

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



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## Facing the Social Evils

Almost all the society in the world are influenced by social problems in one way or the other. However, there are certain societies that have been able to control most of the evils, while some others have not been able to perform well and as a result they have been suffering because of myriads of issues that they face in their daily lives. These social problems are really negative and they are the factors that unsettle the social life to a great extent. They have the capacity to introduce disturbances and troubles in the lives of the individuals inhabiting the society and the overall social norms, values, relations and activities. Some of the dominant social evils include poverty, crime, corruption, drug addiction, juvenile delinquency, robbery, theft, begging and many others.

Many of these evils are, in fact, closely inter-related and have the cause and effect influence over one another. Nonetheless, all of these evils have the capacity to challenge and even sabotage the civilized and better living conditions in human societies.

There cannot be one particular reason behind the social evils. There are different reasons that are responsible for hosting these evils and debilitating a society to perform well for its inhabitants.

One of the basic reasons is the absence or weak adherence to the basic principles of justice. Without adhering to the rules and regulations based on justice and fair-play, it would be very difficult to have a society free of social evils.

Our own society, Afghanistan, can be studied in this regard. The basic reason behind the social evils that haunt us is the absence of justice and a system of check and balance. Moreover, there is no strong mechanism that can ensure that the justice or the rules and regulations are enforced properly. There are certain people who have hijacked the whole system and they are the ones who take advantage of it. The system is only for their service and provide them benefits and luxuries, while millions of other people fail to survive. Justice is, in fact, their words and their desires, and does not serve a higher objective of bringing about harmony within the society.

On the other hand, corruption has made the situation even worse. In fact, corruption is one of the key problems in Afghanistan. Without solving the issue of corruption it would be extremely difficult to make achievements as far as solving the social issues are concerned. If the resources and the energies are wasted for the corrupt intentions and self-centered objectives, there would not be much to exert against the social evils. Rather, it would have a reverse impact - corruption would further deteriorate the situation and give rise to many other ones. For example, it is not possible to solve the prevailing poverty, if the authorities who are responsible for certain programs to minimize poverty get involved in corruption and misuse the resources that are allocated for those programs. The resources would never reach to the deserving people and the programs would fail completely. This is what has been happening in Afghanistan. There have been various assistance programs and funds allocated for certain social problems by the international donor agencies and international community but most of that has been devoured by corruption and a little has reached to the poor people and the consequences are now in front of all of us.

Most of societies in the modern world enact their rules and regulations through a just and proper system of law and order. Strong law and order system strives to achieve justice and minimizes the social evils. Through effective law enforcing agencies, including police, courts and prisons, an active law and order system makes utmost effort that justice is served to the people. The ones who are culprit must be punished while the ones who are innocent must not suffer ill treatment. Afghanistan needs to have the same sort of system.

Another way of controlling or eradicating social evils can be through the values that are disseminated by the social institutions. The social institutions can inculcate within the individuals the awareness about the evils and the ways to avoid them. Among the social institutions, families and education systems can play an important role in this regard. Family, being the primary institution for an individual, can make an individual socially acceptable and guide his attitude in such a way that he becomes a positive member of society. Then there are educational institutions. They can play a tremendous role in establishing the characters of the individuals and making them aware so that they are able to make better choices in the society that may not benefit their individual lives but the social life as well. The roles of cultural and social institutions are also of utmost importance in this regard. They have high social value and influence and through the same they can bring about positive changes in the society by making the members of society abhor and avoid social evils and condemn them in every possible manner.



## The Constructive Role of CICA

By Hujjatullah Zia

The second round of the non-governmental Forum of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measure in Asia (CICA) - which was initiated by Chinese President Xi Jinping in May 2014 - was held in Beijing on June 28. The Conference was attended by delegates from many countries and state members. With concerns about political and economic crises throughout the Asia, "sustainable development" and promoting peace and stability were discussed in the Forum that was chaired by Chen Yuan, Vice Chairman of the 12th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

The main challenges in Asia pointed out in the Forum were: terrorism, imbalanced security, territorial disputes, maritime problem, climate changes, human trafficking, narcotic drug and lack of cybersecurity.

With the escalated violence and bloodshed and modern terrorism, traditional mechanism is not able to address the problem. The Conference provided a suitable platform for the world's delegates to discuss the security challenges and economic crises and suggest strategies to mitigate the life-threatening issues. Muwafag Al-Rubaye, Member of Parliament of Iraq, expressed his deep concern over the militancy carried out by the self-styled Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group and over the Syria conflict, which, according to him, is stoking sectarianism between Shiite and Sunni Muslims and exploiting the security forces. He said that a large number of Sunni Arabs were displaced internally by the "ideological enemy" i.e. the ISIL group.

Many opinions were discussed to put an end to the challenging issues, which menace not only the region but the entire globe, and to gain sustainable development. For instance, the objectives of the CICA Forum was said to "foster community of shared future", to use the words of one of the participants, enhance win-win cooperation, promote security and sustainable development, etc. Indeed, when the world seeks to resolve the challenges with the spirit of brotherhood and uphold human rights, the bulk of the problems will be resolved.

In one of the round-table discussions in the CICA Forum, I said that combating terrorism was the first issue the world needed to begin. Besides pointing out the root causes of terrorism, I came with a conclusion for eradicating this global threat. I suggested two main solutions for mitigating the persistent militancy:

First, it would be highly effective if the clergy of the state members form a religious committee to campaign

against terrorism through speeches and written documents. For instance, the spiritual leaders mainly from Islamic countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, etc. issue fatwa (religious decree) so as to condemn terrorist acts and publish magazines for enlightening the true and peaceful spirit of religion. No doubt, mullahs and muftis in the mentioned countries carry much weight for Islamic societies and their fatwa and preach against extremism will reduce terrorism to a great extent.

Second, I said that traditional mechanism for combating modern terrorism will not tackle the issue. The world should reinforce intelligence and make them do their best on the ground and in cyberspace to combat insurgency.

I further said that Afghan nation paid great sacrifices in combating terrorism and the world should stand with Afghanistan, which is considered the heart of Asia, and stop the persistent bleeding for the region's safety.

The achievements of the CICA was pointed out by Gu Ziping, Chairman of the Task Force of the Chinese Chairmanship of the CICA. He said that the Asia security concept had been promoted on a large scale and the world thinks about the security in Asia.

According to him, the conferences and summits are providing good platform for dialogue and negotiation and a series of activities and discussions are held in gaining sustainable development. So far, the membership of CICA had been extended. Moreover, the message of Xi Jinping read by Chen Yuan said that CICA met the common aspiration of people.

The objectives of CICA are to promote the spirit of co-existence, resolve disputes in a peaceful manner, enhance tolerance and regional cooperation, and stress the role of diplomatic approach for gaining peace and stability rather than persistent enforcement of power.

If the world seeks to respect the rights of all countries and individuals, promotes global cooperation and stands as an iron fist against terrorism, the political and economic crises will come to an end.

China plays its role very constructively in providing the platform for understanding, expressing views and sharing ideas for gaining sustainable development, political stability and economic progress.

To sum up, China should be a role model for countries for extending the "soft power" rather than hard power. The world needs to pursue the strategy of "soft power" for overcoming the crises.

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## Which One: Diplomatic Negotiation or Military Action?

By Sakhi Danish

Militancy is the crux of problem in the region mainly Afghanistan. Terrorist networks seek to extend their reach through suicide bombings and deadly attacks. If you view daily news in Asian countries, the casualty rate of terrorist victims is increasing. People are hurt mentally, physically and emotionally. However, military attacks against terrorism have been proved abortive, since people are killed or amputated on a massive scale throughout the region. Afghanistan is one of the countries remaining vulnerable to militancy and the Taliban guerilla fighters are carrying out extremely deadly attacks.

The issue of terrorism came to stalemate in Afghanistan and debated hotly in recent days with the Taliban's intensified attacks. The US, which is Afghanistan's ally, intends to review its strategy regarding the growing militancy in the country. Reports say that a high-level delegation of US senators met civil and military leaders and visited the South Waziristan tribal region along with Pakistani army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Monday. Subsequently, the delegation arrived in Kabul on Tuesday to meet Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, CEO Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, US commanders and Afghan high-ranking officials to discuss the security situation.

"We have made it very clear that we expect they (Pakistan) will cooperate with us, particularly against the Haqqani network and against terrorist organizations," McCain, chairman of the US Senate Armed Services Committee, is cited as saying. "If they don't change their behavior, maybe we should change our behavior towards Pakistan as a nation."

The senators' visit to Islamabad and Kabul comes at a time when the US is gearing up to send more troops to Afghanistan to support Afghan forces straining to beat back the resurgent Taliban. McCain called for more than just troops, however, urging "a strategy to win" a war that has dragged on for 16 years and which even US generals concede is at a "stalemate".

The US currently has 8,400 troops deployed under the NATO banner, and is thought to be mulling sending up to 4,000 more. In addition, NATO, whose Operation Resolute Support numbers some 13,500, including the Americans, also promised last week to enhance its presence in Afghanistan.

Afghan defense officials have welcomed this strategy which will take a "regional approach" rather than addressing the country's long-running war in isolation.

In the meantime, Afghanistan will follow the negotiation of peace with the Taliban elements. For instance, the leader of Hezb-e-Islami party Gulbuddin Hekmatyar has ushered in a new reconciliation process to bring the Taliban to negotiating table. This comes as the hope for negotiation had shattered as the militant fighters repeatedly held out against the negotiation and continued violence and bloodshed. In brief, the Afghan government as part of its peace initiatives has knocked on several doors over the past fifteen years with the hope of persuading the militant group to hold negotiation. But the Taliban denied to do so.

In addition to leaving the door of negotiation open to warring parties, the Afghan government will also seek military action and welcome any effective strategies suggested by its allies and neighboring countries. The militants, mainly the Taliban, are left with two choices for long ago either to face military action or hold talks. The High Peace Council (HPC) is operating actively to persuade the Taliban to stop killing innocent civilians.

With the repeated failure of peace process, Afghan nation hardly ever hold out hope and optimism regarding this process. The question is that will Hekmatyar be able to persuade the Taliban to hold talks? The role of Hekmatyar being newly put into practice is a mystery for the nation and not predictable.

I am not hopeful enough in this regard, since Hekmatyar was in conflict with the Taliban both ideologically and militarily. For example, his men had clashes with the Taliban many times in the past. Moreover, he condemned Taliban's attacks against the Afghan nation. On the other hand, his agreement with Afghan government drew Taliban's condemnation. But he was in the heart of political issues and gained much experience.

Perhaps his close relation with Pakistani and Afghan government might bridge the gap between the two countries so as to hold joint struggle for peace.

What can one say is that there is no other way except for holding negotiation or intensifying military action? Is there a third way? The cause for concern is that both ways need to be changed and a traditional manner will not tackle the political crises. Now not only Afghanistan but the countries involved in this stalemate should seek the more effective way out of these two dilemmas. What is more important is that combating terrorism, in any possible ways, needs regional and global cooperation.

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