

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

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Does Everyone Have Basic Needs?

Even though human beings need different types of requirements in their lives, the requirements to live alive are the most rudimentary and significant ones. These comprise of food, cloth and shelter. Provided with these rudimentary necessities, human beings are able to chase their other needs, objectives and goals. Providentially, our planet earth is embroidered with different kinds of resources and all these resources help human beings in gaining their needs. Inopportunately, it is still peculiar to find millions of people without the rudimentary needs in the world.

Why is it so that even after having large reservoirs of different resources human beings are not able to get even their basic requirements? Though human beings are the most sensible of all the creatures and they claim to be the unsurpassed, they are not able to use these resources astutely. From the very first human beings, like all the other creatures, human beings have endeavored to discover ways of satisfying their needs. They have travelled much in this regard and yet stand nowhere. They have formed societies and developed systems, yet they are not able to provide even the basic needs of life to the all the human beings. This is really very much pitiful. Some of the thinkers suggest that human beings are bound by the law of nature to be so. They believe that all human beings may not be able to have their basic needs as only those among them are capable of doing so who are the fittest among them. They, truthfully, strive to apply the biological theory of Charles Darwin in society - "struggle for survival, survival of the fittest." Nonetheless, they forget to miss a very important point that the theory may apply for the struggle among different species with their environment, not among the members of the same specie for their personal benefits. If as specie human beings adopt the theory of evolution, they would find out ways of making human beings survive against the changing nature of their circumstances, not fighting one another to steal basic requirements. Applying the theory among the different human beings of the same society may at the end result in the extinction of the entire society.

The examples of ants and honey bees can be cited here for further explanation. They work in communities and support each other for gathering their basic requirements and afterwards using them when they need. They are always found to be working together; supporting each other in the chores that are useful for the community as a whole. They have exemplary discipline and portray the best example of collective life. They have every right to survive as 'specie'.

Ill-fatedly, human beings are not so. Human beings are divided into 'haves' and 'have-nots'. They are divided in the rich and the poor. They rich have all the requirements of lives and they enjoy all the luxuries as well while the poor suffer because of the lack of basic requirements. This is not nature that has decided such an arrangement; it is human beings themselves. The nature does not differentiate the human beings into rich and poor. The scented breeze in the nature blows for everyone without the distinction of race, community, poor and rich. The river that flows in nature provides everyone with same bewitching scene and cold water to drink. The fountains do not recognize the strata and the economic status. And even the natural calamities; like earthquakes, floods and deadly hurricanes destroys everyone equally. However, some may have developed better defense against all these calamities by the dint of their wealth, which is because of the economic system in society developed by human beings themselves, not the nature.

It is the socio-economic and political systems in the country that divide the human beings in different classes. These classes are distinguished with vivid and sharp boundaries. The differences found in these classes are mammoth and one wonders how human beings are really satisfied with so much distinctions. The examples are not difficult to find. There are many millions of poor people in the world. They have not enough food to eat, no water to drink and no cloth to wear. The economic system developed by human beings, with the intentions to fulfill their requirements, has in fact cheated them and they are at a stage of misery. The class-based system and the vivid class disparities have neutralized the capacity of human beings to fulfill their basic requirements from the infinite resources.

This has generated an imbalanced system. This imbalance has further created different sorts of evils in society. There are crimes and injustices because of the same system. Poor, because of negligence and lack of basic requirements are bound to break the law and the rich, because of their authority to mock the law and order system, break it. Poor, to quench the thirst of their children and fill their stomach with few morsels of food, break the law; while the rich, to quench their thirst for luxury and adventure, break it. This system cannot guarantee sustainability and has to change or to die one day. It is a widely accepted proverb that necessity is the mother of invention. Human necessities will compel them to design a better system - a system that would guarantee the providence of basic requirements to all the human beings on the planet earth.

**Democracy Enshrines Equality of Opportunity!**

By Asmatyari

The ultimate goal of democracy is to preserve and promote the dignity and fundamental rights of the individual, to achieve social justice, foster the economic and social development of the community, strengthen the cohesion of society and build a favorable environment for international peace. Democracy, development and human rights are therefore interdependent. The government has been poor enough to ensure all such provisions of democratic system.

Afghanistan has been ravaged by years of conflict. Subsequent to Taliban's regime toppled, Afghanistan was put on the way to democracy, the established and wide practiced system of government. Afghan national institutions are severely factional and lack a cohesive national security culture. In other words, Afghan institutions are not sufficiently focused on defending their own national interests. Influential figures continue to promote patronage networks further institutionalizing favoritism and corruption. The Afghan government continues to give free rein to well-known warlords and human rights abusers as well as corrupt politicians and businesspeople, further eroding public support. Reconstruction of the economic and political institutions through better administrative reforms is perhaps the most important means to ensuring long-term success of a state.

The September 11 tragic incidence turned a blessing in disguise for Afghans that brought Taliban's repressive and despotic rule to an end. Subsequently, the modes of government altered but not the fate of people. The installment of democracy devoid of its fundamental requisites left the people suffer at the hand of non-conforming elements, insurgents and terrorists who at present seems to have grown mightier than previous. The centralized government brought forth, is perceived as continuation of denied political rights. The completion of two democratic terms and slight betterment in women rights and a small degree of freedom, of course, count the successes of the democratic government. The most crucial aspect that left undermined or ignored must be given prime importance in order to ensure vibrant democracy, as underlined below.

It ascertains, people's participation to play an active role in political and civic life. One expresses his will through regular free and fair elections. Voting in a democracy must be universal, equal and secret so that each of us can choose our representatives freely which is not witnessed in Afghanistan till date. Education and vibrant communications media are vital to be able to make an informed choice. Literacy rate touches the ground and media is highly restraint. The role citizens end after they cast their ballots; they aren't continually engaged in public affairs so that thus kept ignorant of their right and duties.

The Afghan population currently has few means of expressing dissent regarding policies carried out by the international community and the central government, which operates on a highly centralized patronage model in which power and resources are channeled through personal and political allies. The system lacks the connection, rules, and checks and balances necessary to make leaders truly accountable to the domestic population, which invites corruption, rent-seeking, and a hemorrhaging of domestic legitimacy. Local governmental bodies are the appropriate places for representing Afghans and responding to their needs, but these currently suffer from a lack of capacity, confusion over their roles and authorities, and little legitimacy.

Incorporating the promotion of equality and dignity through the system of equal value for the vote of all individuals regardless of their sex, religion, language, economic or social status in democracy ensures political justice which is the foundation of social and economic justice, dignity of the individual and national cohesion.

Without a well-functioning government apparatus, administrative system and an efficient and productive economy, no state will be able to maintain basic state functions. The objective is to strengthen planning and auditing activities, promote quality assurance, implement public welfare policies, organize management of human resources, maintain ongoing efforts to reform the administration and fight against corruption, and lay the foundations for managing finances and procurement. These broad based objectives can be met by inventing an efficient administrative system that could relieve Afghanistan out of lingering administrative problems.

In that pursuit a democratic institution must be built on structures and processes that are accountable, transparent, decentralized, and able to manage legitimate elections and the administration of justice, and operate under the oversight of the parliament. Furthermore, it should combat exclusion, protect public goods, actively engage civil society and the private sector, promote participation, and strengthen partnerships among sectors, groups, and every levels of government. Revitalizing public administration for people-centered development would require reform efforts that incorporate these characteristics.

Effective and efficient administrative system, including public sector management, promotes and strengthens democracy and good governance. An effectively functioning civil service is essential in order to ensure that democratically elected leaders are able to protect the rights of citizens and mobilize resources through taxes and other sources in order to pay for police, judges, and the provision of services. A consolidated democracy requires administrative capacity of the state to maintain law and order, and to promote and protect public goods such as environment. Public sector management capacity to perform the above and related tasks, however, requires merit based recruitment of qualified personnel, effective human resource development strategies, motivation and commitment of civil servants, and transparent processes for policy formulation, budgeting, and implementation.

Good governance, the prime pre-requisite of Afghanistan, refers to the question of how a society can organize itself to ensure equality of opportunity and equity (social and economic justice) for all citizens. Good governance is a value in itself, but it is also the most critical means to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)- the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, the achievement of universal primary education, the promotion of gender equality, the reduction of child mortality, the improvement of maternal health, the fight against HIV/AIDS, polio and other diseases, and the promotion of environmental sustainability and a global partnership for development. The government established on sound grounds of protection and promotion of right of every individual, is liable to achieve the heart and soul of masses and universal development goal alike -such act of governing is in fact in accordance to sprite of democracy.

Asmatyari is permanent writer of Daily outlook Afghanistan. He can be reached at asmatyari@gmail.com

Lee Kuan Yew: A Role Model for Afghan Politicians

By Ewaz Ali Bahrami

In March this year, Lee Kuan Yew, the founding father of modern Singapore who transformed the country from a small town into one of the wealthiest nations of the world, died. He was widely praised by world leaders, with US President Barack Obama calling him 'a true giant of history', and Chinese foreign ministry calling him "a uniquely influential statesman in Asia". Mr. Lee was prime minister of Singapore for 31 years, during which he led and oversaw modernization of the country. Singapore is one of the world's smallest countries while its population density is one of the highest. Singapore did not used to be such a great business hub as the modern day one is. It was a small fishing village with severe ethnic adversities, limited land and dwindling economy. In contrast to Muslim Majority Malaysia, Singapore was inhabited by majority of Chinese people. Only after 2 years of merger with the Federation of Malaysia, which Lee Kuan Yew campaigned for, Singapore was expelled from the federation. Lee Kuan Yew aware and afraid of the challenges his people were facing, announced the independence of a state which came to be known as modern day Singapore. That day, thousands of Singaporeans stood on the streets while watching their brave leader cry on air. The tears Lee wept that day, gave incentive to a nation to rise and change those tears to sweats of struggle and hard work. Now, Singapore nor is a fishing village neither it's a poor country.

Singapore's economic development can be an inspiring story for the war-ravaged Afghanistan. Three decades of subduing war, unstable security and trembling economy has brought Afghanistan to instability and extermination. Sporadic ethnic and sectarian clashes have also inflicted the nation in the past century. Afghan government is one of the most corrupt states as reported by Corruption Perception Index in 2014. What Afghanistan might need is a leader like Lee Kuan Yew. Lee can be an ideal role model to learn from, a role model to follow.

Though Singapore's development credit goes to him, but necessarily it does not mean that after his death Singapore will decline to its post-60s condition. Lee did not make a personality cult. In contrast, he made a system in which both Malays and Chinese would live peacefully hence the gate for economic impoverishment would open. He maintained good relations with his southern neighbor Indonesia and lately he tried to enhance relations with its one time hostile Malaysia. Singapore's GDP per capita is around \$78,000, a significant rise from approximately \$400 in the 60s. What made Singapore and Lee capable to fight its economic and land limitations is the lesson Afghanistan should learn and emulate.

It's often called that Singapore owes its development to Lee and the

phrase "Lee was Singapore" is used as a tribute to Lee. The question every Afghan should ask is that "Who is Afghanistan?" and does Afghanistan need that "someone" to develop? Whether Afghanistan would see such a statesman or not, would be a matter of history. The country has long been waiting for someone or some to salvage it.

Meanwhile in Afghanistan, the Coalition forces withdrew which means that the economic and military support umbrella would inevitably decline. Hence Afghans should find a source to fund their budget and the ANA should maintain security in the war-stricken country. On the other hand, the government should fight corruption and unite the country. These ambitions can not be fulfilled without a committed, clean and responsible country and sincere citizens who are willing to make endeavors for this country's development. Afghanistan is the potential trade and transport hub in the center of Asia linking South Asia to the oil and gas enriched countries of Central Asia.

Afghanistan's course of nation-building has been turbulent from the beginning. There have been wars, power struggles and foreign occupations of the country during the whole history of the nation. However, there can be some point to start building the country from scratch. There is abundance of examples of war-ravaged countries with troublesome histories that finally stood up and managed to change the course of history.

Afghanistan is no exception. There are many advantages and potentials for the country to start the nation-building anew. Afghanistan has a young population which could be a great opportunity for turning it into a valuable asset for its development. However, it also can be a serious threat for the country if it fails to develop its human resources. Also, there is a remarkable potential for the country to develop turn into a crossroads of business and trade cooperation. Afghanistan is located in a strategic location linking Central Asia and Europe with South Asia and Far East. For sustainable development, Afghanistan needs to find its suitable model for development. It cannot be necessarily the model used in Singapore, but it could be somehow similar given to Afghanistan's resources and population. Afghanistan needs to invest on potential areas i.e. development of human resources and transit and trade potentials. Singapore is now a role model for many nations for development. And it could be for Afghanistan too. Afghan politicians need to imitate successful statesmen of the world such as Lee Kuan Yew and many others.

Ewaz Ali Bahrami is a newly emerging columnist. He can be reached at outlookafghanistan@gmail.com

Chairman / Editor in Chief: Dr.Hussain Yasa

Vice Chairman: Kazim Ali Gulzari

Phone: +93 799 005 019/799 408 271/777 005 019

E-mail: mail@outlookafghanistan.com, outlookafghanistan@gmail.com

Address: V-137, Street 6, Phase 4, Shahrak Omeed Sabz, Kabul, Afghanistan

Sub Office: Shora Road, Street 10, District 6, Kartey 3, Kabul, Afghanistan

