

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



June 11, 2015

Words of Wisdom

The Greek society was well-known for its love and development in philosophy. The thinkers and philosophers in that society almost discussed all the basic questions of philosophy and strived to provide their answers according to their own thinking. One of their basic qualities that made them earn fame and familiarity with knowledge and wisdom was undoubtedly the capacity to question and search. Unfortunately, our society tends to lack that capacity. Our people do not have the capacity to question and search and mostly rely on their strong and mostly blind beliefs. They believe that their every thought is the ultimate truth. In a modern and sensible society if a person adopts such an approach, he will be expelled for the society. We have to, at least, accept this fact that there were some distinctions in the Greek society and now in modern Europe that have made them rule over the world both intellectually and materially. However, we are not able to realize this fact as true intellectualism is a miracle that we have never experienced. If it is a color, we are blind by birth. If it is a voice, we have always been deaf. If it is something to be expressed, we are totally dumb and if it is a hidden treasure, we do not have the capacity to search for it. We have only emotions, which we have guarded as our wealth and consider it our duty to unleash them every now and then.

Sometimes, these emotions erupt in the form of religious extremism and sometimes in the form of literary prejudice. If we see closely, most of our thinkers and writers have to write only about so-called literature and religious topics. In our intellectuals we do not find someone other than religious scholars, artists and critics. Greek society that was more than 2,000 years old had intellectuals and thinkers who would touch different topics and questions, while the modern societies of the world have touched almost every topic in the world and are now searching the space and other planets.

Our society, on the other hand, stands at a point where its intelligentsia have given up the habit of research and study in the modern sciences and studies. It is very difficult to find a group or institution of such intellectuals in our society who discover the realities of life and the universe objectively and scientifically. Though there are certain individuals who have such consideration but their number is really very small and they do not have enough support and cooperation to institutionalize their efforts.

Our people, without striving to find the truth, claim to know it. Their abstract thoughts and in certain cases even rough ideas are considered as ultimate truth by them. It is important to understand that those who claim to have found the truth, have the tendency to stick to it and keep on insisting upon it. They, thus, give up seeking for it and fall into the imagination that the ultimate reality has been discovered and there is no need of further exploration.

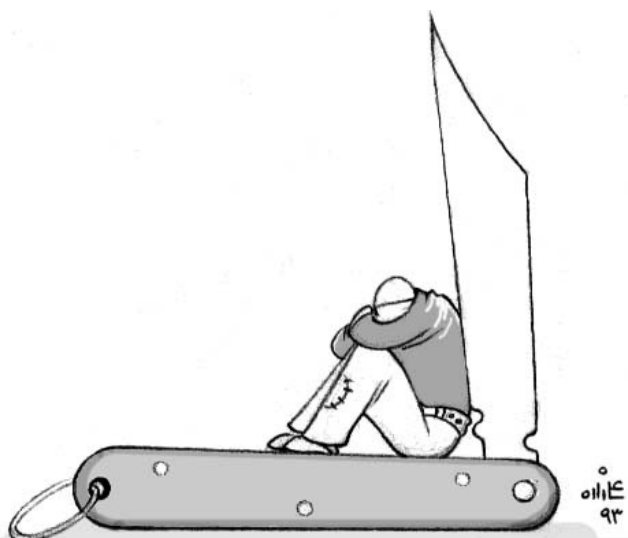
The matter of fact is that the human beings understand the world through their knowledge and human knowledge is not perfect and complete enough to understand the entire universe and different phenomena in it. Thus what they understand at a particular time may be true as per their knowledge at that time but as they further advance in their knowledge and understanding of the universe the situation may change. Their previous truth may seem insufficient and may require further elaboration or the facts may point towards a truth that is totally against the accepted truth and may, thus, reject it completely.

Those who believe that they know the ultimate truth are dangerous as well. They are dangerous in a sense that they consider others as not knowing the actual truths. Then, they become even more dangerous when they want to spread their perceived truths to others and even coerce them. They, sometimes, become violent and cannot tolerate that others should have opinion other than what they know; all because they know the ultimate truth.

Different extremist movements in the world, which have even killed thousands of people without any crime, have basically originated from the thinking that they are right and true, while the rest are wrong and must be amended. Taliban, for instance, consider their way of thinking and their beliefs as true and believe that all others are infidel. Thus it is their moral and the most sacred duty to make others follow the truth as well.

Resultantly, as Andre Gide has said we have to doubt those who find truth. We don't have to believe them but challenge them. Reconsider their conclusions and must strive to keep on searching for truer.

A scientific way of thinking is never to consider something as a complete truth or complete false; rather it suggests, as Henry Augustus Rowland had said, "There is no such thing as absolute truth and absolute falsehood. The scientific mind should never recognize the perfect truth or the perfect falsehood of any supposed theory or observation. It should carefully weigh the chances of truth and error and grade each in its proper position along the line joining absolute truth and absolute error."



Growing Violence Turned Usual Phenomenon

By Asmatyari

Seeing at the magnitude of aggression wreaked by violence-mongers, we find barbarism an overriding element of our society. The strength the anti-state elements have acquired marks the state of unwillingness to be curtailed. Following the pronounced spring offensive the summer offensive has begun rendering the foreign diplomats; public officials and civilian prime target of attacks. The growing attacks on foreign and civilians indicates the insurgents are underlining their pretentious presence. The individuals driven by evil motives, fear of losing what they owned, lust of having numerous monetary gains put them in the black race of domination, leading to formation of a human society we witness at the moment, characterized by rule of mob, violence, aggression, innumerable bloodshed and ruthless killings of fellowmen. Unluckily our society at present is governed by some of identical dilemmas. Apart from widespread bloodshed another element is that of mass disappearance of fellow citizens indefinitely at the hand of insurgents to get their malevolent designs met. There were large number of civilian abductions recorded at the hand of militants; however the tale of abduction of 31 Hazara went viral. The series of demonstration launched made the government make a way to safe release of those abductees. Finally the government leaned before the demands of terrorists and undertook prisoners swap of some 19 abductees. Reportedly, the government handed over 26 people, 22 of them children, in return for the release of 19 passengers. This is indeed a great move ahead making safe recovery of long awaited abductees. Nonetheless, it is discouraging trend that let the insurgents' musters up courage and confidence launching the deadliest attacks against civilians.

The whereabouts of the 12 remaining hostages kidnapped almost over three months ago is still unknown - multiple days after the release of 19 out of the 31 bus passengers. To exert pressure demanding the safe release of rest, families are yet in protest over government's failure. The government assuring the affected families their safe release - does not suffice to foil the irreversibly soaring passion of kiths-and-kin. The member of civil society accuses the government of exercising negligibly least effort releasing the abductees. In order to unearth the grave situation of human basic right to life, the UN's former report is an eye opener for the government and its security institutions. The report discloses 1,000 civilians being killed in the Afghan conflict in the first four months of the year, while 1,989 were injured. It is not only the civilians who are preyed the aid workers are not spared either in the ongoing conflict. Mark Bowden, the UN Secretary-General's Deputy Special Representative for Afghanistan, while talking at the Second Independent Media and Civil Society Forum in Kabul, said the intensifying conflict in 2015 is taxing humanitarian capacities. The UN chronicles serious reservations against ruthless killing of civilians in general and aid worker in particular. While calling the attention to the crucial role civil so-

ciety plays in holding non-state actors accountable for their actions UN representative said, "At this period of increased need, it is particularly disturbing to note that humanitarian aid workers are increasingly becoming targets themselves." He stressed the role of civil society and media to properly advocated about the conflict and ongoing worsening humanitarian situation.

The report attributes most of the casualties to Taliban who is said to be engaged in large-scale attacks and bombings across the country as part of their summer offensive. The report mentions southern Kandahar province the most insecure with greatest life claiming incidents. The report continued that a total of 4,672 insurgents and 331 soldiers were killed during the month, a sharp spike in the causality toll as compared to the past few months. The report read a total of 60 bombings and IED explosions have occurred in the recent month. In addition, the report also attributed 47 incidents of abductions and other violence to insurgents. 124 people were reportedly abducted by insurgents during the month. The report depicts cowardice of insurgents who hold innocent civilians prey to head to their evil designs. Earlier, another credible organization released a report titled Body Count: Casualty Figures after 10 Years of the 'War on Terror' by the Nobel Prize-winning International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, along with Physicians for Social Responsibility and Physicians for Global Survival. The study concluded that around 1.3 million people were killed, both directly and indirectly, in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan as a result of US-led wars in the region in more than a decade. The number of casualties in Afghanistan is the decade long war produced is dreading. The report reads 220,000 in Afghanistan as a result of the war. According to the report the figure "is approximately 10 times greater than that of which the public, experts and decision makers are aware of and propagated by the media and major NGOs. Following the 9/11 attacks this is the highest figure which is concerning for all of human rights organizations.

The statistics is not meant to turn the godfather of this world around; not to draw their sympathies towards the pain stricken masses; not to beg mercy from assassins of humanity; not to ask for general amnesty; not to expect gains out of harms but humbly call to let the people and government of this land devise self-reliant strategies that could head them towards improvements, betterments and advancements. It is only possible when the government seeks chase these elements putting all resources at work.

After all it is the responsibility of a government and concerned departments within a state to ensure peace and security of its citizens. However, the governments that suffer from administrative incapacities fail to guarantee security must try to turn around and should give up - in the bid to prevent the weaker strata of the society; women, ethnic and religious minorities and the common people suffer.

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Muslim Minorities in Burma

Bu Hujjatullah Zia

Religious tensions are high in Myanmar between the majority Buddhists and the minority Muslims, as minor disputes have turned into violent clashes. Recently, some pictures were posted on the cyberspace of Facebook showing that a number of Muslims were murdered and burnt inhumanely in Myanmar (Burma) - this tragedy, which puts the humanity of the perpetrators under question, was highly traumatic.

Myanmar is a Buddhist nation of 50 million. But an estimated 1.3 million Rohingya Muslims, who are known to have migrated from neighboring Bangladesh generations ago, live in the northern tip of Rakhine state.

The Rohingya Muslims have been denied Myanmar citizenship and attacked by Buddhist mobs, which has left hundreds dead and 140,000 trapped in camps. Last year, Myanmar authorities have begun an aggressive campaign to register Rohingya members as Bengalis and label them as illegal migrants from Bangladesh.

Sporadic violence since 2012 has led to great casualties, most of whom are Muslims. Based on UN reports, Rohingya Muslims are among the world's most persecuted people. They are officially stateless, as neither the Myanmar government nor neighboring Bangladesh recognize their citizenship. There are 800,000 Rohingya living in Myanmar, mostly in slums and refugee camps.

Thousands of Rohingya Muslims who left Myanmar in boats in November 2014 have not reached their destinations. The U.N. General Assembly's human rights committee on Nov. 21, 2014, approved a resolution urging Myanmar to provide citizenship on an equal basis to the 1.3 million Rohingya Muslim minority people in the country.

Last year, a UN human rights envoy to Myanmar Yanghee Lee said that most of the 140,000 displaced Rohingya Muslims are living in "deplorable" conditions in camps in Rakhine state. Lee added that those living in the camps have no access to food, water or sufficient medical care - sometimes leading to deaths.

Moreover, reports show that the authorities commit honor killings against Rohingya Muslim women since 2012 in the State of Arakan as a tactic to drive people out of that land. Earlier, hundreds of Rohingya Muslim women who are still teenagers, have become victims of the savagery of the Buddhist Burmese forces, they are deprived of their honor amidst the sufferings as a result of the violence committed by the Buddhist ethnics of Arakan in their villages.

In some cases, locals say, "Security forces entered the village during the night to check out the list of families where those forces raped the Rohingya women in the houses as there were no more men in the houses."

The Rohingya Muslims are killed while their houses and mosques are burnt down, their properties are seized and honor killings are committed against the women.

Strangely, the Burmese Government appears incapable in facing the brutality of its forces and citizens. According to an elder of Maung-

daw, the Government is deliberately committing a systematic ethnic cleansing to make the Muslim Rohingya community run away from their land.

Reports say that more than 100,000 minority Muslims have fled from religious violence and retaliatory persecution in Myanmar. Last year blowback against Rohingya Muslims in western Myanmar led to a mass exodus, as at least 8,000 people fled to neighboring Thailand, Bangladesh, India and Nepal.

In human rights discourse, men are entitled with natural and inalienable rights - rights to life, liberty and property - which must be protected, irrespective of one's sex, color, race and beliefs. It is rightly stated in the preamble of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) as, "Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world, Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people...."

We live in modern era, in which barbarity and violence are considered against the international propriety and civil rights. Human societies have left bloody history behind and millions of people lost their lives, had their limbs amputated and sustained mortal injuries in wars and conflagrations - especially in two World Wars. The historical wars originated from claiming racial superiorities such as apartheid or Nazism, religious beliefs (Crusades), ethnocentrism, etc. To remedy the problems and prevent from war, violence and violation of men's rights and dignities and to suggest peaceful way of dealing the challenges, the international community was established and international instruments were enacted. To articulate their revulsions, a group of Kabul University students, in Sharia Faculty, demonstrated against the tragic murder of Burmese Muslims on Monday. They chanted slogans against racial discriminations and unfair treatments of the minority groups in Myanmar. In short, this tragedy outraged their conscience to a large extent and the perpetrators were supposed to be brought to justice.

The international community has to address the challenges of the minority groups through putting pressures on the Burmese authorities in Myanmar and prosecute the perpetrators. Since racial and religious tensions lead to further violence and bloodshed and spark regional unrests, the rights and dignities of the minority groups must be protected and recognized in Myanmar. At the end, I offer my deep condolence to the victims' families over the inhumane killings and urge the international community to take serious step in this regard.

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