

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



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## Life is a Responsibility

One of the most precious gifts in the universe is life. Human beings must understand and realize its true value and must try to make it worth living. However, making a life worthy to be considered as a true and precious life requires consistent struggle. Imagining such a life is easy but making such a life possible in practice is really difficult.

The most important factor to consider in this regard is that human beings must rise to the occasion and feel their responsibility. They have to understand that the life they have is an opportunity and interval that can have a lasting impact on the coming generations and may lead them towards a better destination. In life every person has the responsibility of the impacts of his living. If the impacts are negative for others the life is not well-spent but if it has positive impact, it is a well-lived life.

The positivity and negativity of life can be gauged by the benefits or harms it brings to other human beings. A positive life is the one that considers the wellbeing of others as the most important factor, while the negative life is the one that does not consider such responsibility and it mostly brings harm or destruction to others.

Definitely, the society we live in does not have such a definition of life and it has converted us into something that human beings should have avoided. We have to shun such conversions and try to discover our lives ourselves. Every individual has to give a proper meaning and a proper direction to his life. Life is not there to be wasted; it is a miracle and every individual needs to prove that his life is a miracle.

In short, every human being needs to go through a process of transformation. He has to move from oblivion to awareness and from lethargy to responsibility. The transformation can start from negating what is already taught to human beings by his surroundings. He requires to un-condition himself. The conditioning that is carried out by the society may not always be favorable for a person, and most importantly that conditioning is as per the thinking and the perspectives of others. Every person needs to discover himself, himself. He has to decide his life according to his own comprehension of his self.

During this transformation, he may feel despair; and may experience nothingness. The world may look meaningless and purposeless. The roads may look dusty and leading to nowhere. The trees may look autumn-stricken and the water may be flowing in a directionless directions. The relations may seem absurd and the friends may appear to be strangers.

However, the important thing is not to get stuck in this despair as the life is on the other side of despair. It is not within it. This despair may prove to be a necessary evil. It may provide an opportunity to a person to rethink about his life, to rewrite its script and to rebuild his personality.

Gold becomes gold after many years of suffering. It has to bear the extreme temperature and great pressure. It has to go through various processes to sparkle as it does. A seed becomes a tree after going through a long and tiresome process. It has to bear the different sorts of weather and have to extract its nutrition from the earth. Only after surviving through every thick and thin it is able to stand strong as a tree and grow flowers and fruits.

History proves that the same is true for human beings as well. The personalities that have gone through very critical circumstances have been able to stand taller as human beings.

Every human being has to go through the experience of despair if he has to discover his true self. Borrowed ideologies, borrowed destinations and borrowed motives can never work for an individual. Every individual is unique in what he really is. Finding that unique self will require going through the quagmire of despair, yet the great revelations are waiting on the other side. Though going through this quagmire is necessary, sticking to it is not recommended. Getting stuck in the quagmire means pitiful death. It means a useless and wasted life. The quagmire should be considered as a necessary passage to the real destination on the other side of it.

Today's world wherein most of the people are lost in hustle and bustle and in pursuit of the materialistic gains, this is a crying need that the human beings must discover true human gifted with perfect realization of the responsibilities and understanding of the human existence. He must suffer and despair, but has to take a rebirth. He has to be born as a different human being after what he goes through. This is the only way human beings can change the world around themselves; no other way is possible today.



## Chaotic Policy on Refugee Crisis

By Abdul Ahad Bahrami

The situation for Afghan refugees – who are stranded in countries on the way to Europe or already have reached in the European countries – have been consistently changing in recent months: while the approach of the EU countries over Afghan refugees have been consistently shifting, Afghan president Ashraf Ghani has maintained his defiant position over the Afghan refugees who have recently reached the European countries. President Ghani's unrelenting stance over the flow of people out of the country and the refugees who have applied for asylum in EU countries have with no doubt helped the U-turn shift of approach of the European countries and their treatment of refugees from Afghanistan. However, there seem to be a blatant inconsistency in the policy of the Afghan government over the refugee crisis and the way to deal with the plight of Afghans who have left the country.

With thousands of Afghan refugees stranded in Turkey and Greece and pressures growing by European countries on those refugees who have reached EU countries, Afghan authorities seek to find ways to work with the EU countries to resolve the crisis. Officials in the ministries of Foreign Affairs and Refugees and Repatriation say the Afghan government is seeking to struck deals with the European countries aimed at seeking a long-term solution to the refugee crisis and, in the meantime, preventing forced deportation of Afghans from those countries. The Minister of Foreign Affairs assured the MPs that the Afghan government is not going to accept back Afghan refugees who are forcefully deported to Afghanistan. He said that the government has always asked the European countries to consider the situation in Afghanistan in dealing with the asylum applications of Afghans and treat them hospitably. According to the officials, Afghanistan is seeking to talk agreements with the EU including Germany, which is the host country to a large portion of the refugees.

This is while the situation for refugees from Afghanistan is deteriorating in the countries on the migrant route as well as in those European countries who have received thousands of new refugees mostly in two recent years. The European countries have been toughening rules for considering asylum request of refugees from Afghanistan with the aim to dissuade Afghans from attempting to leave the country and reach European countries. Afghans were among the first who were barred from entering to Macedonia from Greece about two months ago while before it Afghan refugees were sent back from Germany's border to the southern European countries. German authorities have been firm in asserting that a large portion of Afghan refugees would not get asylum and will be sent back to Afghanistan.

More recently, a number of Afghan refugees were perhaps the first group deported from Turkey to Afghanistan. This is while human rights and pro-refugee groups claim there are many unregistered and unreported cases of forced deportation of Afghan refugees from Turkey to Afghanistan. With EU governments insisting that Afghanistan is safe enough for refugees to return,

many refugees await decisions by the European countries that would see their claims rejected and themselves deported to Afghanistan. Last week, a piece in the Economist depicted the growing mistreatment of Afghan refugees who are either on their way to Europe or those who have already arrived in the EU countries. Amid the uproar over the refugee crisis in Europe and the origin countries, the dire situation of refugees stuck in Turkey and Greece is being ignored and the calls to deal with the refugees struck in these two countries remain unanswered.

There are warnings that the EU countries are particularly ignoring the rights and situation of Afghan refugees which is indicating how the EU asylum system is collapsing and failing to be able to respond to the rights of many of the refugees particularly Afghans. The recent EU-Turkey deal that have come to force in recent days exclude Afghans from having the right to be relocated as part of the scheme to the EU countries while Afghanistan is a war-zone country like Syria. Afghan refugees were among the first group of refugees who were deported to Turkey from the Greek islands.

The Afghan government, however, has done little to resolve the problems the desperate Afghan refugees are facing in the countries on the EU migrant route or in the EU. It has never been able to establish a consistent and consolidated policy that can help reducing pains of Afghan citizens abroad. There have contradicting signals from the Afghan government to the EU countries over asylum request and the fate of the Afghan refugees. The defiant stance of President Ghani along with the inconsistencies in the policy of the government in dealing with the refugees crisis have failed the national unity government to provide support and help to the Afghan refugees particularly those who are stranded in countries like Turkey and Greece and those who may face possible forced deportation after their asylum claims get rejected.

The contradicting signals from Afghan government have even prompted the European countries to further toughen their rules for Afghan refugees seeking asylum. It has further weakened the formal policy of the ministries of Refugees and Repatriation and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to ease the crisis and help lessening pains of Afghans living in limo of migration. The contradicting signals even have led to discriminatory approaches towards refugees by Turkey, Greece and the rest of the European countries.

In reaction to the recent comments by Afghan president Ashraf Ghani, hundreds of refugees criticized the comments and lamented about being shunned by the government of Afghanistan. However, there is no sign of softening the harsh tone of President Ghani on refugees despite the assurances of the authorities that the Afghan government would not accept forced deportation of Afghans. The Afghan government needs to establish a consolidated and robust refugee policy to respond to the deteriorating situation of Afghan refugees in Europe and on the Europe migrant route.

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## The Unmitigated Militancy in Afghanistan

By Hujjatullah Zia

Ushering in heavy attacks, the Taliban inflicted indescribable casualties upon our nation. Annual fatalities of Afghan civilians and security forces have compounded in five years to roughly 10,000 in 2015. Since 2001, Afghanistan has suffered about 75,000 fatalities. To the nation's unmitigated chagrin, militancy lingers despite the government's continued efforts for peace talk. The Taliban's splinter groups keep on their destructive role across the country and trigger a sense of fear among the public.

Mullah Omar's elder son, Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob, has reportedly been handed a military position within the Afghan Taliban. Yaqoob, the son of the former Taliban supreme leader and the group's founder, had previously refused to accept the leadership of the group's chief Mullah Akhtar Mansoor. Based on a Taliban statement, he will be in-charge of military commission in 15 provinces of Afghanistan. Besides this, he has also been included in the Taliban's top decision-making council.

The announcement comes just days after senior leader Mullah Abdul Qayyum Zakir had declared allegiance to Mullah Mansoor. Zakir, who once headed the Taliban's military commission, was among several influential leaders who had earlier refused to accept Mansoor's leadership.

The conflict between Yaqoob and Mullah Akhtar Mansoor emerged after Mullah Omar's death and appointment of Akhtar Mansoor as his successor. Yaqoob, along with Mullah Manan and Mansoor Dadullah, refused to accept his top position or pledge allegiance to him.

Once Dadullah was, reportedly, rescued by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) when loyal to Akhtar Mansoor attacked him. Subsequently, Dadullah, his brother and dozens of his fighters were killed in Zabul province a few months ago – this enraged Omar's family. Dadullah, who was leading a Taliban's faction, was of the view that Omar's sons should lead the Taliban. Religious scholars close to the Taliban brokered a ceasefire between Mansoor and the rival faction under Mullah Mohammad Rasool. The political conflict among the Taliban's elements will lead to horrible consequences in Afghanistan. It is said that the continued threat required maintaining an effective counterterrorism partner and platform in Afghanistan. "While the focus has been on Al Qaeda, we have certainly seen recently the rise of the Islamic State in the Khorasan, and we're also dealing with that. That has further complicated the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan," Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen Joseph Dunford is cited as saying.

Yaqoob's top position among the Afghan Taliban will undermine the political stability more than ever before and this is a frank de-

nial to the resumption of peace talks. Most probably, he is tasked to orchestrate and lead terrorist attacks across the country. In other words, the Taliban elements seek to intensify their seasonal offensives in the New Year – this will bring the peace negotiation into usual stalemate. The Taliban's decision to usher in further militancy is a blow to peace process.

The Afghan-Pak porous border deteriorates the security situation in the country. As a result, fighters loyal to Akhtar Mansoor organized the attacks against Dadullah outside the border. Similarly, Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Lashkar-i-Jhangvi, etc. enjoy safe haven across the border. For instance, the Sunday's deadly attack in Lahore's Gulshan-i-Iqbal Park, which killed and wounded hundreds of people, and attack on Bacha Khan University were claimed by TTP. Moreover, members of TTP have pledged loyalty to the ISIS group. Pakistan's director general of the Intelligence Bureau, Aftab Sultan, said earlier that ISIS emerged as challenge in Pakistan since the militant groups, particularly Sipah-i-Sahaba and Lashkar-i-Jhangvi, had soft corner for it. Though ISIS and Afghan Taliban were in conflict, the TTP coordinated with it, he stated. Sultan held the banned TTP responsible for major terror incidents in Pakistan and said the group had been realigning with Lashkar-i-Jhangvi and Sipah-i-Sahaba. He also mentioned killings of SP Chaudhry Aslam in Karachi and ANP leader Bashir Bilour in Peshawar.

In addition, TTP largely forms "ISIL-K" in Afghan-Pak region and carried out many deadly attacks in Afghan soil against the combatants and non-combatants alike. Hence, this group gained firm foothold in the country through porous border and supported ISIS group in infiltrating the country.

I have always had a serious doubt about the fruition of peace talks on the basis of the Taliban's cruel practices. Despite the Afghan government's repeated calls for truce and offering olive branch through generous acts, the Taliban outfits persist on terror and militancy. In another item, Taliban have never taken an honest step towards peace rather set unreasonable preconditions – which were beyond the acceptance of a sound mind. The peace offering has constantly been denied with the barrel of gun and women and children were the scapegoats. So, one-sided commitment for peace will never give the desired result.

Afghan officials said previously that militants are left with two choices: negotiation or military action. Since it is feared that the Taliban elements will intensify their attacks in the current, the government has to increase military deal against any warring factions who deny coming to peace table. It should be noted that the rise in civilian casualties is beyond the tolerance of the public. Therefore, the National Unity Government has to tackle this daunting issue in one way or another and prevent from further bloodbath.

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