

Azerbaijan's celebrated independence day with nationalists making false claims that it is a world leader in women's rights!

News:

On the 17th of October 2016, the weekly online newspaper the "Jewish Journal" posted an article celebrating the Independence Day of Azerbaijan which claimed that Azerbaijan was a world leader in women rights issues. The article written by Milikh Yevdayev can be quoted, "During our first period of independence, from 1918-1920, we became the first secular Muslim democracy in the world. In those brief years of our initial freedom, Azerbaijan granted women the right to vote for the first time among Muslim countries...today women are represented in all branches of the government.....many democratic nations had yet to take such monumental steps toward progress."

Comment:

The article asserted that, "There is no other nation in the world that has pushed stereotypes and broken "glass ceilings" for women and minorities as Azerbaijan has done". If one is to take these very astonishing statements seriously one should reflect upon the actual reference point that is being used as the measure of 'women's liberation'. It is of course the liberal secular viewfinder that is being use here and if one reverts to the valid measure of women's rights – that being the Islamic cultural and historical per perspective, one would realize that the claim that Azerbaijan is a world leader in women's issues would soon vanish into insignificance. If one was to review the progress women had under the ruling of the Khilafah from the its first inception by the Prophet Mohammad (saw) they would see that women were looked after in a manner far superior to anything offered in any western Democracy to date. Early Islamic history saw the establishment of Muslim women as scholars, politicians, businesswomen, jurists and doctors. From the first ruling of the Islamic State women were granted the right to own their own property and had their independent wealth secured in law. They had the right to marry without force and had their educational need catered for in no less a manner than their male counterparts. The first Khilafah in Medina set a precedent that Khalifs followed. Hundred of Muslim female pioneers fill the pages of the Islamic history books such as Fatima al Firhi who founded the first university in 859 in Fez, Morocco and Umm Darda who was a scholar from Syria who taught imams, jurists and even had the 5th Umayyad caliph who ruled from Spain to India as her student. There are documented accounts of some eight thousand Muslim female scholars many of whom in addition to theology and jurisprudence, were skilled in calligraphy and philosophy, women who not only contributed to their society but actively shaped it.

Slander and sexual harassmt were clear violations of Islamic law with no vague loopholes that humiliated and demeaned the female's victim, as is the current case in all modern democracies today. Azerbaijan's current laws have some clearly discriminatory policies that reflect the blatant hypocrisy in its equality agenda. The "Guarantees of Gender (Men and Women) Equality" enacted in October 2006 seeks to eliminate "gender-based discrimination" while also containing clearly discriminatory provisions that take into account the "special nature of women", including different ages for marriage and retirement for men and women, the law is that it bans sexual harassmt at the workplace and makes possible the prosecution of the abuser as well as any employer who attempts to conceal sexual

harassment in the workplace. However, there have been no court trials related to sexual harassment in the workplace to date. The State Committee has developed a National Strategy for Combating Domestic Violence but the Organization for Human Rights reports “the new measures have had a limited impact on preventing domestic violence or assisting victims, due to a lack of clear guidelines on implementation or any protocols for monitoring and evaluating the application of the new laws” as such violence against women remains a great social problem. In 2015 Azerbaijan hosted the European Games but The UK Guardian newspaper exposed the widespread poverty of women and children living in the shadow of the expensive sports stadiums.

Writer Yuliya Aliyeva Gureyeva is quoted as saying that “These shortcomings and inadequacies in the implementation of international commitments on gender mainstreaming in Azerbaijan indicate that the state so far has failed to formulate a clear and sustainable policy that would address the disempowerment of women.” The discrepancy between the theory of women’s rights and the actual reality of what happens in real life democracies is all too common in all liberal Democracies as there is a struggle between Capitalist money making interests and what different people desire from their mind in terms of their rights. No such contradiction ever existed in the history of the Islamic State as Allah (swt) clearly commands to rule with one objective in mind – that is to obey Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw) and nothing else as described in the Surah Al Maidah Ayat 49 of the Quran.

﴿وَأَنِ احْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَاحْذَرْهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُصِيبَهُمْ بِبَعْضِ ذُنُوبِهِمْ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ لَفَاسِقُونَ﴾

“And this (He commands): Judge thou between them by what Allah hath revealed, and follow not their vain desires, but beware of them lest they beguile thee from any of that (teaching) which Allah hath sent down to thee. And if they turn away, be assured that for some of their crime it is Allah's purpose to punish them. And truly most men are rebellious.” [Al-Ma'ida: 49]

When the world sees the return of the glorious ruling system of Islam it will once again be clear that all current democracies fall far short of the true meaning of protecting women’s rights.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
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