

# Promises for the future of women's rights

Indonesia's Voice of Baceprot, an all-girl heavy metal band making music in hijabs recently grabbed the international attention and gave a strong message about women's emancipation

Harun Yahya (The Jakarta Post) Istanbul Fri, April 13, 2018

Indonesia's Voice of Baceprot, an all-girl heavy metal band making music in hijabs recently grabbed the international attention and gave a strong message about women's emancipation. It was refreshing to see that three teenage girls bravely stood up for themselves and showed that they had the right to live their lives the way they wanted. They delivered a strong message, which said that women certainly don't need anyone to tell them what to do, or how to do their lives. They reminded everyone that men and women are created equally and both are equally free to make their own decisions. Their show of defiance is promising but doesn't change the fact that after thousands of years, our world is still a place of prevailing misogyny. Mind-boggling as it is, women in many countries today are still seen as temptresses, dangerous beings that need to be hidden from sight. Regrettably, this attitude is most common in the Islamic geography because some people wrongly try to attribute this horrible attitude to Islam. Nevertheless, this behavior prevails and most of the time, these misogynists do not realize that oppression of women is also making their countries vulnerable. There is a direct correlation between the welfare and development state of a country and the level of respect shown to women in that country. Misogynist societies are unfailingly the uncivilized and backward ones and oppression of women leads the offending countries to their downfall. Today, it is no wonder that countries that oppress the women the most are the ones that constantly battle with problems in education and fall short in art, technology, science, not to mention their constant problems with civil unrest. However, amid this background, a slow transformation for the better is taking place across the Islamic geography. For example, in Turkey, when some earlier remarks of a few so-called scholars surfaced, where they encouraged violence against women and suggested that women were inferior and were property of men, the Turkish public reacted very strongly. But the strongest reaction came from President Tayyip Erdogan, who said that there was absolutely no place for misogyny in the Quran and that the Quran was our sole guide in religion. Similar promising developments are taking place across the Islamic world, especially where this change is needed the most. For example, in Saudi Arabia a truly surprising and positive change is taking place. For the first time this year, Saudi women celebrated International Women's Day, and held triathlons. Furthermore, they will be allowed to drive and will no longer need a male guardian's permission in order to obtain a driver's license. Iran is another country that shows very promising changes. Although President Rouhani still doesn't have any women in his Council of Ministers, he appointed many ladies to important positions and many women currently serve as vice-presidents, presidential assistants, ambassadors among other positions. These are only a few examples of this slow but firm change that is taking place in the Islamic world and they are crucial because oppression of women is a threat not only to ladies but to the entirety of the societies. Therefore, it is crucial that Islamic countries continue to push on with these good steps. Hopefully, these developments will usher in a new age, an age of freedom and equality for all.

**The writer has authored books on politics and religion.**

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