

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



February 10, 2016

Taliban Lash a Girl in Public

There may be claims every now and then that the violence against women has decreased to a large extent in Afghanistan and discrimination against them have diminished, as well. However, the facts and figures show a different situation. Though there have been some improvements but the overall situation is still pathetic and a great deal of work still needs to be done. Moreover the commitments by the National Unity Government (NUG) that it would take tangible measures to deal with the issue seems to have ended up in smoke as NUG has been engulfed some other issues and has totally neglected the issues pertaining to women rights and violence against them. However, it is important to understand that without dealing with these issues, it would be very difficult for the government to bring about any positive change in the society regarding the role and status of women. Taliban had the worst sort of practices against women and they treated them in the most brutal way. Women were punished and killed in the public and their most of the rights were violated. It is threatening to even think about the reversal of such a system; nonetheless, such practices are still going on in certain parts of the country – mostly in the ones where Taliban have their dominancy.

A recent video footage by Tolo News shows a girl being lashed in public by a Taliban commander in Faryab province as a punishment for having an alleged affair with a stranger. The footage shows that the Taliban commander announces a decree against the girl among the armed Taliban men and then lashes the girl, whose name is Bebe Gul and is reported to be resident of Pashto Kot district.

Recently, there seems to be a rise in different sort of violence carried out against women in such kangaroo courts but there has not been any action against the perpetrators. If the culprits keep on escaping the justice by Afghanistan formal courts and justice system, it would be very difficult to discourage such practices.

In a reaction to the lashing, the Human Rights Commission strongly condemned the action. And the coordinator of the women's right section in Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AI-HRC) has said, "The Human Rights Commission strictly condemns the incident and asks the government to implement the law and see that justice is carried out."

Government definitely needs to divert its attentions towards such issues and needs to take initiatives that will be helpful in discouraging such actions and stopping them from happening.

The fact is that the incidents violating women rights in Afghanistan have not been stopped through effective practical steps. In fact the changes are prevalent only on the exterior while from within the Afghan society still lacks the modernity and development it needs in order to reach to a respectable position. The Afghan social structure has been vehemently dominated by religious extremism and tribal nepotism. Though these factors have affected almost everyone, women have been intensely influenced as they belong to the weaker strata of the society. Most of the self-designed religious doctrines and tribal norms are against the women and discriminate their basic rights. Unfortunately, these norms and doctrines have even gone to the extent of violence and have tortured women physically – mostly in the public. It is important to note that the voices that are heard in media and the cases that are brought to media may get some attention but there are many other cases that are not brought to media because there are many women who as a result of fear never raise their voices before their voices are made completely silent. It is also unfortunate to note that those who do raise their voice do not always get justice. They are discouraged by society in such a way that they should never again try to do so. They are made examples so that others who may intend to do so must be discouraged.

In many parts of the country still the Taliban outlook about women persists, that believes that women are no more than other personal possession of the male members of the society. They can buy or sell them, use them as convenient and can discard them at their will. No one is there to object.

In addition to that, women in Afghan society, like the women in other tribal societies, are considered the honor of the family and they are bound within the chains of so called sanctity. If they disagree to follow their families they are killed through honor-killings.

It is necessary that Afghan government should take serious notice of the discrimination and violence against women. It should now be understood that unless law enforcement agencies carry out concrete measures to enact the law so as to control violence against women, it would be very difficult to control the situation within a society where women are not considered even human beings. However, at the same time it is necessary to address the root causes of the problem. It is important to bring about changes in the way the women are perceived within our society. Unless, they are considered human beings and important part of the society it is very difficult to control discrimination and violence against them.

Scourging Social Evils!

By Asmatyari

The social evils can be defined in different subjects for instance some might only be ethical and some might relate to crime or it might violate certain established principles. In modern society, with special reference to Afghanistan, it is important to note that a number of social evils have grappled our country in its iron claws; in addition it seems impossible to get out of its tentacles unless immediate attention is given.

Any evil, such as overindulgence, that negatively affects society is generally termed as social evil. Social ill-practices, detrimental to social bond of enhance interaction, receiving superfluous acceptance among masses, are regarded as social evils. It is generally the loosening effect of law and order coupled with degeneration of moral values in a society which results in the spread of social evils.

A few examples of the social evils that we deal with today are crime, bigotry, bullying, and poor education. Besides these, there are many other social evils like child labor, wastage of food on the occasion of marriages and other social ceremonies etc.

Now-a-days the life sustaining commodities are not found, in pure condition. Milk, ghee, butter, oil, etc. all are sold adulterated. Not only food stuffs, but medicines, toilet goods and their articles also are mixed with inferior and cheaper substances. This amounts to the cheating of the people. This is a social crime. The government must make all possible efforts to curb this nefarious trade. The people must be ensured the supply of pure and unadulterated goods.

One of the major curse of which Afghanistan is suffering is bribery and corruption weakening the institutional performance of the country; a poison, that must be put down with iron hand. Black marketing is the most colossal crime against society. There are other taboos flourishing, which are gradually decaying the society, creating anomalies such as economic disparity, excessive use of one's authority, falling educational standard, promotion of crime and lack of proper life facilities.

Corruption, unemployment, smuggling, population explosion, inflation, terrorism, bribery, black marketing, adulteration, prostitution, nepotism, and other social evils are cancer for any country. The foundation of social evils is that society is made up of human beings that have all the weaknesses and faults that are inherent to being human. Human traits such as greed, hate, lust for power or wealth, arrogance, etc, and become social evils when they are allowed to grow in a society to a point that they become a part of that society.

Causes of social evils are poverty, illiteracy, blind tradition. Poverty leads to criminal activities like robbery, thefts, Murder, kidnapping and looting. Now and then one can find headlines in the papers about their criminal activities. We often come across reports about whole family committing suicide by taking poison as they cannot afford a square meal. Even the parents do not hesitate to sell their children. When people are unable to get their livelihood by honest means, they are bound to turn into criminals. Very often

people find criminals living only in slums. In fact, it is the property that has compelled them to take to social evils.

The governments devise ways and means to raise their standard of living through science and technology. These poverty stricken criminals instead of being taken to jails and being prosecuted should be taken to rehabilitation centers where adequate care is taken of such criminals and certain skills are being taught to them such as stitching, driving, gardening, cooking, and cleaning etc. which can help them to earn a living and support their families.

The government should make annual visits to the unhygienic and extremely distressful slum areas and provide them money and proper care to help them uplift their depressing conditions. Often general people rebuke poor people and look at them with disdain, this should be prevented and the people should adopt a positive and helpful behavior towards the poor and the destitute. These measures would also contribute in rooting out evils from our society.

Disbanding illiteracy helps to develop enlightened, moderate and law abiding disciplined citizens; serving the best course towards, depreciation of evils practices.

The social evils and superstitions that had crept in the society over the centuries made social reforms imperative for the development of the society and the masses. In the 19th century, the newly educated persons increasingly revolted against rigid social conventions and outdated customs. They could no longer tolerate irrational and de-humanizing social practices. Social reforms are urgently needed. There can be no two opinions about this. Effective laws should be framed. Public opinion should be created in support of these reforms, and. Administration made strict, can alone lead us to success.

An excellent example of a fight against social evil is the civil rights movement that began in the US in the middle of the twentieth century and the struggle against apartheid in South Africa in the 1990s. An all out struggle against social evil is never easy and is never quick. It takes a lot of people committed to accomplishing the task to overcome a well entrenched social evil like discrimination.

We should take tangible measures to eradicate this evil otherwise we will be destroyed. The responsible government, at any level, can never develop unless there are responsible citizens. The institution which constitute the government represent only a small part, other institution like schools, homes, religious centers, voluntary organizations etc form a much greater part of the social activities.

It is summed up in the well known quote, 'All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing'. Put more simply, each of us has the responsibility to not allow the evil that people do go unchallenged. Each adult is responsible for their own actions, but some people believe that it doesn't matter what they do, or they deserve in some way to behave as they do, or they simply don't care what effect their actions have on society. These people are wrong. It does matter how each of us behave. Social evils are prevented by enough people caring how their personal actions affect others.

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Support to Afghanistan Must not be Ended

By Dilawar Sharzai

In the post 2015 scenario, Afghanistan would be facing myriads of challenges in order to guarantee security and stability in the country. It does not only require determination and iron will but resources and assistance to make the country stand on its own. One of the most dominating factors will be definitely financial support. The economic system in the country has not been developed strongly and there are serious problems in the basic infrastructure, therefore the country would be in need of international financial support many more years.

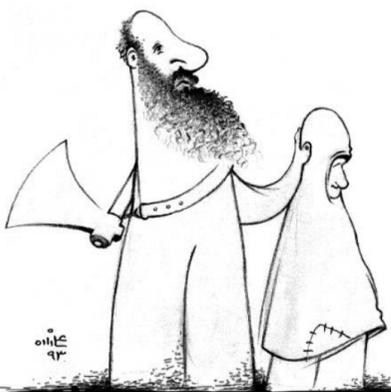
This is really threatening for a country that is already having shaky economic growth. It would be really very tough for the authorities to meet the expenses of having more than 300,000 security forces trained properly and properly equipped. Then there are expenses of sustaining schools, colleges, roads, offices and other infrastructures that have been built in the last 15 years; managing all these expenses would be really a Herculean task. The second way the withdrawal of international forces increase in the insecurity. The investors, both national and international ones, hesitate to invest in the areas where there is no reliability of peace and tranquility, while the security in Afghanistan has been in questions for the last couple of years or so. Moreover, the withdrawal further deteriorated the situation and most of the investments require many years, even decades to provide some outcomes. How Afghanistan is going to make the investors trust so much is difficult to imagine.

Afghan authorities have been very much hopeful about the mining sector. Yes, it is correct that there are large reserves of untouched mineral resources in the country that can provide great support to the country, but converting those untouched reservoirs into usable cash requires a lot of hard work. The process involves not only digging out the minerals but converting them to usable forms and then transferring them to different locations through reliable and fast transportation system. Moreover, it would require strong communication system and latest equipments. But above all it would require a decade or two of relative peace in

the country. Afghanistan has the biggest iron ore deposit of Asia in the remote area of Hajigak. This ore can really help Afghanistan to a great extent but it may not be able to provide the support it is expected to provide. The whole situation can be best depicted in the statements given by a mining consultant in Kabul, "Even in the best conditions, you are looking at many years, often decades, to make significant money from an investment. Here you have to build everything from scratch – power plants, transport networks – in a very tough environment. It's not clear how much is really viable." A European diplomat has mentioned that he could not convince from his countries to invest in Afghanistan. "They just shrug and say we needed 15 years of security, stability and growth, can you guarantee us that?" he said.

It is believed that economic system is just like the circulatory system for society. As a circulatory system circulates blood throughout the body and guarantees life, in similar way the economic system in a society guarantees life and development. Without a strong economic system the country suffers because of myriads of problems and may even become a failed state. Unfortunately, Afghanistan has been suffering in this regard and has to depend on international help in order to stand on its own. It would require the same for at least one more decade. Yes, it is correct that Afghanistan can not keep on depending on the other countries for indefinite period of time and it has to be independent economically, but that cannot happen in a jiffy. The coming Bonn Conference is going to play a dominant role in defining the role of international community in the future developments in Afghanistan. The international community has to keep one thing in mind that the developments that have been made in Afghanistan for the last years are very much valuable. They have been achieved by the dint of great sacrifices and a lot of resources. They should not be undone in any way and support to Afghanistan must not be ended before it is due. It will be in the betterment of Afghanistan, the region and the whole international world and would be of great assistance in putting an end to terrorism.

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