

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



December 19, 2018

The Issues of Migrants Must be Addressed

December 18th is being celebrated as International Migrants Day around the world. The day is meant to highlight the issues of the migrants and the need for policies that can promote better opportunities for them in country of origin and that of origin. Its objectives also include emphasis on the basic rights of every migrant and requirement of measure that can ensure those rights in the best possible manner.

The day was first proclaimed on 4th December 2000. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), considering the increasing number of migrants around the world, announced that December 18 would be celebrated each year as International Migrants day. December 18 was chosen because it was the day when, in 1990, UNGA had adopted the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

For Afghanistan this day is very important and must be observed in the best possible manner as migration has always been an issue for Afghanistan. Different eras of instability have forced millions of people to leave their homeland and move to the neighboring countries and other countries, mostly Europe, USA, Canada and Australia. After the downfall of Taliban and installation of a so-called democratic government, there were some opportunities that the situation could improve and the conditions in the country could get better and people would ultimately return to their country. Regrettably, with an intensification in insecurity people do not appear to be very much confident about the future and many people who have already migrated hesitate to come back and many of those who are in the country are planning to leave for better future.

Those who decide to migrate are caught in different sorts of problems; nevertheless, they are ready to take the risks and leave their homes. They have to undergo different problems on the way to their destinations as most of the times they have to follow illegal means. They have to face human smugglers, cross borders illegally, face different weather conditions and travel across mountains, rivers and even sea. There have been different incidents when the migrants have lost their lives on these routes. On many occasions, Afghan migrants lost their lives in the waters of Greece on their route to Europe or in Indonesian and Australian waters.

This clearly depicts that people do not take decisions to migrate because of economic conditions, alone; rather, they do so mostly because of the security conditions. Lately, the migrants include many individuals from media and different offices, who having observed the situation in the country closely, opted to flee. Therefore, it is no more the issue of ignorance or tough economic conditions as the decisions are taken by well-educated individuals who are educated and even have jobs.

Unfortunately, the ones who reach other countries after myriads of problems are not guaranteed secure future. As the issue of refugees has become very serious many countries are not sure about allowing refugees in their countries. Particularly, European countries, after facing a flux of refugees are already deporting many Afghan refugees. Germany that initially welcomed refugees is also in the process to deport many of Afghan refugees to their country. Same is the case with other European countries.

Moreover, the policies and procedures regarding the cases of different refugee in European countries have also changed to a great extent. There are many Afghan refugees in European countries who have been waiting for the final decision about their cases and in the meanwhile are not in a condition to move freely, earn livelihood and travel to different places and or meet their family members.

Even in the neighboring countries, Afghan refugees have not always been welcomed with warm hugs; every now and then they have been the victims of discrimination and ill-treatment. Most of the Afghan refugees in the neighboring countries, especially, in Iran and Pakistan have suffered the consequences of fluctuations in the way they are treated. Definitely, it has been generous of both the countries to compensate the Afghan refugees, who because of wars and instability left their dear homeland, but on certain occasions they have also displayed the attitude that have violated the rights of the refugees to a great extent. Definitely, these countries have their own problems; they are developing countries and they have their own economic issues to face; however, they have been supported by international community and United Nations to assist the refugees and guarantee their rights under international law. Both the European and neighboring countries at this crucial juncture must make sure that they design a clear strategy regarding the fate of Afghan refugees. Definitely, there are political and diplomatic concerns for all the governments of the world to consider, but the issue of refugees is more important than such concerns, as it involves the precious human lives.

Individual Development in Social Life

By: Dilawar Sherzai

In a tribal setup, family plays a key role. It is the center of the entire social life. In fact, it is considered responsible for all sort of nourishment that a person receives. Moreover, different individuals are also linked to their families in various ways. If they are able to achieve something marvelous, and they become successful people in their lives, their families are praised, particularly, their parents. However, if they fail to become successful individuals in life and some of them are caught in the web of crimes and antisocial activities, again their parents are held responsible. This sort of thinking is, however, very narrow in certain ways.

It is, therefore, essential to see the phenomenon in a greater detail with open mind. As a matter of fact, the development of a personality is highly dependent on various institutions; from family to political system, there is a long list. Yes, the family is the basic one but the institutions like schools, social, cultural and religious institutions and ceremonies, offices, sports and others have their undying influences. All these institutions have different practices and there are different personalities in them that imprint their marks on a person psychology. It is difficult to say that a particular behavior within a person is the outcome of the family or the parents alone as there are different factors involved at the same time.

Parents' nourishment - their care and their neglect have influence on the children, this cannot be rejected. It is believed and believed rightly that a mother's lap is the first academy for a child. But there is a long journey between how a person is treated by his parents and his choice to commit an evil. Moreover, the imprints of parent's behavior on the minds of the children are not like reflection in a mirror - it does not come back in the same form; or it is not like the input and output in the computer, where the output is as per the demands of the users. If it was so, parenting would not be difficult at all, but it is not so and the parents living in our society are the witness to it. The love from the parents will not necessarily result in a good conduct of the children - observations show that children with great love and attention from their parents have committed crimes and evils that have made history; similarly, their neglect does not necessarily result in the children becoming evil-doers. There are many children in our society, who are the victims of their parents' negligence, yet they show great values and behavior and even hate evils. Simply, human behavior and psychology

is not like mathematics where two plus two is equal to four. To understand it, more efforts are required than just to cram the tables; unfortunately, the people do not know anything better than that; therefore, they are not able to understand the complex nature of human existence.

The evils that we see in our society are, in fact, the responsibility of the society as a whole. As Henry Thomas Buckle had said, "The society prepares a crime, the criminal commits it". This suggests that there are many socio-economic conditions that are involved in the preparation of the crimes which are the biggest evil in our society. The social injustice, the economic disadvantage, the political corruption, the religious intolerance, all these factors and many others play their roles in motivating the criminals and the evil-doers to commit them. Suppose a person steals money and becomes a thief. There are certain possibilities, all of which towards the role of the society in it - the person stole money because he was compelled by his economic conditions. He might have had financial problems and have been incapable of providing basic requirements of life to his family members. He might have a patient at home, waiting to be cured, which is only possible in today's society through money as health services have become a great business. Thus, there are so many social factors that have nothing to do with the parents alone and which even compel the parents to nourish and guide their children in a certain way. In fact, if we see from a wider perspective we will soon realize that parents themselves are among the effected, how can they be the cause? The vicious circles of the unjust economic and political systems have bound the people in such a way that they have no way out and no clear idea what to do except blaming each other. That is why we find parents blaming the children and children blaming the parents, and many others blaming both of them, when in fact both are innocent. However, as mentioned earlier, to understand this concept a wider approach is required while many people are just peeping through the lock hole to see the whole room, which does not assist them in any way to see the whole truth. Now, if the door is opened for them, they would be able to see the whole truth and realize how big this world is! Much bigger than a narrow-minded tribal perspective!

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Stepped up US Military Posture in the Gulf threatens Indian hopes for Iran's Chabahar port

By: James M. Dorsey

The arrival of the USS John C. Stennis aircraft carrier group in the Gulf to deter Iran from further testing ballistic missiles is likely to dampen Indian hopes that the Trump administration's exemption of the port of Chabahar from sanctions against the Islamic republic would help it tighten economic relations with Central Asia and further regional integration.

The group's presence in the Gulf, the first by a US aircraft carrier in eight months, came amid mounting tension between the United States and Iran following the Trump administration's withdrawal from the 2015 international agreement that curbed Iran's nuclear program and the imposition of harsh sanctions against the Islamic republic. It raised the spectre of a potential military conflagration.

The deployment for a period of two months coincided with a suicide attack on a Revolutionary Guards headquarters in Chabahar that killed two people and wounded 40 others.

Saudi and Iranian media reported that Ansar al-Furqan, a shadowy Iranian-Sunni jihadi group that Iran claims is supported by the kingdom as well as the United States and Israel, had claimed responsibility for the attack. Saudi pan-Arab daily Asharq Al-Awsat asserted that the attack "reflects the anger harboured by the (city's) Baloch minority against the government." The paper said the Iranian government had expelled thousands of Baloch families from Chabahar and replaced them with Persians in a bid to change its demography. It asserted that Iran was granting nationality to Afghan Shiites who had fought in Syria and Iraq and was moving them to Chabahar.

The paper went on to say that "anti-regime Baloch movements have recently intensified their operations against Tehran in an attempt to deter it from carrying out its plan to expel and marginalize the Baloch from their ancestral regions."

Saudi Arabia, a staunch supporter of the US's confrontational approach towards Iran, has pumped large amounts of money into militant, ultraconservative Sunni Muslim anti-Shiite and anti-Iranian religious seminars along the border between the Pakistani province of Balochistan and the Iranian province of Sistan and Baluchistan that is home to Chabahar, according to militants.

The funding was designed to create the building blocks for a potential covert effort to destabilize Iran by stirring unrest among its ethnic minorities. The deployment was, according to US officials in response to Iran's testing of a ballistic missile capable of carrying multiple warheads. The US sanctions are in part designed to force Iran to drop its development of ballistic missiles. Iranian officials insist the missiles program is defensive in nature.

"We are accumulating risk of escalation in the region if we fail to restore deterrence," said US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

The spectre of increased military tension in the Gulf with the arrival of the aircraft carrier group and of potentially Saudi and US-backed political violence in Iran, and a troubling security situation in Afghanistan threatened to diminish the impact of Washington's granting Indian investment in Chabahar an exemption from its economic sanctions against Iran.

Indian and Iranian officials fear that the United States' stepped up military posture and heightened tensions could undermine their efforts to turn Chabahar, which sits at the top of the Arabian Sea, into a hub for trade between India and Central Asia rendering the US waiver worthless.

The officials have their hopes pinned on efforts to engineer a peace process in Afghanistan. US special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad alongside representa-

tives of the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan met this week with the Taliban. The talks are intended to negotiate an end to Afghanistan's 17-year old war.

An Afghan government delegation, in what diplomats saw as a sign of progress, hovered in the corridors but did not take part in the meeting because of the Taliban's insistence that it will only talk to the United States. Talks with the Taliban have so far stalled because of the group's insistence on a timetable for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Afghanistan.

US officials said the aircraft carrier group, beyond seeking to deter Iran, would also support the US war effort in Afghanistan where the United States has ramped up airstrikes in an effort to press the Taliban into peace talks.

The talks were an opportunity, particularly for Saudi Arabia, whose utility as an ally is being questioned by the US Congress in the wake of the October 2 killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, and Pakistan, which the United States accuses of supporting the Taliban, to demonstrate their utility.

US President Donald J. Trump asked Pakistani prime minister Imran Khan in a letter earlier this month to help bring the Taliban to the negotiating table.

While Saudi Arabia and Pakistan have an interest in using their close ties to the Taliban to help forge an end to the Afghan war, its not immediately clear that they want to see reduced tensions facilitate the emergence of Chabahar as an Indian-backed hub.

A Saudi think tank, the Arabian Gulf Centre for Iranian Studies (AGCIS) renamed the International Institute of Iranian Studies that is believed to be backed by Saudi crown prince Mohammed bin Salman, argued in a study last year that Chabahar posed "a direct threat to the Arab Gulf states" that called for "immediate counter measures."

Written by Mohammed Hassan Husseinbor, identified as an Iranian political researcher, the study warned that Chabahar posed a threat because it would enable Iran to increase greater market share in India for its oil exports at the expense of Saudi Arabia, raise foreign investment in the Islamic republic, increase government revenues, and allow Iran to project power in the Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

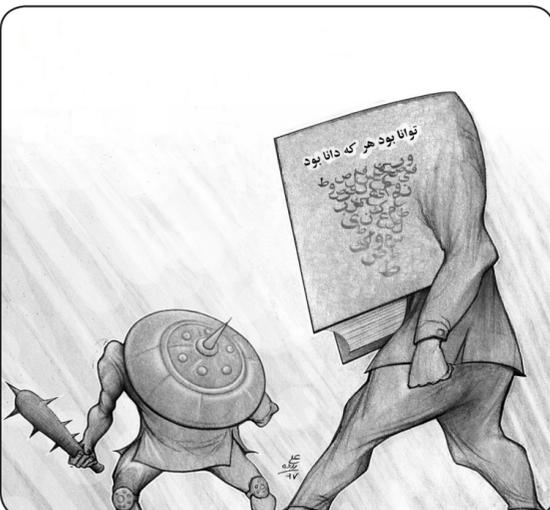
Noting the vast expanses of Iran's Sistan and Baluchestan province, Mr. Husseinbor went on to say that "it would be a formidable challenge, if not impossible, for the Iranian government to protect such long distances and secure Chabahar in the face of widespread Baluch opposition, particularly if this opposition is supported by Iran's regional adversaries and world powers."

Similarly, Pakistan is heavily invested in Gwadar, the Chinese-backed port in Balochistan that is a crown jewel of the US\$45 billion plus China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a pillar of the People's Republic's Belt and Road initiative. Gwadar is a mere 70 kilometres up the coast from Chabahar.

"Pakistan sees India as an existential threat and the idea of India being in any way present on Pakistan's western flank in Afghanistan will always raise alarm bells in Islamabad," said South Asia scholar Michael Kugelman.

If the arrival of the USS John C. Stennis aircraft carrier group in the Gulf heralds heightened tension, Pakistan may have less reason to worry.

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