

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



May 17, 2015

Daesh Turning the Giant Menace?

It is said that Daesh's quest for establishing Islamic Emarat has earned it adherents in Muslims countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan too. Finding the tale of brutality of this group going wild, many splintered Taliban group exploit the name to further their vested interest - some have already vowed to work for Daesh. The once militant outfits of Taliban and other splintered groups have vowed to fight the cause of the group, of international fame. In Afghanistan it is pulling its muscle to establish its rule in remote and loosely governed territories. There are many tales of atrocities hinting the physical presence of Daesh in this war torn land. The former spokesperson of Afghan Taliban, Zabiullah Mujahed along some other commanders has already shifted their allegiance.

Formerly, 45 innocents Ismailis were butchered in the economic hub, Karachi by unknown terrorist. Reportedly, the carriage carrying member of the minority community to work was intercepted by four to six Terrorists who shot them dead in bright day light. The leaflet found at the site hints Daesh being behind the vicious crime. The tales of atrocities surfaced indicate, IS striving to establish its footprints in the region, is alarming and causing existential threat to both countries.

It is an undoubted fact, neither falsehood can be justified by thousands of supporting testimonials, nor can truth be beleaguered by hundreds of lies. Each of the two phenomenon, tend exists with distinct disparity. The establishment of the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (ISIS) renders one of such deception, anchored on the blood of innocents and unarmed citizens. It is said that the throng of terrorists that stationed in Iraq and Sham from across the world, have surpassed the brutality of Al-Qaida; thus sent a shock impulse over the spine of many states, including the US. It is to be drawn that we should demonstrate zero tolerance against the extremists and insurgents who are doing away piece of mind.

Earlier, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group released a new audio statement in which the group's leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi calls for recruits from the around the world while calling Islam a religion of fighting. This video is the reinforcement of the former released video that had asked professional Muslims from across the world to move to ISIS owned land and render their services to greater Islamic cause. Nonetheless, the recent video is dreadful, given Muslims are asked to join the rank of Daesh and fight the so called holy war. It is worth noticing ISIS has already drawn large number of foreign with too many European fighters, in.

If pursue the irreversible gain of this group we find rampant and wide use of media is referred as one of the reason behind success story of ISIS. Reportedly, there are at least 46,000 Twitter accounts been linked to supporters of the Islamic State in late 2014, the report commissioned by Google Ideas stand? Analyzing the location embedded in the tweets, the researchers found the largest number of ISIS supporters in Saudi Arabia, followed by Syria, Iraq and the United States. Likewise, relative to the medium of communication, it was uncovered that nearly one in five of the IS supporters tweeted in English, they found, with three quarters tweeting in Arabic. The aforesaid clues are the distinct manifestation of the truth the war IS fights is widely supported by information technology like twitter -used to propagate terror executions. It is feared, the use of social media if kept unchecked and unrestricted, may facilitate terrorists endlessly carrying forth their horrific activities.

The latest audio statement comes as there have been speculations that al-Baghdadi was seriously injured following a US-led airstrike in the month of March and that he is no more leading the terrorist organization. The 35-minute audio message posted on militant websites features a voice that sounds like al-Baghdadi's urging all Muslims to take up arms and fight on behalf of the group's self-styled caliphate, as the renowned news agency reported. Referring to Islam as religion of fighting, al-Baghdadi says "Islam was never a religion of peace. No one should believe that the war that we are waging is the war of the Islamic State. It is the war of all Muslims, but the Islamic State is spearheading it. It is the war of Muslims against infidels."

Here some faction of Taliban have already responded to the call of Caliph of Muslims al-Baghdadi waging war against innocent civilians here in Afghanistan. Earlier, President Ghani accepted the threat looming over this land due terror plots of IS fighters. This undoubtedly is an alarming sign for the state of Afghanistan, already sickened by recurrent attacks launched by local insurgents and militants. Moreover, Afghanistan undeniably serve as a fertile land providing with large number of individuals whose trust can easily be earned, subsequent of assurance of virtues, noble deed and dearness in the sight of Creator. Consequently, it is pretty trouble-free for ISIS, to establish a sound operational ground in this piece of land, hence adding government miseries. The government can not get away with simple renunciation of presence of footprints of ISIS, instead a tangible measure should be put into practice, to get out of this menace; else's large number religiously betrayed individuals will respond at the call of Amirul Momineen, by joining the ranks of such militants.



Problems of Agricultural Sector in Afghanistan!

By Muhammad Rasool Shah

Afghanistan is an agricultural country as majority of people are farmers and earn their livelihood by farming. The trend started changing with the restoration of democracy in 2001 but still the majority of population depends on agricultural products to feed their families.

A country is termed to be agricultural because of the availability of a number of possibilities. Among these are the availability of suitable climate for crops and trees, availability of vast areas of land for cultivation, abundant supply of water, and some others. Many countries like Japan can face a number of difficulties if it solely relies on its agriculture because the land for cultivation is very limited or the hot desert countries of Asia where shortage of water makes the cultivation very difficult or costly, while the freezing weather of some of the European countries make cultivation impossible.

However, it is lucky that Afghanistan has almost all the natural possibilities that can qualify it as an agricultural country. It has a variety of climate in different corners of the country needed for the cultivation of different kind of crops and fruits. Similarly, a large number of rivers provide a cheap and convenient source of water for irrigation. Availability of large pieces of fertile land and numerous other factors make it a country suitable for the agricultural activities.

Anyhow, it doesn't mean that a country good in agriculture should ignore industry and technological advancement. As stated earlier, there are a number of countries that are not only performing good in industrial sector but are working hard to improve their agricultural sector because agricultural products have become a good source of income for the farmers. However, these countries have adopted latest techniques and machinery which has made the work of farmer easy and also increased the production.

It is also unfortunate that the system of monarchy and then unrest of three decades never let the country to improve in any direction, either agriculture or the industry. We see that there are a number of agricultural countries in the world that improved their crops, increased their production, established more efficient network of water management and irrigation, worked on storage of crops, improved the system of transportation from farm to the market and took numerous other steps that brought general prosperity in the country and especially to the farmers.

Some industries were established before the civil war but these industries were run by government and thus the open competition of a free economy never came into existence. On the other hand, there never came an established government that could have made long-term plans for the construction of dams, improvement of water management, improvement of transportation, introduction and implementation of advanced techniques of harvesting, and many more because of which productivity of our agricultural sector remained the same and already present system of irrigation faced break down.

At present, although being an agricultural country, majority of our food requirements are met by the exports from our neighboring countries of Pakistan, Iran, Central Asian states and numerous other countries of the world. This is very unfortunate that when our farmers are struggling hard to make the ends meet, we are exporting the food products of millions of dollars in a month. Had this money been spent inside the country, it could have not only boosted up the agriculture but every sector of our economy.

However, the agricultural sector of our country is facing a number of problems that need to be solved that would in return solve numerous other problems of our countrymen. No doubt, we witnessed a number of plans being undertaken for the improvement of agricultural sector in the last ten years of democratic establishment, however, majority of these were meant for short-term gains and thus they have failed to change the scenario of this important sector.

Agricultural sector of Afghanistan is facing a number of problems that need to be addressed properly and long term and nicely coordinated plans are needed for the resolution of these problems permanently. First is the absence of a proper system of irrigation. Almost 90% of our farmers depend on the water of river and canals but the system of canals has not been upgraded from many decades and a lot of water is wasted due to soil absorption and evaporation. For this, government and the concerned ministry need to make proper plans on how to improve the present system of irrigation and how new dams and water reservoirs can be established to provide a well-organized system of irrigation to the country. Similarly, due to the lack of water reservoirs, a lot of water flows into the neighboring countries from our rivers or is wasted in the deserts. This cheap water can be stored and properly distributed to our farmers.

Second biggest problem is the non-availability of storage facilities which results in the loss to the farmer. During the season, the supply of an agricultural product becomes abundant which results in the sharp decline of its prices and thus farmers struggle to recover their expenses. On the other hand, when the season of a product ends, shortage of product results in the brisk rise in prices. The solution to this problem is not very easy and cannot be managed by farmers. In different countries of the world, government has intervened and solved the problem. Government makes purchases from the farmers on a reasonable price and then stores the products in its own stores due to which the certain product remains available throughout the year and its price also remains stable.

Another problem is the non-availability or high prices of pesticides, urea, tractors and other objects needed by the farmers. Once again, these things are not manufactured in our country and are imported and thus there is very less a poor farmer can do in this regard. Government can establish the industries of these products or make them available for the farmers on subsidized prices.

Very recently, we have witnessed the increasing trend of cultivating addictive drugs as people were earning very less from other crops and addictive drugs are very lucrative; they can earn millions in one year only.

Another big problem is the poor transportation system due to which the products reach very late from the farm to the market and there is always present a danger that they might get spoiled and wasted. In all the agricultural countries, government works to establish a good network of roads to briskly transport the agricultural products from farm to the market and thus these products are sold on time in local markets or sent to foreign countries. This is worth-mentioning here that a lot of work has been done in improving the condition of roads and still a number of projects are in progress. However, this pace of construction of roads needs to be improved.

It is important to realize here that if the agricultural problems are properly solved, our country has the potential to emerge as one of the strong agricultural nations of the world that would change the fate of the nation.

Muhammad Rasool Shah is the permanent writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan. He can be reached at muhammadrasoolshah@gmail.com

Schooling - Means for Empowering Women

By Hujjatullah Zia

A local newspaper cited an anonymous source privy to the discussion that the Afghan delegation also discussed women's rights and girls' education with the Taliban, in the negotiation organized by Canadian-based organization Pugwash Council in Doha, and got positive response from them. I believe that entitling women their rights, especially right to education, shows a great change in the Taliban's policy towards them.

The Taliban's misogynistic attitude towards girls and women is known to the entire world. As a result, the Taliban militants sprayed corrosive acid on the faces of Afghan girls on the way to their schools and razed their schools to the ground. In the Taliban's ideology, women have to be restricted within the four walls and have no social or political rights in a society. In other words, they are born to satiate men's carnal desires, breast-feed their children and do the household chores.

Under the Taliban's regime, the women's dignity was considered in doing domestic chores. They were not supposed to attend school or social activities - this would lead to blackening their reputation, the militants believed.

Afghan girls were living behind closed doors with profound wounds in their hearts and cursed themselves for being female. After all, they were treated as social anathema by the rabid misogynists - as if women were the epitome of all evils. In short, they had to play a servile role within their husbands' domiciles rather than a paramount social, political or cultural role in the society.

Long after the overthrow of the Taliban in late 2001, Afghan girls are still fighting for equal access to education and the right to learn. While certain indicators of girls' education showed encouraging results in previous years, some of that progress has stagnated.

Several factors contribute to low attendance of girls such as family income, societal pressure - Afghan girls traditionally marry very young - family honor, the distance of the school, local security and lack of female teachers.

While Afghanistan's constitution gives girls the right to attend school, the reality of equal access to education, remains elusive. Without an education, girls are often forced into early marriage and child-bearing, robbing their chances to become proud, productive citizens and robbing the country of close to 50% of an additional workforce.

If Afghanistan has any reason for hope, it is the sheer determination of the girls who do have a chance to go to school. An example of this hope, as it was reported by Help the Afghan Children (HTAC), is the story of a 12-year-old girl Lida, whose sister was killed in a shooting in Logar Province, about a 90 minute drive from Kabul, who began going back

to school not long after her sister's death. Every day she walked past the spot where her sister was gunned down. But she kept clinging to her dream of becoming a doctor. "I am afraid", she is cited "But I like school because I am learning something and that will make me important. With education, I can save my country."

If an Afghan girl, like Lida, is willing to risk her life to learn, she has to nurture the idea of being a national heroine and continue with great determination. Although, the girls encounter great challenges in getting education, they should not lose their morale so as to touch the peak of their dreams.

It is simply said that action speaks louder than words. The Taliban militants still show antipathy towards women. In another item, the girls are bereft of their right to education in the Taliban-dominated areas. Their policy will never change regarding women and no one will fall for the militants' bogus claims.

However, a dearth of textbooks, teaching materials and equipped laboratories aggravate the challenges of the students. A large number of the students complain about lack of textbooks while there are plenty sold in bazaars. This fact points out corruption in schools.

It is believed that every year, more than 100,000 secondary school graduates write the kankor, but due to insufficient spaces and limited capacity, only about half of those students find a spot at the government universities and colleges. Those who fail either go to private institutions, which are very expensive and out of reach for most Afghan families, or try to pass the entrance exam again.

There is much to be done regarding education in Afghanistan. Various strategies for education, especially for women should be carried out, and the establishment, promotion and construction of buildings for girls' schools must be at the top of the priority list for the Ministry of Education. To increase the number of female students in professional and technical education schools, the Ministry has to plan to run public awareness programs in media.

Furthermore, education is means for empowering women. All the citizen in general and females in particular have to do their best to get rid of ignorance and unawareness. Since education enables one spiritually and enables him/her to know about their rights and dignity, it is considered an obligation on men and women to learn.

Taliban's ban on education for female is irrational. They just imposed their own ideology at the point of gun on Afghan citizens during their regime and yet continue their militancy via killing the innocent citizens. Hope the citizens, male and female, continue getting education with a high spirit and never succumb to the militants' threat.

Hujjatullah Zia is the permanent writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan. He can be reached at zia_hujjat@yahoo.com

Chairman / Editor in Chief: Dr.Hussain Yasa

Vice Chairman: Kazim Ali Gulzari

Phone: +93 799 005 019/799 408 271/777 005 019

E-mail: mail@outlookafghanistan.com, outlookafghanistan@gmail.com

Address: V-137, Street 6, Phase 4, Shahrak Omeed Sabz, Kabul, Afghanistan

Sub Office: Shora Road, Street 10, District 6, Kartey 3, Kabul, Afghanistan