

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



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History Was Cruel to Afghan Nation

The deadly episode in Afghanistan's history reveals the ugly face of some despotic regimes who ruled under the mask of religion. Afghans' rights to life, liberty and estate were violated on the grounds of their caste, color and creed and the political figures, who were accommodated in courts, played the role of fox and wolf and betrayed their nation. The violent practices of the kings and their men, with few exceptions, led to great destructions and large casualties across the country.

The regime of Muhammad Nadir Shah, who succeeded Habibullah Kalakani through insurgency, was initiated with bloodshed. He made a written vow to Kalakani not to kill him and his dedicated men, but soon after his presence, Nadir Shah had him shot along with his men. Shah is said to pay tribute to Abdul Rahman's tomb and stated that he, pointing to his tomb, was the king who knew the people well and controlled them appropriately - this uncovered his policy and the public believed that he would follow Abdul Rahman's footsteps.

With the establishment of Nadir Shah's regime, the reformation and democratic movements of King Amanullah Khan were proved abortive and freedom fighters, liberalists and the Kabul intellectuals (members of Afghan youths' Party) - including Shah Abdul Rahman Khan Lodi, Taj Mohammad Khan Paghmani, Faiz Mohammad Khan Barut Saz, Mohammad Wali Khan, etc. - were executed without an iota of mercy. To justify his acts of cruelty, Nadir Shah solicited religious decree from the so-called clergy to state the infidelity or insurgency of his political opponents and those who posed threat to his reign.

Nadir Shah also terminated the penal code approved during Amanullah's regime, which restricted the authority of judges. Under Shah's regime, a large number of people were punished in the worst possible way without standing trial. Torture, mutilation, chaining, dangling one upside down, using foul language, etc. were revived again after being banned by Amanullah. In a nutshell, Shah followed the very steps of Abdul Rahman and exercised his violent policy.

In case of any backlash from the public, Nadir Shah, stoked racial issues and channeled the public attention to sectarianism. Therefore, he spilt the blood of people on the grounds of their race, color and creed and mobilized an ethnic group against the other - this policy sparked tension among the ethnic groups and led to bloody skirmishes. Similarly, following the massacre of individuals, he proclaimed them "insurgent" resorted to militancy against his caliphate and solicited the approval of some individuals who introduced themselves clergy. So, Afghan nation - who fought bloody battles against the British Empire and gained victory at the cost of millions of lives - were butchered under an Afghan king. More painful tragedy is when despotic kings rule a country under the term of religion and claim that they will protect religious tenets and national values through their sultanates/caliphates and introduce themselves religious caliphs. In other words, the sacred term of religion has been constantly used as vehicle for political interests throughout the world, in Islamic and non-Islamic societies. Currently, the insurgent groups, including al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and IS group resort to terror and violence under the mask of religion whereas their fundamental ideologies are against religious instructions and void of moral standards.

Under Nadir Shah, female schools were closed and Kabul Women Council and Ershad Neswan (women guidance) Journal were ended. Afghan women were supposed to wear burqa and were restricted within the four walls. Moreover, primary and secondary schools were closed and some dictator instructors were employed, in symbolic high schools in Kabul, to torture and demoralize the students. Lately, some primary schools were established, though, where unqualified teachers taught. Freedoms of the public, mainly freedom of speech, were curtailed and non-governmental newspapers were ended. Governmental newspapers had to praise the officials and were not allowed to state a single word not only against the regime but also against the British Empire. Those who crossed the red line, determined by regime, were tortured severely.

The honor of epic wars against the British Empire and great sacrifices made to protect religious values, ethical code and national norms, eroded and the nation suffered painfully under Shah's regime. Moreover, the progressive movements of Amanullah came to a standstill and education, economy and culture declined immensely. The flagrant violation of rights and liberty and the regime's violent practices were a slap in the face of democracy and a tragedy for the nation.

Needless to say, Afghanistan has left bloody incidents behind under different regimes and fought for their rights and freedom - the greatest harm they sustained was by the sinister regimes that ruled despotically under friendly mask and shed crocodile tears for the nation. They always justified their cruelty through sympathetic remarks. For instance, the Taliban regime that occupied the country via religious rhetoric played a highly destructive role in the country and massacred a large number of men, women and children in the worst possible way.

Now, it is the government to heal the bleeding wounds of nation through protecting their rights and liberty and combating insurgency and terrorism. Afghan officials should uphold the nascent democracy and form a civil society void of violence and carnage.



Factual Dose of Solution to the Intensified Insecurity Situation in Afghanistan

By: Mohammad Zahir Akbari

Undoubtedly, the terrorist activities have intensified in different parts of the country, especially in Kabul where three deadly incidents happened within a month including attacks on Amrullah Saleh office, attacks on sixth district and the latest attack on Dubai wedding hall on Faiz Mohammad Kateb Road. Other example is Nangar province where nearly ten successive attacks occurred on the Independence Day which caused dozens of casualties in a single day. In Kabul, over 400 people killed or wounded as a result of the three attacks. According to the United Nations Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), in the first six months of 2019, 1666 civilians were killed and 2446 were injured but the civilian deaths has increased by 27% compared to the first quarter of the same year.

In spite of rising casualties in the country, no factual solutions are tabled by our writers and thinkers to overcome the growing issue. Instead of contributing to our government and security forces, we try to use our emotion and anger which negatively impact on our national solidarity. Therefore, this article is going to propose some specific solutions comprising political solution and security solution. In political solution it is enough to say that sustainable peace is not possible in Afghanistan unless essentially tackle the internal and external factors of war in the country.

In terms of none political solutions, there are multiple administrative and technical gaps which let the terrorist groups easily penetrate into community and security system in the country. The first gap is accessibility to unregistered SIM Cards and internet in the country. This issue is not only coordinating the terrorist activities but also the criminal activities; in some secure countries, no one can access internet system unless the system automatically verifies identity code of users for security reason. Unfortunately, here every types of criminal activity are possible because the professional criminal can easily erase its footprint due to lack of functional security system in the country.

The second gap is lack uncontrolled highways and byways into cities, especially Kabul city. There are several highways and about one hundred byways to Kabul city without any screening facilities. Given the large population of Kabul capital city, each hour thousands of small and large vehicles are entering and exiting while security check is not possible due to lack of screening facilities and well-trained dogs. As aforementioned, there are around one hundred byways into Kabul city without any serious security surveillance. Therefore, if each day only one terrorist comes through each byway, Kabul will host a hundred terrorist per day.

The third issue is availability of chemical fertilizer everywhere in the country. Most often terrorists used it for making sticky bombs and car bombs while its basic material is accessible everywhere in the country. As it has dual use, we need to distribute it accordance with specific requirements from certain address to certain registered farmers. Otherwise, the terrorists groups need not to trouble themselves

carrying explosive from outside while it is legally accessible inside. The fourth issue is the weakness and limitedness of national security directorate. Given the complexity and nature of Afghan war and security experiences of world countries, the National Security Directorate should be changed to Ministry of National Security or various layers of security group need to be created both horizontally and vertically. As everyone is confident about inability of the current national security directorate, we need to expand the national security directorate both qualitatively and quantitatively. Instead, the unimportant ministries or departments can be eliminated due to fiscal limitation.

The fifth issue is lack of Special Forces against suicide and terrorist attackers; sometimes the usual police go fighting against the well-trained suicide attackers while it needs certain expertise and equipments. It is better to establish special security unit within the Ministry of Interior or Ministry of Defense and train them to combat terrorist and suicide attackers in a professional way. Moreover, this unit needs to be equipped according to the nature and characteristics of the suicide war.

The sixth issue is lack of serious regulation in regard to the social gatherings. In some advanced countries, no more than 50/40 people are legally allowed to get together without supervision of security forces or without contribution of permitted private security company. Otherwise, the public gatherings can be easy target for terrorist groups in Afghanistan.

The seventh issue is widespread misuse from Afghan Identity card (Tazakera) as When an Afghan born or lives abroad for a long time, not only his / her beliefs, mentality and personality change towards the country but also his or her citizenship, commitment, and loyalty may change. He/she might become a member of foreign intelligence network but he easily obtains Tazkera without any serious security check and then easily occupies key posts which are very dangerous. The solution, as in many other countries, the Afghan Tazkera must be expire-able or renewable after each five years. Anyone who lives in a foreign country for a long period of time or when his Tazkera expire it should be subject to security checks and not allowed to work in the sensitive positions.

The last issues are lack of rule of law in the country, especially against terrorists and professional criminals. The owners of this pen believe that we need to have specific law against terrorists, genocide, drug traffickers, kidnappers and other professional criminals. These types of criminals must not be forgiven if we wish to improve the security in our country. In addition, there are some other gaps which already debated in local media such as corruptions, misuse from police uniform, black glass cars, misuses from motor bike, illegal weapons, monitor from religious seminaries and the issue of fifth column inside the system.

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Will Democracy Die Last?

By: Dominique Moisi

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, prominent international relations experts such as the late French political philosopher Pierre Hassner argued that the world was witnessing a process of competitive decay between the United States and the Soviet Union. For the latter, the conflict in Afghanistan was about to become an even costlier failure than the Vietnam war had been for America. By 1989, the verdict was clear: The Soviet Union had atrophied much faster than the US, and its empire collapsed, the victim of its own errors and contradictions.

Today, the concept of competitive decay of ideological and political models seems to be relevant once again. In a recent interview with the Financial Times, Russian President Vladimir Putin declared that the liberal democratic ideal had become "obsolete." Yet the crowds of protesters demonstrating in the streets of Moscow and, much more spectacularly, Hong Kong, suggest that the authoritarian model has plenty of problems of its own.

True, worried democrats now fear that the world has entered a third, darker phase of its postwar history. The first phase, from 1945 until 1989, was dominated by the Cold War. The second, between 1990 and 2016, represented a fragile victory for liberal democratic regimes. But now, the argument goes, the world is in a new, dangerous populist era that began with the victory of the Brexiters in the United Kingdom and the election of President Donald Trump in the US.

Yet this interpretation may reflect the current general mood of pessimism and resignation as much as objective reality. Populism itself is currently under attack in several Central European countries, including the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Romania. And in France, President Emmanuel Macron is defending the classical liberal democratic model far more robustly than many of his critics had expected.

Reports of the demise of democracy and freedom, and the victory of populism and authoritarianism, are thus premature. If anything, the longing for freedom and democracy is on the rise. This suggests that reason has not yet been crushed by negative emotions.

Thus, the age-old question remains: which model - democracy or autocracy - is more vulnerable? The outcome is not predetermined, and will of course depend on political personalities, events, and cultures.

In that regard, the 2020 US presidential election could prove crucial. Moreover, uncertainty regarding the outcome is greater than it

was before the past two elections. Rightly, few people thought that Barack Obama would lose in 2012. And, wrongly, few thought that Trump would win in 2016. The 2020 race, by contrast, looks wide open.

After getting it so wrong in 2016, most commentators, including me, are trying to be more cautious this time. Yet significant segments of the global financial and economic elite seem to think that unless the US falls into recession in the coming months, Trump will be re-elected. Moreover, their prognosis is not only based on a fear of being wrong again; many seem resigned to such a result, and some may even be hoping for it.

At this point, the comparison with the 1930s inevitably comes to mind. Of course, Trump and Adolf Hitler have little in common. But in their apparent acceptance of Trump's re-election, large parts of the liberal establishment are behaving like Germany's financial and industrial elites when Hitler rose to power in the 1930s. Back then, German bankers and bosses deluded themselves into thinking that they could control their country's vulgar new chancellor. And they were convinced that, despite Hitler's strange behavior and appearance, he remained the best defense against communism. Sadly, many of today's elites seem to have learned nothing from history, and think and act as if interests and values were totally disconnected from each other in the real world. So long as Trump is good for business, they appear unconcerned that he is the single biggest threat to America's soul and values, and to its image and interests abroad. Sure, they say, Trump may be going a bit too far with the Chinese on trade, but at least he has been asking them the right questions. And yes, he may be overplaying the race card, but he is no racist himself, and, if flirting with the unacceptable helps to consolidate his hardcore support, then why not?

Such thinking is deeply dangerous. As the Franco-Lebanese writer Amin Maalouf has said, it is "better to err with hope, than to be right with despair." Contrary to what many democratic Cassandras think, the worst is not inevitable. Authoritarians and populists have not yet triumphed, and in many places, democrats are fighting back.

Or, to put it less optimistically, democracy and autocracy still have similar chances of decaying. For now, it remains uncertain which model will prevail. But it is never wise to write off democracy, much less hasten its downfall.

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