

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



March 01, 2015

Our Vulnerable Energy Sector!

The breakdown of electricity in the country is now entering its second week and in just one week, it has almost crippled the overall functioning of the country. The functioning of government offices, different small and big businesses and the households are badly affected by this electricity problem. According to the reports, last week's severe snow and wind brought down a number of giant electric pylons in the northern part of the country. The electricity being imported from Tajikistan was shut down due to this incident and the capital fell into the worst darkness of its history. The severe snowfall in the north also blocked the Salang tunnel which is the only access of country to the northern areas. It was opened yesterday and it is hoped that the broken electric pylons would soon be repaired and supply of electricity would be resumed.

Till now, the reaction of government authorities in the resolution of this problem has been disappointing. Although the terrestrial connectivity of the country with the north of the country was blocked by the heavy snowfall, the severity of the situation needed that better steps should have been taken to solve the problem in the least time possible. In this regard, the military helicopters could have been used to carry the engineers and their equipment across the Salang tunnel. For almost a week, the government authorities were waiting for the opening of Salang tunnel to start the restoration work of fallen pylons.

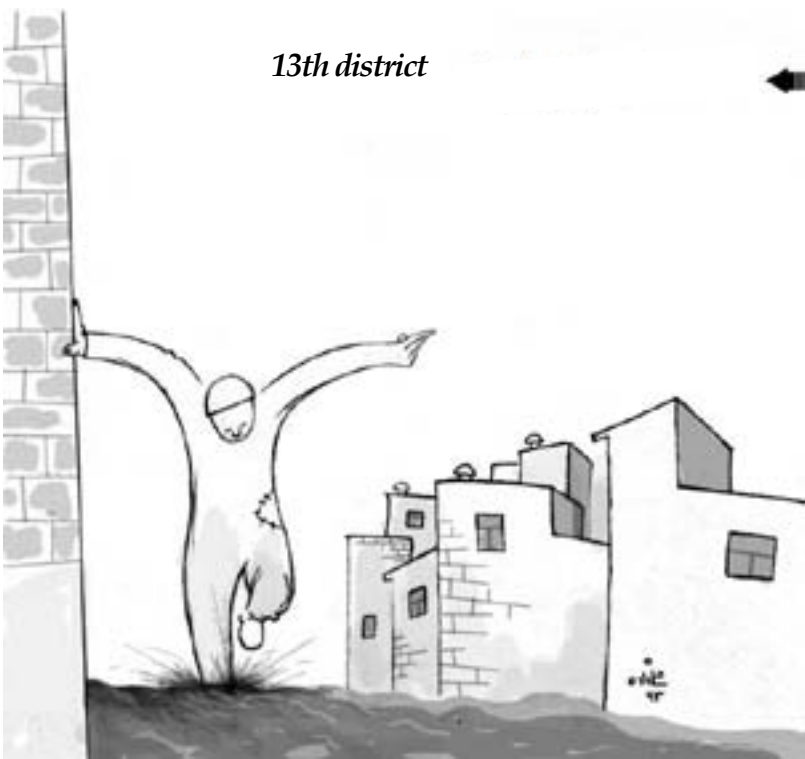
This incident also brought into light the fact that our basic infrastructure is much vulnerable to a number of threats, be it natural or man-made, and we don't have any alternate solution to tackle any such emergency situation. In this era of information technology, when almost all the functioning of government and private organizations depend on machines run by electricity, such a feeble condition can be termed as a potential threat for the overall system of government and private sector. During the last week, we saw that we were having very poor management of electricity and our electricity-dependent system jammed down due to this electricity breakdown. Instead of repairing the damaged pylons, we don't have any other option to run the machinery of state and if the condition persists for long, it may end up in the loss of millions for the overall economy.

Another big threat was the only option of connecting to the northern areas of the country. The only reliable way of connecting to the north of the country is the famous Salang tunnel but in the months of winter, due to heavy snowfall and incidents of avalanches, the tunnel is blocked for many days every year. Although there are also present a number of other ways that connect the center of the country with its northern areas but they are even more dangerous than Salang tunnel and the rough road and dangerous elevations make them almost impossible for any kind of reliable transportation. Realizing this grave fact, it is needed that better projects should be made for the rehabilitation of Salang tunnel so that the tunnel should be open for traffic at any given time in a year. Alternately, the routes except Salang can be made better so that we should not always be relying on a single route.

At present, we badly depend on the electricity exported from Tajikistan. Unfortunately, we have failed to utilize properly the resources available to us for the generation of domestic electricity. Although we have some dams and hydroelectric generation projects but these are not good enough to meet our needs. In last 12 years of democracy, no serious work has been undertaken in this regard. Although the sincerity of our past governments cannot be doubted in this regard, but they failed to realize the increasing demand of electricity and increasing dependency of our economy and public and private sectors on electricity. It is also a fact that electricity generation projects are so grand in scale that they require billions of dollars for their construction and many years until they start generating electricity. Even in the advanced and developed countries, governments depend on private investment or loans from international monetary agencies and banks for the completion of such big projects. However, it is needed that the present government should give extra attention towards this sector because it takes many years until a project is started and its feasibility report is finalized. In the same way, a number of countries in the world are ready to invest billions of dollars in such grand projects. Our neighbor and friend nation China is famous in the world for their huge investments in the energy sector of a number of countries of the world. If our government starts its efforts, it is hoped that China and other countries of the world would come forward to invest in the energy sector of Afghanistan and soon, we will be able to meet the requirements of the country.

The present government seems to be sincere in bringing actual solutions to the problems of the country. It is hoped that the government would also give exclusive attention to solve the energy crisis in the country.

13th district



What is the Solution to End ISIS?

By Hujjatullah Zia

The escalating propensity of radical ideologues for violence and bloodshed has triggered fear and worry across the world. The gruesome acts of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) have aroused national and international concerns. The Islamic militants butcher their hapless quarry without an iota of mercy or sense of guilt. This non-descript bedlam has filled the world with a fit of pique and aversion. The current conflagration, which roots in eruption of extreme ideologies, threatens not only the Middle East but the entire world.

The inherent and inviolable rights of mankind are violated egotistically. Women suffer from honor-killing acts and their rights and dignity are trampled upon, men are burned alive and children are abused in one way or another. Moreover, domiciles are razed to the ground and male and female youth are abducted to satiate their satanic carnal desires or to use for lucrative deals.

Their megalomania and narcissistic feelings and appetite for evil have left them devoid of religious values and moral norms. It is believed that a large number of the IS's members scurry from one battle to another not for nurturing a certain ideology but to satisfy their insatiable thirst for evils. Jihad-e-Nikah reveals this fact in the worst possible way. As a result, it was reported last year that ISIS fighters were going door-to-door, entering houses, killing the men and raping the women. It was further said that four women in Mosul had committed suicide after being raped or forced into marriages with the militants.

The world, particularly the fundamentalists' quarries, has to establish a bulwark, for the immunity of their rights, and moral inhibition. Since man is born with inherent natural rights - the rights to life, liberty, estate, etc. - no omnipotent power is allowed to take his rights - without a process of law. Shedding one's blood and tarnishing one's reputation is a great religious and moral taboo. To discuss secularly, it is stated in the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which is based on moral principle, 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 aspi-

ration of the common people, Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law...."

Egypt plays an integral role in the ideological side of the battle against extremism. Mr. Sissi last month proposed a "religious revolution" to save an Islamic world that "is being lost by our own hands." Sheikh Ahmed al-Tayeb, the grand imam of Cairo's Al-Azhar University and a leader of Sunni Islam, called last week in Mecca for reform of Muslim religious education to correct "corrupt interpretations" that had allowed extremism to grow.

Nader Mousavizadeh, who co-leads the global consulting firm Macro Advisory Partners, says, "Both religion and politics have been hijacked" in the Arab world creating a "toxic mix".

In the beginning of his first round of presidency, U.S President Barack Obama gave a highly significant speech in Cairo under the title of "A New Beginning" saying, "...I do so recognizing that change cannot happen overnight. No single speech can eradicate years of mistrust, nor can I answer in the time that I have all the complex questions that brought us to this point. But I am convinced that in order to move forward, we must say openly the things we hold in our hearts, and that too often are said only behind closed doors.

There must be a sustained effort to listen to each other; to learn from each other; to respect one another; and to seek common ground. As the Holy Koran tells us, 'Be conscious of God and speak always the truth.' That is what I will try to do - to speak the truth as best I can, humbled by the task before us, and firm in my belief that the interests we share as human beings are far more powerful than the forces that drive us apart." Obama urged Islam and West to seek common ground and to share interest as "human beings" irrespective of our religion, color, sex, race, etc. Moreover, he rightly pointed out that a sense of mistrust grew between Islam and West within long centuries and has to be eradicated.

To root out ISIS from the Middle East and to curb terrorism, it would be highly effective to expunge mistrusts and to seek common grounds with all honesty. The world has to join forces to counter the common enemy - who propagates horror and terror on the planet and outrages the conscience of mankind around the world. In the age of eruption of secularism and democracy, imposing a certain ideology at the point of gun is beyond public tolerance and a bona fide peace is accessible through secular anthropology.

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United we Stand, Divided we Fall

By Asmatyari

There wouldn't be delicacy in life, unless there's happiness. Happiness wouldn't be in a life, inside a soul, if there's no rest, peace, justice, love and enjoyment. Partly, money is also necessary as that is responsible for our position in the society and a way to enrich our lives. But, leading a solitary life cannot bring all these things to a person. But also, these won't be brought up if in the society the unity among the members is strong.

It is a message bearing tale, everybody has heard of. Once, an old man was exceptionally ill and lay dying in his bed. He had four sons who were al-ways fighting with each other. He always worried about them and wanted to teach them a lesson and asked his sons to come to him, a day. When they came, the old man gave them a bundle of sticks and said, "Can you break these sticks?"

The first son tried to break the bundle but nothing happened. He tried very hard and finally gave up. Then it was the turn of the second son to try his luck. He thought it would be an easy task and picked up the sticks easily. He tried his best to break the sticks but nothing happened. Then, the third son tried to break the bundle of sticks, but he couldn't do anything either. Meanwhile, the youngest son jeered at his brothers and thought they were very incompetent. He thought he was very clever and took one stick at a time and easily broke all of them. The old father then smiled at his sons and said, "Children, do you understand what happened? It is always easy to break the sticks one by one.

But when they are bundled together, none of you could break them. In the same way, as long as you live together, no one will be able to hurt you then." The four brothers realized what their father was trying to teach them and forgot all their enmity and learnt that unity is strength.

Unity is the state of being together. All of us would be still uncivilized if there wasn't unity to be seen. We have to be together to make a whole, which can show a way to success or victory. Perhaps, it's possible to survive as a single, but no one can make it till the end, perfectly.

In fact, it won't be a school if there are just less than ten students. Meanwhile, having a great amount, it will only be maintained if there is unity among them. Or else it won't be possible to bring up a proper school when everyone is disunited. Apart from those, in sports, teamwork is surely required. Precisely, teamwork is a part of unanimity, being a team joined with different people to achieve a goal and working as one group. Let us first discuss the smallest unit of our society. A family indicates oneness, the members of a family live together, they work together, they enjoy together, they share their woes together, and this is the basic strength of the unit.

Parents encourage their children to mix freely with their peers of other races and religions. From this smaller unit, we go to the bigger horizon of society. Schools are the best places for students of different races to mingle freely without prejudice and suspicion. Students should learn about the different festivals of their friends, their rites and rituals and their places of worship. It's well known that how bad the relationship grew and there was disunity found and caused the world war. It had so many tremendous negative effects. All of it happened as unity was feeble and turned up things with disunity. Other than that, this will make us lose our strength, help and support, in the name of separation. This separation occurs between communities, societies, nations and in other view action against peer groups, relatives or others.

Fairly in words, unity's strength improves everything. In the meantime, it would be destruction and loss when it's disunited, destroying everything, including all. But, when there is sense of humor, thought and hospitality, there will be unity and bond. Certainly, human beings won't have to face any problems at all, mainly, when considering social problems. Everyone should be very wise and pragmatic about being united and strengthening it by possible ways. This would help to bring up a brighter world, clean and gay. A rope is strong because its threads are united. We cannot break it unless the threads are separated. A single hand has a limited capacity, but more hands working together will have much more strength to apply on a particular thing at the same time. So we should be united in all our missions of life. A single person's family is somewhat weak in the sense that there is hardly any other person to stand by his side in his calamity. But in a joint family, there are other members of the family who can come forward to one another's rescue in the days of calamity.

In case of a country also, the same example is applicable very appropriately. When the native land is attacked by any outside enemy, it is not a single or a few people's job to fight the enemy. It is the collective force of all the countrymen to fight out the evil. Thus harmony is always proved to be a great source of strength. It is really like an invincible constructive or destructive performance. We are proud of our cultural distinctiveness. We are proud to be the inhabitants of Afghanistan. It is our responsibility to maintain its unique feature. We should think beyond the petty interests and work for the broader goals of bringing prosperity and progress in our motherland. For this it is not the government but the people; the parents; the schools and their teachers who have to play their part with a sense of dedication and a commitment to the national cause. It may appear to be a laborious task but is not an impossible one. National Integration should become the watchword of all education at all levels.

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