

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



March 31, 2016

## Unemployment is Getting out of Control

Unemployment is one of the biggest issues in Afghanistan and also one of the root causes of insecurity, instability and disturbance within the Afghan society. Unfortunately, the different governments have not paid much attention to it and now it is getting out of control. The National Unity Government (NUG) has also been indifferent to it and not paying the required attention.

On Wednesday, March 30, the Director of the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission, Ahmad Masoud Tokhi revealed in parliament that over 25,000 posts have not been filled. Addressing the parliament, where he was summoned he remarked, "25,584 out of the total 397,722 positions in different civil services organizations are vacant."

As Afghanistan 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 really vital that the government must understand the link between the growing unemployment and increasing insecurity and instability. More than any other thing, government must concentrate on providing job opportunities to the educated youngsters and thus pave the way for prosperity and development. It is really unfortunate to note that the youth who should be having a constructive role in the country are now supporting the ranks of the terrorists.

It is 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 remain limited and the unemployment remains rampant, the consequences will be 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.

It is also feared that in the post withdrawal era, the country would face major economic challenges. The financial support has already started decreasing for Afghanistan. In near future 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.

The role of economy is very much vital for a country. And the economic system can only be strengthened when the capable and skilled individuals participate in strengthening the economic system. Especially the youngsters who get qualified from universities must be given opportunities to present and use their skills in the profession of their choice and interest. Young blood equipped with determination and patriotism can definitely play a significant role; all they need is equitable treatment from the prevailing system. Moreover, equal job opportunities must be created for girls and women as well as they form an integral part of Afghan populace and can play a tremendous role in improving Afghan economic system.

## Europe Versus the Islamic State

By Dominique Moisi

After the November 13 terrorist attacks in Paris that left 130 dead, I wrote a commentary entitled "We Are At War" - and faced considerable criticism from readers, Europeans and non-Europeans alike. How dare I use the word "war" to describe the attacks! Words are weapons, and misusing them is irresponsible, even dangerous. Had I not learned anything from George W. Bush's jingoism?

In fact, I knew exactly what I was doing when I chose that word. And last week, when Brussels faced a terrorist attack on its airport and a metro station, the emergency services personnel chose the same word, calling for the treating of "war wounds." So I will say it again: We are at war.

Of course, it is not a traditional war. No formal declaration of hostilities was made; but the attacks on Paris and Brussels were acts of war - deliberate and brutal maneuvers planned by a group of people controlling a large chunk of territory. These acts targeted not just Europe's people, but also its fundamental values, and they are part of a broader pattern of aggression that will not simply fade away. Indeed, though the Islamic State's territory may be shrinking in Syria and Iraq, it is expanding in Libya. And who knows which countries ISIS may seize tomorrow? Parts of Algeria, for example, could be vulnerable.

It is time for the European Union to recognize the reality - it is at war, whether it likes it or not - and respond accordingly. If there was ever a moment since the end of World War II when Europe needed to take charge of its security, it is now. This means both managing the threat at home and taking a leading role in the fight against ISIS, not only because of Europe's geographical proximity, but because of the past contributions some of its member states, such as France, Italy, and the United Kingdom, have made to destabilizing the region.

In this endeavor, it is critical that the terrorists are not conflated with the refugees flowing into Europe. The refugees, who are being driven out of their homes largely by the actions of ISIS and other violent actors, represent an important opportunity for Europe. Today's surging European populists, who hold European values in contempt, cannot be allowed to cause us to miss that opportunity through bigotry and fear mongering.

Of course, terrorism is not the only security threat that the EU currently faces. With the United States focused on Asia and the Middle East (not to mention itself), it is up to EU leaders to grasp the nettle of limiting Russia's ambitions in the eastern part of Europe.

At a time when the EU - which, if given the choice, would tend to focus its attention inward - must confront such

daunting external challenges, the last thing it needs is a destabilizing internal challenge. Yet that is precisely what it is facing, thanks to Prime Minister David Cameron's feckless attempt to appease the rabid anti-Europeans in his Conservative Party by planning a referendum on whether the UK should remain a member.

When your shared house is in danger of burning down, you work with the other tenants to put out the fire; you don't fuss over who should carry the hose.

The discrepancy between what Europe needs and what it is ready to do reflects a gap between reason and emotion. Rationally, the need for greater European cooperation on security and defense, as Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi has noted, is obvious.

Emotionally, however, the reverse appears to be true, as illustrated by the EU's failure to formulate a common policy toward the arriving refugees.

Like Renzi today, German Chancellor Angela Merkel was alone in her plea for a humane response to the refugee crisis. For most Europeans, the situation seemed overwhelming, so they shrank from it. "Refugees, this is your problem," Latvian President Raimonds Vējonis famously told Merkel in a European Council meeting last year. Terrorism, with its unpredictable tactics and nebulous borders, elicits a similar response.

The challenge is so overwhelming, in fact, that EU countries have been unable even to share information effectively. A similar problem arose after the September 11, 2001, terror attacks in the US, which then withheld information even from its closest allies, Canada and the UK. I saw the frustration this caused first-hand in January 2002 at the World Economic Forum, where I co-chaired a private session among Western security chiefs.

Today, according to Europe's self-determined pecking order, there are the French and British intelligence and security services, and then there are the rest. Belgium, poorly regarded in this area, given its weak state structures and complex linguistic and cultural identities, is not receiving the information that the French and British are collecting. But this is no time for arrogance, much less fear and concealment.

If terrorists are targeting Europe, it is because they believe Europe is the West's weak link.

For its own sake, Europe must prove them wrong. The only way to do that is to stop allowing the emotional desire to hide behind nationalist claims to overwhelm the rational recognition that united action is the only way to be safer. (Courtesy Project Syndicate)

*Dominique Moisi is a professor at L'Institut d'études politiques de Paris (Sciences Po) and the author of La Géopolitique des Séries ou le triomphe de la peur.*

## Deadly Attack in Pakistan

By Hujjatullah Zia

Not a week goes by in which, a report about an atrocity or attack in Afghanistan or Pakistan is flashed on the news. We are then routinely bombarded from all sides as to whether it was justified or was an atrocity. However, the terrorist networks continue their insurgency without hesitation and the national and international condemnations fall on deaf ears.

The Sunday's deadly attack at a crowded park in Pakistan, which left 74 dead and 340 people wounded, fills one with an outpouring of grief. The stream of blood oozing from the lifeless bodies of women and children, who were targeted for their racial or religious backgrounds, is an immense wrench. This lethal episode will numb your mind and senses and it is a slap on the face of humanity. Although, this outrageous act of terror has drawn strong condemnations, the anguish of victims' families is yet to be assuaged.

Reportedly, a massive suicide bomb went off in Lahore's Gulshan-i-Iqbal Park, a few meters from children's play area, on Sunday evening and took heavy toll of innocent civilians - most of the victims were women and children. An offshoot of the Pakistan Taliban, Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), later claimed responsibility for the attack in the eastern city of Lahore and said that it was aimed at killing members of an ethnic minority group who gathered in the park. Jamaat-ul-Ahrar further vowed to continue such attacks and also took responsibility for the twin bombings of a church in Lahore last year.

Members of the United Nations Security Council condemned this attack in the strongest terms. In a statement, they offered condolences to families of the victims and to the people and government of Pakistan. They hoped that hundreds of the wounded would recover quickly.

The council's members reaffirmed that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constituted one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. They reiterated that those responsible for the killings should be held accountable and urged all states, in accordance with their obligations under international law and relevant Security Council resolutions, to cooperate actively with the Pakistani authorities in this regard.

The members of the council stressed that all acts of terrorism were criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation and no matter where they were committed and by whom. They said this or any other attack by the TTP would only strengthen their resolve to support the people of Pakistan. The statement said, "The Security Council will continue to support the efforts of the Pakistani authorities in their fight against terrorism and violent extremism."

Taliban insurgents, mainly the TTP group, have carried out a

series of deadly attacks in Pakistan. For instance, the attack on Bacha Khan University, which killed at least 21 people, was carried out by the TTP group. The attack on the University was claimed by TTP Geedar group's commander Aurangzaib alias Khalifa Umar Ameer Naray, who was also involved in attacks on Peshawar's Army Public School in December 2014 and Air Force's Badabher camp in September last year. The TTP widened its terrorist activities on a large scale. As a result, the US found out that "ISIL-K" is formed in Afghan-Pak border by members of TTP and Afghan Taliban. Pakistan's director general of the Intelligence Bureau, Aftab Sultan, said earlier that TTP was responsible for major terror incidents in Pakistan adding that the group had been re-aligning with Lashkar-i-Jhangvi and Sipah-i-Sahaba. He also mentioned killings of SP Chaudhry Aslam in Karachi and ANP leader Bashir Bilour in Peshawar.

Despite the security challenges and mounted militancy, Pakistan insisted on resuming peace talk between Afghanistan and Taliban and promised to bring the Taliban to negotiating table - Pakistani Chief of army staff, General Raheel Sharif, discussed the issue with his American interlocutor in a trip to the U.S.

Subsequently, a four-nation group, comprises Pakistan, Afghanistan, China and the United States, was formed to broker peace talk with the Taliban. They held some meetings, the fourth one was held in Kabul on February 23, and called to stop violence and bloodshed and make peace. Moreover, Pakistani officials offered to host the first round of direct talks between the Afghan government and Taliban representatives.

Pakistan's Adviser on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz said that his country will put pressure on the Taliban to hold talk. A Pakistani newspaper has reported recently that Pakistani authorities had "detained" the chief of a breakaway faction of the Afghan Taliban, Mullah Muhammad Rasool. He was chosen in early November by several Taliban cadres opposed to Mullah Akhtar Mansoor's ascendancy to head the splinter group.

It is believed that Rasool's capture will be used as "lever" to mount pressure on the Taliban to give in for talks. However, the Taliban have still refused to hold talks and persist on their preconditions and continue their acts of terror in Pakistan and Afghanistan. They inflict heavy casualties on innocent civilians perhaps to react against the two governments' actions.

Considering this issue, peace talk is less likely to come to fruition, and Afghanistan and Pakistan will have to intensify their military operations against any terrorist networks - that refuse to stop violence. Moreover, the violators of human rights should be brought to justice.

*Hujjatullah Zia is the permanent writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan. He can be reached at zia\_hujjat@yahoo.com*



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AFGHANISTAN  
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Chairman / Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Hussain Yasa  
Vice-Chairman: Kazim Ali Gulzari  
Email: outlookafghanistan@gmail.com  
Phone: 0093 (799) 005019/777-005019  
www.outlookafghanistan.net

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