

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



March 31, 2015

Government must Ensure Sufficient Job Opportunities

The situation of unemployment is haunting Afghanistan to a threatening extent. Different youngsters living in different parts of the country are suffering from its negative consequences. Some current news reports and features reveal that about 400 educated youth remain unemployed in Ghor province and they, disheartened by the situation, have warned that they have no choice but to swell the ranks of insurgents or smugglers. They have complaints regarding the policies of the government and believe that government is not doing enough to provide job opportunities to the youth. They even claim that the available positions are unjustly filled by the cronies of provincial council members, parliamentarians and other bigwigs through corruption, which further aggravates the situation and add to the frustration of the unemployed youth.

The situation is not only grave in case of Ghor, there are many youngsters throughout the country who are suffering because of the curse of unemployment. Every year thousands of students complete their education but there is no mechanism in the country that can absorb those students in different profession. According to estimates of World Bank about 180,000 students complete their higher education each year but hardly 60,000 are able to find jobs, while the rest become the victims of unemployment, which then compels them to find different alternatives and even opt for illegal ways of earning livelihood.

According to the calculations of Afghanistan Labor Association about 16 million Afghan are eligible for employment and out of that number only 3 million are employed. The rest are mostly jobless or work as daily wagers or opt for other options, which includes joining the ranks of the terrorists or joining hands with smugglers and criminals. Given that the numbers are true, there are serious concerns and these concerns must be dealt with immediately before it is too late. It is imperative for a government within a state to create job opportunities for its people. Job opportunities would definitely enable the residents of a state to make positive use of their capabilities for betterment and development of a society. It is really important to understand that a state and its population are highly dependent on each other. It is difficult to imagine any of them living separately. As the state guarantees better life opportunities for its population, the population in return must, through thinking and action, strive to make the state stronger.

However, if the job opportunities in a state are limited and the unemployment is rampant, the consequences are really severe. Though unemployment in itself is a severe problem, it is also the root of many other problems. Unemployment is basically an injustice done to a population. It is basically the unavailability of jobs when there are people who have the required qualifications to be employed for different positions. Thus it is injustice, as the qualified people do not get what they deserve - a respectable profession to join so as to use their education and knowledge.

The people who spend a lengthy process of completing their education or acquiring particular skills should be absorbed by the job industry as soon as they are ready to work. Failure to provide such an opportunity may influence those people to a great extent. They, in order to live alive, need to earn a livelihood, which is threatened by unemployment; therefore, they seek to find out other ways of earning a livelihood. In the process they either join a profession that may not be of their choice or they may join illegal ways of earning, which would damage the society to a large extent.

Afghan society is one of the societies that have been haunted by the ghost of unemployment to a threatening degree. As the country has been largely dominated by different era of disorder and instability, the socio-economic infrastructure has not been developed much and as a result the job opportunities have always been limited. Though Afghan society is an agricultural society, the sector has not been able to absorb a large number of unemployed people. Mostly the people have been engaged in agricultural activities on personal basis and the sector has not been developed into an industry on modern grounds; therefore, the ones who own lands can benefit from them while the ones who do not own such lands are bound to remain out of work.

Undoubtedly, unemployment has done great damage to Afghan society. The people who have not been employed have mostly become the part of terrorist networks or the filthy business of narcotics, or even they have become addicted to drugs. As they do not have any other work to do or any way of making both ends meet they do not have much option but to join insurgency.

It is also feared that after the international forces withdraw from the country, the country would face major economic challenges. The financial support would also decrease for Afghanistan. One of the biggest challenges would be to create job opportunities for Afghan people. In absence of sufficient job opportunities, it would be really very difficult to maintain peace, tranquility and order. The international community and the Afghan authorities must make sure that they create enough jobs so as to save the country from falling into instability and economic crisis.



Learning Must Continue

By Dilawar Sherzai

Human beings come to this world with an innate desire for learning. Since the very early days of his childhood till he is an old man the process of learning continues. As the knowledge is limitless, the capability of human beings to learn is also infinite. It never ends and it is difficult to gauge the amount of knowledge a person learns within his lifetime. And it is this capacity to learn that human beings have been able to dominate the world and the living beings present on it; even, he has extended the limits of his learnings to other planets and stars and to other galaxies.

The first institution where human beings start their learning is a family. The parents are, thus, the first teachers. It is through parents that children start learning a language and form the foundations on which they construct the building of their knowledge. Parents prepare the children for what they are going to learn in the years to come. Parents, in fact, do not install the urge for learning within the children. The urge to learn and the thirst to know are already there. The parents only require to keep that alive; or even assist in increasing that.

However, on certain occasions, the parents discourage that urge and strive to install within the minds of the children what they know themselves. They want the children to be their carbon copies; copying what they teach them. The inquisitiveness, the curiosity and keenness that are the natural gifts of the children are thus spoiled in that case and the children become habitual of getting fed by their parents instead of searching for knowledge themselves.

Another institution that plays a tremendous role in supporting the children to learn is school. Though schools assist children in learning to a great extent, they can also be responsible for snatching from children their precious gift - the capacity to learn. Certain schools use the methods and ways that are not at all supportive in learning; rather, they discourage children to a large extent. The use of fear is one of the most dominant factors in such methods, and is highly responsible for killing the students' craving to learn. Stanley Kubrick puts this concept in the most appropriate words: "I think the big mistake in schools is trying to teach children anything and by using fear as the basic motivation. Fear of getting failing grades, fear of not staying with our class, etc. Interest can produce learning on a scale compared to fear as a nuclear explosion to a firecracker."

Teachers, therefore, must strive to keep the students' craving for learning alive instead of inculcating in them the readymade thoughts and concepts. Teachers must

support the students in polishing their capacities to develop their own understanding, instead of making them repeat like parrots. The true teachers, as Nikos Kazantzakis says are those who use themselves as bridges over which they invite their students to cross; then, having facilitated their crossing, joyfully collapse, encouraging them to create their own.

The habit of learning keeps a person updated and ready to face the overgrowing changes of changing world. As, with each passing moment the universe is expanding and along with it the knowledge, it is essential that human beings must never give up the habit of learning. At the end of each day a person must have something new that he has learnt. It is the only way that a person can remain updated and young. He, in this manner, never gets old and outdated. As the famous writer Mark Twain had said, "Anyone who stops learning is old, whether twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing you can do is keep your mind young".

For human beings to keep on learning the central concept is to consider that a person has never learnt enough. As the great philosopher Aristotle used to say, "I know that I don't know anything." It is the very basic step. The realization that a person knows that he knows not leads to true learning. On the other hand the ones who believe that they are not ignorant and know everything, for them all the doors to learning are automatically closed. They, from the very first step, deny to open the vistas of knowledge to themselves. They are basically the blind believers who are unfortunately sure that they have enough knowledge, while on the contrary, they are the ones who need the most of it. And, they are, undoubtedly, the most ignorant of all.

Vera Nazarian quotes in The Perpetual Calendar of Inspiration, "It's a fact - everyone is ignorant in some way or another. Ignorance is our deepest secret. And it is one of the scariest things out there, because those of us who are most ignorant are also the ones who often don't know it or don't want to admit it."

Here is a quick test: If you have never changed your mind about some fundamental tenet of your belief, if you have never questioned the basics, and if you have no wish to do so, then you are likely ignorant. Before it is too late, go out there and find someone who, in your opinion, believes, assumes, or considers certain things very strongly and very differently from you, and just have a basic honest conversation. It will do both of you good."

Dilawar Sherzai is the permanent writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan. He can be reached at email.urya@gmail.com

Is Our Nation Bound to Starless Night?

By Hujjatullah Zia

"I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality... I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word." - Martin Luther King, Jr.

Our bleeding nation seems to be deeply involved in political quagmire. One is saddened by the death of his/her loved one in a suicide bombing; the second is charged with blasphemy and lynched by angry mob, the third has fallen prey to honor killing or suffers from mortal wounds inflicted by her spouse and ultimately, one is abducted on the way to his home after being forced by civil unrest to live a long period of time outside his country. These incidents are not the films' denouements but our national news and the newspapers' headlines. The terrorist victims leave a handful of hapless mourners behind - who either have lost their breadwinners or sweet children. It is likely that Afghan nation is doomed to suffer militancy and violence for the whole period of life. Our dream for peace and prosperity never comes true.

I feel a strong sense of nostalgia for our historical glories when our patriotic nation fought for freedom and for protecting religious values and moral norms. Each drop of their blood, used to save the humanity from decadence. In another item, they sacrificed themselves to ensure an honorable life for the next generation and to break the chains of slavery. The devoted Mujahedeen of Islam, who fought against colony and dictatorship, cultivated humanity and code of ethics in our history. In short, our glorious history is the product of our people's blood and sacrifices. But their devotion and dedication are eroding and our cultural and moral values are waning.

Our historical glories are in a moribund state. Our megalomania and voracious appetite for worldly pleasures force us to discard the call of our conscience. Rather than dying for our brethren's safety, we kill them to comfort our own life, rape to satiate our carnal desires and humiliate one on the basis of sex, color, race or belief to deem ourselves superior. The schism between our past (glorious history) and present widens with each passing year. If this trend continues, we have to be on the alert for more horrible consequences.

Martin Luther states, "We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love. There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies."

Murder on the grounds of discrimination and intolerance will lead to endless violence and bloodshed. The macabre

story of death and aggression is highly toxic to our social norm. Our children and youth will be affected psychologically by hearing the hackneyed phrases of violence twenty-four/seven.

To the unmitigated chagrin of our people, democracy, which was a dream come true, was not a panacea for their wounded hearts. The human rights' discourse, the equal rights and suffrage of man and woman, the binding law, etc. palliated the problems to some extent but there is much to be done. Nonetheless, one's rights and dignity are trampled upon with impunity. Violence and violation of rights are the inveterate genre which continues relentlessly. To put it succinctly, the escalation of terrorism, aggression and carnage is a matter of great worry which has raised the public concerns.

Whenever I imagine the pungent smell of a human's burnt limbs in the bedlam of a suicide bombing, the painful sobs of the injured, the bloody bodies of street vendors, the children's beheaded corpses, the mothers who seek their kids tearfully and the profound anguish of the victims' families, I recoil with unmitigated disgust and wish I was not born so that I didn't hear or see the lurid reports and poignant incidents going on in our surroundings. I feel ashamed of being called human - who is devoid of humanity and compassion. Are we really bound to suffer violence and bloodshed for the whole life?

Lawlessness adds insult to injury. The citizens' equality in the eye of law is only in written form, but practically the law is strict only for the poor. Our people suffer from injustice and nepotism on a large scale. "Law and order exist for the purpose of establishing justice and when they fail in this purpose they become the dangerously structured dams that block the flow of social progress."

We have to break the chains of egotism and megalomaniac feelings. We should believe that we are equal and the racial and linguistic differences matter not in the realm of humanity. We are all human, born with certain and inalienable rights and dignity. We will not gain peace and freedom unless we respect the rights and dignity of our brothers and sisters, cherish religious tolerance, value the code of ethics and yield to the call of our conscience. "I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word." We are not "bound to the starless midnight of racism and war." We are able to end this conflagration and cultivate the morale of brotherhood and sisterhood on the prolific land of our society. We can revitalize our historical glories and cultural norms through acts of virtue and moral practices.

Hujjatullah Zia is the permanent writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan. He can be reached at zia_hujjat@yahoo.com

Chairman / Editor in Chief: Dr. Hussain Yasa

Vice Chairman: Kazim Ali Gulzari

Phone: +93 799 005 019/799 408 271/777 005 019

E-mail: mail@outlookafghanistan.com, outlookafghanistan@gmail.com

Address: V-137, Street 6, Phase 4, Shahrak Omeed Sabz, Kabul, Afghanistan

Sub Office: Shora Road, Street 10, District 6, Kartey 3, Kabul, Afghanistan

