

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



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## Measures to Curb the Menace of Drugs

Life is, without a doubt, a miracle. One has to reach to this conclusion after going through its mysteries and excellence. Life is not how it is defined; rather, it is how it is lived. The living of life gives it a meaning. Human beings are not born with particular meanings for their lives, they have to discover them, search for them and ultimately depict and disseminate them through attitude and behavior. Destinations are not pre-determined; they are carved, discovered and strived for. The experiences, behaviors, thoughts, dealings and different and often contrasting approaches embellish human lives with significance, with a worth and with a connotation. And, great are those who fight for life; for its dignity and for its significance; those who tell the human not to waste it and be counted among the responsible members of the community. Not those who make life a misery and make human beings suffer.

After mentioning the indispensability and primness of life, it should not go unmentioned that the menace like drugs that devalue the life and make human beings crawl like insects, instead of rising like a real human must be spurned and proper measures must be carried out to uproot them from our society in their entirety.

The preventive measures to stop the use of drugs should be two-fold. First, the measures must be carried out to discourage its spread and use; means the objective should be to stop producing new addicts. Strict legal measures must be carried out to discourage the smuggling of drugs and its business. The convenient availability of different types of drugs makes many addicts each year. Even if a very young child goes to buy a packet of cigarette from any shop in the country; he will not return empty-handed. It is just a small example, even the most harmful of the drugs are available with greatest of the ease. On the other hand, there are people who are so unfortunate and incognizant of the negative use of them that they use them as medicine. Their incapacity to have approach to the normal medicine, they try to find cure in the only drug they have easily and cheaply available. By the time they are cured from their diseases, they are caught in the cruel web of addiction to the drugs. With such a scenario at hand, it is really a Herculean task to stop the people becoming addict. In fact, the drug smuggling and its availability in every corner of the country is linked with the organized crime in the entire region and even international mafia. Most of the funding for the organized crime in the country is obtained from the filthy business of drugs. Unfortunately, the law and order system is not strong enough to take serious action against them. More unfortunate is the fact that there are culprits from within the government authorities who are involved in invigorating this grimy business and make the people addicted to this menace, instead of playing a role in eradicating it entirely. All these factors must be taken care of by the government authorities and relevant agencies and a comprehensive movement should be launched to counter this menace.

The second phase of the preventive campaign should involve the treatment of the addicts and availability of pleasant environment to them so that they should avoid using drugs and return to positive living. In this regard the establishment of the medical and rehabilitation centers can play a key role. Well-developed and properly managed hospitals and rehabilitation centers for the addicts can really bring back the addicts from the alleys of the darkness to the horizons of the illumination. It is hapless to mention that the number of such centers is insufficient in our country. There are only few such centers in the urban areas while most of the people, who are addicted to drugs, do not have access to such opportunities. It should also be mentioned that the ones that are present are not equipped with latest technology, medicine and techniques and on most of the occasions they depend on violence as their only tool to cure the patients. The patients after such treatment, instead of becoming a positive member of society, are further pushed towards addiction and crimes. So, the important thing is that the centers that are established to treat the victims of drugs addiction must not only be equipped with latest technology and techniques, but also well-trained and affectionate doctors and caretakers. The suggested measures can really play a role in discouraging the use of drugs; nevertheless, they are short-term. For a considerable reduction in the use of this menace, it is vital that better living conditions must be provided to the people as most of the people become addicted because of their poor socio-economic circumstance. In addition, the production and smuggling of the drugs should be banned as much as possible through a trust-worthy and strong law and order system. Shortly, it is important that the rule of law should be maintained throughout the country. Moreover, awareness campaigns must be launched in different parts of country that can spread awareness about the ferocity of this hazard and that has the capacity to generate intense hatred against it and inculcate within the minds of our people the dignity of life and its importance.



# Furnishing Youth with Contemporary Resources

By Asmatyari

Childhood is the most innocent stage in a human life. It can be classified into early teen and late teenage -those in their late teens are said youth and early teens are called children. Both of them are rich asset of a nation. It is that phase of life where a child is free from all the tensions, fun-loving, play and learns new things, and is the sweetheart of all the family members. But this is only one side of the story. The other side is full of tensions and burdens. Here, the innocent child is not the sweetheart of the family members; instead he is an earning machine working the entire day in order to satisfy the needs and wants of his/her family and eventually resulting in child labor.

Child labor is one of the biggest challenges that the whole world is facing now. Child labor includes working children who are below a certain minimum age. This practice is going on since long and is one of the worst forms of child exploitation. Child labor not only causes damage to a child's physical and mental health but also keep him deprive of his basic rights to education, development and freedom. According to statistics provided by UNICEF, there are an estimated 250 million children aged 5 to 14 years employed in child labor worldwide and this figure is continuously increasing.

This evil is not only affecting under-developed and developing countries, but developed countries are also facing this though the rate is comparatively very less. Child labor in Asia accounts for the highest percentage of child labor (61%) followed by Africa (32%). According to International Labor Organization (ILO), if child labor will be banned and all children get proper education, world's total income would be raised by nearly 22% over 20 years, which accounts for more than \$4 trillion. Banning child labor will help in boosting the economy of a country.

Child labor victims in Afghanistan mostly work in illegal remote mines and other sources for at least 12 hours a day since mining a major source of income for poor families, they then force their children into it for money, food and other things. Child labour is an issue of growing concern in Afghanistan. According to recent estimates, one in four Afghan children aged seven to 14 is engaged in some form of work. This data explores why children in Afghanistan work, focusing specifically on factors that influence decision-making at the household level. Drawing on findings from an in-depth, qualitative study of poor households that use child labour as well as those that do not, this paper looks beyond poverty to explore the range of social and cultural factors in household decision-making about child labour and considers their implications for policy.

The findings were drawn from interviews with 33 poor households in both urban and rural settings Kabul province, including Kabul city and a peri-urban community in Paghman; Herat

province, including Herat city and a community near the Islam Qala border with Iran; and a rural village in Badakhshan province. In addition, researchers consulted stakeholders from the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, and Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD), national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and United Nations agencies in developing policy and programme recommendations. The decision to send children to work is influenced by a combination of factors. Poverty is an obvious contextual factor that dominates the decision-making of all households in the study. In addition, household composition and gender norms affect the availability of labour resources, which can result in the need to send children to work.

It is a great national wastage if these energetic hands and brains are not provided with some sort of work to meet the needs of the nation. What is needed is that they should be taken into confidence and given a direction - some constructive work. This massive manpower can do wonders provided its enthusiasm is harnessed for development work. Afghanistan youth have never lagged behind when called upon to meet a challenge. It is for the national leaders to play their part by mobilizing their abilities and providing them with a direction instead of letting them at the reach of extremist elements.

There can be a large number of schemes, projects and programs wherein their total involvement will bring quicker and better results. They can play a pivotal role in the socio-economic regeneration of the society. There are many evil practices in our society. If the youth is associated in a drive against these practices, the results may be much more satisfactory. There may be schemes connected with the raising of the level of production in agriculture. The youth may be assigned the job of dissemination of knowledge for better farming, new techniques and proper use of fertilizers and pesticides. What is required is that they may be given adequate training in these tasks. In a drive against economic offences, their energy may be used in molding public opinion in favor of eradication and prevention of such offences. The youth may work successfully as an arm of the administration in the implementation of governmental programs aimed at fighting against these and other maladies.

Another field wherein their energy may be gainfully employed is the task of adult education and universalisation of education. Being given a little dose of incentive encouragement and support, they may take over the great responsibility of fulfilling the targets fixed by the government. Their services may similarly be utilized for preventing and fighting offences like smuggling, black-marketing and hoarding. They can at least create public opinion against those who indulge in such unfair practices. However, in order for continuous success to take place; it is the Government's responsibility to provide the youth with proper facilities for, getting equipped with the knowledge of the modern era.

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## Fundamentalism

By Dilawar Sharzai

There are different ways of perceiving a religion, or it would be better to say that there are different degrees of perceiving a religion. There are people who strictly adhere to the basic teachings of religion and are reluctant to make any compromise regarding even the slightest deviations from those teachings. The people with strict adherence for the particular fundamental teachings of the religions can be termed as fundamentalists and the act as a whole can be called as fundamentalism. Fundamentalism is basically a reaction against the changes that are intended to be brought in the basic teachings of a religion. In fact fundamentalism can not be limited to a particular religion; rather it has been used for different religions.

These terms have been used for describing different movements and inclinations in the religions mentioned. Modernist theologians and thinkers believe that the term fundamentalism has a pejorative sense and consider it responsible for different sorts of extremist movements and even terrorist ambitions. Currently, the term fundamentalism like the term terrorism has been dominantly linked with Islam, but in reality it is not necessary that there is fundamentalism in Islam alone.

Sociologists of religion, like Tex Sample, consider fundamentalism as an attitude rather than outcome of religious teachings. It is the way the religions are perceived that develops fundamentalism. If the attitude is narrow and strict, the beliefs regarding any religion may turn into fundamentalism; therefore, it is not suitable to fix fundamentalism for any of the religions - Christianity, Islam, Hinduism or any other religion. Howard Thurman was interviewed in the late 1970's for a BBC feature on religion. He told the interviewer, "I say that creeds, dogmas, and theologies are inventions of the mind. It is the nature of the mind to make sense out of experience, to reduce the conglomerates of experience to units of comprehension which we call principles, or ideologies, or concepts. Religious experience is dynamic, fluid, effervescent, and yeasty. But the mind can not handle these so it has to imprison religious experience in some way, get it bottled up. Then, when the experience quiets down, the mind draws a bead on it and extracts concepts, notions, dogmas, so that religious experience can make sense to the mind. Meanwhile religious experience goes on experiencing, so that by the time I get my dogma stated so that I can think about it, the religious experience becomes an object of thought."

It is really weird to note that there is term like Atheist Fundamentalism, which is basically used to mean strict adherence to the principles of Atheism - a religion-less ideology. However, the term used in this article would mean religious fundamentalism. Fundamentalism, in certain phases of history has taken the form of movements, basically initiated by the changes that

are introduced in the religions or that are strived to be included in the religious principles by the modernists. The fundamentalists, fearing changes in the basic principles of the religions have always launched opposing movements. Most of the religions of the world have a large degree of sanctity attached with their basic beliefs, sacred books and teachings of their prophets, therefore, changes in the ideas regarding them are not welcomed at all.

In Christianity the term fundamentalism rose as a movement in the United States in late 19th century and earlier 20th century. The movement was basically launched by the conservative theologians to safeguard Christianity from modern criticism and changes. The term fundamentalism got famous because of the collection of twelve books, "The Fundamentals" on five subjects regarding Christianity funded by the brothers Milton and Lyman Stewart. The collection proved to be the representative of "Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy". Afterwards the term kept on being used for the tendency to oppose modernist ideas regarding the Christian beliefs.

The term fundamentalism has been used for Islam in different ways. The term has been used to talk about the radical elements and movements.

Afghanistan has been one of the countries that have been largely dominated by fundamentalism. The fundamentalism in Afghanistan was inculcated in Afghanistan by Taliban. Opposing every sort of compromise in the fundamental teachings of their version of Islam, Taliban have always demanded total adherence to the teachings that were true hundred of years earlier. Afghanistan during their rule resembled a country in 6th and 7th century and was totally cutoff from modern trends. Even the people's way of living and their clothing were emphasized to be old fashioned. Women, in this regard had to suffer much. As they were asked to observer complete hijab, it was not uncommon to find patrolling Taliban beating women with stick on as slight a divergence as an unintentional display of naked feet. There were incidents when women were publicly stoned and even shot because of having relations with men out of their family members. Besides, there were restrictions on modern education and the use of modern inventions as well. There were occasions when television sets were destroyed and hung on the electrical wires and posts to show that there was no place for addition even in the material aspect of the Taliban version of Islam. There were many such incidents and beliefs that can be considered nothing else except pure fundamentalism, which proved detrimental for Afghan society and had made it suffocate in the tight circle of bondages and restrictions.

Fundamentalism is a concept that has to be condemned in its every form. It is against the natural growth of human mind and human society as it considers human life stagnant and tries to keep it intact.

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