

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



June 12, 2017

Showing Empathy to Others

One of the basic reasons for chaos, instability and war in the world is the incapacity of human beings to see the world in its totality. Human beings are not able to consider themselves as a part of the whole. They divide themselves into nations, casts and sects and do not relate themselves to a single community of humanity. This is also because of the fact that they live in different parts of the world with different socio-political circumstance, therefore, it is very much possible and practical that they see the world from different points of view and, on certain occasions, consider others as different and even enemies.

However, it is not a valid argument to justify conflicts, wars and chaos. Definitely, there are differences among human beings and among different groups or communities of them, but it is not impossible to accept these differences, embrace them and let them embellish the world with variety instead of fighting over them and killing others for them.

Today's globalized world has brought human beings closer in so many aspects and it has given rise to the challenges of confrontations among different people with different backgrounds; however, it has also provided the opportunities to understand one another and appreciate others or learn from them. It has also disclosed for the human beings that there are so many aspects among them which unite them and bring them closer as a single community. However, it is important to see the factors that are common instead of discovering differences for political and other purposes. They have to see the world and its habitants with the feeling of empathy instead of hatred. Hatred would definitely see the differences and give rise to further hatred, while empathy would enable them to see above all the differences and rise in stature as a human being.

From a practical point of view, it is really vital to understand that the systems in the world are designed or formed in such a way that they make people and things connect to and depend on one another. No human being can live alone in the world. Those who think that they can isolate themselves as individuals from their societies and their fellow beings are basically living in a fool's paradise. They need to wake up, and realize the true world and their true selves. Accepting others, supporting and assisting them are the only way to live in today's world that is turning to be more and more mechanical with each passing day. Human beings require adopting empathy as their top priority behavioral trait, if they want to guarantee their existence in the world. So much hatred, bloodshed and differences have been promulgated just because human beings have forgotten the habit of compassion.

Hating others just because they belong to different cultures, religions, sects and ideologies is, in fact, a weird behavioral trait. If others are different for a person, it is also true that he is different for them as well. If he thinks others as detestable; others may also think so. However, it is important to see others in perspective of their environment and their socio-political context. Looking at others with one's own biases is a silly mistake and may lead to abhorrence and hatred. Empathy, in fact, has the capacity to turn enemies into friends. The policy of hatred can only generate further hatred; it creates a never ending chain. If you hate others; others will hate you as well and process will continue. In order to break the chain of hatred and enmity, it is important to adopt empathy from the very beginning.

An imperative point to understand is that every person must start empathy from his own self. He must understand himself and his true nature first and then he can understand the worth and reality of others. Loving himself and developing his own personality will really help him in being kind to others. And, it must be realized as well that being compassionate to others does not mean that a person is superior to others; that he is on the giving end and others are on receiving end. It is mutual - empathy for others is vital for one's own self and personality as well.

It is crucial to comprehend that the current policy of animosity and envy will lead human beings towards extinction. It is not wise to continue the same policy of hatred. Human beings require changing themselves. Realizing this fact is of utmost importance. Having realized it, we can further debate the viability of the policy of empathy in today's world.

Today our country is also suffering from the repercussions of hatred and war. Our people, therefore, require adopting empathy as their basic code of conduct. It will surely change our society and our people and we would be in a better position to fight hatred, violence, terrorism and wars.



The Need and Possibility for Peace

By Mohammad Ishaq Arifi

Peace is one of the fundamental needs of our society and should be pondered upon so as to facilitate the society with peace and prosperity. Currently, peace has been considered an inevitable national need, since the public reveals strong hatred of war, violence and destruction. However, one might assume that there is a particular social layer of the society which continues violence and engineers a destructive war. It is self-explanatory that those who are involved in war, will bear the brunt of casualties and mourn over the dead bodies of their near and dear ones. The need for peace has been changed into a widespread national desire and the country will have to spend in this way.

There is no doubt that gaining peace will cost as much as the war imposes on a nation. First, a country needs to bolster up fearlessness, bravery and aspiration for peace and tranquility rather than war and violence. It would be far honorable to sacrifice reputation and dignity for peace instead of having them violated in war. In addition, the financial expenditures are to be spent for facilitating peace not for continuing war. In such a case, peace will regain its fundamental status as a strategy and paves the ground for practical solutions.

Needless to say, the need for peace will be changed into a process on the condition that all social institutions shoulder their responsibilities about peace and extend the national demands in this respect. Religious institutions are believed to have great responsibility in paving the ground for peace.

They have to strengthen the behavioral, religious and social pillars of peace and make the public mentally ready for negotiation. Similarly, the media, educational institutions, etc. are supposed to keep the collective spirit high and their hopes alive for peace and prosperity. One will conclude that all social institutions have great responsibility for smoothing the path for peace and have to take high and effective step in this respect.

The government's significant role regarding the issue of peace is undeniable. In addition to peace-making capacities as a social institution, the state has serious obligation in ensuring peace and stability based on the country's Constitution. It is stated in the Constitution, "The state shall be obligated to create a prosperous and progressive society based on social justice, preservation of human dignity, protection of human rights, realization of

democracy, attainment of national unity...." Hence, the state should place the peace process on the top of its agenda for having greater responsibility.

First of all, the state needs to find out the root causes for peace and carry out a comparative study about its intellectual, social, political and economic hotbeds. That is to say, it is the government to find how to undermine the bases of instability and boost the public spirit for peace. A realistic and educational approach towards peace and war will enable the government to tackle the instability and social chaos, adopt an effective strategy and map out for gaining peace.

After exploring the factors and obstacles for peace, adopting a strategy for peace and making policy for a peaceful and civil society is the second fundamental need. The government is supposed to pursue this need bravely through meticulous, educational and flexible plan. The planning for peace should be in accordance with public traditions and social realities. Furthermore, social, political and economic investments have to be paid serious attention. It is crystal clear that a sustainable peace will not be gained without a strategic plan and clear policy.

The military deal will be the last resort for peace which will be planned with taking into consideration the strategic pillar for peace.

It is believed that planning will be the most sensitive period for peace possibility, but the practical step will be highly difficult. This step will cost too much and needs bravery and skill for implementation.

The National Unity Government (NUG) is less likely to have filled the three vacuums, since it has ushered in military deal without a deep study and adopting a certain strategy. The military deal has not borne the desired social and political result yet.

The peace agreement with Hezbe-Islami, led by Gulbudin Hekmatyar, will be called a success, but this still has not had a tangible effect for the country's stability. Therefore, peace is supposed to be planned based on strategic feasibilities and clear objective.

The government is to fulfill its commitment as it is constitutionally responsible to build a society void of violence and bloodshed on the basis of democracy. It is hoped that a clear strategy will be adopted to tackle the insecurity effectively and put an end to war and violence.

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The Ifs and Buts about Saudi-Qatar's Tension

By Hujjatullah Zia

The sudden tension between Riyadh and Doha - which prompted Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain and Egypt to sever diplomatic tie with Qatar last Monday - was debated hotly in social and international media. The four countries claimed that Qatar supported "extremism" which was denied by Qatari officials. The issue seems to be a game-changer in Arab world and will have repercussions for the Middle East.

Shortly following the severing of diplomatic ties and border closure between Qatar and the three Arab Gulf countries of Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain, Qatari nationals were ordered to leave within 14 days. Saudi, UAE and Bahraini citizens were also given the same timeframe to leave Qatar.

As a result, hundreds of mixed-citizenship Qatari couples are facing the grim prospect of being split from their families. This is the first ill effect of the non-diplomatic way of severing ties between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Late on Thursday, a joint statement by Egypt and three members of GCC Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the UAE named 59 individuals and 12 charity organizations in Qatar of being "linked to terror". However, Stephane Dujarric, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' spokesman, said, "The UN is bound only by the sanctions lists put together by UN organs such as the Security Council. We're not bound by any other lists."

The severing ties between members of the GCC comes as a large number of men, women and children are burning amidst violence and bloodshed in Iraq, Syria, etc. Perhaps, if this diplomatic ties have been severed mainly with the aim of weakening terrorist activities to protect the rights and dignity of war victims, it will be a highly positive movement.

However, if there are other reasons except for what has been claimed by the four countries, it will be self-destructive in such a critical time.

Qatari analysts bring three main reasons behind the severing ties between Riyadh and Doha. First, they believe that Qatar supports the democratic movement of Arab Spring which is not favored by its political rivals. To use the exact words of a writer, "Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani's increasing embrace of the revolutionary uprisings in the Middle East had further enraged the palaces in Riyadh and Abu Dhabi."

This argument indicates that Qatar is involved in supporting Syrian forces against the Assad's regime. In other words, the Syria's conflict is also part of Arab Spring supported by Doha. Whether or not the self-styled Is-

lamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) is backed by Qatari emirate still remains a mystery.

The second reason, according to pro-Qatar analysts, is Qatar's support to Muslim Brotherhood (MB) is against the Riyadh's policy. This support further increased after Mohamed Morsi, a Muslim Brotherhood member, became Egypt's first democratically elected president in 2012. Hence, Qatar shares a strong tie with "moderate Islamist group" No wonder, Saudi also pointed out Qatar's support to MB one of the reasons behind the diplomatic severing, since the MB were declared a terrorist organization by the four countries Saudi, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt in 2015 due to alleged terrorist activities. Therefore, Riyadh and Abu Dhabi "participated in the organization of the July 2013 military coup" that put an end to Morsi's presidency by supporting anti-Muslim Brotherhood figures with the Egyptian military.

Qatar's tendency to follow a foreign policy independent from the Gulf states has been said the third reason. This initiative has been adopted by Kuwait and Oman earlier. So, this would put Saudi's influence under question. To sum up, the three analyses seem close to the fact, mainly when Qatar's support to revolutionary uprising and Muslim Brotherhood has been stated directly. Since the ISIL group is widely involved in Syria's conflict, this also might gain Qatar's support against the Assad's regime.

Some political pundits believe that Doha's support to MB's offshoot Harakat al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyyah (HAMAS), which was founded in 1987, will bring Iran and Qatar to a close point.

Although after the Riyadh-Doha's tension Iran offered to export food to Qatar, this does not necessarily mean bringing their foreign policy to a single point. To put it succinctly, the two countries will extend their commercial relations but may not their policy regarding the Middle East issue.

Perhaps, Hamas is supported by both the countries, but Iran's anti-ISIL's policy is undeniable.

It is emphasized that if the four countries seek to undermine extremists, mainly the ISIL group, it is the right time and right policy. The world will have to join forces to fight militant fighters so as to protect the rights and liberty of war victims and prevent from the spread of terrorism. The four countries, which have severed tie with Qatar, are supposed to act this way with any countries supporting extremism, if they are really genuine in this claim and launch a strong military attacks against extremist groups.

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