

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



March 08, 2018

Everyone Must Have The Basic Requirements

Human beings depend highly on the environment where they live. Both the physical and socio-economic circumstances provide them the opportunity to fulfill their different sorts of requirements. Among these requirements the needs to live alive are the most basic one; they include food, shelter and certain other opportunities. It is only after fulfillment of these basic requirements that human beings are able to divert their attentions towards other objectives and goals. In fact, they would not be able to give proper meaning to their lives and will not realize themselves unless they have their rudimentary requirements properly met.

It is also very important to note that there are enough resources around the world that can fulfill most of the requirements of most of the people in the world. However, there are millions of people in the world who do not have the basic requirements. They suffer from extreme poverty and dearth of resources. Many of them die because of the same reason. This unfortunate fact leads us to think that though human beings consider themselves as the wisest of the creatures, they are not able to prove the same through their actions. They have designed modern states and systems, yet they are not able to provide their own kind even the basic requirements of life, which is really unfortunate. Only some of the people have access to most of the resources of the world while most of the people suffer from poverty.

There are some thinkers who even suggest that human beings are bound to be so. Or, they consider it a necessary outcome of the evolutionary process, which they believe is based on the survival of the fittest. The ones who have acquired limitless resources just for their self-centered motives are thought to be fittest and thus the rightful winner of the competition that is prevailing in the natural world. However, they fail to understand that the distribution of the wealth and resources is basically the result of unjust economic and political systems that are designed by human beings themselves not by nature.

The nature does not discriminate between rich and poor. The fragrant 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 is developed by human beings themselves, not the nature.

It is the socio-economic and political systems in the country that split the human beings in different classes. These classes are demarcated with bold and clear boundaries. The dissimilarities found in these classes are enormous and one gets astonished to see how human beings are really satisfied with so much distinctions. The examples are not difficult to find. There are 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 unlimited resources.

The same can be observed in our own country, as well. The ruling class, that includes the political and religious leaders, the business tycoons, the warlords and the chieftains, has accumulated most of the wealth and resources while most of the poor people suffer from misery and deprivation. This ruling class is not interested in any other thing except pursuing its own selfish goals. That is the reason that poverty, unemployment, terrorism and insecurity are haunting our nation to a large extent and they are getting worse with each passing day.

Our socio-economic system has a dominant imbalance and 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 prosperity. There is a crying need for drastic changes. The imbalance has to be diminished if it is not completely eradicated. True justice should be followed and the resources and wealth should be used for the poor as they deserve it, not the rich who already enjoy all the facilities and luxuries of life.



Women Hold Up Half of the Sky both in China and Afghanistan

By Liu Jinsong

Today, March 8th, is the International Women's Day. Both China and Afghanistan attach great importance to this day, for it is a festival for women, as well as for the whole society to pay tribute to women. In China, working women are privileged to have a half day off, while men have to work all day long. Since assuming the office, I came to know that there was an old saying in Afghanistan puts that Women hold up half of the sky, which is similar to China. My Afghan friends and I couldn't stop laughing and joking that women hold up half of the sky in both China and Afghanistan, then the sky will never have a chance to fall down and men need to worry for nothing.

The first letter I received after my taking office was from H.E. the First Lady Madame Rula Ghani. Her Excellency was so nice to send me a book titled Embroidering within Boundaries. The book makes a detailed introduction to how Afghan government and relevant organizations help women in rural areas for job creation and revive the Afghan traditional industry. During my meeting with H.E. the First lady later, she told me all about the tireless efforts she and her office made in promoting women's empowerment and job creation. I was deeply impressed.

I am so happy to learn that there are 3 female ministers, 10 female deputy ministers and 5 female ambassadors in Afghanistan. In my courtesy calls, I made acquaintance with many high-level Afghan female officials, MPs and intellectuals. They are no inferior to men, and well displays the Afghan women's elegance, gentleness, brightness and capability, which I admire so much.

The Chinese women cause also has its glorious tradition and outstanding achievements. The life expectancy for women is nearly 80. Female makes up more than 50% of students at school, 45% of the employment population and 55% of the internet entrepreneurs. Last year, 24% of representatives of the 19th National Congress of the CPC and 1/4 representatives of the ongoing 13th National People's Congress of China are women. At present, there are one female Deputy Premier and nearly 20 female ministerial officials in Chinese government.

After the founding of the P.R.C, we had female Deputy President, awarded more than 40 females as Generals. The Chinese female scientist Madame Tu Youyou got the Nobel Prize of medicine in 2015. Her great contribution using artemisinin to cure malaria has saved so many lives in different countries including Afghanistan. By far, there are about 2000 female diplomats including 10 ambassadors in China. H.E. Madame Fu Ying, the former Chinese Ambassador to UK, used to be my boss. When facing the anti-Chinese molecules trying to disturb the Beijing Olympic Torch Relay, she fearlessly lifted up the torch and ran forward. When someone questioned whether China has lost control over a country during the Munich Security Conference, Madame Fu answered with a smile that a word that sounds very western, China has never tried to control over any countries, please do not judge China with the image of other superpowers. When someone questioned China's military budget, she kicked the ball back that the NATO felt free to request its member states to raise their military budget to 2% of GDP, but made so many comments on China's 1.5%. That's totally double standard and surprised the whole world. All above are full demonstration of elegant demeanor of Chinese female diplomat. Cooperation on women affairs is an important component of China-Afghanistan strategic cooperative partnership. In October, 2014, H.E. Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, President of Afghanistan, paid a state visit to China on invitation of H.E. Mr. Xi Jinping, President of China. The two countries issued a Joint Statement in

which the Chinese side promised to support the Afghanistan government's efforts of promoting the rights of women as well as the empowerment of women, and offer assistance to Afghan women and children within its capacity. During the 2nd Meeting of Kabul Process held last month, the Chinese side once again elaborated its support to Afghan women comprehensive and meaningful participation in Afghan peace and reconciliation process.

In 2017, we offered training opportunities in China for 104 Afghan women professionals in different fields, and 3 excellent female students were awarded the Chinese Government Scholarship and are studying in China now. Ms. Shahnaz, a staff of Ministry of Commercial and Industries, participated in a short-term training course in China. After return, she said with excitement that within a few weeks in China, she learned a lot and wished to apply all these experiences and knowledge to the peaceful reconstruction of Afghanistan. Last year, the Chinese Embassy donated fitness equipments for Afghan Ministry of Women Affairs, beds and toys for girls in kindergarten of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as computers, stationaries and etc to the Malalai Female High School. With its own donation, China constructed hospitals in Kandahar and Kabul, facilities in Kabul University, low-cost housing project, National Vocational Training Center. Teaching materials and textbooks have also been donated to schools across Afghanistan. Like many past years, these donation will continue to benefit tens of thousands of women in Afghanistan.

Some Chinese women, fearless to wars and violence, are bravely working in Afghanistan and serving the Afghan people with heart and soul. Ms. Gulnisa, a teacher in the Confucius Institute of Kabul University, came to Afghanistan last March. Her husband, Mr. Tursun, married her 35 years ago, retired in advance and came to accompany her. But unfortunately, Mr. Tursun passed away due to illness. When Ms. Gulnisa went back to China to attend her husband's funeral, many friends advised her to stay in Urumqi and enjoy her late life. However, she came back to Kabul and continued her teaching with great pain in heart only one week after finishing her husband's funeral, because she can not set aside her responsibilities and students here, and wants to ease her husband's soul by her teaching achievement, and would like to go through thick and thin with her Afghan colleagues and students. Her story is widely listened in Kabul University and touched the heart of many Chinese and Afghan friends.

In Afghanistan, there is also a female boss and her Chinese restaurant which is widely welcome around the area, female Secretary General and her Chinese Business Association and also Chinese female reporter who ran to the field of explosion instead of escaping when hearing the sound of alarm. They all have been in Afghanistan for years or even more than 10 years, living harmony with the Afghan society and offering their care to the vulnerable here. They have devoted their youth and love to this country.

Days ago, I asked a 7-year-old little girl named Fareshta, who is living in Char Rah-e-Qambar Camp and came to visit the Chinese Embassy that day, "what is your biggest aspiration". She answered without hesitation, "Go to School for study!". The answer is so simple and clear, but also heartfelt. Let us do something for the Afghan girls, and help them to realize their dreams like boys. Just like the words of Mr. Sun Yat-sen, the forerunner of Chinese revolution, should there is no woman, the world would lose half sincerity, 70% goodness and all beauty. Should there is no woman, there is no human.

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

The Fluctuation of Women's Rights and Freedoms in Afghanistan

By Hujjatullah Zia

Gender discrimination has been widely practiced in Afghanistan and curtailed the freedoms of women in one way or another.

The past patriarchal systems and misogynistic views left little or no room for women to participate in social, political, or economic spheres. Women were subject to harsh treatment and negative mindset. Afghan women suffered gender discrimination throughout the history and paid heavy sacrifice in this respect. They were treated with humiliation and their social and political role was curtailed on a large scale. Deadly conflicts and civil unrest sidelined women from social and political life and they were not able to participate in political decision-making. To view the history of Afghanistan, Afghan women were highly prone to gender discrimination. Traditional culture and patriarchal systems hampered their progress and social activities. Their rights and liberties were flagrantly trampled upon simply for being women. Women's rights and dignity did not carry much weight for rulers and their men, who exploited them sexually.

It should be noted that the freedoms of women encountered many ups and downs in Afghanistan and a number of kings also sought to liberate women from traditional culture and stereotypical mindset. For example, during the last decade of Muhammad Dawud Khan's premiership, in late 1950s, the voice of Afghan woman was heard from the radio and then a woman's song was released for the first time. Wearing burqa (a head-to-toe covering) was declared non-obligatory and the door of schools were opened for them. Similarly, the last decade of King Muhammad Zahir Shah's regime was known as the "decade of democracy" or the "decade of constitution". In this decade, the constitution of Afghanistan was amended by Loya Jirga (Grand National Assembly) and was known the best constitution in the history of Afghanistan and more democratic than the constitutions of the neighboring countries. This constitution stated in article 25 that all Afghans had equal rights and responsibilities before the law without any discrimination or distinction. Based on this constitution, which had great influence on Afghan current constitution, both man and woman were allowed to participate in parliamentary election, which helped women to play their role in political sphere. Subsequently, four women were elected as MPs and two others were appointed by King in the Upper House of parliament. Likewise,

with the modernization of King Amanullah Khan, women were able to exercise their rights and freedoms equally with men. They were allowed to get education and play their social, political and cultural role without barriers. In the constitution approved during his regime, both men and women were considered equal and there was no gender discrimination. Moreover, he founded two schools for women and also launched a magazine for them. His regime also abolished the system of child marriage. Nonetheless, a number of people, who practiced traditional mindset, found women's freedoms in conflict with traditional culture and pressured King Amanullah to stop the movement. The King was widely condemned for his practices which triggered the public sensation. Subsequently, the people revolted against his regime that led to its collapse, which re-paved the way for the restriction of women's rights and freedoms.

Subsequent to such issues, the social and political role of women declined in Afghanistan once more. The doors of schools were closed and women were coerced to stay within the four walls. Cultural restrictions, tribal custom, and patriarchal structure did not let them play their role freely or exercise their human rights the same as men did. The fact is that women were treated inferior to men in the past culture of the country.

Decades of war and violence also narrowed the room for women to play their role or exercise their rights and liberties as members of the society. For example, the Taliban inflicted untold sorrow and indescribable pain and sufferings upon Afghan women. They treated women as pariahs and their radical ideology and misogynistic views could not tolerate women's presence in social, political, or economic spheres. They bore the brunt of violence during the Taliban's regime. In short, the issue of women had its ebbs and flows in the history of the country and Afghan women were frequently discriminated on the basis of their gender.

Although men and women are equal constitutionally in the post-Taliban Afghanistan, Afghan women still suffer from gender discrimination and fall the victim of violence. The ongoing domestic violence against women and desert courts where they are tortured are the clear examples of sexual discrimination. To mitigate violence against women, the state must implement the constitution thoroughly and punish the violators of women's rights as it is stipulated in the law.

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