The Controversy over Electoral Reform

By Hujatalah Zia

Following the 2014 presidential election, Mujahid Ashraf Ghani and Dr. Abdullah Abdullah negotiated a political agreement to form a National Unity Government (NUG). A central part in the negotiations was a commitment to electoral reform. The process of electoral reform has been slow and irregular. After a protracted disagreement between President Ghani and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah on who should lead the reform portfolio and what should happen with the electoral commission, both the Independent Election Commission (IEC) and National Unity Government finally formed the Special Electoral Reform Commission (SERC) as specified in the political agreement to review and propose reforms to electoral structures and laws.

On September 15, 2015, President Ghani issued two decrees amending the Special Electoral Law and the Election Commission Law. The amendments to the two laws adopted some of SERC’s recommendations and new elections would take place on December 21 and 26, 2015. Following suit, Meshrano Jirga also voted down both decrees, on January 05, 2016. On Febru-
ary 26, 2016, President Ghani issued two new electoral laws to enforce the Electoral Law and Structure Law apparently appropriate law.

On June 11, 2016, the long-awaited, presidential decree on the Structure Law was put on the agenda and the Wolesi Jirga debated hotly over the issue. MP’s debated at each other and on the officials of the house, the Administrative Board, trying to stop discussion and insisting they go directly to the vote. When MPs spoke in favor of the decree, others pounded the table, not listening and disregarding the points from the opposition parties.

The Wolesi Jirga’s president, Mr. Fara Ustad Amil from Balkh declared the decree unconstitution and a rarity by the government. He said such a badly drafted decree that MPs would be forced to reject it and return it to the president. He added that the president never considered the points from the opposition parties.

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It is really important for Afghanistan to stand on its own and try to fulfill the people's needs as much as possible. The agricultural sector in Afghanistan has not been able to fulfill the requirements of the people as it has not been given proper attention by the government. The agriculture sector is highly dependent on the individual farmers and landowners. Most of them grow as much as they require themselves.

Therefore a large number of people, each year, have to look at the other countries for help in order to have food to eat. The international organizations in this regard have been fulfilling the requirements of the countries to a large extent, thus making the burden of the government much lighter.

The food shortage itself is a sure problem, but there are many other problems that deeply affected this issue. Many social evils will find their way in the society and will further deteriorate the country's socio-economic sectors. The struggle for survival in the whole world is growing the richer in the people. The people suffer from the shortage of food and the lack of food sources.

Food insecurity means that there is no security that all the people are going to have food requirements. And, unfortunately, the alternatives are not ready as well. The security concerns and the hardships during the cold weather make the supply of the food from other parts of the country to the region of the starvation a Herculean task. Another available alternative for the government is to fulfill the deficiencies through government owned private sector, which is not ready because of lack of food sources but not more than the mark. And this year’s expected food shortage will not be recovered from the mentioned situations.

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