentality of Social Freedom may also mean some irresponsible parents may waste money on substance abuse and a lifestyle of entertainment rather than looking after the needs of their own children. In the Islamic economic system those that are truly needy will have access to the Islamic funds from the Bait al Maal (State Treasury). Those persons who waste their money in haram acts or neglect their children will be punished in the judicial system. Freedom to do whatever you want with land resources or your money is not an accepted option for citizens in the Islamic state.

Allah (swt) says that there is enough provision for each of humankind as in Surah Al Hijr verse 15, ﴿وَالْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَاهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَوْزُونٍ﴾, **"And the earth - We have spread it out wide, and placed on it mountains firm, and caused (life) of every kind to grow on it in a balanced manner"**.

In the Islamic State of the past, the balance was restored to humanity and there was no possibility of some people going hungry with matters left to chance by charity organizations selectively feeding people. The Khalifah would have a complete census and ongoing observance of those in need so that the Walis in each area would have the rights of the people met. Umar Ibn Al Khattab is quoted as saying that he would not accept the animals in the Khilafah in need of food, such was the concern the leaders had for their responsibility to care of the affairs of the Ummah. Capitalism's main concern is looking after the priority of Business and the elite that is why the other citizens are left to suffer. With the return of the Khilafah (Caliphate) upon the method of the Prophethood, humanity globally will wish to benefit from this just system of Allah (swt) even if they are not Muslims!

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