

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



October 22, 2015

## Societal Problems Pleads Prior Attention

Amidst the ongoing continued wave of violence unleashed –it appears as if terrorism the only predicament the war-torn land is coming across. The prevalent intimidation and dominant atmosphere of endless bloodshed has let everybody think of massive states of failure undoing the state of affair. Nonetheless, there are multiple areas that run morally bankrupt and ethically ruined and socially disordered. Certainly, it is not only the security state that goes downtrodden the other areas also overwhelmingly go mismanaged.

It is generally the loosening effect of law and order coupled with degeneration of moral values in a society which results in the spread of societal evils. Those evils can be defined in different subjects for instance some might only be ethical and some might relate to crime or it might violate certain established principles. The preferably disagreeable practices are detrimental to social bond of enhance interaction, receiving superfluous acceptance among masses. In modern society, with special reference to Afghanistan, it is important to note that a number of social evils have grappled our country in its iron claws; in addition it seems impossible to get out of its tentacles unless immediate attention is given.

One of the major curse of which Afghanistan is suffering is bribery and corruption weakening the institutional performance of the country; a poison, that must be put down iron handed. Black marketing is the most colossal crime against society. There are other taboos flourishing, which are gradually decaying the society, creating anomalies such as economic disparity, excessive use of one's authority, falling educational standard, promotion of crime and lack of proper life facilities.

Corruption, unemployment, smuggling, population explosion, inflation, terrorism, bribery, black marketing, adulteration, nepotism, and other social evils are cancer for any country. Human traits such as greed, hate, lust for power or wealth, arrogance, etc, and become social evils when they are allowed to grow in a society to a point that they become a part of that society. Unemployment leads to poverty that incites to undeterred violence. Poverty leads to criminal activities like robbery, thefts, murder, kidnapping and looting. Now and then one can find headlines in the papers about their criminal activities. When people are unable to get their livelihood by honest means, they are bound to turn into criminals. Very often people find criminals living only in the slums. In fact, it is the property that has compelled them to take to social evils. The governments should devise ways and means to raise their standard of living through proper and implementable policies and strategies.

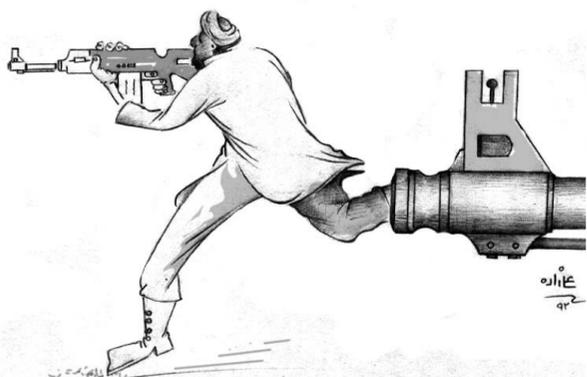
The foundation of all evils is that society is made up of human beings that have all the weaknesses and faults that are inherent to being human. Human traits such as greed, hate, lust for power or wealth, arrogance, etc, and become social evils when they are allowed to grow in a society to a point that they become a part of that society.

Another, predicament running across our social consciences unfelt is growing child labor. The rule of land either is silent at the subject or owes subtly implemented provisions, shelved to add into the look of constitutional edifice. Notwithstanding, the children subjected endless afflictions and exploitation ranging from physical, mental abuses and tortures fails to earn the attention of guardian of law. Child labor not only causes damage to a child's physical and mental health, but also keep him deprive of his basic rights to education, development and freedom. Keeping the gravity of problems in consideration the government of Afghanistan must take immediate steps for alleviating the child labor on war footing.

Institutional reforms to broaden Afghan political participation and punish corruption would be preferable, but institution building is fast slipping beyond reach. It may soon be necessary to settle for constraining favoritism at the margin by renegotiating today's political deals between Kabul and sub-national power brokers to exclude only the worst abuses. In particular, land taking by criminal patronage networks is uniquely destructive; with Western patience and resources dwindling, preventing official land grabs could soon be the limit of the achievable.

The government should put all its efforts in upholding the rule of law. Every person should be treated equally irrespective of his material status. Often general people rebuke poor people and look at them with disdain, this should be prevented and the people should adopt a positive and helpful behavior towards the poor and the destitute. Seeing the law makers' frequently breaking laws, the citizen finds it easier to go with wrong decisions, creating law and order problems. These measures would also contribute in encouraging evils in society. The government must make all possible efforts to curb these all nefarious trades.

At present state nations pursue their goals to collective progress, social well-being and safeguards from possible incursion. The consolidation of a state primarily pivots on the former requisites than latter, provided the universal notion of peaceful coexistence isn't run-down. The role of nation states thereby is confined to provision of social services than keeping large standing army. Conversely, the nascent Islamic democratic state Afghanistan is distant yet to embrace the modern democratic norms of rule of law, pluralism, segregation of state and religion and civil liberties. A society at the behest of irrational discourse and traditional laws is bound to suffer and wander till the onset of pertinent cognition of introducing social reforms.



## Children – the Victim of Insecurity

By Dilawar Sherzai

Children are seen as the builders of a nation. Educated, healthy and motivated children guarantee a prosperous future. Therefore, it is advisable and many countries practically strive to protect the children from all sorts of evils and promise them better living standards. It is essential that all the people in the world and all the governments realize that they have a special responsibility towards the children which they have to fulfill in every condition. Moreover, special attention should be given to the children who are living in instable societies, like Afghanistan, among myriads of economic and social problems and who have to undergo violence and discrimination, as well. There are various ways in which children are influenced, but one of the most direct ways is that they are directly dragged or pushed in the war. There have been various cases, in Afghanistan, when children have been recruited by the insurgents and they have been made to fight the wars in different parts of the country.

The United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) has once again voiced out concerns in this regard and has condemned any sort of situation wherein children are used to fight a war.

UNICEF press officer, Sayed Maroof Hamdard, has said in a statement, "Involving children in the conflict, no matter by any group, is cause for concern." Recently some children, who were fighting against Afghan security forces, were arrested in Badakhshan province.

The acting governor of Badakhshan, Shah Waliullah Adee, confirmed that child soldiers are being used by Taliban in the province. At the same time, the Ministry of Interior Affairs (MoI) has also admitted to the existence of child soldiers, saying Taliban bring these children from Madrassas to the battle field.

There have been many incidents of suicide attacks in different parts of the country, wherein the attacker were below 16 years of age. Apart from that the children are also welcomed by the militant groups with the intention to have a cadre that they can train in accordance to their own will, within their training camps.

There have been certain cases, as well, when security forces have used children for the war; however, such incidents are very scarce. And, since 2011, there have been improvements in this regard and steps are being taken to eliminate the trend. In 2011 an action plan was signed by Afghan government with the UN to end the recruitment of Afghans who are under 18 years of age in security forces. And, the passing of legislation by the Wolesi Jirga, earlier, to criminalize underage recruitment in ANSF further added to the optimism. There are hopes that if the commitments are pursued with complete determination, its practical implication would be made

possible by all means. Recruitment of the children both by Taliban militants and security forces will definitely result in violence against children and their abuse. The attitude of a trained militant clearly depicts the fact that the training sessions in their training camps do involve severe kind of violence and maltreatment. Another type of violence includes the killing and maiming of the children because of the conflict-related violence.

This also includes accidental killings or injuries by the national and international security forces, which, though relatively are much lower than the ones committed by the terrorists. Unfortunately, most of the deaths or injuries in this regard have been the result of the violent attacks of the terrorists on schools and hospitals. Such attacks do not only take precious lives but tend to inflict fear among parents and children regarding attending schools.

There are many other ways in which insecurity and indifference influence children. Many children, because of improper birth or because of lack of health facilities and insufficient nutrition either die in the very beginning of their lives or able to drag on their lives with certain physical deformities and serious diseases. Most of the children of the society are not able to have access to education, either because of the financial problems or the traditional hatred of the parents for modern schooling system.

The girls in this regard suffer even to more extreme levels. Moreover, the children who do not get a chance to be admitted in school are then sent out for labor so that they can prove to be a helping hand for their parents and in the process they are left at the mercy of the social evils.

Child labors are exposed to crimes and maltreatment to a risky extent, especially the ones who are employed by shop-owners, mechanics and small firms. They are even put to violent treatment by their employers on pity matters. Further, another concerning factor regarding the plight of the children in Afghanistan is the growing number of child beggars.

Families, stricken with intense poverty, do not hesitate even to send their children for begging. Apart from that, there are professional beggars who utilize the helpless children for the begging purposes.

The security of the children against all sort of violence, their proper nourishment and their character development are the most important considerations to contemplate on, if the government is really serious to safeguard the rights of the children. The same children are going to be the builders of future; their proper care should be ascertained through every possible means. Apart from the government the members of the society can also play a tremendous role in diminishing violence against the children and uplifting their morale.

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## Factionalism Harms National Unity

By Asmatyari

In democracy, maximum power rests with the chief executive aided by a cabinet to run the affairs of a country. It is the constitutional dictates that channelizes the derived power and ascertains the dos and don'ts of a ruler. Identically, the constitutional power descends to heads of federal and provincial departments, both elected and appointed. The law shuns any discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religions, treats all the citizens equitably is enshrined in the constitutions that functions via institution. Every institution sticking to constitutional provisions should exercise its legitimate authority without meddling into affairs of others institutions. Regrettably, the 14 years long democratic government could not satisfactorily bring about consolidation of democratic institutions. Even at date individuals then institutions enjoy great deal of power. Moreover, subsequent to political deadlock it was temporarily thought out the electoral mess could be done away with formation of national unity government. The decisional impasse was witnessed in every political undertaking –be that the appointment of ministries or provincial heads, reforms in election commission –even the ministry of defense till date foresees the appointment. It distinctly depicts disparity of interest and different overview of president and CEO on various issues.

It has been just over a year since Ashraf Ghani was sworn in as president as part of a US-brokered unity government with his main election rival Abdullah Abdullah. It was thought the power-sharing deal between Ghani and Abdullah will lead to reinstatement of broader consensus between the two leaders that later will be supported by constitutional amendments and ratified by grand assembly (Loya Jirga). Nonetheless, a period of more than a year past the deal, no reform is witnessed. However, no reform is carried out including parliamentary elections and Loya Jirga. It is mostly observed a decision taken by one is duly averted by the other that has likely created a stalemate over many significant issues. The delayed evolution of consensus over appointment of head Electoral Reform Commission justifies the said propositions. On the other hand the 40 degree fall of popularity of both Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah from that previous ranking should be none surprise, when every public proceeding suffer mismanagement.

The existing disparity is duly exploited by both local and international players –who are stung by peaceful and stable Afghanistan. It is felt some clandestine hands are plotting malicious designs at the behest of political unrest and insecurity. The all at sudden shift of war from Taliban dominated Eastern and Western part of country to Northern part underlines the beginning of impact of evil intentions. Abdullah who is deemed to represent north, is left to mounting insecurity and declining popularity could be for two reasons. One, he should disband asking a lion's share in every special grant or political decision. Second, Taliban should not be deemed a terrorism group who should meet crushing defeat, as repeatedly asserted from his political standpoint –contrary to many groups favoring peace talks. Abdullah

is witnessed to the most vocal leader who has repeatedly dismissed favoring talks with insurgents in the wake of multiplying attacks or he has suggested talks from the position of strength.

Disagreeably the political differences between the two leaders have led to erroneous decisions coming into appearance. It is seen the political figures are leading military operation surprisingly arming their loyal in the fight against insurgents. It is said that this practices gaining wide acceptance amongst ordinary masses in the insurgency struck north. This earns two harms for the country: first the army as a security institution is undermined; second widespread political meddling is depicted; third, a sense of self security followed by armament of ordinary people is encouraged. This certainly hints the strategic drawback and furthers insecurity to curbing it.

Going through the reasons behind falling of potential province Kunduz to insurgent, we come to learn distinct disposition of disunity of command between provincial executive head and security head –the former being president's pick and the later CEO's. It is said that great deal of nepotism and favoritism is exercised in many critical appointments even in security institution. Earlier, Ghani promoted 61 ANA officers –some to heads of departments and some as generals –in a bid to increase capacity building, maintain security and protect national sovereignty. Even the president's special representative for reform and good governance, Ahmad Zia Massoud claimed that nepotism has, for a while, been the basis for appointments. It should be remembered army should be deinstitutionalized and highly politicized, is deemed a deliberate blunder.

On the other hand, the US President Barack Obama's decided to keep 5,500 troops beyond 2016 has therefore been met with widespread relief by officials and residents, who hope it will prevent the country from becoming a regional hub of terror. Nonetheless, the insurgents' seizure of the Northern Province, Kunduz, last month, though brief, was a hurtful blow to stationed western forces more than Western-trained Afghan forces –dims their competence and questions their resolve fighting the growing militancy in the said land. The presence of US forces accompanied with increasing attacks on potential sites downs the credibility of western forces, was criticized by former president. While pinpointing Karzai said the presence of foreign troops had not only failed to stamp out terrorism but is in fact adding to the problem in war-ravaged Afghanistan.

Karzai said the Afghan people have had 14 years of foreign troop presence in their country and hoped for lasting peace and the elimination of terrorism but that this has not happened. Instead insurgency has strengthened.

It is critical to learn a peaceful Afghanistan will serve the greater interest of progressive and peace oriented world. Significantly, both the president and CEO have to come on a single page and better translate their differences into strength –is practical demonstration of unity –only inflicts crushing defeat to all opposition forces.

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