

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



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## Unemployment Needs Serious Attention

Afghanistan is facing different sorts of problems simultaneously; among these problems, unemployment is a dominant one and it is also causing many other problems as well. The people are getting frustrated with each passing day because of lack of employment opportunities and they are compelled to seek illegal ways for earning livelihood. They have been showing their concerns as well but there is no one to listen to them seriously and solve their issues.

Though people belonging to almost all walks of life face the evil of unemployment, the laborers are the ones who are influenced to a large extent by it. Their earnings are made on daily basis; therefore, if they find no work, they, along with their families, will have to remain hungry and deprived of many other basic requirements of life. They are not part of any particular union or organization that can guarantee consistent support for them; therefore, all they depend on is the daily opportunities that they get. Unfortunately, that seem to be decreasing as well.

A recent report by Pajhwok Afghan News shows that a number of laborers in capital Kabul complain that joblessness has increased during the past two years and they are unable to find work for a week in a month. The joblessness has forced them into borrowing money from friends, the daily wagers say, lashing out at the government for failing to generate jobs and honor promises. Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD) spokesman Abdul Fatah Eshrat Ahmadzai also agree that joblessness had increased in Afghanistan over the past two years. He said joblessness surged after foreign forces' withdrew from Afghanistan and international aid reduced. However, Ahmadzai said the government had recently increased construction projects that would gradually reduce the unemployment graph. He said the labor ministry had launched a program to train and professionalize workers in order to reduce joblessness. A number of youth would also be sent to foreign countries by the ministry to learn new techniques and vocational skills. The government needs to understand that unemployment is one of the most serious issues in a society. It is because of the unemployment that the valuable human resource within a society is not brought to use or it is mostly used for negative purposes and therefore results into disorder and disturbance instead of being used for development and prosperity. It is said that an idle mind is devil's workshop; therefore, the people who are unemployed do not get the chance of bringing their minds and their skills to work; therefore, they are used elsewhere - mostly somewhere where they can find any sort of opportunity without the thought of considering the negative and positive aspects or the concept of right and wrong. Though most of the countries in the world today face the issue of unemployment, the underdeveloped and the developing countries suffer from this menace to a large extent. As, the basic infrastructures in such countries are not developed and they lag behind in the process of industrialization, they are not able to create ample financial and developmental opportunities; therefore, new jobs are not created, which generates challenges for the authorities to compensate the ever-increasing population. The number of the capable people who have required qualifications and can work increases but the society and systems cannot compensate for them appropriately and, therefore, they become a part of the detestable unemployment. It is not only because of the lag in the industrial revolution but unemployment has also to do with lack of determined and honest efforts to create job opportunities for the people. The agricultural societies, though may not be on the top regarding the industrial development, can also play a great role in creating opportunities for the qualified people. Some of the developing societies in this regard have taken some great initiatives and they have been successful as well. Therefore, it is also important that there should be determined and honest efforts to create new and innovative opportunities so that more and more of the human resource can be brought to work. Afghanistan needs to take the issue of unemployment seriously. Though insecurity and terrorism are important, the most important issue being faced by the country today is poverty and unemployment. There are direct links between the insecurity and unemployment, which are neglected altogether. Unfortunately, behind the hyped news of terrorism, the issue of unemployment has become less important. However, it deserves as much attention as the growing insecurity and terrorism and even more than that. This issue should be dealt immediately by authorities because it is becoming as the root of many other social issues in the country. The social problems like insecurity, immigration, drug addiction and crimes are mainly because of unemployment. If there are people who deserve to be working somewhere but are not provided the opportunity, there is huge likelihood that they will opt to join the ranks of the terrorists, become drug addicts and commit crimes or plan to migrate. Therefore, the Afghan government must deal with this problem on top priority basis. The issue of unemployment is more dangerous and urgent than the issue of insecurity and terrorism. Having solved this issue, Afghan government would be a huge step closer to solving the issue of terrorism and insecurity.

## Violence Against Women

By Hujjatullah Zia

The persistent violence against Afghan women unfolds the patriarchal system and traditional beliefs practiced widely in individual and collective life. They have been discriminated on the grounds of their sex and suffered mental and physical tortures in one way or another, which root in wrong notions and have no religious or legal basis. What is more, they have constantly found themselves confined within cultural restrictions and ideological dogmatism.

A large number of Afghan women, mainly those who live in villages, are unable to unleash their feelings or raise their voice against painful tortures being inflicted upon them. Patriarchal system, which is deeply embedded in our culture and traditions, has curtailed women's freedom as well as their cultural and political activities. The restrictive norms and traditional folklores put the rights and liberty of Afghan women at stake. In Afghanistan, mainly in remote areas, it will be indecent of a woman to file against her spouse for his violent behavior. In sum, women are still being treated as a pariah in some parts of the country.

It is self-explanatory that Afghan women bore the brunt of violence during the Taliban's regime - the memory still haunts them. The Taliban's chauvinistic practices and harsh ideology took their toll on women's rights and liberty. Women were deemed not only an inferior creature but also a tool for satiating men's carnal desire.

The women who broke the Talibanic taboo every once in a while, out of courage and bravery, were flagellated in desert courts in public and some were disposed of in the worst possible way. The publicly physical torture, which was highly degrading for them, put an adverse effect on the minds of the viewers and triggered a sense of disgust and hatred among them. The Taliban's arbitrary code was void of religious values and moral standards. Being plunged into painful sufferings, women had no options other than invoking the Lord for having their rights and dignity protected.

The Taliban fighters persisted in their militancy after the downfall of their regime as well. They sprayed corrosive acid on the faces of schoolgirls, targeted female MPs, teachers and police. The infinitesimal changes in villages forced a large proportion of female teachers and police to abandon their jobs.

Indeed, the establishment of democratic administration was not a panacea for the bleeding wounds of Afghan women since the Taliban depleted our social values through implanting dogmatic ideology in the minds of some individuals and continuing their insurgency.

Moreover, they ushered in indiscriminate killings of men and women in public places. In a suicide attack on the streets, you

would be taken aback to see the streams of blood seeping from women's wounds into the ground - such horrific episodes put a negative psychic impact on the public, especially on women and their activities shrank to a great extent.

Within the two past years, the Taliban have intensified their attacks against Afghan nation and the graph of civilian casualties, including women, have increased exponentially. In other words, warring factions have maximized their offensives - which will put the life and liberty of Afghan women at greater stake - rather than giving up their catastrophic acts of horror and terror. To put it succinctly, since the Taliban insurgents are restricting women's social and political activities, through spilling their blood, they are still considered a paradigm of evil. Besides combating terrorism, there is a great need for amending cultural values. Our culture should be based on moral standards and national and international laws. The violent practices in tribal belts have no legal basis. They trample upon women's fundamental rights - rights to life, liberty and property - with impunity. In other words, the lurid reports about women in tribal areas make the headlines, frequently, on national media. Although Afghan women have sacrificed their lives to obtain freedom, it remained no more than a phantom in their minds and their selfless sacrifices did not bear the desired fruit. Constitutionally, there is no prejudice against women on the basis of their sex and their rights and dignity should be respected and protected the same as men's. Afghanistan's Constitution states in article 22 as, "Any kind of discrimination and distinction between citizens of Afghanistan shall be forbidden. The citizens of Afghanistan, man and woman, have equal rights and duties before the law."

Similarly, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), to which Afghanistan is committed to observe, declares, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." So, the government will have to empower women and uphold their rights and liberty through implementing law. It is believed that Afghan women are not able to break the traditional taboos by their actions, which are embedded deeply in our society and will be ensued by death or reputational damage, but through raising their voice against violent practices. In addition, the civil society activists and the Human Rights' Independent Commission are supposed to be the de facto advocates of women's rights. Hence, Afghan women need a stable structure to exercise their inherent rights with a peace of mind. It is hoped that the state will evolve legal and democratic structure so as to protect women's rights and dignity.

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## Thieves of Time

By Mohammad Zahir Akbari

Social media networks are recognized the biggest wasters of time in civilization history of mankind. In fact, they are the termite-like thieves which vitiate the most valuable asset and energy of young generation. Unfortunately, these thieves vastly have penetrated to everywhere including Afghanistan: homes, government and non-government offices, cultural centers, security bases but most addictively in schools and universities. Overall, more than two million people are steeped in using face-book and twitter in Afghanistan. As soon as the early morning students get up, they give priority to using face-book; even though the official work left on the table personnel prefer to satiate their addiction using Facebook. In addition, public media such as national and international T.V channel broadcasts violence and time-killing movies which has destructive social and psychological effect on children. If someone loses his monetary property, it possible to compensate but when he waste his time it is not possible to restore. Time is always flowing and keeps on moving. What was yesterday is not today. What is today will not be tomorrow.

On the other hand, it is important to differentiate between positive blessing of new technologies and recognition of addictive thieves of time. If anybody wastes his childhood in face-book, he will not be able to acquire and build up character in future and will suffer all consequences. Similarly, if a student neglects his studies from day-to-day, no amount of hard labor before the examination will get him deeply through. It is true, that the tears that shed after each failure, is the sweat that is not shed for the victory. Time management skill is very important to be promoted in today's competitive life; building a good habit lays the foundation of a success in future. "Time is the pivot of life activities. When you miss a second, you miss a time in your lifetime! Time is undoubtedly the greatest asset one can ever acquire. The ultimate and real time is in the mind. Time is thought and thought is time. To mind your time, mind your thought! To mind your life, mind your time!" - Ernest Agyemang Yeboah

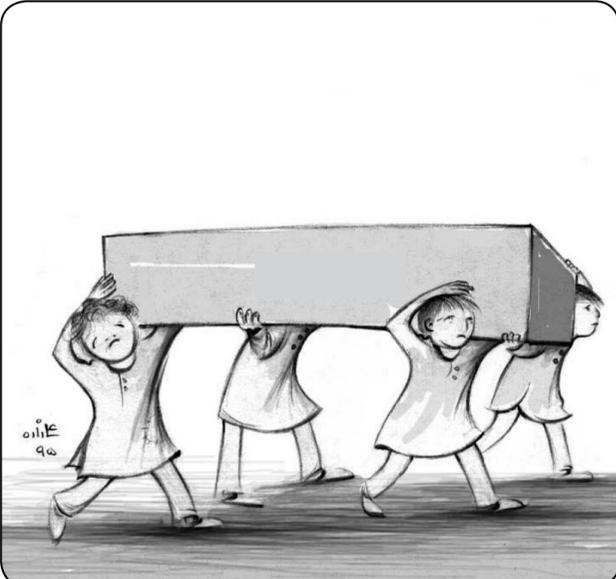
Social media networks need to be banned from being used in schools, universities, places of work and even go so far as to say it's illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to use social media or texting devices. Why?

These are habit forming years and to create an impression that these social media outlets are a part of healthy living is ridiculous. Those are the years when children should be actively reading, exercising and socializing in person [NOT over the computer or texting device]. In fact, the aforementioned software and technology devices are arguably the biggest time wasting ideas ever to hit the market. Unfortunately what It would like will not happen, since

the sheer popularity and so called necessity, not to mention profit margins override common sense and healthy living choices. It is commonly seen that pre-teens, teens and young adults whip out their phones to 'appear' important or busy. You can bet the same people lie in bed at night texting away or playing with their phones, sacrificing productive activities people their age used to participate in such as reading a good book, game or a productive activities but it's not happening; unfortunately it leads to a lazy, poor and consumer generation.

Finally, time is the most valuable resources of humankind. Those who do not care about time can never achieve their goals and those who do not have a specific goal cannot manage their time. There are some skills and individual strategies suggested for purposeful people: (1) create a daily plan, Take the first 30 minutes of every day to plan your day. Don't start your day until you complete your time plan. The most important time of the day to schedule time. By failing to prepare your plan, you are preparing to fail yourself. "Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe." - Abraham Lincoln. (2) Cultivate a personal thinker habit, take a few minutes to think before every idea you express, before every phone call you make, and before every task to decide so as to answer yourself what result you want to attain. This will help you know what success looks like before you start to reach. And it will also slow time down. Take five minutes after activity to determine whether your desired result was achieved. If not, what was missing? How do you put what's missing in your next call or activity? (3) put up a "Do not disturb" sign when you absolutely have to get work done. (4) Practice not to use face-book/tweeter/emails and mobile phones just because you have access to it or have free package credit in you mobile. Instead, schedule a time to use facebook, answer email and make phone calls if there is a certain need. (5) Peg a time limit to each task. Be clear that you need to finish X task by 10am, Y task by 3pm, and Z item by 5:30pm. This prevents your work from dragging on and eating into time reserved for other activities. (6) Learn to say "No". Don't take on more than you can handle. For the distractions that come in when you're doing other things, give a firm no. Or defer it to a later period. (7) Target to be early. When you target to be on time, you'll either be on time or late. Most of the times you'll be late. However, if you target to be early, you'll most likely be on time. For appointments, strive to be early. For your deadlines, submit them earlier than required. (8) Prioritize. Since you can't do everything, learn to prioritize the important and let go of the rest. Apply the 80/20 principle which is a key principle in prioritization. If you don't know this principle read relevant books or google it because it is the most

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