

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



June 04, 2017

On Worsening Security Situation

The security situation in Kabul appears to be very tense after the tragic incident on Wednesday. Following that attack, on Friday, about 5 people were killed by the clashes that erupted between the security forces and the protestors who had gathered on the streets of Kabul against Wednesday's incident. On Saturday another tragic incident took place during the funeral of a Senator's son, who was killed in the protest. Three suicide bombers targeted the funeral in cemetery at Khair Khana in Kabul. The attack resulted in the death of 20 people and injury more than 87 others.

The incident further sparked the emotions of the people who were already protesting against the rising insecurity. The situation has now turned to be very fragile, and it will definitely test the unity of the people of Afghanistan and the capability of its leaders to tackle the situation without inviting further instability and chaos.

Meanwhile, there are hundreds of protestors who have gathered around Emergency Hospital, and they are in a state of protest against the security officials. They demand resignation of key security officials after three tragic incidents in Kabul in just five days.

President Ashraf Ghani, meanwhile, has asked for harmony and unity, but that is very difficult to see among the angry protestors. It is really vital that the protestors should be tackled with proper diplomacy, their voices should be heard, and the officials must ensure that they pursue the real causes of the recent violence.

Meanwhile, The Special Chargé d'Affaires Ambassador for the U.S to Kabul, Hugo Llorens, has also called on all Afghans to unite "during this painful time". He said in a statement on Saturday, which summarizes the situation very well, "Grief can be a powerful motivator and I urge all Afghans and the international community to come together during this painful time... Friday's protests reflect the frustration of many Afghans. While peaceful demonstrations are welcome in a democracy, some narrow political elements used this opportunity to spark violence, resulting in more death and suffering, compounding the grief... Now is the time to stand unified and announce to the enemies loud and clear that Afghans, along with their international partners, will not allow cowards to break the Afghan resolve to achieve a prosperous, stable, and peaceful nation that they have long deserved. The enemies of Afghanistan cannot win. They will not win."

It is really vital for Afghan people and authorities not to get distracted as the terrorists and enemies of Afghanistan want. They should be responsible and sensible enough to remain united and face the ongoing challenges with required will and determination. The terrorists want them to be disunited so that they are able to launch their filthy objectives. They want to ignite another civil war so that Afghanistan is not able to come out of instability and chaos; therefore, it is vital to see the traces of the conspiracy that is being built in the country.

It is really unfortunate for Afghanistan that even after so many sacrifices that are given by the country, the prospects of peace and tranquility are not very optimistic. The insecurity seems to be on the rise in different parts of the country and the response of the relevant authorities are not truly effective. It seems the authorities do not have any clear idea about how to tackle the situation and help the country go through this crucial period with triumph, and now the people are being distracted as well, which is making the task even more challenging.

On the other hand, Taliban and Daesh have spread their networks in different provinces and everyday show their presence in some way or the other. Sometimes they target the innocent civilians and at others they target the security personnel. Afghan security forces, on most of the occasions, take actions only after such incidents and calm down the situation temporarily. When the situation seems to be normalized, the insurgents again move forward and make their attacks.

In fact, the security forces do not seem to have a proactive approach, which may be because of lack of any clear strategy in the top rankings of the government officials, who, themselves, are involved in their own differences instead of standing united to counter the growing threats of Taliban and Daesh.

If the authorities do not get really serious and determined to solve the security issues, it may start haunting Afghanistan to a great extent and may even undo the achievements that have been acquired in the last 17 years. The insurgents will keep on carrying out their activities and terrorize the people of Afghanistan like they are doing now. The current situation clearly highlights the fact that the insurgents are not even inclined towards peace process. However, before any hopes of acquiring peace and tranquility can be turned into reality, the security forces and government authorities must make sure that they fulfill their responsibilities with determination and untiring efforts. Definitely, Afghan people have given many sacrifices and after so many sacrifices, it is important that Afghanistan should see a future full of peace and tranquility; however, for that to happen it is imperative that Afghan leadership must prove itself capable of designing and following a workable strategy to counter terrorism in true sense.



The Philosophy behind Suicide Attacks

By Dr. Aman Fasihi

The Wednesday's suicide bombing shook Kabul city and affected the minds of people. Although Kabul residents, alike other Afghans, are used to acts of horror and terror and suicide bombings are somewhat common, the recent bombing was strongly horrible with following nature.

First, the recent explosion was extremely strong. It is believed that following the Shah Shaheed suicide bombing in Kabul, it was the second strongest explosion that has ever happened. Human catastrophe, mammoth destructions and piercing sound as a result of the bombing reveal its strength.

Secondly, the location of the bombing was critical. To one's unmitigated surprise, it occurred where there is considered tightly secure. It happened in the heart of the city close to most significant governmental institutions such as Presidential Palace, the offices of First and Second Vices President, NDS, the Palace of the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Local Organs and the embassies of Germany, England, Turkey and Iran.

The third critical issue is the time of the explosion. The incident happened in the Holy Month of Ramadan in which war and violence are forbidden. In short, the explosion happened in a sacred month by those who claim to fight for religious issues.

The fourth important aspect is the complexity of the action. Carrying explosives by a tanker and exploding it in downtown is a meticulous action which has been hidden from the security officials. It bespeaks of the fact that the acts of terror become more complicated with each passing day. On the other hand, it indicates that there are strong intelligence behind the scene who orchestrate such attacks. Therefore, Afghan government and security system should not underestimate such issues.

The quick action of security forces, managing the crisis and taking the wounded to hospital show the high capacity of the forces, though.

Many reasons have been said and written regarding terrorist acts and suicide bombings. It is said that those who resort to suicide bombings are made for this act through addictive drug and freed from willpower and sound mind. The fact is that nothing other than an internal justification can lead to such acts.

In other words, what drives a terrorist to kill himself and others is their addictive ideology rather than addictive drug. Now the questions are that what is the reason behind legitimizing these actions for the perpetrators? Based on which reasons do they spill the blood of innocent civilians in the Holy Month of Ramadan? It is

believed that an action will not be done unless it makes sense of the doer, especially when the action is carrying out a suicide bombing which will lead to the death of the perpetrators and others.

This question can be answered from various perspectives, but this commentary tends to answer it from sociological view. According to sociology, although committing suicide is totally a private phenomenon as people decide in their own will to end their lives, it roots in social issue and the manner of a person's interaction with society.

Psychologically, there are three types of suicide.

First, egoistic suicide which happens when one feels lonely and solitary or whose social ties are on the wane or broken. Second type is altruistic suicide, which happens when one's social tie reaches to excess and giving more value to society rather than themselves. The third type is fatalistic suicide.

Altruistic suicide happens in a society where there is a strong social solidarity and the social conscience hold strong sway in a way that one is ready to sacrifice his/her life for a group's objective. Suicide bombing falls in this category as a person kills himself for others like a soldier's sacrifice for the country.

A suicide bomber resorts to suicide for the sustenance of a group. In the current social situation, the false interpretations of religion as martyrdom, sacrifice and selfness, not in their true meanings, justify their actions. Secondly, there are some vulnerable groups who succumb to false ideology such as members of the Taliban, al-Qaeda and self-styled Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

These factions recruit individuals from vulnerable groups and socialize them in military centers or seminaries through false interpretation of religion, plant their own dreams in their minds and exploit them for their political interests. No wonder, members of these groups resort to suicide attacks under the terms of selflessness, sacrifice and safeguarding religion and society.

Moreover, their strong ties with their groups weaken their interaction with society. The weaker their relation becomes with society, the more dangerous enemy people look to them. Hence, harming or killing others seems not only legitimate but also necessary to them. The terrorists' acts and words in our country reveal this fact.

According to them, they are saviors, the political structure is the product of western modernity, and politicians are the US and western puppet. Thus, they legitimize killing people and carrying out suicide attacks, which become rife with the passage of time.

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No Panacea for the Bleeding Wounds?

By Hujjatullah Zia

The recent spate of suicide bombings has left Afghan nation at the mercy of escalated insurgency.

The Wednesday and Saturday's heavy offensives in Kabul spread a strong sense of fear and disappointment in the air and triggered hatred against the hands engineering the attacks behind the scene. Shedding streams of blood in the sacred month of Ramadan have outraged public conscience.

The heart-wrenching stories as a result of the terrorists' sinister deeds fill one with an outpouring of grief. The heart of stone will melt with the blood oozing from sliced throats and amputated arms and legs. Men, women and children are butchered without an iota of mercy.

This year Afghanistan has sustained large casualties up to now and higher than the last year's current period. The responsibility for the two recent terrorist attacks have been denied by the Taliban. According to an official privy to the issue, Haqqani network and Lashkar-e-Taiba have carried out the attacks and will orchestrate more.

The tension between Kabul and Islamabad will predictably resurface following the attacks carried out by terrorists who enjoy safe havens in Pakistan.

The recent attacks came as Afghanistan, Pakistan and China held the first round of trilateral Practical Cooperation Dialogue (PCD) in Beijing. Meanwhile, Kabul will host an international conference on June 06, 2017 regarding the political instability and terrorist issue.

Holding the trilateral PCD, the Afghan-Pak relation seemed to recover but it did not last for a week. So, it will be the end of PCD.

According to a Pakistani Media, Dan Coats, who, as National Intelligence director, and also leads a team of more than a dozen spy agencies, including the CIA and FBI claimed that Islamabad had failed to curb militants and terrorists in Pakistan and because of this failure, "these groups will present a sustained threat to the US interests in the region and continue to plan and conduct attacks in India and Afghanistan".

The issue of terrorism has turned highly serious since Kabul came under severe attacks. Rumors say that Haqqani network and Lashkar-e-Taiba will continue their deadly attacks in Kabul, which is likely to be in their agenda. Based on a source, the two terrorist networks decided to carry out attacks through exploding vehicles in crowded areas, which is against the rule of war, religious tenets and ethical code. Director Coats told the US Senate committee that despite increased military efforts to defeat them, the Taliban militants had and would continue to make gains, especially in rural areas.

Little wonder, there is no bona fide intention for peace talks and warring factions have intensified their attacks

despite Afghanistan's constant calls for peace. It is hoped that in the upcoming conference, the participants discuss and come with an effective strategy for combating terrorism rather than reconciliation process, which has never come to fruition. A global campaign against the terrorists' safe havens will be a right strategy.

Afghan analysts and officials say that paying lip service to counterinsurgency by Pakistan will not be acceptable. To build trust, Islamabad will have to prove its sincerity by action not empty talks. For instance, warring factions have their sanctuaries and seminaries in Pakistani soil and, according to public belief, orchestrate their deadly attacks against Afghan nation from across the border.

The demise of Mullah Omar in Karachi in April 2013, the death of his successor Mullah Akhtar Mansour in Baluchistan on May 21, 2016 and al-Qaeda's leader Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad on May 2, 2011 bespeak of the terrorists' sanctuaries across the border. A bilateral counterinsurgency attacks against all terrorist networks will mitigate insurgency both in Afghanistan and Pakistan and recover the mutual trust.

Spilling the blood of civilians - be it in Afghanistan or any other parts of the world - is highly outrageous. Non-combatants should be able to exercise their rights and liberty without a sense of fear or threat. They have nothing to do with war and their lives must be respected. To put it succinctly, killing civilians will never ensure paradise for the murderers.

More importantly, Afghan nation will have to maintain their unity in such a sensitive condition. One of the objectives of the warring parties is believed to be stoking sectarianism in the public air.

For example, the ISIL fighters murdered ethnic minority groups and attacked mourning proceedings with the aim of triggering sectarian violence.

Similarly, widening the gap between state and nation will be the next objectives of the militants. The public are not supposed to succumb to the surge of their emotion. Chanting slogan against officials will not only not alleviate the challenges but also compound the tension. Afghan nation must not fall for their plots.

Afghans payed large sacrifices with the hope of breathing a sigh of relief in a peaceful society.

However, the bleeding and tragic incidents have never come to an end. Life remains cheap. In brief, our national responsibility in this critical time is maintaining the spirit of brotherhood.

The government's responsibility is to find out a significant strategy for combating terrorism along with neighboring countries and its international allies in the upcoming international conference.

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