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AFGHANISTAN: Taliban ‘ban’ contraceptives for women-‘haram’ in sharia

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Women in Afghanistan have said that midwives have refused to provide contraceptives where they previously would have

By [Umang Sharma](#)

[First Post](#) (10.02.2023) – The Taliban have allegedly stopped

selling contraceptives to women, claiming that it is “haram” or forbidden under Sharia law. Drug stores and pharmacies across Afghanistan have allegedly been directed not to stock any pills, ampoules, or medicines used as contraceptive.

‘Outrageous’

Reacting to the move, though there has been no official announcement to this effect, Former Policy Advisor to Minister for Afghan Resettlement & Minister for Refugees, Shabnam Nasimi tweeted: “Access to contraception is a universal human right. This is outrageous.”

Contraceptive prices skyrocket

According to Afghanistan-based online news agency *Rukhshana Media*, selling contraceptives to women has been quietly stopped in Kabul and Balkh provinces.

The unofficial ban has doubled the price of contraceptives. There is, however, no regulation on drugs as the report said they are secretly sold on the grey market as the imports go unchecked by the Taliban.

‘Don’t know whether to laugh or cry’

Women in Afghanistan have said that midwives have refused to provide contraceptives where they previously would have.

The report quoted a 35-year-old Kabul resident and mother of three, whose youngest child is a year old, saying to prevent another pregnancy, she would visit a midwife every two months for contraception injections.

“The midwife I always visit said the Taliban has told them not to inject contraceptives because it is haram,” she said.

“When she said that it was haram, I didn’t know whether to

laugh or cry,” the woman added saying that when she to buy tablets instead from outside, she was charged double the amount.

‘Decision violates women’s rights’

Afghan women say that the decision to ban contraceptives violates the right of women to make a personal choice and the right of families to make decision about having children.

“They (Taliban) have even taken away the peace inside our house,” a woman said.

The report quoted another 42-year-old woman and a mother of four saying that she has been using birth control pills for past five years. Since the last three weeks, she has been running pillar to post for contraceptives.

“Contraceptive tablets were not found in many pharmacies in Kabul. The pharmacists told me that it is forbidden, so the price has gone up and it is sold secretly,” she said.

“They (pharmacies) said they don’t have it and it is forbidden,” he added.

‘Kabul bans import of contraceptives’

Reports quoted drug wholesalers in Kabul city confirming that the Taliban has stopped importing these drugs and other related equipment which in turn has pushed the price higher on the black market.

The *Rukhshana Media* report quoted a drug dealer saying that the Taliban banned all types of contraceptives 20 days ago.

“Currently, any type of drug that women use for contraception are prohibited. Although they did not tell us a specific reason, but the [the Taliban] said it is not permissible and it is forbidden,” the dealer said.

“About fifteen days ago, four Taliban forces came dressed in white clothes and told us that we no longer have the right to sell these drugs,” he said, adding that they also confiscated some of the medicines that were there in his shop.

Midwives in Afghanistan challenge ban

The ban has been challenged many midwives with one in Mazar-e-Sharif saying that the Taliban visited their clinic three weeks ago to tell them to stop providing contraception.

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