

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



February 16, 2015

Government's Efforts for Economic Expansion

On Monday last week, President Muhammad Ashraf Ghani visited the economically important copper-mines of Mes Aynak in Logar province. President went there to give message to the world that the area is now completely safe from the security point of view and international investors can immediately come and start the work on the site.

Last week was also important from the investment perspective of the country when foreign ministry announced to give instant visas to foreign investors without any delay and official complications. The visa can be obtained for a duration of three years which will be further extended when needed. Mes Aynak is considered to be one of the biggest reserves of copper in Asia. In 2007, the mines were given on a thirty years' lease to a Chinese company worth three billion dollars, making it the biggest foreign investment in the history of the country. The said company also promised to establish a railway track from the site to the capital city of Kabul, the total distance of 25 kilometers. A 400 megawatt electricity facility was also part of the project. It was estimated that the project would generate thousands of job opportunities in the country and it would be a constant source of revenue for the country, adding the minimum of 100 million dollars to the national exchequer. The extraction of copper would further give birth to numerous economic activities in the country that would change the fate of the country. However, the work was soon halted on the site due to the staggering security conditions in the area. Right from the beginning, the project became a matter of controversy due to the increasing interest of a number of international powers in the country. There are reports that many countries are not happy of the allotment of this project to a Chinese company and the hidden hands of international powers cannot be ignored in the insecurity in the area. On the other hand, the area is considered to be a sensitive point of the entry and passage of insurgents from a neighboring country.

Having a look at the poor economic conditions of the country, the importance of mass economic projects are really important. It is a sad fact that our country is badly dependent on international donations due to the absence of domestic production. We import almost all the things from other countries of the world and we don't have almost any exports. Due to this reason, billions of dollars are spent on international spending while no money enters the national economy from exports. In such conditions, the country becomes badly dependent on international donations. However, the country can also have another source of income in the form of extraction of minerals. The country is considered to be one of the richest countries of the world in terms of natural resources. According to geological experts, there are vast reserves of different natural resources in the country. The work has been started on the mass oil and gas reserves in Shibirghan while there are reports of similar vast gas and oil reserves in a number of other places in the country. These natural resources can not only generate billions of dollars to the country but they can also produce thousands of jobs and give birth to economic activities, adding a new life to the economy of the country. However, the country's present infrastructure and labor force is not skilled enough for the extraction of these minerals. In such conditions, we look forward for foreign investments for the extraction of minerals. In this regard, a number of international companies are looking forward to invest billions of dollars in a number of projects in the country. But there are certain obstacles in this regard. The biggest hindrance in this regard is the insecurity in the country. Though the security of major cities is quite satisfactory, but the security in the rural areas is not satisfactory. This applies to almost all the natural reserves found in different parts of the country. Second problem are the complications by the concerned government authorities that make the process of investment difficult in the country. The present government has shown extreme sincerity for boosting economic activities in the country. The president tried his best to encourage foreign investors in all his foreign visits and he has also worked to bring reforms in the government offices to bring more facilities to the investors and remove complications in this regard.

This week's news about the visit of the president to the copper reserves of Mes Aynak and the facilitation of visa for foreign traders, investors and businessmen is a good news for the feeble economy of the country. It is hoped that with the passage of time, the trust of both foreign and local investors and businessmen will increase, resulting in the increased economic activities and expansion in the economy of the country and we will be able to have an economy good enough to meet the needs of the country and we will no more be dependent on anyone. Along with these two activities, it is hoped that government will look for all other possibilities to increase economic activities of the country and make the country one of the most favorable countries for foreign investment.



The Evil Match!

By Muhammad Rasool Shah

Yesterday was a big day in the Cricket World Cup of 2015. Two archrivals, India and Pakistan were facing each other and the match was termed as the 'mother of all the matches' by cricket pundits. As expected, the weak Pakistani team lost the match and there was like a national mourning in the cities and towns of Pakistan. On the other hand, Indians were jubilant and their joy was getting almost uncontrollable. As there are also hundreds and thousands of Afghans who have spent many years in Pakistan as refugees and have soft corner with this country, so they also appeared unhappy at the conclusion of the match. On the other hand, there are also present some who support India as India is considered to be a friend nation of Afghanistan so there were also present those who were rejoicing. However, like any other India-Pakistan match, this match was also a horrible picture of hate-promotion and heedless media campaign in both the countries. More than a month ago, when the schedule of World Cup matches was issued, the media in both the countries had started exclusive preparations for this match. Large number of sports channels covering the World Cup matches had made special arrangements to increase the public interest in this match. But this match was never going to be left unnoticed by the general public. So media had to work to do something special to immerse it into the brains and emotions of the people on both the sides. Some of the special preparations included of songs made in the favor of teams, and unfortunately, these songs had to insult the other team to be more meaningful and acceptable. Special commentary of the legend Indian actor, Amitabh Bachchan and the fastest Pakistani bowler of his time, Shoaib Akhtar was anxiously awaited. General public was also in frenzy; many had made special arrangements for watching the match with friends and family members and then to celebrate it in style.

A bakery in Pakistan had made a special cake. This huge cake was in the shape of a cricket ground in which players were made from jelly and other things like these. Some people in Pakistani city of Karachi were dancing a night before the match started. The media on both the sides was giving maximum coverage to this event and it looked as if crimes, unemployment and all other problems in both the countries had either finished or ignored for the time being. People from both the sides were busy in talking in favor and against the teams on social networking sites of Facebook, Twitter and others. There were exaggerations, the description of past events and in worst cases, there started a verbal war of using bad words against the countries, teams and players of the opposite side. Some time, it crossed its limit and reached to religion or sacred public figures of the countries. Unfortunately, the general public on the both the sides is not mature and literate enough to be careful about the sensitivities of such comments. Thousands of supporters had reached Australia to watch this match and support their teams and according to the media, there was an air of a fair and excitement in the small city of Adelaide where this match was going to be played.

With this frenzy, the desperately awaited match started and during the continuation of match, the supporters from both the sides went through different emotions. According to unconfirmed sources, people had kept on bet billions of rupees about the victory or defeat of the teams. However,

er, the match did not turn out to be exciting and it was in fact a one-sided match. The Indian team was leading the match right from the beginning and the doubtful Pakistani batting once again collapsed and Pakistani team lost the match with a huge margin. As the match ended, there was an outburst of emotions on both the sides. Indians were getting almost crazy with joy and they started their celebrations. The crackers, the sweets and the traffic jams were the necessary ingredients of this celebration. In Pakistan, the reaction was also not less violent and fierce. There were many who broke down their television sets, who shouted on people near them and it is yet to be confirmed, but in past, there were many who lost their lives after a heart-attack due to the unbearable joy and sadness of the victory or loss.

A couple of years ago, some Muslim students, who actually belonged to Kashmir of India were tortured and expelled out of the university when they reacted on the result of a match between India and Pakistan. These Muslim students were studying in a university with majority of Hindu students and they were accused of exhibiting their joy after Pakistan defeated India in a cricket match. According to media, the Hindu students not only beat them but later on they were expelled from this university under allegations of disrupting religious harmony of the university. In past as well, after the loss of Indian team against Pakistan, many Hindus looted or set on fire the shops or houses of Muslims living as minorities in their vicinity. Special arrangements were made by law-enforcing agencies to avoid sectarian violence and riots on such occasions. However, this list of mental and emotional despair, rage and revenge is long and no side is less than the other. But such reactions have done irreparable harm to the relations between the public of these two countries. On all these occasions, the media outlets on both the sides arrange programs in a way that cricketers or cricketing experts from both the sides take part and public is also involved via live phone calls. At times, it is felt that the anger, emotionality and irresponsible comments would end in a verbal fight and the adrenaline level of the viewers on both the sides reaches to unbelievable heights.

It is a harsh reality that both the countries are considered to be the harsh enemies of each other but it is also a fact that both the sides can prosper and grow only by mutual growth and coexistence. This rule is not only applicable for the scenario of India and Pakistan but to every nation of the world. There has been efforts from the considerate classes of both the countries to bring the people close to each other and wipe away the feelings of enmity against each other but such matches have always done the exact opposite. For this, people on both the sides of border cannot be blamed as they are driven away by their emotions but the media in both the countries can be blamed as they utilize this opportunity to make it lucrative and successful financially but for their financial gains, they play with the emotions of people and broaden the gaps between them. Just like the blasphemy cartoons and coverage of the cruel atrocities of ISIS in Syria and Iraq, this is also a dark side of media when it puts its own benefits first and plays with the emotions of people. They may earn a few more dollars but they leave behind lasting imprints of disrespect, insult and embarrassment on humanity and mutual self-respect.

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Our Heedless Deeds Serve Our Sufferings!

By Asmatyari

Most of the problems, we encounter on daily accounts are associated with a flawed understanding of the root causes of the quandary and flawed strategies leading to its proper solution. Consequently, efforts exercised in the pursuit of extraneous vague goals, fall short to devise an appropriate way out. Thus, we keep on oscillating between the issue and the disingenuous course leading to suitable solution.

There has ever been a wide chasm between thoughtful comprehension of obligation and veneration; in contemporary Afghan society one finds verbal utility the other overshadowed by heedless inculcation. Virtues, earnest faith, superior deeds and heavenly rewards, only come via repeated veneration, are widely propagated, negating the underlying worth of dutifulness. The binding principles of duties of immense significance are deemed inferior whilst religious dogma and set ritual are considered superior. This is the state of superiority complex and the society suffering from superiority complex never rises to prominence, unless it turns realistic.

Inhabiting in constant state of denial is yet another problem overshadowing our collective wisdom. We advertently commit to disown the responsibilities for our committed and deliberate ill-deeds and mishaps instead bother not in shifting the responsibilities to another institution or official. Thus the guilt is neither fixed nor is guilty brought to book. One of the degenerative understandings, commonly witnessed is an objective view of the issues. It has always been effortless, holding someone else responsible for our erroneous deeds. We have all turned professionals in disowning the ill-consequences, some of our ill-strategized feat brings. We spare not, any opportunity to earn credits for other selfless undertakings. Conversely, we are reluctant to own the responsibilities for a self accomplished, fallacious accomplishment.

Indiscriminate and faceless owing of the worldly discoveries is one of the persona Muslims bear. The mismatched references are superfluously used in order to justify their intellectually bankrupt state. The claimant for every invention left them in superiority complex and hollowness, turning their innate aptitudes plagued and dysfunctional. On the other extreme, years long propaganda against modern scientific education is also propagated that sought a credible support and appreciation from many so called well learned individuals.

We could not draw a clear, distinctive line between licit and illicit deeds. The plague of narrow-mindedness has worst affected us to the level that our ill deeds are fortified to the height of truth and other good deeds appear forged for us. The poison of biased understanding injected into the bloodstream of society has maligned their moderate disposition to extreme one. Freedom of thought, providing a sound basis of intellectual progress is not only given the status of ill recognition but also un-Islamic. The aristocratic, despotic regimes and absolute rule instilled in most of Muslim countries -the ruling class steers the fate of the nation, consequently the pages of history are filled with blunders individuals committed and the nation is left to reap for generations, no one realizes. Another pivotal problem -the fallacious and social structure enrooted on an erroneous classification system supporting proprietors, feudal

lords and ruling elites. A superior ethno-political elite ruling for generations draws economic and political privileges. The lower class or ethnic groups are denied access to fundamental rights and necessities of life.

There are multiple incidences of frauds and irregularities and embezzlements occurred in this piece of land till date no culprit is punished and no impartial accountability is exercised. In all such cases the accused public official and institutions begin shifting responsibilities. Nominal commissions and committees are constituted to fix the responsibilities; at the end of day, nothing, with exception to wastage of public revenue crystallizes. It's high time we demonstrate commitment to rise to eminence by setting examples of admitting and fulfilling our collective responsibilities.

The system directly supporting, promoting and protecting injustices seem unlikely to extend space to talent, competence, capabilities, as an alternative recommendation, inducement and influential financial status help earning preferential societal position. Nonetheless, the whole functionaries of the flawed system escape apprehension -they are subjugated to practiced system not the constitutional provision because of despotic brought up. The culprits of Kabul bank swindle to date, escape detainment and prosecution because of having influential ties. It is imperative that constitutional safeguard is provided to hapless citizens seeking justices over authority and power abusers.

The injustices cracking the socio-political fabric of society and widen the societal divide across ethnic lines, must be curtailed. The politically under-privileged ethnic group rendered vulnerable with increasing the sense of insecurity and should be given in confidence. May the custodians of illusive slogans come forth to fight against all these social evils, injustices, biases and human rights violation?

It should be underlined that a sustainable triumph with continuous and unending effort, encompassing a dynamic mechanism, pursuing a workable strategy seems plausible and workable. Problems and crisis are the integral part of every society, as long as a pragmatic solution is not working out. Man owes the potentials of averting their disgruntled fate by exercising rational deeds following due course of actions. The man is entitled to be the supreme creature given his superior mental capability owes a peculiar attribute in his inferior body. Deeds are executed in the light of perception thought-out in one's mind based on sensational judgments. The mental supplement involving rational discourse is never brought into practice that enables man learn beyond the limits of superficial sensory perceptiveness. The sensory conception of man lies within a restricted limit; nevertheless his mental perceptiveness is boundless and is at par with excellence.

It is a renowned truism 'God help those who help themselves'. The dictum reminds us of the deep lying worth of selfless accomplishment of duties. Nevertheless, we have thought out to get others commit our undertakings. Seeing the degree of reliance on others, rendered our innate capabilities dysfunctional, the aforesaid saying never justifies our standing. Consequently we are likely not to execute our socio-political undertakings; resultantly every aspect of societal proceedings pleads grave attention and right direction.

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