

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



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Curbing Criminalities

Currently, Afghanistan is suffering from myriads of problems and among them the rising rate of crimes is a dominant one. The persistent insecurity and instability have provided the opportunity to the criminals to take full advantage. Moreover, the prevailing circumstances – the snowballing poverty and unemployment, growing injustice and unreliable law and order system – are further pushing the people towards crimes and corruption. It is always important to see that there is a prominent link between poverty and crimes. There are many people who commit crimes only because they are not able to feed their families or they are capable of fulfilling the ever-growing necessities of life.

The important point is to realize that though poverty is one of the basic reasons of why people commit crimes, it is not the only reason. It can be observed that the criminals are mostly rich and have connections with authoritative people in the society. Moreover, there are criminals among the ruling elite and they commit huge crimes and never brought to justice.

Thus, there are different reasons behind the crimes that are committed within a society and they are not always evident to us. What is evident is the outcome of the crimes as it directly influences the people. Whether there is a murder, robbery or a kidnapping, the effect is very direct and can be felt by the victims, their relatives and other people who come across those crimes. These impacts of the crimes disturb the normal social life and may prove to be a ripple that can generate more crimes and disturbances within the society. Therefore, it is important to safeguard the society from these influences and control the crimes in the best possible manner.

Two types of strategies can be effective in this regard – short term and long term strategies. The short-term strategy is basically carried out by the law-enforcement system in the society that works through the institutions of courts and police. Law-enforcement system within a society basically works on the principle of identifying the criminals, bringing them to justice and punishing them. The countries with weaker law-enforcement systems suffer to a large extent in providing justice to the alleged criminals. Such societies also suffer from lack of providence of timely justice.

The system of courts is not very efficient. There are many cases that take many years in courts and yet remain undecided. The people who are influenced by such cases experience a complete change in their lives, which is from bad to worse and by the time they reach to justice, their lives are already destroyed. It has been also observed that the cases that belong to influential people are pursued immediately while the ones that involve the ordinary people are kept in files and they never reach to the courts.

And then there are detention centers that, in fact, do not transform the criminals into useful citizens, which is the basic philosophy of them. They, on the other hand, turn them into bigger criminals and if unfortunately, which mostly happens, there is a person who has been punished wrongfully; such a person becomes a true criminal after leaving the detention center. Unluckily, Afghanistan is one of the same types of countries that suffer from weak law-enforcement system. Though there has been much development in this regard, serious concerns still prevail and raise questions about the system.

The police force in Afghanistan is still in the preliminary stages and it really requires years of attention and support to reach to a truly professional stage. There are many areas in the country where the police do not have enough penetration and where they cannot reach to crimes and criminals. Then there are many areas wherein the people still go to traditional courts, which are dominated by religious and tribal leaders instead of going to the courts that are established by the government.

There is a great margin of tireless efforts for the improvement of detention centers as well. The basic facilities that the prisoners get are in no way enough and the environment is not very much healthy. Even within the detention centers the criminals are able to keep their communication with the outside world and are able to lead or to participate in their unlawful activities.

It is really imperative to keep in consideration that the law-enforcement system can provide short-term solution to the crimes. If a society is really interested in controlling them there should be a long-term strategy that must deal with the basic reasons of the crime and try to nip the evil in the bud. There should be efforts to work on efficient administration, better economic condition, political stability, good governance, providence of basic human rights and control of corruption. Justice should reach to all the people of the society alike and the citizens must not feel alienated from the society.

Moreover, there should not be discrimination as far as practical implementation of the criminal law is considered. Law should not serve the rich alone as is happening in many societies of the world; rather all should be treated equally in this regard.



The Growing Mistrust

By Hujjatullah Zia

Following the Friday's deadly attacks on a military base in Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghan MPs lashed out at Pakistan. The attack, which killed and wounded hundreds of Afghan soldiers, outraged the nation and officials and triggered public sensation. Terrorism has been one of the serious issues for more than a decade and a bone of contention between Kabul and Islamabad.

The Afghan-Pak officials exchanged harsh rhetoric regarding the Taliban's heavy offensives in recent years. Militancy led to strong mistrust not only between Afghanistan and Pakistan but also between state and nation.

After the February 14 attack on Lal Shahbaz Qalandar in Sehwan, which was claimed by the self-styled Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Pakistani officials alleged that the militants had organized the assault from Afghanistan's soil and showed military backlash against the country through firing missile at Nangarhar province.

The attack prompted public hatred against Pakistan although it was not responded by Kabul government that has denied the Islamabad's claim. Condemning the attack on Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, Ghani said that Afghan government had proved its honesty and commitment in fight against terrorism and added, "Honesty and the will to fight against terrorism will prevent terrorists from carrying out their subversive activities in any country."

The blame game continues with the recent attack on unarmed Afghan soldiers in Mazar-e-Sharif. This time, Afghan MPs called on Islamabad in a serious tone to stop supporting terrorism.

However, Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa condemned the attack and called terrorist a common enemy. "Our heart goes out to the victims of this terrorist attack. We express our heartfelt condolences with the bereaved families and pray for speedy recovery of the injured. Terrorism is a common enemy and a threat to peace in the region," Sharif is cited as saying. No wonder, Afghan-Pak governments are beset by escalated militancy and sustained indescribable fatalities in this regard. Streams of blood were shed in these two Islamic lands without abating militancy.

Perhaps Afghanistan bears the brunt of terrorism in Asia as France does in Europe. The blame game goes on in vain. It is self-explanatory that Afghanistan and Pakistan are blackmailed by a number of warring parties, the Taliban and the ISIL group pose the strongest threat. So, why should put the blame on each other?

It is believed that the blame game will be an obstacle on the way to cooperation. Regardless of any facts, we are

member of the UN's families and "should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood".

Before bringing the Taliban to negotiating table, which has been a hot issue within a decade or so, the Kabul and Islamabad governments will have to nurture a friendly relation and resolve their own problem. To put it another way, stop the blame game. Second, the unabated insurgency which is leading to high fatalities will widen the gap between state and nation. According to public belief, there are many challenges within the government apparatus. For instance, the MPs called on Afghan President Muhammad Ashraf Ghani to announce the remaining members of his cabinet. They further expressed concerns over violation of the Constitution.

Although Afghan defense minister Abdullah Habibi resigned following the attack, the MPs said that the problems are too challenging to be resolved with his resignation. Similarly, Shah Gul Rezayi commented that the Afghan High Peace Council (HPC) was a burden on the nation without a tangible result.

Hence, the said issues reflect the fact that there are challenges in the government machinery as well. These issues will undoubtedly make people lose their trust in the government. Lack of respect to Constitution is crystal clear. The establishment of National Unity Government (NUG) is the product of Ghani and Abdullah's political agreement and is not supported constitutionally.

In addition, the legal period of parliament was terminated long ago without announcing the date for parliamentary election. Worst of all, some ministries are still being managed by acting heads. These are the problems to be addressed instantly in such a critical state so as to bridge the gap between state and nation.

Militant fighters are always answering the call for peace at gunpoint. I strongly believe that the Taliban will never come to negotiating table especially with the ideologue figure Haibatullah at the helm. The futility of HPC in this respect is beyond doubt and should be cancelled as its founder Hamid Karzai, Afghanistan's former President, who showed great tolerance towards the Taliban said that he would no longer call the Taliban "discontented brother".

So, the point is that the Taliban are not a political party to hold talks but a terrorist group with radical ideology seeking to continue violence and bloodshed.

To sum up, Kabul and Islamabad must put an end to the blame game since its continuation will compound the mistrust and leave no room for friendly rehearsal. Meanwhile, the government has to fill the nation-state gap through putting law into practice.

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Catastrophe and its Ensuing Necessities

By Syed Asif Husaini

Performing religious ritual after a human tragedy is favorable but not enough. The emotions and offering condolence over tragedies are a general occasion that all can do, including simple individuals. Therefore, governments' mourning about human catastrophes will not cure the wounds of victims' families.

Since offering condolence cannot meet the public expectations, the nation hopes to get rid of the repeated terror. If condolence soothes the burden of pain and anguish, it will, however, never hamper the repetition of such scenarios.

The fear of the public is right. Recurrent catastrophes have increased the possibility of incidents in this land. The main reason behind the recurrence of catastrophe is the repeated errors made far from the public eye. Ignoring errors created immunity for the officials, but only the war-torn nation is unable to have immunity. In the incident of Shahin Corps, the nation's apples of the eye fell over.

This pain weighs heavily on people. When nation's fresh and fruitful trees are buried, how one can tolerate that the perpetrators are at large and ridicule the scene, this is the nation's question. People must know that on the one hand some political figures mourn over the death, but on the other hand, they are in line with perpetrators. Such political satires will darken the fate of the unfortunate people.

At least the victims' families have the right to have an exact answer after the incident. Disregarding this issue is tantamount to disrespecting those families. The catastrophe of the Protection of the Prominent Figures Department, the bloody incident of Deh-Mazang and the massacre in Sardar Dawud Khan Hospital aligned the nation against the common enemy but the mystery over investigating the issues damaged the government's status in the public mind.

Enemies capitalize on this condition – sometimes the state has unintentionally smoothed the path for foes.

The government has to either answer to the nation or acknowledge its negligence. Lack of a persuading answer to people is failure. Such presumptions have made the nation lose trust in government's commitment made for investigating the Shahin incident.

The last year incident of Protection of the Prominent Figures Department occurred at the same time but President's commitment to nation in a hot speech was futile. A series of more catastrophes took place and the enemies inflicted heavy casualties upon the nation.

The National Unity Government (NUG) will have to take serious step and fulfill its commitment so as to gain pub-

lic trust, which is the only asset for the NUG and should not put it on auction. In brief, answering to nation will be the only way to gain trust.

Public opinion has clear demands from the state as the media explained them for long. But all have fallen on deaf ears.

It is surprising to notice that the nation's fate depends on defining a single word. To put it another way, the oppressed nation asks for the definition of "friend" and "foe", yet the government has evaded the question.

Despite all the sufferings inflicted upon nation from certain enemy, the past and present administrations beat around the bush. The officials use unclear words while offering condolence and call the sworn enemy "brother" or simply "opponent".

It should be noted that the people's silence does not necessarily mean that they do not keep these words into memory. Reminding these inappropriate words are an insult to the injury.

This honorable nation does not deserve pain and sufferings, but there is no ear to listen. Following the recent terrorist attack, the public demand is clear and the state has to respond.

The public ask the government for declaring the Taliban a certain and sworn enemy rather than folding them in the veil of opponent or Islamic State (Daesh).

The true demand of Afghan nation is that the authorities should no more use the military and security institutions as vehicle for political haggling regarding peace talks and do not distribute the power on the basis of spate of casualties.

Political distribution of power will pose a threat to meritocracy. The government should not marginalize the military experts and employ people based on their merit. The nation will rely in the administration if the government explains the result of investigation over the recent attack and assault on Sardar Daud Khan Hospital through media and prosecute the perpetrators.

Disrespecting the victims' families will fill them with anger. Those who express anger regarding the attacks, by devoted soldiers, against the enemy and keep silent over the terrorist attacks must no more have the opportunity for such bold actions.

To sum up, strong and sustainable battles against the enemy are Afghans' fundamental demands and the NUG should declare the Taliban a certain enemy. Now the government has gone through a serious ordeal and selecting the wrong choice will lead to irreparable harm.

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