

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



April 23, 2015

Peace must be Preferred

Human beings have so much experience about the wars and their devastation that they should now have a proper lesson and must strive to completely eradicate them. Wars have killed millions of innocent people, exterminated numerous families, demolished thousands of houses and handicapped various people. Thus, the sanity of those who propagate war and do not hesitate to push humanity towards it can be doubted. Today, stimulating the possibilities of war means risking the entire life on the planet earth. And our inclination towards war clearly depicts that we are far more evolved in ferocity and savagery than our barbaric ancestors who used to fight with spears and sticks.

It is not incorrect to conclude that history has chosen the wrong people for shouldering the burden of leading the world and the world order. It is really difficult to judge whether the people who claim to lead the world and decide the world order are really striving to establish peace and tranquility. They fail to understand that their thirst for power has in fact shown that they feel no responsibility towards their fellow beings and even towards the life on earth.

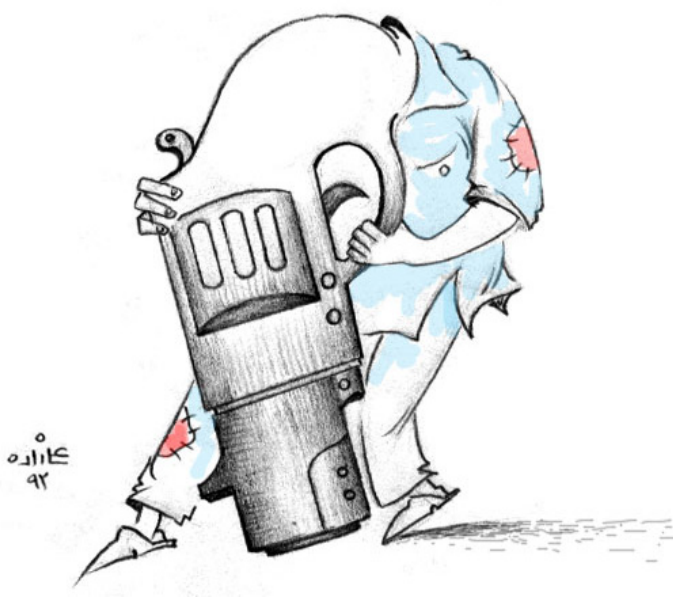
The matter to ponder upon is, "What is the basic factor that makes human being such a barbarian?" One of the basic factors is indeed the extremist beliefs and the uncontrolled and unlimited power. The ruling class in the world has in fact turned their thirst for power as a belief, and today the grip of the beliefs has tightened to a great extent. To stand as evidence to the claim, it could be noticed that today even science has been turned into a set of beliefs - a set of belief that has its own destruction within itself. Looking at the current role of science, it can be claimed that modern human beings are nothing except the ancient barbarians, or even worse, who are just dressed in modern clothes. Does such modernity mean anything? Is it really modernity if the innocent humanity is victimized by the uncontrolled desire of power and ultimately extinction?

Nowadays, it seems that the world is heading towards instability and chaos. If science is used in the similar fashion - for destruction of human civilization, then such an era is not far away when the true spirit of civilization and awareness would rise against the "knowledge and education", and we would be compelled to conclude that we do not need science any more. As Thomas A. Edison wished, "There will one day spring from the brain of science a machine or force so fearful in its potentialities, so absolutely terrifying, that even man, the fighter, who will dare torture and death in order to inflict torture and death, will be appalled, and so abandon war forever." But before that happens, it can be noted that the way the criminal minded groups in the world have used science is basically a great machination against science and knowledge.

Though human beings have developed much in science, they have not been able to form a scientific outlook. That's why most of the scientific developments are made in the wrong direction. The tragic reality is that the respectable knowledge like science is leading the military institutions throughout the world in today's modern society. Can human beings claim that they are civilized and sane as long as there are lethal military institutions, which are trained by the highest knowledge and the most skilled experts? It is believed the greatest service to human beings would be to reduce dramatically the amount of money, energy, knowledge and expertise for the military institutions and weapon factories.

It is really weird to find human beings machinating and arranging so much and using so much energy and knowledge to dig their own graves and the grave of the entire human civilization. The wars can never lead human beings towards peace and tranquility and the weapons have nothing to offer to them except death certificate. Who would want a peace that is established with the cost of human life and resultantly the lives of all the human beings on earth? Peace, without life, though attainable, is useless. As John F. Kennedy had said, "Mankind must put an end to war before war puts an end to mankind."

Human beings, especially the authoritative people around the world need to realize that they have to take off the glasses of extremist beliefs and the uncontrolled power as with them they would never be able to see the true face of humanity the true beauty of life. They need to understand that their beliefs and their desires for power have made them corrupt the feelings of love and brotherhood that can establish peace and harmony; and they are also required to recognize that they have even spoiled the sacred knowledge like that of science, which can serve humanity in myriad of other unbelievable ways.



Avoiding Iraq's Mistakes for Afghanistan!

By Muhammad Rasool Shah

Recent developments in Iraq are frightening and disappointing for all those who were looking for a stable and prosperous Iraq after all the efforts and sacrifices of International community and Iraqi public. At the same time, it gave away numerous lessons for the politicians and political experts of the world. First important lesson is not to consider small and ignore a problem. When the Islamic State (IS) separated from Al-Qaeda and announced to carry out its activities as a separate Jihadi organization, it was not given any importance. Later on, when they captured Fallujah in Iraq in 2013, it was ignored on grounds of being a small group comprising of a few hundred militants and not able to inflict any serious harms to the security of the country. This ignorance gave them a full-fledged opportunity to gain strength, get professional training for their militants, acquire weapons from wherever possible and develop a very nice hierarchy within the organization due to which they are able to operate like a professional army. Same ignorance also cost a lot for the supporters of democratic Iraq when the old generals and political experts of Saddam government were not chased and hunted down who joined the lines of ISIS as soon as they saw the opportunity and brought for them all their expertise, skills and experience. Had these old generals being caught and tried in the beginning, they could have never performed their role in today's political and military turmoil of the country.

Next important lesson was the ignorance of social and economic injustice in the country. International community poured the country with billions of dollars but this huge sum was never used properly and transparently. Massive corruption made some hundreds of Iraqis millionaires about whom we heard unbelievable stories. There were Iraqis rich enough to afford holidays in Europe, shopping in Dubai, education in the United States and they were able to establish their private armies and luxurious villas in almost all the parts of the country and different countries of the world. But unfortunately, majority of the Iraqis remained suffering with their miseries. Increasing violence and militancy negatively affected the economic activities of the country and all these resulted in the increased poverty of the middle and lower classes of the society. All these circumstances gave birth to a perception that democracy was for the sake of some limited people only and majority of the common public remained indifferent to it. It is the reason why, when there were news of increasing influence and control of IS in different parts of the country, there were also present those who were happy of this, expecting a kind of change in the present status-quo of the country.

Some political experts believe that the Coalition Forces deliberately gave rise to the differences and clash between these Shia and Sunni due to their own hidden agendas. It was an idea that if the two groups clashed with each other, the work of the coalition forces would be easier. It was also said that if the two groups of country kept fighting with each other, they would grow weak. But this sectarian bloodshed got so intensified in 2006-07 that coalition forces had to revisit their policies and strategies in this regard. This was another lesson from Iraq

that an evil way would never lead to a virtuous destiny. It was wrong right from the beginning that country should be ruled on the policy of 'Divide and Rule', rather national solidarity and respect for differences could have been more productive and fruitful. It remains a fact that the snake you reared for others might turn against you one day and cause the trouble that you were thinking of inflicting on others.

It also remains a fact that all classes and regions of the country were not given equal representation in the new democratic setup of the country. It is the reason why, present government is not having the full moral support of all the classes and groups of the country. This problem started when the group or groups that were ready to cooperate with the Coalition Forces were given preference while those groups that insisted on political freedom, sovereignty of the country and more Iraqi influence in national politics were ignored and sidelined which resulted in the situation when the country got divided on political lines as well.

In all these issues, we see that there were divisions on the basis of economy, political representation, and sectarian and religious differences which divided the country into large number of groups. Between these groups, similarities were less while the differences were high which gave birth to antagonistic feelings against each other.

It has also been noticed that Iraqi forces were less trained and equipped comparing to the IS militants. IS militants were able to defeat the Iraqi forces on the war-front and they did not face much difficulty in capturing large number of towns and cities of the country. This poor performance of Iraqi army depicts a fact that American forces left the country and gave its charge to Iraqi forces when they were not ready to handle it properly. It is also a fact that an army should not only be trained and established but also provided with proper equipment because Iraqi army is not happy of the weapons they have and they are also complaining of the lack of adequate air support. Iraqi army has only some helicopters and doesn't have a well-established air force.

And most importantly, this disturbance is also due to the interference of large number of international players. There are also those powers that are working to bring down the government that is supporting the policies of the West so that they should be able to bring a government that should serve their policies as well. Whoever may be the players, it is for sure that there are so many big powers supporting this militancy because a group with such strong army and support in form of weapons and money cannot exist and continue on its own.

All these important lessons are very crucial in the scenario of Afghanistan as well. We are also sharing the similar circumstances in form of social, economic and political inequalities and injustices. We can avoid the similar situation in our country by bringing reforms in our present setup to bring more economic equality, expansion of social and political freedom and participation.

We also need to make our army and police strong and work incessantly against the militants and anti-state elements, no matter how small or less active they are, without giving them any chance to grow and emerge as a real threat to our democratic setup.

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Women's Deepening Plight Reported

By Asmatyari

Dautlessness is not man's attribute, given he can suppress and duress the hapless daughter of eve - despite being reciprocated in the gentlest way. This is not to render man at fault; instead laws safeguarding women's rights are minimally applied. Every alternate day endless tales of butcheries, physical torture, harassment and sexual assaults are surfaced where women render prey to flawed cultural practices, biased laws and Sharia doctrines. We turn deaf ears to the hapless cries, blind eyes negligent to see the magnitude of mental sufferings she endures while getting out to earn a livelihood, numb to realize the numerous pain of gender based victimization she bears frequently, because of fallacious socio-religious structure based on irrational biases. It reflects women are coerced to repression after being found hapless and voiceless.

Women constitute half of Afghan population. They can play foundational role in formation and development of the society for upcoming generation. They owe equivalent vigor to outstand and undertake the societal undertakings appropriately. Regrettably, they are deemed and treated second class citizen; meant to plague their innate capabilities rendering them dysfunctional. If properly educated and socialized they can be turned into valuable human resource earning enormous riches for poverty stricken country. If shun in constant denial they will degenerate without productive contribution.

Formerly, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) released its report identifying the factors that enable or hinder women's access to justice in cases involving violence. It documents the individual experience of 110 Afghan women victims of violence who sought justice through the judicial system and though non-judicial mechanisms, including mediation, across the country between August 2014 and February 2015. The majority of the cases in the report were brought to mediation, a process to resolve a dispute through mutual agreement and reconciliation between parties, and only five per cent of the resolved cases resulted in criminal prosecution and sanctions against the perpetrators. Women's preference for mediation is influenced by several factors, such as perceived deficiencies in the criminal justice system, including allegations of corruption, abuse of power and lack of professionalism, as well as cultural and family pressure. Interviewed women also stressed the value of mediation as a swift means to have their case processed.

Violence against women in Afghanistan have kept women very far away from education which is one of the reasons that usually subjected them to extensive discriminations because they are kept ignorant of their fundamental rights. The choices of Afghan women are extraordinarily restricted; the family decides the fate of their lives. There is little chance for education, little choice about which she marries no choice at all about her role in her own house. Her principal undertaking is to serve her hus-

band's family. The report also found that the majority of women were largely concerned with obtaining redress of a civil nature, such as divorce, custody settlements or living in a safe environment rather than seeking criminal sanctions, fearing the negative economic and social consequences they might generate for them and their families.

The report notes that the existing legal framework and court adjudication process in Afghanistan provides limited options for women facing violence, with its focus on the imposition of criminal penalties on perpetrators and the absence of legal provisions available for obtaining restraint orders and civil remedies.

The role of women in peace, reconciliation, rehabilitation and nation building must not be repudiated. They must be heard by granting maximum if not equal opportunities in societal making. The upcoming government keeping his promise should take bold and immediate measures undoing all such developments eroding and restraining the capabilities of women to work for the good of society provided empowered women can effectively contribute in the development of the country.

The report also highlights women's economic dependency and the weak legal protection of their property and other rights as key factors impeding survivors of violence from taking action against abusers. For example, a woman who complains to the authorities about violence and is forced to leave the marital home that is her husband's property often has nowhere to go. Afghan authorities are continuously called to take, much greater steps to both facilitate reporting of incidents of violence against women and launch immediate investigatory cells in districts and division level facilitating the prosecution. As long as women and girls in Afghanistan are subject to violence with impunity, little meaningful and sustainable progress for women's rights can be achieved in the country. Ensuring rights for Afghan women - such as their participation in public life, including in the peace and reconciliation process and equal opportunities in education and employment - requires not only legal safeguards on paper, but critically, speedy and full enforcement of the Elimination of Violence against Women (EVAW) law.

The report recommends that the Government of Afghanistan adopt legal, institutional and policy reforms to better protect Afghan women facing violence. These include expanding the civil remedies available, strengthening the capacity of the criminal justice system to protect survivors, regulating mediation through common standards, and applying the 2009 Law on the EVAW law. The report also suggests recruiting and training staff - both women and men - to treat survivors of violence with professionalism, dignity, sensitivity and respect.

It is stressed that major crimes of violence against women must be prosecuted and adjudicated through the criminal justice process and not mediated, in accordance with Afghan laws and the country's international human rights obligations.

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