Article

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The Agenda Behind the Azerbaijan School Hijab Ban

On Monday, 12 October 2026, Azerbaijan's education ministry began enforcing new uniform rules, turning away female pupils wearing hijabs. Protests began outside state schools in the capital, Baku, and in several southern districts including Masally and Jalilabad. News media agencies showed groups of students in Islamic dress being stopped at the school gates, many with their parents clearly distressed and complaining about the discrimination. One girl was reported as saying, “Why should I have to give up my religion?”

The interior ministry said it had detained 37 people on Monday who tried to obstruct the rules and "grossly violate public order”.

The rules, approved on 21 September, ban clothing that contradicts "the principle of secularism in education" in state schools. They do not mention the hijab. Similar guidelines were extended to teachers on 6 October.

In one video, pupils outside School No. 69 in Balakhany, outside Baku, hold a banner reading: "The hijab does not prevent anyone from getting an education.”

Shahiza Huseynova, a mother who was protesting outside a school in the Mashtaga district of the capital, was detained on Tuesday.

In an interview with Meydan TV, an independent Azerbaijani-language channel based in Germany, Huseynova's husband Agha said she had been given a warning: "Either you take off your child's hijab and send them to school, or you go to prison.”

Ilkin Huseynov, an activist, launched an online platform called "Let Leyli Go to School". It offers free lessons from volunteer teachers to pupils barred from class.

According to a friend of Huseynov, he left his home in Baku with unidentified men, and his phone has been off ever since.

Azerbaijani officials have defended the rules. One MP, Nigar Arpadarai, told the 1news.az website that children did not choose to wear the hijab themselves but were influenced by their families. "A child has no freedom to choose a religion. This is a conscious prerogative of adults," she said.

As the Muslim nations capitulate to the demands of the enemies of Islam, we can see how the suppression of Islamic expression is an ever-increasing agenda. The idea that you have to commit an act of violence or have active plans to harm another human is not the measure of whether you are criminalised.

These young sisters clearly have no intention of doing anything other than exercising their human right to an education. The abuse they experience is not only at a level of being denied the opportunity to advance their studies and future goal, it is much more than that, and the powers designing this abuse know it very well. The objectives of labelling young women as a danger are the following:

1) It is a social and political tool to signal to others that opposition to liberal secular ideology will not be tolerated and harsh punishments will be meted out to anyone who dares to think for themselves.

2) Submission, fear and force are the tools of state control and weakening of the spiritual attachment to enforce secularism to consolidate obedience to the laws of men, not to Allah (swt)

3) The realisation that the capitalist nations are failing and Islam is a real and present alternative to the current chaos and destruction must be managed. Governments know that they have no real intellectual allegiance from their citizens, who have zero trust in the systems operating above them. They create an enemy to distract from the real source of chaos and destruction; the Hijab is an easy angle to use.

The row has now spilled over into Türkiye, Baku's closest ally, which provided support during Azerbaijan's 2020 war with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh. The two countries call themselves "one nation, two states". President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's chief adviser, Oktay Saral, has called the Azerbaijani restrictions "unacceptable" and urged Baku to "reverse this mistake". But the lack of action to actually save these sisters is clear from Türkiye, and every other Muslim nation shows how support is imaginary, not real.

We as Muslims cannot feel ashamed of our Islamic identity and these pious sisters who refuse to take a Dunya (worldly) benefit in place of their position in the Ahkira (Hereafter) know the well the promise of Allah (swt) is true. ﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾ **"Indeed, those who have believed and done righteous deeds and established prayer and given zakah will have their reward with their Lord, and there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve."** [2:277].

These signals are all there to give Muslims more hope that the old redundant ideas of feminism and liberal capitalism give no assurance of security of human dignity and that the only way forward for true justice in the establishment of the Khilafah (Caliphate) upon the methodology of the Prophet (saw) and the noble Sahaba (ra).

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