

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

Daily Outlook
AFGHANISTAN
The Leading Independent Newspaper

January 16, 2019

Electoral Malpractice and its Consequences

An election is a procedure by which members of communities and for organization choose representatives to hold an office.

The general idea of the meaning of election is reflected in the below definition. "Elections are the democratic method of choosing representatives of the people". If the above definition is so, then how does it come about that election are held in all types of countries, even in those where democracy does not exist?

Some scholars argue that elections are a technique for forming representative bodies and or for delegating authority.

It means therefore, that elections can be used instead of other techniques (designating representatives by succession ex officio or by appointment) without having any democratic substance. In other words, elections are not confined exclusively to democracies.

In essence elections had been held in western democracies long before universal suffrage was achieved and in actual fact elections are held in political systems which do not have a democratic structure: a classic example is USSR, where the domination of one party (The Communist Party) was written into their constitutions. Other include; Socialist Hungary and Romania, where representatives were reappointed at regular intervals.

ELECTORAL MALPRACTICE

A malpractice in its ordinary meaning has to do with illegal or wrong behavior while in a professional job. Electoral malpractice include falsification of results, to violence, snatching of ballot boxes, multiple voting, illegal voters list register, impersonation, purported switching of votes or among the wrong winner in an election by an electoral officer etc.

Electoral malpractice and violence, especially the incidents that occur with some regularity, seems indicative of more widespread systematic grievances. Treating electoral malpractice and violence as a criminal matter or a cyclical phenomenon is not likely to end future elections from being irregular and violent.

How to Curb Electoral Malpractice

Several postulations have been put forth by scholars on how to achieve free and fair elections and consequently achieve correlation between elections and legitimacy. For example, they have put forth the following as common denominators in their recommendations for a free and fair election: independent electoral body, independent judiciary, explicit electoral rules.

Yet, in spite of all these recommendations, electoral fraud has continued in many countries unabated. Some of the methods adopted are either with rapid crudity or highly sophisticated. These scholarly recommendations made by the highly rated scholars have failed to address problems associated with electoral fraud because; they have failed to take cognizance of the environment in which their recommendations are to be implemented.

Therefore, attempt is made here to recommend environmentally realistic solutions capable of resolving electoral manipulations. Hence, recommendations, here are borne out of peculiarity of Afghanistan's environment.

For instance, any meaningful attempt to stem electoral fraud in Afghanistan must give consideration to the wide gap between the haves and have not. There is no doubt that poverty has impacted negatively on the electoral behavior in at least three ways: (1) it encourages buying and selling of -votes by the electorate (2) inability of candidates and political parties to access media with equal strength by competitors for the purpose of citizens education and enlightenment (3) encourages the emergence of the dangerous, dimension of godfather-godson syndrome in Afghanistan politics.

Poverty of ideas and that of wealth have made many of the electoral manipulations easy. It has made it difficult for the creation of a level playing ground politically. A bad Candidate with impoverished ideas about governance may be rich. These riches have made him to access hungry minds, print posters to enlighten the electorate, bribe all the stakeholders in the Electoral process. This is because the rich candidate or their god fathers may equally have resources to induce the poverty stricken before or on the day of elections to manipulate voting and electoral process. It is equally possible to buy over hungry voters polling and counting officials and law enforcement agents. All these electoral officers can be induced to facilitate, the rigging of elections by the wealthy politicians.

Managing Diversity Key to Social Peace

By: M. Karimi

Living within a diversity requires that the inhabitants develop respect and broadmindedness for one another. Without these factors, it might be terribly troublesome to tighten the social bonds. Different societies have inhabitants from totally varied cultural, historical, religious, ethnic or sectarian milieus. Even though these societies have the advantage of being diverse and culturally wealthy, they are noticeably at risk of conflicts, also. As there are teams of individuals with totally different ideologies and practices, there are prospects that there are frequent clashes and disturbances. Therefore, it is necessary in such societies that totally different teams ought to settle for one another's existence. The open-mindedness for others is best developed by realizing the fact that others have their reasons to be what they are. They need their own backgrounds and values and their own practices that have developed among them through their distinct history. However, people don't seem to be able to do so in such a large amount of cases. They, in fact, become the victims of utmost partisanship. They observe and perceive others in their own views and check out to weigh them as per their own values, that don't offer correct and just result. They base their analysis and understanding depending on their own frame of reference that is certain to be biased as they do not look after the objective truths.

The biased and ethno-centric approach towards others is certain to end in clashes and chaos. Such a state of affairs is actually noticeably prejudicial and might be used by others for their personal benefits. History approves the actual fact that the heterogeneous societies that have had clashes among their completely different strata were dominated by others who solely reinforced those clashes through political means and in that manner pursued their own motives. In short, the societies that have such clashes are politically used by others and that they suffer severe loss as a result.

It is, therefore, essential for heterogeneous societies to develop a culture of co-existence. A way of belongingness to an oversized body; may be a sense for attachment to some national feelings, will solve the problem to a particular level. Binding themselves to national levels, the heterogeneous teams within the society might surrender their trivial matters and begin thinking in broader perspective. They need to be instructed to grasp that it's solely through collective efforts that they'll improve their survival potential in today's society. Their collective efforts will grow to be a synergy that may give them the chances of facing the overgrowing challenges of life successfully and dignity.

One of the simplest ways in which to exist in an exceedingly het-

erogeneous society is searching for the similarities among totally different teams rather than distinguishing the variations and creating them the bone of rivalry. In fact, the similarities among totally different human teams are larger than their variations. One of the biggest similarities among all the groups of people is that they're human beings and share an equivalent earth to survive on. However, such ideas are solely thought of ideal and unworkable. In reality, people are divided into totally different strata and that they have myriads of disparities. There are fights among them and that they use deadly weapons in their fights that kill many at a time. Each cluster, in pursuit of proving itself higher or correct, makes machinations to decimate others. Others are aliens, foreigners, infidels and wrong-doers. Religions and social and political ideologies that have got to bring folks along have, in fact, compelled them to stand largely apart and divided. This can be extremely pathetic and doesn't show in the least that humans are the most superior of creatures and have the intelligence and gumption.

Afghanistan is one among the societies that are heterogeneous to a particular extent. There are people from totally different ethnic groups who have their sub-cultures. Although they have embellished Afghan society with variety; however, there are instances when these strata have had clashes among each other. These clashes resulted in civil wars and influenced Afghan society negatively to a large extent. Other countries that had their interests in Afghan society used these clashes for their political functions and further added fuel to the fire.

However, nowadays Afghan society is standing in a challenging position. It is in the course of developing a peaceful life for its people. At this important juncture, it is extremely necessary that Afghan society should stand united and face challenges as a powerful nation. It should not let the variations among various strata dominate its national integration. The younger generation will play an amazing role in this regard. They are educated and they have previously experienced the implications of decades of instability and wars; so, they will better decide which path to choose.

If Afghan people want to guarantee their national integration within the times to come, they will be tested by the challenges. They have to learn holding one another's hands tightly and assisting one another in nation building. They need to grasp that the varied groups within the country are essentially different elements of a healthy body and while not the support of any of them it might not be able to create the body complete and make it work and perform properly.

M.Karimi is an emerging writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan.

The Leader of the World Bank Needs

By: Homi Kharas and Eswar Prasad

Jim Yong Kim's sudden resignation as president of the World Bank Group (WBG) offers an opportunity to reflect on the direction, legitimacy, and effectiveness of that 75-year old institution. Like other multilateral institutions, the Bank in recent years has been criticized for its elitism and for championing outmoded models of economic globalization that have failed to deliver broad-based benefits. It has also become another staging ground for the geopolitical great-power rivalry between the United States and China.

Recognizing this, finance ministers and central bank governors from the G20 established a commission in April 2017 to recommend reforms to the global financial architecture and the international financial institutions. And at a G20 meeting in October 2018, the commission issued a report outlining steps "to create a cooperative international order for a world that has changed irreversibly."

The proper mission of multilateral development finance institutions is to help solve urgent, large-scale problems in the developing world. For example, we are currently witnessing the largest urban expansion in history, and managing it will require a doubling of the global infrastructure stock within the next 15 years. Multilateral institutions also have a role to play in addressing the great expansion of Africa's population, and in laying the foundation for sustainable, decarbonized economic growth across the developing world. Failing that, the world should expect to see more migration, unemployment, frustration, and anger in the years ahead.

This is the context in which the next WBG president will be selected. Not surprisingly, the organization's Board of Executive Directors hopes to find a candidate who is capable of effective leadership and management, with a compelling vision, a commitment to multilateralism, and diplomatic communication skills (read: "politically savvy"). The candidate should be prepared to implement already agreed strategies, embodied in the WBG's previously published "Forward Look" and the "Sustainable Financing" papers.

But the most important criterion, in our view, is that the candidate should embrace the WBG's mission in all of its ambition and scale, and follow through on the recommendations in the recent G20 report. The WBG president's job was redefined in 2017, with the introduction of a Chief Executive Officer. Under this new arrangement, the president should be freed up to focus on strategy (for example, how best to deploy a recent capital increase), Board relations, and partnerships.

In the absence of a standard leadership-selection process, multilateral institutions have developed their own methods over time. For example, the Inter-American Development Bank has a double majority system, whereby the winning candidate must gain a majority of shareholder votes, as well as an absolute majority of votes from

regional governors. In the United Nations, the General Assembly selects the secretary-general on the recommendation of the Security Council. For the newly created Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the president must receive 75% of the votes. In each case, the process is designed to give the world's major powers their due say, while preventing any country from dominating the agenda entirely, thereby maintaining the spirit of multilateralism.

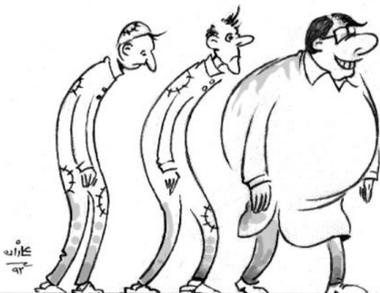
At the WBG, however, the winning candidate simply has to get the most votes. Practically speaking, the president has always been an American, thanks to an informal bargain between the United States and Europe, whereby the Europeans back the WBG candidate favored by the US, while the US supports a European to lead the International Monetary Fund (which has a similar simple-majority voting system). To be sure, the US cannot veto a candidate for WBG president (as it can with a candidate for UN secretary-general). But it would be foolhardy for any candidate to campaign without at least an implicit US endorsement.

This leaves a range of options for choosing the next WBG president. The US could select an American who appeals to other countries: Kim, for example, touted his Korean origins during his 2012 campaign for the post. It could select a dual national or an immigrant, such as former WBG President James Wolfensohn, an Australian who became a US citizen. Or it could back a non-American candidate from an allied country. What is important is that the nominee enjoys the trust of the US and most other countries, and can reconcile countries' diverse interests in a true spirit of multilateralism. Nationality, per se, is not a prerequisite.

But gaining the support of other countries is just one requirement. The successful candidate should also have support from other stakeholders. At the UN, candidates publish vision statements and responses to questions from civil-society organizations, and participate in a global town hall event. A WBG presidential candidate should embrace such transparency and extend it to businesses and academia, in keeping with the institution's commitment to empiricism and fact-based solutions.

When the Board selects Kim's successor in April, we hope it does so in a way that contributes to the institution's legitimacy and effectiveness. The WBG needs a trusted leader who understands the urgency and scope of the organization's mission. In fact, the WBG has never had a female president. There's no better time than now to usher in fundamental change.

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