

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind



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Democracy is Strengthened through Elections

Human beings have been in continuous struggle to form a sort of society or system wherein they are able to live a prosperous and satisfied life. However, the different systems that they have formed have always had certain drawbacks. However, with each passing day they have been able to bring improvements. It is because of these improvements that they have reached to today's modern society, wherein they are able to establish democracy and live a comparatively prosperous and satisfied life. Democracy is a political system formed by the blessings of General Will and it possesses every capability of guaranteeing prosperity and mass awareness. Democracy in its ideal shape forms its roots by the bicarbonates of public participation, forms leaves that can make food with the photosynthesis of free judiciary and independent media, forms fruits that contain the vitamins and proteins of prosperity and development. One of the most dominating attributes of democracy is the process of election. If elections continue democracy prospers. This claim can be strengthened by the evidences that lie in the history of greatest democratic states. American democratic history depicts a series of elections, continued for more than two centuries. United Kingdom's history depicts even a longer continuation of series of elections and today both the countries enjoy a dominant role in International Political scenario. They both enjoy economic and political might and there are many countries that have been trying to adopt their systems so as to have justice and order in their systems. They are no doubt among the leading countries, with prosperity licking their hands as faithful pet and invincibility guarding their gates successfully. In true sense, elections let the public govern themselves; therefore, in a democratic state government is not anything beyond the General Will. People get the chance of listening the motives and mottos of the leaders and they get time even to analyze them properly. Afterwards, they are given chance of casting their votes and choosing the leaders whom they consider capable enough to govern them. It is possible that the leaders who are chosen to form government may not be the best, but they are better than the ones who are not chosen by the will of the majority as every nation in the world have the right to choose what they think better for themselves, without bringing harm to others.

However, there are certain thinkers who believe that even though the elections continue the miseries of the people continue as there is no any change in their lives as a result of the elections. They argue that though the elections change faces of the rulers but do not change the lives of the common people who are being ruled. They basically relate to standard of living of the common people and their access to justice and rights and claim that though elections continue, miseries prevail. However, it would be self contradictory statement to say that elections continue and miseries prevail, because as soon as we say, "Elections continue", we negate the second portion that says, "Miseries prevail". In reality miseries prevail because elections do not continue. It would be better to explain it in a simpler manner. In fact, every new election is a new step in the evolution of democracy and every new step is better than the earlier one. That's why we call it evolution. No matter, if the government after new election is corrupt. It is always better than the earlier one as the election before the earlier one had also contributed a little in the awareness enhancement, so will do this new one and the election after this one would have better decisions. People will have a chance to see what the chosen government has been able to offer to them. They can have the chance of not casting their votes to one who have not been able to serve them properly. So now, it would be wise to conclude that when elections continue miseries diminish, awareness enhances, democracy evolves and prosperity reigns. It would be better to discuss the statement in context of Afghanistan. Recently, there have been different sorts of discussions regarding the upcoming elections in Afghanistan and continuously there have been discussions regarding the democratic system in Afghanistan and its outcomes so far. There are intellectuals who basically believe that democracy will not be able to lead Afghan political system and they even argue that Afghan society is not so far ready for it. But, it would be better to be more logical and scientific. The history of democracy in Afghanistan is very short and before blaming democracy for the miseries in our country, it would be better to ask ourselves, "Has there been democracy in real sense in Afghanistan?" Never! So, when there has never been democracy and elections have a very short history then how can we blame democracy for miseries?

In order to have a fruitful tree of democracy, we need to water it continuously with elections, safeguard it from the parasites of corruption, fertilize it with freedom of expression and above all avoid deforestation by dominance of dictatorship. Only then we would be able to have true democracy and would not claim irrationally that elections continue; miseries prevail.



Let's Try To Build One Nation

By Asif Ghaznawi

Parliament of Afghanistan for the first time approved Electronic identity card four years ago in May 2013; but the then president Mr. Hamid Karzai refrained to sign it. The card contained particulars like official name of the state (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan), name of the holder, father's name, date and place of birth. According to this decision of parliament ethnicity and nationality of the holder were not mentioned on the card; though they were to be inserted in database in the ministry of interior.

But according to latest decision of the parliament and president on the issue, the word 'Afghan' as national identity and as well ethnicity of the holder should be written on the card. Despite changes about the contents of the card, differences and disagreements on the issue continue.

Four years have passed; but this very significant national program has not been implemented yet and rather it has faced a deadlock. Despite its importance for the government, good-governance, people and administrative works, it seems that one of the greatest aspirations of people is not going to be fulfilled and one of the most important and strategic programs of the government is not implemented at least in near future.

Word 'Afghan' as nationality and as well ethnicity of holder are the main sources of contention; some politicians especially in lower house of parliament have launched hue and cry on the issue. The controversy is tightening day by day. People are concerned that disagreements on the contents of the electronic identity card may divide people further and drive the political situation of the country to crisis and chaos.

Postponement of the program by government also shows that national unity government leaders and other concerned men have reached deadlock on the matter. Chief executive of the government Mr. Abdullah has said that government is working on the legal aspects of the program and the issuance of the card will not begin unless all parties agreed and reached a consensus.

Vice president Mr. Sarwar Danish but accused some 'radical racists' of taking EIC issue as hostage and advised that the problem should be solved in accordance with provisions of the constitution. Constitution of the country declared -Afghan- as national identity for all who live in Afghanistan. (Article 4) but the opponents argue that word 'Afghan' means 'Pashtun' which is used for a particular ethnicity of the country and it is imposed on other ethnicities in Afghanistan.

While tensions continue on word 'Afghan' as nationality, many other ethnicities of the country like Sadat, Aimaq, Qarlooq, Khalili, Bayat and others have raised their voic-

es and asking for recognition and registration of their ethnicities in national database and in national electronic identity card. They have had several gatherings in the capital recently and warned not to take the card unless their ethnicities are recognized and written on EIC or Tazkera. Tensions and controversies are increasingly rising and the situation is getting more complex, differences are widening and deepening.

A national program which is expected to unite people, modernize the country, help good-governance, facilitate several other important national projects and programs like general census and election, unfortunately has now turned to bone of contention and source of disunity.

With implementing this national program -issuance of electronic identity card- Afghanistan for the first time will own a national database that could specify population and provide comprehensive information for government's socio-economic programs.

It eases prosecuting criminals and fighting terror suspects. Given the facts in our society, the best way to the end current tensions of 'nationality' and 'ethnicity' in the electronic identity card is to accept the first decision of the parliament on the issue. In May 2013, the parliament approved the card without mentioning nationality and ethnicity of the holder. It was the best decision; because as most of other national identity cards in the world, it contained just name, father's name, date and place of birth and some other personal particulars of the holder; except nationality and ethnicity.

To build one nation the walls that races and ethnicities have built among people of Afghanistan, should be erased. It doesn't mean their ethnic identities should be merged and dissolved; they can maintain that; but for greater interest and common fate, people have to be ready for some sacrifices too. Tolerance, coexistence and national interest require this. Politicians and political parties for their own interest should not highlight points that segregate and separate people on line of ethnicity, race, religion and language.

The Government of Afghanistan should not take sides of those radicals who fan and fuel the fire of ethnic sedition, discord and disunity. National unity Government had promised to issue the electronic identity card and now it should not let some controversial politicians to succeed stopping this great national project.

The first decision of the parliament on electronic Tazkera (2013) is the best, most comprehensive and least controversial. We need not to judge our fellow countrymen on their faces, names, ethnicities and other affiliations; but member of one nation and let's try to build that nation.

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Crisis Leadership

Mohammad Sakhi Rezaie

Afghanistan is experiencing one of its most critical periods; insecurity, economic, social injustice and corruption are among the top social issues that challenge the government leadership and management capabilities. The way the Afghan government deals with these issues will determine the fate of the future of Afghanistan: overcoming the challenges and becoming a prosperous nation or going to a new round of civil wars. The social crises we witness today are due to inability of society to regulating and maintaining social order and lack an internal power to address these issues. In other words, the social structure of our society is crisis enabler and the social issues are such diverse that threatens the foundations of the social order in our country.

Social crises is, by definition, a situation that the quality of the public life is interrupted, and most of the accepted social values are in danger and requires urgent measure to address them.

When a crisis arise, the first thing people often look for is a leader: the person who knows how to solve the problem and will take the necessary steps to do so. Of course, here the Afghans look for their president and other high ranking officials to find a way out of crisis and lead them to a better life conditions. It also shall be mentioned that very few individuals are experts in handling crisis situations. Inexperienced leaders can make rash decisions, react too quickly to the situation, or worse, not react at all in hopes that the situation will work itself out.

Using strategic mindset and detail orientation to see a problem clearly

The leadership of AUG shall look at the big picture, and understand how all the moving parts work together. This may be done by taking a step back from the problem, the underlying causes can become clear. This allows them to strategically and efficiently assess the problem to develop a detailed knowledge of the issue. One of the main barriers to do so by the AUG is that they look at the social issues from the ethnic lens, this approach not only prevent them to have a clear picture of the social issues but causes them to make unrealistic and ethnic based decisions in terms of addressing such crisis. And it is one of the main factors that most of the social issues change to social crises in Afghanistan. Collaboration and decisiveness

The AUG leadership shall consider the collaboration as any leaders' greatest strength. Listening to the civil society advice and using their inputs can help the government manage the social crises effectively.

Building trust by remaining calm in the face of chaos The AUG in a crisis situation needs to feel a sense of urgency but remain level hood. The AUG leaders shall guide and provide all the necessary means to the relevant organizations to handle a social crisis peacefully. However, the people in a fragmented society like Afghanistan are pessimist about each other and it applies to our leaders as well. Therefore, they misunderstand the demands of the people. For example, if there is a peaceful demonstration to demand better security for the citizens, the AUG leadership may interpret it an act of challenging it, ignited by the outsiders. The AUG needs to reconsider its approach to social issues in the country and shall build on trust building in order to see the social issues from the public perspectives too. The same goes with the political conflicts as well.

Take a moment to determine the nuances of a situation so to convey a sense of confidence

When faced with a chaotic situation, there will often be more input than one person could ever possibly handle. The ability to act in a purposefully in times of chaos is what makes a leader effective. The AUG requires to collect a solid understanding of situation, gathering everyone and everything together, then delegating tasks in a deliberate manner, the AUG shall convey confidence to those looking to him or her for a solution. Thus, the AUG has fallen short to do so far.

Demonstrate control

While in a crisis situation you cannot always control the "fire". However, by assuming and conveying sense of control over the situation. By keeping calm and focused, a leader is more effective in solving a problem than one who allows panic to ensure.

In sum, the AUG requires to change its approach to social issues and social crises. It needs to involve the civil society and look at the social issues and social crises from the lens of the people. It also need to act cautiously and with reliable data and information in terms of the mentioned topics.

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