

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

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Planning a Family

There is no short cut to or any spontaneous method to decrease the number of people in a particular community and adjust them with the available sources and resources of the country. On the other hand, however, it requires a long-term planning with an effective and an efficient organization on the country level to make the people conscious about the rapid growth of population and to change their old values about the family and marriage. In the western countries and in some of the neighboring countries such organized programs like family planning are going on for better planning of population and resources. According to the prevailing conditions, family planning is the only remedy which can help people as well as the government to lead a prosperous and richer life in better ways. The concept of family planning is not clear for a layman. Family planning does not imply the absence of children or sterilization, but it is only a low rate or reproduction and nothing unnatural or inhuman. Taking into consideration the prevailing deteriorating conditions of the country and masses as a whole, family planning can be one of the main solutions. Family planning can be an effective measure to check the rapid growth of population and provide a happy life both for the parents and children. Family planning is nothing but planned parenthood, i.e., reproduction of the children with a reasonable interval between the first and the second baby without affecting the health of the mother and socio-economic stability of the family unit. The number of children in the family should be according to its resources and it should not be too large to make proper socialization and education of the children difficult for the parents.

It is vital to understand that high population growth exerts pressure on national efforts for future economic growth and development and simultaneously diverts resources from productive uses to more consumption and creates greater demand for more and more civic amenities. Therefore, it is important to adopt a comprehensive national policy to deal with the situation of rapid growth of population so that both the nation and the individuals benefit from it.

Population planning is certainly beneficial to the families with low income, less literacy, already too many children and such other disturbing socio-economic characteristics. In all parts of the world including urban and rural people, economic reasons for adopting family planning seem to be more convincing in comparison to the other advantages in support of planning.

For example, the head of the rural family is faced with the problem of dividing up his small holding of land among his large number of children. While in a poor family, it is obvious that each new baby increases the burden on parents. Among those in somewhat higher economic circumstances, interest naturally develops for a better life and education for the children. In cities, household appliances and other comforts are desired. All these facilities are difficult or impossible to attain for a large family except in families enjoying the highest economic status. The same kind of effects can be seen for the nation as a whole.

Then there are many health benefits as well that are attached to family planning. The women who are benefitting from this sort of planning tend to have better health. Enough time period during the two consecutive babies supports women in gaining enough energy. Then it should also be taken note of that there are higher chances of mortality in case of females during the child bearing period. Repeated pregnancies break down the health of women, weaken them and result in their deaths. The women are more likely to die during child birth if they have more babies. And it is more dangerous if they are older in age and give birth to babies.

Moreover, frequent births deteriorate the health of the babies as well. Insufficient diet for the mother and babies effect the health of the babies to a large extent. The health of the father is also affected negatively due to overwork as he struggles to support a large family. On the other hand, sick and unhealthy babies disturb the peace of mind of the fathers as well.

Therefore, it is essential that the families must adopt proper family planning so as to save their lives from different sorts of trouble and give birth and nourish the children who can be positive members of the society. Few may suggest that family planning is not acceptable in Islam but they fail to understand that Islam is the most recent religion of the world. It not only takes care of the spiritual side of man but also guides him regarding his relations in the world with his fellow humans. Islam demands from Muslims to be wise and take actions that should assist them to spend easy and blissful lives, free of difficulties and sins.



Ideological Differences Facilitate Militancy

By Hujjatullah Zia

Insurgency stems from ideological differences and people fall victim to violence and bloodshed on the grounds of their racial, sexual and sectarian backgrounds. One, who happens to be born in a particular geography with certain color and creed, is treated as pariah in the perspective of some ideologues, without having done a crime. The ideological difference creates a rift among people and parties and breed conflicts. Now, a number of individuals' fundamental rights are violated in different parts of the world, mainly in Afghanistan, for their accidental backgrounds.

Although, people share common feelings, social standards and cultural norms in a society, a number of individuals show tendency towards breaking law and ethical code and succumb to societal temptations in one way or another. For instance, some yield to advertising gimmicks and copy the same styles and fashions of models, actors/actresses, singers, etc. to the detriment of their cultural heritage and moral values. In another item, they are alienated from their cultural values and adopt liberal way of life. On the other hand, however, some are born in a close structure and nurture a set of fundamental mindset. They claim to practice the very perfect school of thoughts with flawless rule and regulation believing that others have been led astray. After all, they resort to violence under the pretext of saving moral erosion. Based on this false assumption, they justify their acts of violence and trample upon the rights and dignity of the public. So, the second group does not only step out of moral restrictions but break the state law flagrantly - which is considered crime and lawbreakers are to be prosecuted. Now, the question is that why some individuals, unlike many others who live in the same society and share the same culture and traditions, show inclination to breaking moral standards and even state law?

There are many reasons behind this fact. Lack of social control is one of the contributing factors which paves the grounds for perpetrating crime and corruption. Although, a considerable number of people believe in shared values and accepted norms, nonetheless, they are inclined in transgressing moral values and ignore social requirements, mainly when there is lack of social control from the government. Similarly, differences in values which originate from cultural varieties provide opportunities for some and discriminate others. For instance, apartheid in South Africa was a major blow for the Black. The White enjoyed all facilities and had access to the best schools and universities - where the Black was just deprived. Normally, those who were not entitled to have the same opportunities as others in their surroundings will show

inclination to perpetrating crime. Since the deprived layers of a society are humiliated in some ways and their rights and dignity are trampled upon and their voice may have fallen in a deaf ear, ethical code and law will be meaningless for them. Likewise, sometimes not a group but an individual fails to get his/her ambitions, s/he may seek to gain their desires in any possible way - be it at the cost of breaking moral values, law or violating the rights of others.

Moreover, it is believed that man is not born criminal and inclination to violating law and order and amoral or immoral practices are not natural or congenital. One acquires their criminal characters from immoral environment, their playmates, classmates, etc. In other words, deviating from the social path is a process rather than happening suddenly or being an impromptu case and one will get this characteristic through interacting with others. When one socializes in a criminal environment and interacts with criminal individuals, s/he will learn it with the passage of time. It is worth saying that media also play a crucial role in prompting people to be tempted to positive or negative attitudes. As a result, the changes that media have brought in our country within the last decade are easily tangible. A large number of youths, including male and female, have adopted the styles of foreign countries which are mostly in conflict with our cultural values and social norms. Some have been alienated from the country's ethical code since foreign cultures have been desensitized through serial and amorous films. The same is the case with the fundamental groups. Since they are born and bred in radical environment and socialized in a close structure, they cherish radical ideology and show no tolerance towards the public practices. Socializing in the hotbed of terror, lack of social control, interacting with radical and intolerant individuals, being deprived of enjoying an appropriate social status or a good life due to poverty and failing to reach their ambitions, are all the factors that have forced a number of people to succumb to violence and bloodshed.

The world should eliminate the hubs which are changed into hotbed of radicalism for decreasing terrorism. Members of warring parties who come from ill environment and filled with strong sense of intolerance and pessimism will hardly ever make peace with the world. Perhaps the militants come from the poor families who have been held in contempt for years and now violence run in their blood. So, besides destroying their fundamental milieu, it would be highly crucial to strengthen the social control within the country and tighten security, especially in the borders, so as to mitigate militancy.

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Toward a Viable Climate Target

By Oliver Geden

Last December in Paris, 195 governments reached a consensus on how to curb climate change over the coming decades. But, as usual when it comes to the United Nations, the deal that was struck was big on stated ambition, but far more modest when it comes to commitments to concrete action.

The Paris climate agreement includes a pledge to keep warming "well below two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels." Furthermore, at the request of the world's most vulnerable countries, language was added promising "to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°."

The trouble is that these aspirations are not matched by the commitments called for by the treaty. Instead, the agreement's system of voluntary mitigation pledges will allow global emissions to rise until 2030, likely leading to a warming of 3-3.5° by 2100. This looks like a prime example of inconsistency in policymaking.

The problem lies, first and foremost, with the goals spelled out in the agreement. Targets like limiting warming to 1.5° or 2° cannot effectively guide policymakers and the public. They address the whole Earth system, not individual actors or governments. By failing to state explicitly what individual countries are required to deliver, it allows leaders to support targets that seem ambitious, while pursuing mitigation efforts that are in reality insignificant. No scientific formula can describe how to share the burden of global mitigation equitably among countries, leaving every government able to declare confidently that its policies are in line with any given temperature target.

An evaluation of whether the goals are being attained can be carried out only on a global level, and thus no country can be held responsible if the target is missed. As a result, every UN climate summit concludes with expressions of grave concern that the overall efforts are inadequate.

This has to change. The conventional approach is to call for more consistency between talk, decisions, and actions. But inconsistency is inherent to policymaking. Diplomats and politicians treat talk, decisions, and actions independently, in order to satisfy the demands of a diverse set of stakeholders and to maximize external support for their organizations. In climate policy, most governments choose a progressive stance while talking and deciding, but a more cautious one when it comes time to act. Ambitious UN climate targets have not served as a prerequisite, but as a substitute for action.

This is no reason to give up on climate targets altogether. Complex long-term policymaking works only if ambitious goals are in

place. But targets cannot be vague aspirational goals; they must be precise, evaluable, attainable, and motivating. The Paris agreement itself offers one possible approach. Hidden behind a vaguely defined formula, a third mitigation target has been introduced: reaching zero emissions in the second half of the century.

A target of zero emissions tells policymakers and the public precisely what must be done, and it directly addresses human activity. Every country's emissions must peak, decline, and eventually reach zero. This provides a transparent system to evaluate the actions not only of national governments, but also of cities, economic sectors, companies, and even individuals. Defection would be discouraged because it is easy to see - and more important, to explain to the public - whether emissions are going up or down. Such a target would put all new fossil-fuel-based infrastructure under intense scrutiny; if we need to drive emissions down, why build another coal plant or badly insulated building? A shared vision of zero emissions could even spark a race to cross the finish line first. Sweden wants to be there by 2045. The United Kingdom has announced that it plans to come up with a zero-emissions target soon. Germany might follow, after its next elections.

Scientists prefer exact thresholds for climate stabilization, and policymakers like powerful symbols. That is why temperature targets dominate the global climate discourse. But history proves that this does not automatically lead to action. Replacing temperature thresholds with an effort to reduce emissions to zero would ensure accountability and minimize political inconsistency.

There is precedent for such an approach. The Montreal Protocol for protecting the ozone layer primarily addresses harmful substances, trying to accelerate their phase-out, rather than defining a stabilization target for the ozone layer.

The gap between real-world emissions and what will be needed to keep warming below the agreed-upon limits is rapidly widening. The UN has tasked the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to conduct a detailed investigation of how to meet the - already unrealistic - ceiling of 1.5°C. This implies a risk that the world will waste valuable time on yet another debate about lofty goals.

Whatever our temperature target, global emissions have to peak soon and decrease afterwards - all the way to zero. The Paris climate agreement will be remembered as a success only if we manage to shift our focus from talk to effective action. (Courtesy Project Syndicate)

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