

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



May 25, 2017

Crimes and Criminals

The countries that are not able to provide proper governance and achieve stability, they are bound to face myriads of social and political problems. These problems, further invigorate instability and chaos and the cycle continues. Crimes are also the product of instability and ill-governance and the issues that are given birth by them. They have the capacity to give rise to serious issues within a social setup. Crimes are basically offences that are considered detrimental for not only the target of the crime and criminal but for the society as a whole. There are myriads of reasons involved behind why a person tends to commit crime.

Poverty is one of the basic reasons of crimes. Studies have revealed that poverty compels many people to commit different sorts of crimes that range from minor stealing to the biggest crimes like murder and theft. Consider the countries that are suffering from poverty; there are many examples wherein people commit crimes as a result of intense destitution. Take the example of our own country Afghanistan; the facts and figures shows how poverty and disorder have influenced the crime rate. Though poverty is one of the basic reasons of why people commit crimes, it is not the only reason.

There may be many other reasons involved behind the crimes that are committed within the society. Whatever may be the reason of the crimes, their effects are very disturbing and have the capacity to bring serious disturbances in the society; therefore, measures must be there to curb them. There are two strategies to control the crime. The first one is the short-term strategy and the other one is the long-term strategy. The short-term strategy is basically carried out by the law-enforcement system in the society that works through the institutions of courts and police. Law-enforcement system within a society basically works on the principle of identifying the criminals, bringing them to the justice and punishing them.

The countries with weaker law-enforcements systems suffer to a large extent in providing justice to the alleged criminals.

Such societies also suffer from lack of providence of timely justice. The system of courts is not very efficient. There are many cases that take many years in courts and yet remain undecided. The people who are influenced by such cases experience a complete change in their lives, which is from bad to worse and by the time they reach to justice, their lives are already destroyed. It has been also observed that the cases that belong to influential people are pursued immediately while the ones that involve the ordinary people are kept in files and they never reach to the courts. And then there are detention centers that, in fact, do not transform the criminals into useful citizens, which is the basic philosophy of them. They, on the other hand, turn them into bigger criminals and if unfortunately, which mostly happens, there is a person who has been punished wrongfully; such a person becomes a true criminal after leaving the detention center.

Unluckily, Afghanistan is one of the same types of countries that suffer from weak law-enforcement system. Though there has been some development in this regard, serious concerns still prevail and raise questions about the system. The police force in Afghanistan is still in the preliminary stages and it really requires years of attention and support to reach to a truly professional stage.

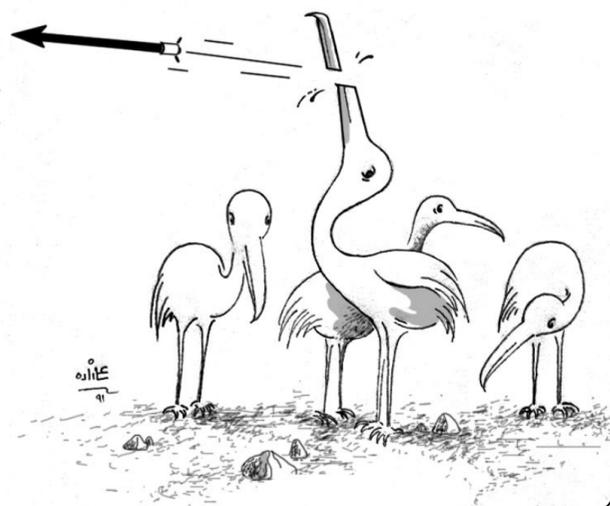
There are many areas in the country where the police do have enough penetration and where they cannot reach to crimes and criminals. Then there are many areas wherein the people still go to traditional courts, which are dominated by religious and tribal leaders instead of going to the courts that are established by the government.

There is a great margin of tireless efforts for the improvement of detention centers as well. The basic facilities that the prisoners get are in no way enough and the environment is not very much healthy. Even within the detention centers the criminals are able to keep their communication with the outside world and are able to lead or to participate in their unlawful activities.

It is really imperative to keep in consideration that the law-enforcement system can provide short-term solution to the crimes. If a society is really interested in controlling them there should be a long-term strategy that must deal with the basic reasons of the crime and try to nip the evil in the bud.

There should be efforts to work on efficient administration, better economic condition, political stability, good governance, providence of basic human rights and control of corruption. Justice should reach to all the people of the society alike and the citizens must not feel alienated from the society.

Moreover, there should not be discrimination as far as practical implementation of the criminal law is considered. Law should not serve the rich alone as is happening in many societies of the world; rather all should be treated equally in this regard.



The Need for Census in Afghanistan

By Syed Ali Mutahhari

State is a human institution and population is the first and foremost element. No state can be imagined without the people, as there must be some to rule and others to be ruled. Legally, the population's quality and quantity has no major effect on establishing a state; however, the high level of citizens' knowledge, profession and awareness plays a significant role in a county's independence, authority and development. With inserting authority in the study of state and international policy, the quality and quantity of population will have strong effect on gaining the objective and determining the realm of national and international interests.

The element of population in Afghanistan, however, will have a particular status. A large number of political decisions at national level, strategies, and policy-making are determined on the basis of population in provinces for the society's administration. Similarly, the allocation of facilities and the state's support will be done on the same basis although the officials have not been committed enough to the statistics.

I strongly believe that there has been no exact census about the population from the very beginning of the country's establishment in 1747 up to now and the national decisions and macro strategies were not determined upon the population's proportion. Ultimately, in Sawr 19, 1396 (solar year), the Central Department of Statistics announced the number of population about 29.2 million, including one and half million nomads.

The statistics suggested the number of males 15 million and females 14.2 million. Moreover, the urban population was said to be 6.9 million and rural population 20.8 million – the center's officials underlined the precision of this statistics to some extent.

However, it is believed that the above statistic is based on no definite and logical method or mechanism and rather it is based on assumption and false information gained from residents or provincial officials. There are many reasons suggesting the inexactness of this statistic such as the insecurity in many provinces and districts, displacement and migration as a result of war and violence, impassable routes in some regions and the remoteness of some towns and villages.

There seem many other reasons regarding the inaccuracy of this statistic. For instance, there is no registration of birth and death in many provinces and even in large provinces including the capital. It is really surprising to see that many families either do not know or do not care about the obligation of birth and death registry.

Therefore, the statistics announced by the Central Department of Statistics is inexact and based on false in-

formation and assumptions. Now the question is that why there is a need to exact statistics about population? All countries, including Afghanistan, are in need of exact statistics with the aim of upholding the citizens' rights and providing them the necessary services. An exact statistic seems to be more important for Afghanistan since the country is in a particular condition, unlike many other countries. For example, an exact number of population is necessary for enjoying from facilities and national investment, fair distribution of public services and government's support and even political positions. To view the issue more realistically, the importance will be manifested well. The number of population in a province will be the source of important decisions in many great issues in all political, cultural, social, economic and administrative aspects. More importantly, the presence of tribal groups in political structure will be in accordance with the proportion and composition of their population.

1-Allocation and establishment of administrative units at provincial and district levels was based on population. Currently, the process of adjustment and establishment of new administrative units based on sufficient population and capacity are under construction.

2-The allocation of seats in provinces and zones for people's representatives in parliament is considered on the basis of population's proportion.

3-The provincial council seats will be determined according to number of population in all provinces.

4-The number of members of district council will be based on a district's population.

5-National resources will be allocated on the basis of a province's population.

6-Rationing of facilities in all aspects such as health, education, transportation and moral issues as obligatory act of Haj, etc. will be considered based on population's proportion.

In brief, one of the most important issues is likely to be using exact information and data in this process and planning for counting the manpower since the population is the constituting element of a society and the source of social and economic development. Exact statistics and collecting the necessary data about the country's population will support the officials in country's development and betterment. Meanwhile, the citizens will enjoy fairly the national investment.

Although there are natural, security and cultural barriers before establishing a standard mechanism in the country, an exact statistic regarding the country's population is a crying need.

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The Dystopia of Human Societies

By Hujjatullah Zia

Civilians have nothing to do with war. However, armed militants inflict sufferings on them in one way or another. I was moved to tears with the death of my 13-year-old classmate years ago. He was killed in a mourning proceedings along with many other men and children. I could not believe my eyes seeing him in pool of blood. Yes, he was my school classmate Imran who was killed by terrorist fighters without being guilty. The sliced throat of a 9-year-old girl in late 2015 added insult to my injury.

Her photo with smiling lip circulated in social media and melted the hearts of viewers. On the other hand, the tragic picture of a 3-year-old Syrian boy Aylan Kurdi – whose image made global headlines after he drowned on 2 September 2015 in the Mediterranean Sea – numbed my senses. All the three children were the victims of terrorism.

To see or imagine the blood oozing from the wounds of civilians, who fell victim to terrorist fighters, fills me with an outpouring of grief. The human catastrophes continue unabated in the wake of fundamentalism and lead to indescribable tragedies. Noncombatants, mainly women and children, bear the brunt of radical ideologies and men's cruelty under the nose of international community. As a result of widespread violence and bloodshed, the tragic scenes and human casualties are given cold shoulder by the public.

In other words, children's sliced throats, women's bloody corpses, and men's riddled bodies by bombs will hardly ever shake the conscience of contemporary men. Being killed, mourned and buried has been changed into normal story in war-torn countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, Nigeria, Somalia, etc. It was both ridiculous and painful for me to see an abducted woman by terrorist group holds out against going home. In a three-minute video released recently, a woman who claims to be Maida Yakubu, one of the schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram in April 2014, refuses to be rescued as part of a recent swap deal with the Nigerian government.

Flanked by three other women clad in black, she proclaims her loyalty to Boko Haram, the group that has killed more than 20,000 people since taking up arms against the Nigerian government in 2009. Perhaps, she was forced to claim her loyalty to the group for a video recording to hunt for simple individuals to join them. But what if she has been radicalized?

Killing and radicalizing people are the normal practices of armed groups. Their ideology is likely to be: die or accept the belief.

So, there is no third choice – no matter who you are, what you believe in, or which language do you speak! Some are humiliated and tortured to accept their warped minds but others will die instantaneously.

To be honest, the spurious claims and inhuman practices of fundamental groups make me feel nauseous.

It is self-explanatory that their ideology, in case of having, is based on no religious tenets, ethical code or social values. Women are raped or killed and children are murdered on the grounds of their caste, color and creed. We live in the world of cruelty and barbarity.

In the world where life and dignity have turned extremely cheap. The heart-wrenching stories no more outrage the collective conscience. No more tear is shed over the riddle bodies of terrorist victims.

According to humanitarian law, the rights and dignity of noncombatants will have to be protected. Civilians have nothing to do with wars and conflicts and must be safeguarded against violence regardless of their racial, religious or linguistic backgrounds.

Besides civilians, detainees and wounded soldiers should not be tortured or humiliated. Warring factions must act on the basis of humanity and ethical code – for being human – if not religious tenets. Killing civilians will do nothing other than revealing their barbarity.

Martin Luther King has aptly said, "Violence is immoral because it thrives on hatred rather than love. It destroys community and makes brotherhood impossible. It leaves society in monologue rather than dialogue. Violence ends up defeating itself. It creates bitterness in the survivors and brutality in the destroyers."

This commentary is a voice raised against violence and flagrant violation of human rights and dignity although I know that it will fall on deaf ears.

The tragic stories and outrageous acts of violence unfold men's barbarity. Perhaps, one will hear my voice and feel my pain and then raise their voice against cruelties – this will keep the cycle of hatred of fundamentalism and terrorism running which is the commentary's objective. It is hoped that the individual hatred of violence will awaken the collective conscience. Don't you think that if the world strengthens the spirit of brotherhood, violence and bloodshed will be mitigated to a great extent?

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