

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



April 20, 2015

## Cabinet Owned Divine Responsibility, Should Sustain Rule of Business

The cabinet picks, rendered the difficult most undertaking left to discretion of National Unity Government provided the proponents of both President and Chief Executive had not only to discuss the eligibility of every candidate but also evolve a broader consensus relative to each of them. Following the assumption office of presidency, President Muhammad Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah, seemed destined to opt for convenient individuals in bid to carry forth government formation. Earlier, on Saturday April 18, 2015 the Wolesi Jirga (Lower House of Parliament) approved 16 cabinet nominees with exception to nominee for defense ministry were introduced by the government in the second round of voting – since the establishment of National Unity Government (NUG). It took the government pretty long to get the empty slots of cabinet filled. Previously in the first round of voting on January 28 – nine out of 19 nominees were approved.

The names of accredited candidates and their corresponding ministries are followings: Hamayoun Rassa, as the minister of commerce and industries; Abdul Bari Jahani, as the minister of information and culture; Asadullah Zameer, as the minister of agriculture, irrigation and livestock; Gulab Mangal, as the minister of borders and tribal affairs; Mahmood Baleegh, as the minister of public works; Abdul Sattar Murad, as the minister of economy; Mohammadullah Batash was approved as the minister of transport and civil aviation; Asadullah Hanif as the minister of education; Sayed Mansour Sadat Nadiri, as the minister of urban development; Abdul Basir Anwar, as the minister of justice; Abdul Razaq Wahidi, approved as the minister of information technology; Dilbar Nazari, approved as the minister of women's affairs; Salamat Azimi, as the minister of counter-narcotics; Farida Momand, approved as the minister of higher education; Nasrin Oryakhail, approved as the minister of labors, social affairs, martyrs and disabled and Ali Ahmad Osmani, approved as the minister of water and energy.

It is a positive and certainly welcoming sign, the government displayed patience over appointments despite piles of consignments awaiting their fates. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) too has welcomed approval of the 16 ministers to the country's NUG. "The United Nations congratulates the ministers-designate and looks forward to working with them, supporting both them and the government in its important work ahead."

Having sought vote of confidence the candidates formally descends to cabinet and assumes their respective responsibilities or ministries where they enjoy great power and authority. There are countless issues and problems awaiting their fate, to be solved long ago. The absence of legitimate authority procrastinate the public consignments, have equally impacted the affairs of governance. Aside to filling the slots with competent and committed individuals, the entire affairs of government, termed as governance stand primary. Governance is the dynamic interaction between people, structures, processes and traditions that support the exercise of legitimate authority in provision of sound leadership, direction, oversight, and control of an entity in order to ensure that its purpose is achieved, and that there is proper accounting for the conduct of its affairs, the use of its resources, and the results of its activities.

Subsequent, to successful completion of picking ministers for different slots, the preliminary subject of prime importance to incumbent government will be the mainstreaming of governance. Responding at the query how to get that done is illustrated below. A well-governed country has also both these sectors well administered and in harmony with each other. When a country is not politically sound its institutions will also be in poor condition. In our country we can see the due to the bad governance our public and private sectors are in a great mess.

Other requisites is the means that the processes implemented by the government to produce favorable results meet the needs of masses, while making the best use of resources, human, technological, financial, natural and environmental at its disposal.

In general, a government is accountable to those who will be affected by its decisions or actions as well as the applicable rules of law. Participation needs to be informed and organized, including freedom of expression and assiduous concern for the best interests of the government and society in general.

It is asserted high quality governance is needed for the smooth running of public institutions, it is also essential for maintaining the sovereignty of the country. A good governed country is economically strong and all the departments of the country function smoothly. It enables the rulers to strengthen the country's security. Undeniably, the rampant corruption in government offices has earned us infamy; the incoming ministers are hence left to exercise their fullest capacity to undo every act of corruption, favoritism and nepotism.

Amidst the loud rumors of peace talks between Afghan government and Taliban, the rule of law is equally demanded. It's generally observed, the magnitude of violence practically soared, with the raise in hype about peace talks. Every time a tragic incident occurs the fatless civilian has to pay the price by serving to be a sacrificial cow. The consecutive attacks on foreign diplomats, ordinary masses and public installation depict either state's unwillingness to restrict the insurgent away from commercial and residential areas or it has surrendered to militants operating at will. The later stance seems more credible seeing the government tempted to begin talks with Taliban, for past many years. However, the entire society is overwhelmed by endless bloodletting, rendering them believe violence avenge aggression. The new cabinet set into place, must undertake a fair, tough and bold steps to put Afghanistan on the course of eternal success.



## The Final Push to End Extreme Poverty

By Jim Yong Kim

2015 is the most important year for global development in recent memory. In July, world leaders will gather in Addis Ababa to discuss how to finance development priorities in the years ahead. In September, heads of state meet at the United Nations to establish the Sustainable Development Goals – a group of targets and goals set for 2030. And in December, countries again will gather in Paris to work out an agreement on climate change.

This year has also seen the emergence of a major new player in development – the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank led by China, with more than 50 countries and regions signing on as members. With the right environment, labor and procurement standards, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank – and the New Development Bank, established by the BRICS countries – can become great new forces in the economic development of poor countries and emerging markets.

We hope these new institutions will join the world's multilateral development banks and our private sector partners on a shared mission to promote economic growth that helps the poorest. The decisions we make this year, and the alliances we form in the years ahead, will help determine whether we have a chance to end extreme poverty by 2030, the central goal of the World Bank Group.

The good news is that the world has made substantial progress already. Over the past 25 years, we've gone from nearly 2 billion people living in extreme poverty to fewer than 1 billion. But that means we still have nearly 1 billion people living on less than US\$1.25 a day.

We know it's possible to end extreme poverty in the next 15 years, in part because of this past success, and because we have learned from years of experience about what has worked and what has not. As a result, our advice to governments has evolved over time. Our strategy to end extreme poverty can be summed up in just three words: Grow, Invest, and Insure.

First, the world economy needs to grow faster, and grow more sustainably. It needs to grow in a way that ensures that the poor receive a greater share of the benefits of that growth. We can reach the end of extreme poverty only if we mark a path toward a more robust and inclusive growth that is unparalleled in modern times.

The World Bank Group will continue to support governments

and make investments in a broad variety of areas in the fight against extreme poverty. In most of the developing world, though, efforts to end extreme poverty will require us to focus on boosting agricultural productivity.

Helping farmers improve yields requires increasing access to better seeds, water, electricity and markets. According to one study in Bangladesh, six years after constructing 3,000 kilometers of roads to connect communities to markets, household incomes increased by an average of 74 percent.

That's the growth part of the strategy. The second part of the strategy is to invest – and by that, I mean investing in people, especially through education and health.

The opportunity to get children off to the right start happens just once. Investments made in children early in life bring far greater returns than those made later on. Poor nutrition and disease can have life-long implications for mental and physical health, educational achievement, and adult earnings.

The final part of the strategy is to insure. This means that governments must provide social safety nets as well as build systems to protect against disasters and the rapid spread of disease.

Ebola revealed the shortcomings of international and national systems to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious disease outbreaks. Ebola also taught us that the poor are likely to suffer the most from pandemics. The World Bank Group has been working with partners on a new concept that would provide much needed rapid response financing in the face of an outbreak, where countries would receive rapid disbursements of funding, which would, in turn, help contain outbreaks, save lives, and protect economies.

We know that ending extreme poverty will be extraordinarily difficult – in fact, the closer we get to our goal, the more difficult it will be.

Governments of the world must seize this moment. Our private sector partners must step up. The World Bank Group, our multilateral development bank partners, and our new partners on the horizon, must all seize this moment. We must now collaborate with real conviction and distinguish our generation as the one that ended poverty.

We are the first generation in human history that can end extreme poverty. This is our great challenge, and our great opportunity. The final push must begin right now.

The author is president of the World Bank Group

## Afghan-Style Democracy

By Hujjatullah Zia

Do we live under a democratic system? The irony is that democracy means violence and bloodshed inflicted upon a nation. Afghans struggle to survive suicide bombings, abduction and terrorist acts. The security situation is a matter of great worry for the people. The mouth-watering promises in presidential election were no more than a flash in the pan and Afghans' expectations of democracy seem to never come true. Reports show that a myriad of people take their dream about peace and stability to the grave with them. Their ballots were changed into bullet to shed their blood before the eyes of their families – The completely opposite of what was intended of flocking to ballot boxes.

Reports say that at least 30 Afghan soldiers have been killed; eight of them decapitated, and several others were abducted after militants stormed army checkpoints in Jurm district of northeastern Badakhshan province last Friday when more than 200 militants launched an assault. However, a lawmaker from central Parwan province, Almas Zahid, said 62 troops had either been killed or missing. Zalmai Mujaddadi, representative of Badakhshan province to Lower House, said, "Militants have beheaded eight soldiers in ISIS's style and have sent the bodies back to the government." He added that, the check posts had been completely destroyed by insurgents while four armor vehicles, six police vans and several light and heavy weapons were taken. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack saying they had killed 49 soldiers and wounded 42 others, which was not confirmed by any independent sources.

Afghan Wolesi Jirga members said government officials had committed negligence in this regard urging President Ashraf Ghani and CEO Abdullah Abdullah to resign.

Fauzia Kofi, a female lawmaker from Faryab, said the Taliban had infiltrated in each home in Faryab under the leadership of three Pakistani generals, 12 Chechens and some Uzbek fighters. She warned if the situation in Faryab was not curbed, it could not be controlled from spreading to Mazar-i-Sharif, the capital of northern Balkh province. She urged the president and the CEO should resign because they could not heal the nation's wounds.

The tragic murder of Afghan National Army has not only raised the parliamentarians' concerns but came as a complete shock to Afghans' bleeding nation. To their unmitigated chagrin, the security situation has been deteriorated in recent months. As a result, 33 people were killed and 125 other injured in a suicide blast in Jalalabad capital of Nangerhar province the other day. Also 31 Afghan travelers were abducted about two months ago on Herat-Kabul Highway and yet no serious action is taken for their release despite their families' urges and public demonstrations.

The civilian casualties are more appalling for the nation. As a result, Latest figures from the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) shows a continu-

ing trend of record high civilian casualties, with deaths and injuries from ground engagements in Afghanistan remaining the leading cause.

A statement released by the UNAMA said that today, with the release of UNAMA's findings from the first quarter of 2015, UNAMA called on all parties to the conflict to recognize and act to prevent harm to civilians.

"With the seasonal resumption of higher levels of conflict-related violence, the United Nations urges all parties to the conflict to take all necessary measures to protect civilians," said Nicholas Haysom, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan and head of UNAMA.

Haysom said: "The parties in particular should refrain from using mortars and rockets in any areas populated by civilians."

In the first three months of 2015, civilian casualties from ground engagements rose by eight per cent compared to the same period in 2014. Ground fighting between pro-government forces and anti-government elements caused 521 civilian casualties, with 136 civilians killed and 385 injured.

Haysom said UNAMA was particularly concerned about the impact on civilians of further conflict-related operations by the Afghan National Security Forces and anti-government elements in the coming months.

Total civilian deaths and injuries in the first quarter of 2015 followed the record high levels of 2014. Between 1 January and 31 March, UNAMA documented 1,810 civilian casualties (655 deaths and 1,155 injured), a two per cent decrease from the same period in 2014.

The latest figures further demonstrated a continued rise in women casualties with an increase of 15 per cent on the same period last year. Conflict-related violence killed 55 women and injured 117. Child casualties surpassed the unprecedented levels recorded last year with 430 child civilian casualties (123 deaths and 307 injured). In line with increased ground fighting in civilian populated areas, ground engagements remained the leading cause of women and children civilian casualties, the statement added. Targeted killings were the third leading cause of civilian deaths and injuries.

In the first three months of 2015, civilian casualties from targeted killings increased by 34 per cent, with UNAMA documenting 309 civilian casualties (217 killed and 92 injured) in 192 separate incidents.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for 48 incidents of targeted killings, including deliberate killings of tribal elders, judges, prosecutors and civilian government workers. Under international humanitarian law, a civilian is any person who is not taking a direct part in hostilities.

In our democratic system, the casualties and bloodshed can no more arouse the officials' concerns. A lot has been said and written about the insecurity and tragic incidents, yet no effective strategy is adopted to curb the situation.

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