

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



September 27, 2016

## 'Tourism for All'

Human beings have always liked to enjoy nature and its beauty. They have shown their interest in their surroundings and have always strived to discover natural phenomena. The scenic environment has attracted them and made them show their love for it in different ways. They have written essays, stories and poems and songs in this regard.

They have not stayed to their own surroundings and they have tried to go to different parts of the world and enjoy the beauties of nature. Though, they have faced difficulties and hardships, they have not given up their thirst for finding out the miracles of this bewitching world and have kept on being astonished by it.

Today, when the world has been modernized and divided in different states, boundaries and borders have been created, yet human beings have not given up touring different places in different countries. This has now taken a formal form and called as tourism. Tourism is now a famous leisure and a developing business as well.

Millions of people around the world tour various places and thus spend a large amount of money every year; while the countries that host those tourists earn millions of dollars as well. According to current statistics by UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), international tourist arrivals grew by 4.6% in 2015 to 1,184 million and in 2015, international tourism generated US\$ 1.5 trillion in export earnings. UNWTO forecasts a growth in international tourist arrivals of between 3.5% and 4.5% in 2016 while by 2030, UNWTO forecasts international tourist arrivals to reach 1.8 billion.

A part from financial and economic benefits, tourism can also provide opportunities to share social and cultural values and at the same time assist people in learning traditional and historical lessons.

Keeping these advantages of tourism in consideration, United Nations has selected September 27th to be celebrated as World Tourism Day. The purpose of the day is to promote tourism and preserve the tourist sites from destruction.

This year the theme of the Day was, "Tourism for All - promoting universal accessibility," which emphasized on creation of environments that can cater for the needs of all of us, whether we are traveling or staying at home. May that be due to a disability, even temporary, families with small children, or the ageing population, at some point in our lives, sooner or later, we all benefit of universal accessibility in tourism.

It also remain a reality that for a country economic stability has an important role in the development and improvement of tourism. It, in fact, helps both in providing better opportunities to host tourists and at the same time provide better opportunities to produce tourists who would have the capacity to tour the places of their choice. It is really difficult to find any country suffering from economic instability spending money for the promotion and development of tourism as they have many other priorities.

There are several countries in the world that have places worth visiting and can attract many tourists, but as the governments of such countries are not able to spare budget for development of tourism, they are not able to cash the opportunity.

In a similar fashion, the political stability and security also play a dominant role in supporting tourism. The countries that suffer from insecurity are not able to attract tourists as tourists would rarely want to risk their lives for the sake of tourism. Afghanistan is also a similar type of country that has been suffering from the evil of insecurity; therefore, tourism has not been able to flourish much.

However, the country possesses the potential to become an important tourists' site. According to information by the Ministry of Information and Culture (MoIC), despite a five percent drop in the number of foreign tourists to Afghanistan, due to insecurity, the sector had generated an annual income of almost one billion Afghanis. MoIC spokesman Harun Hakimi said in a statement on Tuesday that foreign tourists can travel to 12 provinces of the country that have over 200 historical sites.

He also claimed that the ministry issues 100,000 tourism visas for foreign tourists every year. "The tourism industry generates one billion Afghanis in income on an annual basis, but most of the income goes to private companies because they carry out activities relevant to this sector," he said.

Afghanistan can flourish its tourism and this sector can be an important contributor in its economy as the country is striving to stand on its own. But, for that to happen it is really important that the relevant authorities must make honest efforts. The Afghan government needs to give proper attention to this sector and must not neglect it just because of the excuse of insecurity. Afghanistan can develop when it pays attention to different sectors simultaneously. Considering one sector as the panacea to all is not the solution. Developing all the institutions is important and so is the institution of tourism.

## Drastic Changes between Generations

By Dilawar Sherzai

There is nothing as permanent as change. And, this phenomenon is true for the entire universe. Wherever there is matter, there is change. The changes in the physical environment are so evident that we can see them any time we want. However, in certain cases we become so used to them that we do not feel them unless they are extreme or unexpected. Meanwhile, there are changes within human beings themselves too. This is true not only for their physiology but their psychology and their ideology as well. Consequently, these changes result in the differences with the overall society and ultimately, between the two consecutive periods within a society and the people living during those periods; thus, generating a generation gap.

Generation gap is basically the result of changes at a larger level. When two consecutive generations differ each other in their ways of thinking and ways of living, generation gap exists. Within a society, it is very natural and is bound to happen. In fact, it is as per the requirements of evolution. However, the important factor to understand in today's societies is that the generation gap is very wide as the changes are very quick and mostly drastic and thus results in differences so wide that it becomes too difficult to manage.

It is also imperative to understand that changes are not always positive. Though a modern generation may always claim to be more educated and advanced but it may not claim to be better in so many aspects. When there is a discussion about human society, it is not only advancement that matters; there are many ethical and spiritual aspects as well that needs to be considered.

There is no doubt in the fact that generation gap is natural but it can turn into a serious problem in so many ways. When there are drastic differences within two generations, there are influences on entire families and social interactions. Parents, who nourish their children for years, at some point of life may become strangers for their children and sometimes children consider their parents as their enemies instead of guardians and caretakers. Therefore, in such cases, the gap keeps on widening and the parents and children keep on moving away from each other.

The important thing at such a point is to understand the basic theory of life and that is, "things change". Everybody needs to understand this basic philosophy of life. Though it seems very simple to understand, it is the most difficult to adjust to. People agree and

accept this phenomenon theoretically but practically they never adopt it and that is where the problem arises. Parents need to understand that their children and their way of thinking and behaving will definitely be different. That is bound to happen. Children cannot be similar to their parents. Unfortunately, most of the parents want that their children to be their carbon copy. They abhor the differences in them and keep on giving their own examples and the examples of their own times and in most of the cases these examples are obsolete and they are no more applicable in a different society. When the children do not do what the parents expect, which are basically unnatural the parents are frustrated and gap starts getting wider.

It is not necessary that all the changes that are there in new generation should be accepted by the parents as some of them may be very much awkward and even alien. With the penetration of globalization in the different cultures, it is not difficult to find many aspects of the life in the new generation quite unfit for their society. Such aspects should be dealt with masterly. It is not to say that all the parents should be sociologists but they can be wise and for wisdom there is no need of great deal of education but experience is what counts the most.

As the children become youngsters, they are full of energy and they are easily influenced by the changes as those changes influence their learning process; therefore, they are more open to the social changes. They, in certain cases, get carried away by the tides of changes and when they become conscious they find themselves nowhere. Then the time to mend has already passed and they have no way to return; therefore, the parents need to understand them and help them get to a better destination. Parents cannot stop changes; all they can do is to guide the changes properly and channel them towards positivity. Two consecutive generations may always differ from each other in attitude, behavior and thinking but they can always have emotional attachment and can have a sense of respect for one another. There can be affection between them, but for emotions and affection to tie them tightly it is necessary that they have to rise above the differences in cloths, thinking and tastes. They have to raise their humanity to a level higher and start perceiving each other on the basis of their beings not the different manifestations of their beings.

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## Indian Assistance to Afghanistan

By Naser Koshan

The largest democracy in the world does indeed have an even bigger heart when comes to reaching out to its friends in need, particularly the war torn Afghanistan. No doubt India and Afghanistan's cordial bilateral relations go back to centuries; India has been a trustworthy and credible partner through thick and thin to Afghanistan, therefore the Afghan people have an exceptionally high regards for their Indian counterparts.

In 21st century world, every single country needs to adopt a role model for its economic development and political security. Luckily Afghanistan has a privilege to follow the Indian suit in enriching its paleo economic infrastructures as well as strengthen its fragile democratic institutions. Being at a crossroad between south and central Asia, Afghanistan can easily replicate and adopt proven reform policies from its strategic partner India.

Despite having major economic challenges at home, India, nonetheless, has been a true friend and a reliable partner to Afghanistan's reconstruction efforts post 2001, with a contribution of \$3.0 billion; it has been one of the largest donors to Afghanistan. Luckily with the assistance received, the Afghan government has been able to build numerous schools, pave roads and highways, rejuvenate major electric dams, as well as train a humongous number of civil servants and military officers in major Indian academic institutions.

On the other hand, as an emerging economic power, India is consciously aware of its pragmatic role in the region, and the expectations for its active political and economic engagements in this trade enriched geography of South Asia. There is a huge potential in this particular region which requires regional harmony and open togetherness. No doubt the whole region can hugely benefit from modernizing their trade policies, and market their domestic products in vastly growing Indian markets. But as we speak, the single biggest constraint that precludes the region from a robust economic integration is Islamic radicalism, which at the end of the day harms the victims and condolers equally.

On the global stage, India has moved on to playing a bigger league political engagement around the world. Indian Prime Minister Modi as a charismatic and prudent politician deeply understands the challenges and opportunities both India, Afghanistan and the region entail when it comes to their mutual national interests and regional harmony.

Coming back to Afghanistan, as a historic trading partner, Afghan products enjoy special custom treatments in Indian markets. There is a niche market for Afghan fresh and dried fruits in Indian markets. Luckily, recently signed agreement between India and Afghanistan certainly opens a new chapter of economic cooperation between the two countries.

For Afghanistan, India provides both the platform to train its civil and military personnel as well as equip its emerging armed forces. Despite being concerned about the sensitivities indulged in military cooperation between the two states, India so far has graciously provided three combat mi-35 helicopters with the fourth in the pipeline to the Afghan air force command, which is deemed critical in effectively eliminating militants across Afghanistan.

Moreover the restoration of Salma Dam officially called the India-Afghanistan friendship dam with a price tag of 1,775 Indian crore is singlehandedly the most valuable gift of the Indian people to the Afghan nation. The goodwill and sincere assistance of the Indian

government is highly plausible and critical to Afghanistan's national survival and state building efforts.

Meanwhile, India built a brand new parliament for the country to symbolize its belief of a democratic and peaceful Afghanistan. Afghanistan's untapped mineral resources provide a remarkable opportunity for Indian companies to dig in and initiate investment ventures. So far Indian private sector has been actively involved in these endeavors with more to step in soon.

On the other hand, Indian expatriates and professionals are playing a pivotal role in shaping the Afghan economic endeavors; they are either in charge or advising their Afghan counterparts in private and public sectors simultaneously. The Afghan banking system has extremely benefited from the expertise provided by setting Indian CEOs who have gradually transferred their know how to their Afghan colleagues in the concerning fields.

Despite deterrence and visible intimidations to sabotage this healthy relation between the two countries, the leaders on both sides rightfully acknowledge the deep roots shaping this mutual bonding, which goes beyond regional politics and regardless of constant ill-fated intentions by their common neighbor. India aspires for a strong and stable Afghanistan, as Afghanistan is actively pursuing routes to connect with regional economies and revive its historic silk route and transit hub status, India indeed is a key component in fulfilling this strategic objective.

The recent state visit of president Ghani to New Delhi and the concurrent agreements on strengthening trade ties, closer cooperation on extradition as well as intelligence sharing will have a huge impact on the prevailing war against terror. Both the leaders reiterated on joint cooperation on curbing terrorism which is the single biggest threat facing the region and their respective countries' national security.

Needless to say India has provided Afghanistan's national cricket team with a home ground to effectively assist the rapidly growing sport in the country, besides pledging a \$1 million dollars to build a full-fledged grand cricket stadium in Kandahar, Indian coaches provide technical expertise to the infant Afghan Cricket Academy. Globally with a large number of skilled workers, Indians are securing highly paid jobs around the world, here in the United states the largest multinational corporations and prime financial centers employ Indian CEO's and managers to boost their operations in target countries. Meanwhile India is a key and founding member in recently formed BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), an alliance of emerging economies looking for investment opportunities beyond their respective borders. India as a good friend can persuade these member states to invest in Afghanistan in the future.

As recently as the 71st UNGA, diplomats from Afghanistan, U.S. and India met on the sidelines to discuss ways to go around Pakistan which does not allow access to Indian and Afghan trade vis-à-vis its Karachi port. Since the United States buys its access to accommodate its resident troops in Afghanistan from Pakistan, a very frequent act of hostility and use of trade routes for political aims have urged the U.S. to think of an alternate solution for this growing problem. Evidently this trilateral meeting could put reasonable pressure on Pakistan to rethink its official policies, and avoid further isolation from the rest of the world.

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