Performing Ablution while Having Artificial Nails on One’s Fingers and Toes - 16 /Jul/ 2019

Q.| How can women wearing artificial nails perform the ablutions of wuḍū and ghusl?

A.| Artificial nails and the material used to attach them are obstacles that prevent water from reaching the tips of the fingers, which must be washed in the ablutions of wuḍū and ghusl. As such, artificial nails must be removed prior to performing ablution, even if this involves a financial cost or undergoing some hardship. The only exception is if their removal before the expiration of the time of a canonic prayer constitutes an ordinarily unbearable hardship, in which case the worshiper is required to perform the wuḍū and ghusl of the wounded (jabīrah) for the canonic prayer at hand. However, as soon as the cause that made the removal of artificial nails unbearably difficult has expired, they must be removed for the subsequent canonic prayers. A related point to bear in mind in this relation is that artificial nails are a form of adornment (zīnah), and as such women must cover their fingers from non-maḥram men[1] so long as they are wearing artificial nails.