

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



June 21, 2017

Ignorance is Contrary to Islam

Education is considered a social instrument through which man can pursue his destiny and determine his future. An unenlightened mind is nothing but a sorry lamp to light the steps of any man or woman. In his famous book "Islamic", Muhammad Marmaduke Pick Thai writes: "Neither the Holy Qur'an nor the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) ever contemplated the existence of an ignorant Muslim". Indeed, ignorant Muslim is a contradiction to the true teachings of Islam. In fact, at certain period of their history, the Muslims began to turn their backs upon a part of what had been enjoined to them. They discarded half the Shariah - the part which ordered them to seek knowledge and education and the Christians of the West, about the same time, began to act according to that portion of the Shariah which the Muslims were discarding and so advanced in educational sphere. Thus the Muslim countries kept on suffering in the educational sector and today they find themselves quite behind the West in this regard.

Afghanistan is also among the countries that is suffering from serious problems in its education system. In fact, our education system has failed to achieve the objectives and it has not been able to change the society according to its cherished goal. Our educational needs have increased manifold and our educational system needs to be modified according to the basic and local needs of the people, while keeping the aim of installing in them inquisitiveness and curiosity.

Today's education has many facets - academic, aesthetic, moral, spiritual, physical, social, practical, vocational and education for home life, citizenship and leisure. All education is farce if it is not established according to its national as well as local needs. It is pity that our education has failed to promote a national consensus and education has not played its proper role in national development though its aims were very high. The reason for this failure has been the lack of talented, conscientious and devoted teachers. No effort was made to produce a class of teachers who could work sincerely for the implementation of these recommendations. Our failure in the past few decades has no parallel. Although it is not possible to attribute this failure to any single factor, one can say with confidence that the entire planning in the field of education has been lopsided. The structure of any progressive education system capable of meeting the demands of any modern nation or state has to be like a pyramid, widest at the base tapering systematically to the top of high specialization.

Another reason for failure of education system is that the affairs of education were conducted by the persons who had the least experience in this field, or sorry to say, they lacked competence and proper education. Consequently, in our educational system, the base was never really broadened. On the one hand, the people were deprived of their basic right of education and on the other they were not given the necessary directions to be productive to the state. Unless education both for citizenship and leaderships is provided, no good results can be expected. Let the past history serve as a great lesson for us. Managers may or may not be necessary but leaders are essential. Our educational system has long suffered from the managerial type of administration. It is a type of administration that is static, dull, non-progressive, and favoring the status quo. Maintaining such an administration is not relevant for the educational system of a country like Afghanistan. Our education needs re-orientation. It needs leaders who are properly motivated, adequately dynamic. They should not be problem-blind but have a broad vision, deep insight and genuine understanding of the issue involved. They must be imbued with the spirit of Islam and investigation and scientific outlook at the same time. They should also have the willingness to work enthusiastically so that our educational system may play a fundamental part in the preservation of the ideals which can lead us towards unity and integration and at the same time survival in the times to come. The moral and spiritual values of Islam combined with the principles of freedom, integrity and strength should be the ideology to inspire our educational system. We should make every effort to compete in the race of higher science and technology in a world which intends to move towards development and progress. We have to ensure that there is a massive shift from extremist and obsolete educational system to a more meaningful and thought-provoking one.

It is essential that every student who comes out of an educational institution should carry with him enough skills to be absorbed in our socio-economic framework as a good worker. Our education should be a comprehensive system aimed not only to educate the mind and to make the students achieve economic independence, but also to help them build up their character and a healthy attitude to life. They should be so equipped as to defeat all the evil forces that endanger the very existence of our country such as terrorism, ethnic issues, class distinctions, religious intolerance, bribery, corruption, nepotism, robbery, black-marketing, smuggling, Ignorance and political and social injustice. That is the only way we would be able to move towards development and progress and a true change.



Fighting Administrative Corruption in Afghanistan

By Abdul Hamid Arifi

Within the past two decades, the issue of administrative corruption has challenged Afghanistan seriously and hampered it from gaining political, economic and managerial objectives. The spread of administrative corruption created problem for the current administration and prompted the National Unity Government (NUG) to take serious steps in reducing and eliminating corruption. This issue further pushes the state to focus on the significant issues such as fair distribution of national capitals, creation of a safe ground for political, economic and cultural activities, easy access of citizens to justice, enforcement of social justice, public welfare and denial of monopolization, etc. Similarly, the government has prioritized combating many kinds of discriminations. For instance, racial, religious, and linguistic discriminations and discrimination in hiring process are denied and fought strongly. National programs are designed effectively in gaining the state's objectives.

Establishing the Supreme Council for the Rule of Law and Combating Corruption:

It is an undeniable fact that lack of supervision and effective and efficient legal system is the main reason behind reducing the sense of responsibility and working conscience in the society. This issue also paved the ground for administrative corruption. The Supreme Council for the Rule of Law and Combating Corruption was established under the supervision of the President for the aim of monitoring and pursuing the agenda adopted by the government and preventing from violation of law and regulation.

This further aims to strengthen the system of justice and judiciary based on rule of law, observe human rights, facilitate access to justice, reform laws and legislative documents based on needs and as well as combat administrative corruption effectively and with strong determination.

It is worth saying that fighting strongly the roots of such issues is important but the process of government's supervision should not lead to the extension of a bureaucratic system which is believed to increase the challenges of the public.

In addition to having a strong and serious determination for eradicating administrative corruption, a parallel and coordinated activities of governmental institutions and government forces in the country is necessary.

Moreover, strengthening judicial system and setting and enforcing appropriate punishment for those committing corruption are highly essential in reducing and eliminating exploitations - this

will be a right solution in this regard.

Supporting the media and press with the objective of reflecting freely and clearly the corruption committed by high-ranking officials will be crucial and will play a key role in fighting corruption. Which is why the Supreme Council for the Rule of Law and Combating Corruption has been established.

Drafting and Amending Legislative Documents:

The need for drafting, adjusting and revising laws, which will smooth the path for transparency and social justice, is an important issue. But what is more important is decreasing and eliminating corruption in governmental and non-governmental institutions and amending law and approving new law. Therefore, social groups and organizations ask for reviewing law, which is a legal want, for gaining their legal and legitimate demands.

On the other hand, taking the citizens' demands into account will not be possible without amending and drafting law. Lack of attention to this issue has led to ambiguity, exploitation and corruption, and lack of transparency.

Hence, the government seeks to pay serious attention in this respect, pave the ground for citizens' demands in the frame of legislative documents and end the disharmony between legislative documents and the needs of time and place. This will ensure legal sanction and support law more than ever before.

It is believed that amending laws and regulations and legislative documents are the most crucial part of fighting corruption, since these will end the confusion and ambiguity exist in law and ban the way for exploitation. The best result is to leave no room for the opportunists to exploit the vacuum and confusion left in laws. Therefore, the NUG has established the Committee of Laws led by the Second Vice President Sarwar Danish prioritized this issue. Within three years, this committee has conducted its weekly meetings regularly and about two hundred legislative documents have been revised, amended and finalized.

The most important of them are:

The law of elections, the law of education, the law of land tenure, the law of the municipalities, the law of urban development and housing, the law of taxation, the law of the prohibition of torture, the law of communities, strikes and demonstrations, the Customs Code, the law of the protection of domestic industry, the law of Jirgas in civil disputes, Law on the protection of the rights of the author, the artist and the rights (copyright), the law of protecting the inventor and explorer, the passport law, the law of the railways, the law on the protection of children, the law of customs, the law of civil servants, etc.

The Death of the Party

By Nina L. Khrushcheva

Nearly 26 years ago, President Boris Yeltsin issued a decree that effectively banned Communist Party organs from operating in factories, universities, and all other workplaces across the Russian Federation. But Yeltsin's bold decree was, in some ways, superfluous: the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), once a fearsome organizational weapon, had already been decimated by its own incompetence and brutality, to the point that the public was simply indifferent to it. Today, once-great political parties in the West and some developing countries also seem to be on a fast track to oblivion. But whereas the CPSU's demise was perfectly logical - Yeltsin's decree came just months before the Soviet Union's collapse - the decline of major political parties in countries like France and India is not so easy to explain.

In France, President Emmanuel Macron has just secured a massive majority in the French National Assembly for his own year-old movement, ostensibly consigning the Socialist Party - with which Macron himself was affiliated while serving as economy minister - to Trotsky's dustbin of history. France's other major mainstream party - the center-right Republicans, rooted in Charles de Gaulle's political legacy - does not seem to be doing much better.

Until recently, the United Kingdom's Labour Party, under the leadership of the far-left Jeremy Corbyn, also seemed to be on the edge of extinction. But it has been granted something of a reprieve, thanks to Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May's sheer incompetence during the recent parliamentary campaign. But whether Corbyn will actually be able to unite and reinvigorate his party remains far from certain.

In the developing world, India is witnessing the decline of the Indian National Congress, the party of the country's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, who led the country to independence from the UK. Under the feeble dynastic leadership of Sonia Gandhi (the widow of assassinated prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, Nehru's grandson and the son of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi) and her son Rahul, Congress now seems unable even to retain seats in its historic bastions, such as Uttar Pradesh. Indeed, its main opponent, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, seems to have the 2019 parliamentary election already locked up.

In South Africa, another great party of national liberation - the African National Congress, which helped to bring about the downfall of apartheid - is facing similar rot.

Just 18 years after Nelson Mandela left the presidency, the ANC is crumbling under the ruinously corrupt leadership of President Jacob Zuma. An official split among embattled and embittered rival factions may very well take place when the ANC chooses a new leader later this year.

Of course, great political parties have died before. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Liberal Party, not Labour, was the Conservatives' main rival in the UK, thriving under the leadership of figures like William Gladstone and David Lloyd George.

Yet that ended just a few years after World War I, as the British journalist-turned-historian George Dangerfield chronicled in his

book *The Strange Death of Liberal England*. In Italy, the postwar political parties - the Christian Democrats, the Communists, and the Socialists - experienced something of a mass extinction, after the Tangentopoli (Bribesville) corruption scandal erupted in 1992. The next year, Canada's Conservative Party was practically wiped out in a parliamentary election, in which it lost all but two of its 151 seats.

Many explanations for the fall of political parties have been advanced. Working-class voters' move to the middle class did as much to kill off Western Europe's communist parties as the failure of the Soviet regime.

More broadly, in countries where coalition governments comprise parties with similar ideologies, it can be easy for voters to shift their loyalty. This is particularly true nowadays, as voters increasingly view parties as brands that can be replaced if they fail to keep up with consumer tastes, rather than as focal points of unassailable tribal loyalty.

Moreover, voters nowadays are more and more likely to focus on one or two key policies, rather than a party's entire program. It is this thinking that has allowed single-issue parties like the immigration-focused UK Independence Party (UKIP) to thrive. The increased use of referenda in the world's developed democracies seems a direct outgrowth of the turn toward consumer-oriented politics. The problem is that referenda undermine accountability, as they enable ill-advised decisions based on simplistic questions, as was the case with the UK's feckless Brexit vote. In such situations, the playwright Bertolt Brecht once quipped ironically, the only alternative is to "dissolve the people and elect another."

But, while consumer-minded voting goes some way toward explaining the demise of parties like France's Socialists, it does not explain the decline of the Indian National Congress and the ANC. Their problems seem, instead, to be rooted in arrogance. For the Indian National Congress, that arrogance is largely hereditary. From Nehru to Indira and Rajiv Gandhi to the current incompetent face of the party, Rahul, the Gandhi family has viewed leadership and control of Congress as a birthright that cannot be rescinded, regardless of the individual's actual skill or qualifications.

As for the ANC, its arrogance seems more akin to that of the CPSU: an overweening sense of "owning" the state, which makes corruption seem like a form of electoral entitlement. Arrogance of this sort cuts a party off from its actual supporters, who then find it easier to search, and to find, a viable alternative. But, in politics, death need not be permanent. Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), for example, ruled the country for 71 years, before its defeat in 2000.

At the time, it was assumed that the PRI would never return to power. Yet, by 2012, it did, with the election of current President Enrique Peña Nieto. This possibility may be why the Gandhi family and Zuma are so nonchalant about their parties' decay. The question, though, is whether anything that comes back from the dead can ever again be what it was.

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