

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



March 07, 2017

The Unchecked Juvenile Delinquency

As no society is perfect; there are different factors in every society that are responsible for creating injustices and crimes. Though in every society there is a system of maintaining justice but the best ones always have strong control over the crimes and generate less opportunities for the culprits to commit them. There have been development and improvement in the legal systems and law-enforcement agencies around the world but the crimes have kept pace with these developments. Every sort of crime is a matter of concern for a society and is responsible for introducing disorder. The random crimes may be treated as a normal phenomenon but different trends and organized forms of crimes can really put a society on threshold of destruction.

Among the different trends of crimes, juvenile delinquency is considered one of most concerning for the modern societies as it involves youngsters and adolescents. Youngsters are basically concerned as the backbone of society and the future of a society highly depends on the potential of its youngsters. If they are motivated towards the improvement of the society and are optimistic about the socio-political scenario and have conformist attitude towards the prevailing social, political and economic setups, they can prove beneficial for the society as whole. But if they are pessimistic, have negative approach towards the socio-political scenario and have non-conformist attitude towards the social, political and economic systems they fall the prey to delinquency. Juvenile delinquency is always a cause of panic for a society because of the fact that it indicates the deterioration of the society as the juvenile delinquents are going to be serious criminals in future if managed improperly.

The causes of juvenile delinquency can be linked with the general theories of the causes of the crimes but all the theories that hold true for the crimes as a whole can never stand true for juvenile delinquency all the times as the juveniles do not share the same characteristics like that of the mature people. They differ from the grownups in their attitude, psychology and emotional integrity.

Therefore, they have to be dealt in a different manner; even the punishments that are suggested by the courts for the normal crimes must differ in the cases of juvenile delinquency so as to compensate for the differences.

It is important to understand that crimes are not always the rational choice that the youngsters make; rather the culture and society are responsible, to a considerable extent, for intoxicating them with the germs of crimes. The disorganization that creeps into social institutions and their interaction determines the youth to commit crimes.

It should be noted carefully that the youth in the third world countries are more vulnerable to be caught in the web of crimes than the youth in the developed countries of the world. It is because the third world countries suffer greatly from different sorts of social, political and economic problems that deviate the youth from normal course of behavior and lead them towards crimes.

Moreover, the psychological stress and strain on the minds of youth are immense in such countries and end up in the delinquent attitude. Poverty, limited opportunities, difficulties in getting education and pursuing the professions of their will, child labor, strict traditional values, lack of proper parental guidance and many other such problems make the youth delinquent.

Juvenile delinquency is one of the major problems in our country Afghanistan as well. The socio-political and socio-economic scenario in the country has been very much vulnerable for the youth. The circumstances are further deteriorated by the continued wave of civil wars and terrorism. Though there have been certain improvements made since the installation of so called democratic government juvenile delinquency keeps on concerning the process of improvement.

Apart from the traditional crimes like mugging, rape, robbery and murder youth in the country are dominantly caught in the web of terrorism. There are many fresh recruits in different terrorist groups who serve as potential cadre for such evil organizations and presently they have been serving as the man power for suicide bombings. In many of the cases of suicide bombings that have taken place in different parts of the country recently, the bombers have been youngsters. Moreover, there have been many youngsters involved in the smuggling and production of drugs in the country that has been a dominant evil for us for the last few decades.

The unchecked juvenile delinquency in the country really points at serious concerns for the future of the country. Necessary measure must be introduced by the government in this regard to curb the situation appropriately and as per the scientific approach towards the solution. Severe punishments alone cannot guarantee a crimeless society and in the case of juvenile delinquency the matter gets even more complicated.

Special considerations, special laws and special treatment must be in place to deal with the cases of juvenile delinquency otherwise the circumstances may get worse rather than getting any better.



Vulnerability to ISIL's Toxic Ideology

By Hujjatullah Zia

One will be shaken up with the tragic incidents resulted from war and violence. Warring factions play highly destructive role and target civilians and soldiers indiscriminately without paying a tinge of heed to humanitarian law. The heart-wrenching stories of the war victims and their painful sufferings will be a stain on the collective conscience. Streams of blood which are oozing from the sliced throats of children and the riddle bodies of women - who have nothing to do with war - will traumatize one to a great extent.

The law of war is neglected and non-combatants are left at the mercy of escalated militancy and radical ideology of fundamental groups. Despite being combated, terrorism mushrooms and militant fighters pose more serious threat to the region. Syrian and Iraqi people are believed to be highly vulnerable to insurgency and bear the brunt of atrocities practiced by the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

With the escalation of war in Aleppo province, a large number of families left their homes to survive the bloody war. More than 65,000 people have been forced to flee fighting in northern Syria, ravaged in recent weeks by dual offensives on the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group, the United Nations said. The UN's humanitarian agency, OCHA, said that tens of thousands of people have left their homes in northern Aleppo province, particularly around the former ISIL stronghold of Al Bab.

Since February 25, OCHA said, another 26,000 people fled violence further east, where Syrian government forces supported by Russian air power have also been waging a fierce offensive against ISIL. It added that the "high contamination" of unexploded bombs and booby traps set by retreating ISIL fighters was complicating efforts to return.

Aleppo province hosts tens of thousands of displaced Syrians, many in camps near the Turkish border. "Daesh [ISIL] was shelling us, the airplanes were hitting us. Our children were terrified. We were barely able to save ourselves," a 25-year old Syrian woman, who fled the clashes with her two children, is cited as saying.

Worst of all, a large number of people lose their lives by the Improvised Explosive Device (IED). While no organization has estimated how many of the more than 470,000 deaths in Syria are due to IEDs, the United Nations Mine Action Service identifies them as a "grave threat to civilians".

According to its surveys, some 6.3 million Syrians are living in areas affected by explosive weapons incidents. Similarly, more than 200,000 people have been reportedly displaced as a result of the Iraqi forces' battle to retake the city of Mosul from ISIL that began in October.

In the meantime, medical workers warned that women and children have been exposed to toxic gas near the city. If confirmed, the use of chemical weapons and toxic agents in the fighting will amount to war crimes, the UN has said.

The operation in Mosul was officially launched in October last year. In January, its eastern half was declared "fully liberated". The Iraqi army is also taking part in the fight for west Mosul, with the 9th Armoured Division advancing through the desert surrounding the city, aiming to cut it off from the ISIL-held town of Tal Afar, farther west.

A flurry of attacks was carried out by the American-led coalition in and around Mosul on Saturday. With the encouragement of the Americans, the Iraqi strategy has been to mount an attack on multiple axes to present the militants with more problems than they can handle.

On the other hand, however, Iraqi troops have been spooked by the ISIS drones, which sometimes hover in swarms of three to five. Neither the American nor the Iraqi military has an easy remedy. Trying to jam the drones might interfere with the Iraqis' own communications, and it is not always easy to shoot them out of the sky.

No wonder, the US President Donald Trump vowed to battle against "radical Islamic terrorism", and to "eradicate from the face of the Earth."

Now, his administration plans to hold an anti-Daesh (ISIL) summit in Washington on March 21. More than 60 countries are part of the coalition that holds counter-ISIL meetings every three to four months.

It is really disappointing to see that ISIL has involved the world into a protracted war and put many countries into challenge although there has not long passed from its formation. Radicalization is on the rise and terrorist networks breed fear and hatred and violate the rights and dignity of individuals around the world, despite democratic discourses and human rights organizations. There is much to be done by the world to dismantle the terrorist networks and destroy their sanctuaries.

It goes without saying that the Syria's war between Assad's regime and his opposition will pave the ground for further militancy. It was the conflagration which changed the Syria into hotbed of radicalism. To mitigate insurgency and safeguard the rights and liberty of innocent people, the world will have to broker an agreement between the warring sides in Syria so that they can defeat ISIL.

It is hoped that the international community will stop turning blind eye to human casualties and violation of human rights and humanitarian law.

Furthermore, Trump will have to fulfil his commitment about eradicating terrorism.

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Trade Truths for Trumpians and Brexiteers

By Jim O'Neill

Here's a reality check for British and American policymakers, and for the many pundits who frequently comment on world trade without understanding its realities: data on Germany's total exports and imports in 2016 indicate that its largest trading partner is now China. France and the United States have been pushed into second and third place.

This news should not come as a surprise. I have often mused that, by 2020, German companies (and policymakers) might prefer a monetary union with China to one with France, given that German-Chinese trade would likely continue to grow. And so it has, driven primarily by Chinese exports to Germany. But German exports to China have also been increasing. Notwithstanding a recent slowdown, Germany could soon export more to China than to its crucial neighbor and partner France, and it already exports more to China than it does to Italy. For German exporters, France and the UK are the only European national markets larger than China.

Seasoned observers of international trade tend to follow two general rules. First, the level of trade between two countries often decreases as the geographic distance between them increases. And, second, a country is likely to conduct more trade with big countries that have strong domestic demand, rather than with smaller countries that have weak demand. The latest German trade data confirm both rules, but especially the second one.

A big but geographically distant country is different not only in size, but also in kind from a smaller one. This is too often forgotten in discussions about trade agreements, especially in such charged political atmospheres as currently prevail in the United Kingdom and the US.

In the UK, the House of Commons has already adopted a bill to establish a process for withdrawing from the European Union; but the House of Lords is now demanding that the bill be amended to protect EU nationals living in the UK.

In my own brief contribution to the marathon House of Lords debate last month, I argued that, even if Brexit is not the UK's biggest economic-policy challenge today, it will likely exacerbate other problems, including persistently low productivity growth, weak education and skills-training programs, and geographic inequalities.

Moreover, I warned that the UK will need to adopt a far more focused and ambitious approach to trade, not unlike that of China or India, if it is to fare well after Brexit. Sadly, the UK's post-Brexit trade strategy is being determined by internal politics, such that it is "patriotic" to focus on new trade deals with Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and others in the Commonwealth, while ignoring harsh economic realities. New Zealand may be a beautiful country, but it does not have an especially large economy, and it is a very long way from the UK. In fact, despite its massive problems, Greece's economy is still larger than New Zealand's.

Many UK policymakers - and all members of the "Leave" campaign - are ignoring the likely costs of exiting the EU single market. But this factor alone demands serious attention, given the single market's size and close geographic proximity. It is very important that the UK maintain strong trade ties with many EU member states after Brexit.

To that end, Britain should be shoring up its exports of services, a sector where it arguably still has a real net natural advantage. At the same time, the UK should urgently be trying to take its relationship with China - or what former British Prime Minister David Cameron called the "golden relationship" - to a new level.

If there is any country with which the UK should want to strike a new trade agreement, surely it is China. During my brief spell in the British government, I helped then-Chancellor George Osborne persuade Cameron that we should aspire to make China our third-largest export market within a decade. Does the new government still consider this a priority? Beyond China, Britain also needs to be far more focused on its trade ties with India, Indonesia, and Nigeria, all of which will have significant influence in the world economy and global trading patterns in the coming decades.

In the US, President Donald Trump and his economic-policy advisers need to return to reality, especially on trade. They can start by studying Germany's trade patterns, especially vis-à-vis China. To be sure, China has a large bilateral trade surplus with the US; but it also constitutes an expanding export market for US companies.

And if trends from the last 10-15 years continue, China could soon supplant Canada and Mexico as America's most important export market.

As Chinese household income continues to rise, demand for some of the US's most competitive goods and services will only increase. Trump, rather than spewing nonsense about China manipulating its currency, should be encouraging market forces to rebalance bilateral trade.

The same can be said for the US's overall external deficit. Unless the US can boost its savings rate relative to its internal investment needs, it will continue to need foreign capital inflows. And this, in turn, will require it to maintain a trade and current-account imbalance.

Finally, by pushing for a renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement, Trump is taking a risk similar to that of the Brexiteers. Despite China's recent gains, Canada and Mexico are still close neighbors and crucial trade partners. By potentially disrupting import patterns with all three countries, Trump's policies are more likely to push up import prices, while jeopardizing US export growth. (Courtesy Project Syndicate)

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