

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



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Our Role against the Evils in Society

No society is perfect and there are different sorts of evil that persist in every society. Nevertheless, this does not mean that there should not be efforts to fight against the social evils and let them not multiply. A glance at the developed nations of the world would clearly depict that the nations that have made efforts to control the evils have diminished them to a large extent. It is, therefore, imperative to consider the social evils negative and not to let them penetrate deep in the society, otherwise, they would become very difficult to tackle.

One of the basic reasons that any evil gets promoted within a society is the appreciation and support it gets from within the society members. Or there may be indifference on the part of society members towards the evil. The members of the society may neglect the evil and thus support in promulgating it.

The example of Afghan society in this regard is very much relevant. There are different social evils that get no proper attention by the members of the society. For instance, the evil of corruption has penetrated deep within Afghan society and most of the institutions in the country are being influenced by it in some way or the other, yet it is not being taken as much seriously as it should be taken. People consider it an integral part of their social life.

They complete their tasks through corrupt ways without even feeling guilty. Corruption, unfortunately, is a now a routine. It is no more weird to find corruption; the weird incident is to find someone being honest. Such a social value is really very much pathetic and it has kept on feeding corruption to a great extent.

People's indifference towards corruption around them is really very sad; there has not been any comprehensive movement or there have not been series of protests to condemn corruption within Afghan society. Though there have been many protests and demonstrations on the issues that are not vital for the people of Afghanistan at all, but, unfortunately, the evil of corruption which is crippling the social system within the country has faced no comprehensive protest.

It is common to find people, who complain against corruption, getting involved in corruption easily. It is easier for them to get their tasks done through some bribery and recommendation than to follow the honest, lengthy and tiring process of 'honest means'. They quite easily forget their demands for corruption-free society and higher standards of honesty.

It is not to deny that the people responsible for controlling the corruption must play a role in controlling the corruption, but the importance of social movements is very much vital in facing a social evil. The control mechanism within a society can enforce a law and can control a social evil by force to a certain level but if the society members do not support the mechanism it is very difficult to control the situation.

For example, the violence against women in Afghanistan has been identified as social evil by the control mechanism, yet it has not been controlled as Afghan society is not yet ready to accept it as social evil. The society members do not consider it inhuman and unlawful to carryout violence against women. It is very much normal in patriarchal Afghan society to find husbands beating their wives, fathers beating their daughters and brothers being violent to their sisters. And when there are cruel incidents of violence against women, the society members, except few, do not come to the roads to protest and shun such incidents as social evils.

Same is the case with the evil of drug use.

The people of Afghanistan use drugs as if they are part of their normal lives. People use it as painkillers and as medicine to fight against cold weather.

Though in some cases people do so because they are not fully aware of their negative consequences but at others they just do so because they are totally indifferent towards the issue.

They know that using such drugs may lead them towards negative consequences, yet they are not ready to avoid them and find out ways of getting rid of them.

It is really imperative to note that the sustainability of any social evil within the society largely depends on the attitude of the society members towards the evil. If from the very beginning the society members realize that social evils are negative and they are hindrance for the development of the society and may generate problems for them, there are possibilities of fighting the social evils properly, but if the society, either due to ignorance or negligence or individual considerations, remains indifferent towards evils, it would be very difficult to control them.

Therefore, it is necessary that as a part of society, we must feel our responsibility and be very much vigilant.

It is our responsibility to rise against the social evils, stand against them and raise our voice. Unless we respond to those evils we do not have the right to complain about them and we do not have any way of avoiding them.



Barriers before School and Schooling

By Hujjatullah Zia

The significant role of education in a society is beyond doubt. A country will have strong economic pillars and power for having standard educational system and qualified instructors. In modern world, science and technology are highly instrumental in the progress of a country. Knowledge beckons a society to humanity and has them respect the rights and liberty of a nation regardless of their race, color and caste. Violence and bloodshed have no room in social realm of knowledge. However, there are many challenges in Afghanistan regarding education and schooling. A number of people are likely to take their desire for going to school to the grave with them due to one reason or another. Economic crisis is a strong obstacle for many students to go to school.

For instance, child labor and forced marriage prevail in the country despite being contrary to national law and international instruments. Little wonder, no one likes to trouble their children; however, poverty and economic constraints force them to violate the law through making their children marry in early age or involve in backbreaking chores.

On the other hand, lack of schools and qualified teachers, mainly in villages, slows down progress in the field of education. I remember vividly, when I was teaching at a school in Daikundi province, that scores of students, including male and female, walked for long hours to get to their school. Meanwhile, the quality of education was really poor and there were hardly ever any teachers who could satiate the unquenchable thirst of students for knowledge.

Based on a recent report, only 199 schools out of 377 have buildings - 33 of them are mud schools built by the locals - in Daikundi province where 164,921 students are attending schools. So, 258 schools, which form 68 per cent, are without buildings and students are taught in open air or destroyed homes/stores. Many schools are behind the schedule for no buildings and right places for teaching. Lack of teachers seem to be a highly serious challenge in this province.

A number of students have reportedly passed last year without being taught regularly or having any specific schedules. The report adds that currently 41 per cent of teachers have not been hired yet and totally about ten thousand teachers are needed to be hired. It also suggests that text books have not been distributed to students from the solar year of 1392 onward in this province and students buy the books.

Similarly, lack of facilities such as enough chairs, tables, laboratories, and teaching materials and as well as drinking water compound the challenges.

To consider insecure provinces such as Helmand and Kunduz,

girls' schools are closed and they are particularly deprived of getting education. The radical ideology of warring factions have again marginalized them from social and cultural activities. This will lead to two horrible consequences: first, the girls will deem themselves inferior to men and lose their confidence. Secondly, they will not be able to be aware of their rights for being kept in dark by fundamental ideologies. In brief, the residents of insecure provinces will suffer not only from lack of facilities and qualified teachers but also from militancy.

In Moqor district of Ghazni province, where I lived for years, the girls' schools are closed except for primary schools for girls. I do remember when a girl looked taller or older from the Taliban's criteria, the Taliban ordered teachers not to let them attend schools anymore which was highly disappointing for them. They also checked text books of primary schools and ordered women's pictures to be distorted by pen for having bare face/ not wearing burqa. Don't you think that such issues will put ill effect on children's minds? It will really pave the ground for radicalization, won't it?

To cut it short, there are many obstacles before getting education both in secure and insecure provinces and girls are more vulnerable to these challenges. The second vulnerable group is those who suffer from poverty - who neither afford the cost of tuition nor being paid enough attention from the government. In case of raising their voice, it will fall on deaf ears.

The Constitution of Afghanistan states in article 6 as, "The state shall be obligated to create a prosperous and progressive society based on social justice, preservation of human dignity, protection of human rights, realization of democracy, attainment of national unity as well as equality between all peoples and tribes and balance development of all areas of the country." Moreover, the heads of the National Unity Government (NUG) made mouth-watering promises for economic developments, providing public welfare, etc. during their presidential campaigns, but they could hardly put them into practice.

The state will have to pay serious attention to education and facilitate students with all necessary equipment such as text books, teaching materials, laboratories, etc.

Moreover, since warring parties hamper progress in the field of education and fill the air with a sense of fear and disappointment, the government should strengthen counter-insurgency mechanism and protect the rights and liberty of students, mainly the vulnerable ones. As education plays a crucial role in the society, deprivation of schools and knowledge will lead to horrible consequence and pose a serious threat to society. It is hoped that the challenges will be reduced soon.

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Achievements and Challenges of NUG in Rule of Law

By Syed Asif Husaini

The rule of law is one of the issues which has drawn the attention of lawyers, economists and political figures. Today, it is accepted that it will not be considered legal system without rule of law and officials' respect for it.

Both historically and culturally, Afghanistan has encountered problem in the field of rule of law. Extreme social, economic and cultural backwardness, mainly tribal structures, the emergence of fundamental and ideologue groups through coup and bloody battles for power and interference of foreign governments are considered as major factors in this regard.

Being recorded as the bloodiest and most destructive part of the history, we witnessed not only the rise and fall of regimes, institutions, organizations and ideologies within the past three decades, but also social and political awakening and campaign for justice. Establishing legislative and judicial institutions such as National Assembly, Supreme Court, the Ministry of Justice, approving Constitution, Parties Law, Criminal Law, Law on protection the rights of women and children and hundreds of other sub-laws are the main outcomes of Afghanistan after civil unrests.

Despite these outcomes, Afghan government still wrestles with large-scale challenges in the issue of justice and judiciary and so on. Afghans face many problems and are denied legislative services in many cases which made them lose trust in legislative institutions. Afghan government is responsible to fight any kinds of failure and abnormality through careful planning and provide access to justice.

Due to international commitments and continuation of mutual cooperation with its international allies, Afghanistan has accepted principles and standards of human rights, access to justice, the rule of law, adherence to treaties and international conventions. Therefore, this country is responsible to undertake fundamental reforms in judicial field. So, it will fulfill its international commitments besides answering the citizens.

Government's Achievement in Judicial Reform

Luckily, the government has lately taken high steps in this regard. The National Unity Government (NUG) could establish considerable institutions for fighting violence against women and children, despite many challenges, with the view to persuading its international allies.

In addition to creating Special Court for Women, the NUG has established: Counter Violence Administration for Women and Children in Afghanistan's Attorney General. Currently, the Supreme Council of the rule of law under the supervision of the President, Center of anti-Corruption Campaign in the Attorney General, Justice Committee and Law Committee under the supervision of the Second Vice President Sarwar Danish - these are all for structural growth of judicial sectors in Afghanistan. Recently, National Administrative Reform Program in Afghanistan has been confirmed and its implementing program is started - implementing program of the relevant institutions in the Law Committee will be finalized in the coming days.

Government's Achievements in Reforming and Adjusting Law President Ashraf Ghani may realized the fact that the rule of law is directly related to the quality of the country's law. There-

fore, he has considered the reformation of law as bases of reformation in the judicial system and submitted this hard task to his Second Deputy Sarwar Danish - who has reformed and adjusted more than hundred legislative documents, in the Cabinet Law Committee, up to the end of 1395.

To improve the status of women and children in the community, the NUG has finalized the Law on Prevention of Harassment of Women and Child Rights Protection Law for the first time.

The Challenges of Rule of Law in Afghanistan

Last year, structural reforms in the judicial sector raised Afghanistan's position for the first time in the international ranking and prompted public hope. In terms of enforcement, however, women are frustrated with judicial system and resort to suicide and self-ignition to free themselves from the cruelty of time. Farkhunda's case is still pending in the layer of judicial corruption in spite of public sentiments - which was called as disgrace and shame for the judicial institution by Second Vice President - in the Supreme Judicial Seminar held in Inter-Continental Hall.

Bribery and administrative corruption in Afghanistan have kept the market of speculators and managers warm. Sexual and ethnic discriminations are dominant rule against Afghanistan's standard and adjusted rule. The contrast between structure and broker in Afghanistan's justice system is noticed clearly. Besides structural reforms, the NUG should consider fundamental reforms in the attitude of the brokers. Otherwise, as Montesquieu puts it, if good law is not enforced, it is the same as it has never existed.

Bribery, embezzlement, abusing position, appointing relatives in key posts and compulsion by illegal armed groups are the major factors in violation of law in Afghanistan. Just yesterday, the provincial council head of Herat province, resorted to demonstration on street against the decree of judicial body.

On the other hand, the prevalence and persistent of corruption is caused by: abusing official authorities, selecting managers based on ethnic, regional and group criteria, unfair payments, government staff's disbelief in retirement, low level of education and other relevant facts. Hence, strategies to combat corruption and evasion of law, considering the particular situation, are as following:

- 1-Attracting international supports in financial and cultural fields and spending them for the improvement of Afghans' living condition and culture.
- 2-Implementing and monitoring the rule of all in all administrative and social levels.
- 3-Entrusting jobs to the right people via administrators' transparent selection based on transparent competition.
- 4-Enhancing the quality and quantity of government staff's living, such as paying on time, tackling homelessness and other social welfare; otherwise it will be hard to eliminate bribery, corruption and administrative recession.
- 5-Struggling to strengthen the authority of central government and preventing any attitudes which may undermine national unity and interests in the country.
- 6-Transparency in managing and accountability of government's key elements - which is of high significance in establishing sound administration.

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