

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

# Daily Outlook

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## Education Ruined in Helmand

We admit the role of quality education central to development of every country we aspire to associate with, anyway. It is believed education is one of the elements; entailing dynamic programs of socio-political and economic riches –it can only transform us from underdeveloped state into fully developed state. We have been narrating tales of technological progress, economic gains and educational developments the rest of the world has achieved, bidding to create an inspiration to our fate makers' so that they could steer the country on an agreeable course of sustainable success.

It is heart wrenching to find education sector meagerly administered and poorly governed –the cry for lack of resources is high, however when substantiated is defrauded. Afghan education sector already suffering of poor management, is struck by sever stroke of fund misappropriation. Education sector is worst hit by meager performance –the allegation of fund embezzlement adds to its complication.

With exception to poor governance and bad administration insecurity is another factor harming education sector. It is alarming to learn the Helmand province bearing the brunt of insecurity pushing educational institutes to closure. Helmand's education officials have said over 100 schools have been closed in the province on account of security threats, with the majority of them located in the northern districts. In addition to the confirmed closures, provincial officials have said that even in the cases of schools that are remaining open, families are declining to send their children to school out of fear of security threats.

According to Helmand's Department of Education, there are a total of 385 schools in the province, with 192,000 male students and 50,000 female students. Officials say 150 schools, or 43 percent, are thought to be closed at the moment, amounting to about 100,000 students. While provincial officials say some progress was made in getting schools reopened in recent months, instability in northern Helmand is now forcing many schools to close rapidly, curtailing much of the progress previously made.

Contrary to the said data the members of civil society activists in Helmand have reported a higher number of closed schools than the one quoted by provincial officials. In each school from 500 to 2,000 students have been deprived of education, and the continuation of the situation will mean an illiterate generation ahead. Nearly 100,000 students have been unable to attend more than 100 schools where they are enrolled in southern Helmand province due to insecurity, officials say. The official said 192,000 students, including 51,000 girls, were being taught by over 3,000 teachers, including 564 female teachers, in the province.

On the other side the central government and education department show complete negligence in this regard. Afghanistan making education sector's priority is reflected from its spending on education. At present the spending on education is not enough seeing the magnitude of illiteracy. The remedy is to increase the proportion of public resources going into education. If tax-to-GDP ratio cannot be increased, the state should be willing to divert resources from sectors with lower priority towards education. The donor community has been prepared to help with funds when it is not feared that domestic resources were constrained to allow for an increase in public sector expenditure on education. Sticking to state of constant denial, owing the responsibility of mishaps undertaken in one's realm marks an in-depth degree of incompetence whilst negating any expectancy of betterment. Consequently the politician lost in delusion try not to revisit the grey areas of governance, consequently improvement turned an intangible target given a rational dictum for intellectual and material achievements has never been a persuasive discourse for our politician. Regretfully the efforts are mostly exercised to earn the credit for else good deeds instead of owing and following a clear stance. At these very dismal circumstances the government has to turn education sector into one of the well-funded sector, aiming to rid the country out of calamity of illiteracy. The government must work on training, welfare and other facilities of teachers to make it a preferable and a dignified sector. The teachers should only be inducted provided they pass various stages of test and interviews. It is right time the government gets this sector streamlined well nurtured capable to compete with developing countries of the world. A nation reaches to prominence, turn unbeatable and matchless, only when greater intrepid steps are taken to eliminate illiteracy by declaring the state of educational emergency. The profound significance of education in societal ascend is established and undisputed, contrary to being failed to inspire our politicians. Education is one of the necessities of the humans and, therefore, a prime responsibility and obligation of the states and governments to impose it without any regional or class discrimination. Many states like that of ours, myopically perceive the fate of nation guided by foreign investments or donations which is unarguable fallacy. It is the right time, to realize, education economy can duly carry us along the avenues of long-lasting success. Without giving education first priority we can not keep pace with technological, innovative and scientific advancement the world has attained. The education itself is a proof to the progressiveness and development of the nations. The most developed nations in the worlds have most developed and best education systems while, the underdeveloped, struggling ones and one with the bad economy and global ranks have the bad education systems when compared to the developed ones.



# The Chronic Problem of Women

By Hujjatullah Zia

According to reports, violence against women has increased by 8 percent in recent months in Bamyan province and the perpetrators go unscathed from prosecution. The victims have voiced against the injustice going on in judicial systems and this incident adds insult to the injury of the women outraged by rape or physical and mental tortures. Violence against women is a chronic problem in collective and individual life in Afghanistan and women were deemed inferior many years back. Yet the patriarchal system holds sway in the country.

The images of abused and helpless Afghan women incessantly flood our minds, undermining the significant role of women as agents of change in Afghanistan. During the 1920s and 70s, a period of economic and political stability, a large number of Afghan women asserted their rights and continued their education and professional pursuits. These women belonged to a privileged economic background; all the same their role and aspirations offer the world an alternative narrative. Acknowledging the agency, contributions, and strong voice of Afghan women does not undermine the stories of women like Nazia, an 18-year-old Afghan woman whose nose and ears were sliced off by her husband and appeared on the cover of Time magazine in August 2010, or Sitara, a 30-year-old woman whose nose and lips were lopped off by her addict husband in Herat province in 2013 and their audacious spirit, whose story of sufferings is one too many for our world.

Last year, BBC reported about two girls who fell victim to sexual aggression in Baghlan Province in North of Afghanistan. When a 9-year-old girl was raped by a man, four male members of the victim's family attacked his home and committed the same honor-killing against his 15-year-old sister as revenge.

Although, since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, Afghan women have made significant advances in rights, with millions of girls attending schools and women holding government posts. But with the steady withdrawal of foreign forces and the Taliban insurgency still resilient, there are growing fears the gains will be lost. The truth is that a backlash against women rights campaigns started back in 2001 after the overthrow of the Taliban. Its first public face was the young TV presenter Shaima Rezaeey. Accused of flirting on TV, the music show presenter was found dead in 2005. The murder was never fully investigated but rumors abounded that hers was a Taliban murder or maybe an "honor killing". These two possibilities could be expressed in one breath showed that the misogyny of the average Afghan family was perhaps not vastly different from that of a Taliban state.

Shaima's killing made it clear: if there was one part of Afghan society that was ready to embrace women's rights, there was another part that was ready to suppress them. Women soon discovered that the enemies of women's rights were as omnipresent as dust and corruption. Neologisms such as "the Talib in suits" or "the tie-wearing Talib" were coined to sum up encounters with misogynist men dressed up as progressives. Some of them held PhDs others were Fulbright scholars. But a university degree was no guarantee for a progressive mind.

Meanwhile, the silence of the women whose very job was to stand up for Afghan women against this steady backlash was conspicuous, but not surprising. Many of them were mere extensions of the same mafia clans that had already infiltrated politics and economy. Few of them believed in feminism. Some publicly distanced themselves from women's rights others openly supported the Taliban.

Women's struggle for civic and human rights still has a long way to go. Three decades of war has left many Afghans both eager for change and afraid of it. There are still many instances of ordinary women experiencing domestic violence, being sexually abused, or being forced into marriage. Women in senior leadership roles – such as in parliament or the police – are still being murdered. Some men feel threatened by the presence of women in senior positions. These men see women's rights as the "westernization" of Afghan culture and a threat to moral standard.

The women right based on quality, access to higher education, and their escape from narrow gender roles is not easily achieved. The struggle for sexual equality based on civil rights has a long history and is likely to continue. In traditionally patriarchal society any improvement in the status of women has for reaching consequences and produces fundamental social and political change. Therefore it is always resisted by the established powers in a society. However, it seems certain that they will ultimately have to relent because struggle based on equal rights for women is both necessary and desirable.

Education is the best strategy to liberate women from male domination. Investing in girls' education is critical to addressing girls' needs and concerns as well as human rights. It has been shown that girls who go to school and stay in school are more likely to find jobs and are able to earn more for their families and communities. Beyond protective security measures, the only way to ensure women's human rights in Afghanistan and to truly empower women in the long run is through offering primary, secondary, and higher education that will foster literacy, free-thinking and knowledge of international human rights standards.

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## Role of Ethics in Politics

By Dilawar Sherzai

There have been different discussions regarding the role of ethics in politics. Some believe that is impossible to separate them and it would be even unwise to do so, while there are others who believe that separation of ethics from religion is necessary to ensure proper political developments. Among the political philosophers who were the founders of idea of separation of ethics from politics in modern political study was the Italian political philosopher and politician, Machiavelli.

Machiavelli broke away from the tradition upheld by Plato, Aristotle and medieval thinkers which looked at the state in terms of ethical end and purpose of making men happy and good. Machiavelli ignored the ethical purpose of the state. The state was not a means to an end but an end in itself with its own interests. State power was an end in itself and not a means to gig her moral end of promoting social welfare. To Machiavelli, it was clear that the interests of the state justified everything. The end justified the means. Public necessity knows no law. State actions were not to be judged by individual ethics. Machiavelli prescribes a double standard of conduct for the ruler and for the individual citizens on the basis that the ruler is a creator of law as also of morality for moral obligations must ultimately be sustained by law. As such he is above both. It will be the ruin of the state, were it to be weighted down by individual ethic. Public and private standards of conduct were different. It was always wrong for an individual to tell a lie but sometimes necessary and good for the ruler to do so in the interests of the state. The state has no ethics. It is a non ethical entity. Machiavelli believed that the justice of the state was the interest of the sovereign. The safety of the state was the supreme law. Machiavelli believed that the state was the highest form of human association and had a superior claim to a man's obligations. Reasons of state must outweigh any ethical considerations. Public interests were the most potent of all motives for political action. Public standards of action were different from private standards. It is wrong for a private individual to kill but it is not wrong for the state to kill by punishment for crime. The state hangs a murderer because public safety demands it and because public interests are more important than private interests of the criminal. Private interests of ethics have nothing to do with public action. Public conduct is neither inherently good, nor bad. It is good if its results are good. A good citizen may be a bad man of whom patriotism is the only moral law. Citizen acts for himself; the state acts for all and therefore the same principles of conduct do not apply to both. The state is neither moral nor immoral but non-moral. It is not a moral entity like the individual and, therefore, individual ethics do not apply to it.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that Machiavelli had little place for ethic or for that matter, for religion in a system or political philosophy and that formed the chief difference between him

and the medieval writers. Aristotle had already distinguished ethics from politics but had not separated the two whereas Machiavelli brought about a complete divorce between them. Moral virtues had their own value but he refused to assign them any place in his scheme of things. Machiavelli agrees that qualities like liberality, mercy, fidelity, courage, chastity and sincerity make a good man and add, "I know that everyone will congress that it would be most praiseworthy for a prince to possess all the above mentioned qualities which are held to be good." Again, "one cannot call it a virtue to murder one's fellow citizens, to betray one's friends, to be without faith, without mercy, without religion." Here the word virtue is used by Machiavelli in the conventional sense. Morality was not denied but was subordinated to politics and, therefore, Machiavelli, is not immoral but unmoral in his politics. To Machiavelli there is no absolute good or evil. That is good which serves the interests of the individuals and of the community and which brings security. With Machiavelli, the end justified the means. Machiavelli may be called the "founder of utilitarian ethics".

Machiavelli, also, does not believe in a supernatural end for man. Men value material prosperity, power and fame, etc. Disbelieving in a supernatural end for man, Machiavelli has no use for divine law. Machiavelli not only separated morality from politics, but also relegated religion to a very subordinate position in his political system, and it is because of this that we think that the modern study of politics begins with Machiavelli. For centuries politics and religion had been intertwined. Politics was, in fact, the handmaid of religion. Some of the best medieval thinkers subordinated the state to the church. As a political realist Machiavelli realized that passive Christian virtues, like gentleness and meekness, had little bearing on the sordid Italian politics of the day where success followed only the pagan virtues of courage, audacity, cunning and duplicity. Italy had no place for Christianity for, as represented by papacy, it was deliberately impeding the realization of Italian unity. Once again, Machiavelli was not irreligious but non-religious. He was more attracted by the propagandist utility than by the doctrinal virtues of Christianity. Machiavelli knew the public utility of the binding force of religion without which the state could not exist and he looked upon devotion to religion as a useful weapon in the hands of state to be skillfully used in furtherance of the ends of the state.

An important contribution of Machiavelli to political science was his rejection of medieval thought with its emphasis on the supernatural end of man, its Natural and Divine Laws and its universal authorities in the Papacy in the Roman Empire sapping the life out of the state. Machiavelli rescues the state out of these shackles and gives it a modern touch. His repudiation of medieval Universalism, his attempt to create a strong, centralized and independent state and his insistence that a state should expand up to the limits of its racial homogeneity and no further pave the way for the most central subject of modern thought namely the concept of the nation-state.

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