

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



May 27, 2018

## Good Governance: Prosperous Nation

Being a true leader means putting people first. In other words a true leader considers the people supreme and ensuring the rights of the people is his ultimate goal. In our age leadership requires a good understanding of the current political, economic and social situations of the country, region and the world. Such a leader could address the concerns of the people and could manage the challenges people face successfully.

Leadership is just filling a position for many people, especially in Afghanistan; but as a matter of fact, leadership is guarding the trust of the people. In our world, electoral processes are one of the common means that people elect some specific people to fulfill a responsibility they gave to them.

In the context of Afghanistan, many people who are elected by the people do not subject themselves to serve the needs of the people. They just make unreliable promises to the people during election campaigns and once they get the vote of the people, they totally forget those who have given the position and responsibility to them. There may be various factors involved in such political behavior in our society, but the most common and influential one is the lack of believing to democratic principles by such leaders. They merely consider elections as a tool that they can deceive some people and have their votes, and then feel no responsibility to these people, because they neither consider themselves accountable to the people and nor consider their positions as a responsibility given by the people to them to guard their trust.

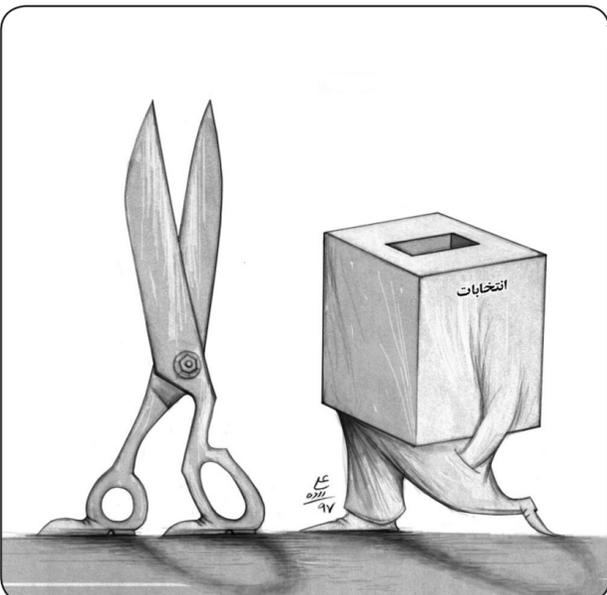
Considering the widening social division and conflicts in Afghanistan, we need leaders who could unite the different groups of the society and create a common vision to motivate all of them to pursue it. Such leaders have the capability to lead the society towards prosperity, not further their own interests.

One of the other characteristics of a good leader is being a just person. Justice in leadership is a core concept, because a good leader should put aside his personal inclinations and preferences. As we witness in our society, most of the Afghan leaders lack this characteristic and there are various examples how they misuse their power and distribute the resource to their family, and ethnic groups and etc.

Further, lack of good governance is one of the major problems in the context of leadership in Afghanistan. Good governance implies being honest, fair, merit based, ensuring participatory processes and equal distribution of opportunities and resources among all the people. It requires having a strong political will to govern well and empower it. Poor management of public resources and failure in policy implementation by the current Afghan leaders are the consequences of weak governance because they are not committed leaders and also lack integrity and relevant knowledge. In other words, these leaders do not have the relevant knowledge and are not capable of demonstrating high competencies and correct attitudes for their supporters to replicate them. While they are expected to contribute constructively in the national processes, and be directly involved in formulating, implementing, controlling and supervising policies that are specifically designed to address the problems of their constituents according to the right order of priorities; they usually fail to do so either due to lack of competencies or lack of commitment to the people at the national level. On the other hand, incompetent leaders usually incite group, ethnic, religious, etc. divisions to cover up their weaknesses and gain the support of those elements of society who do not have a big vision and can easily be satisfied by short term interests.

Leaders play a crucial role in different political, economic and social issues. Nation building is one of the areas that leaders are expected to play a constructive role in it. In fact, leaders are the prime movers in nation building agenda in any country. It is self evident; nation building is the process of constructing or structuring a national identity through state power. The aim of nation building process is unifying the people within a state so that it remains politically, economically and socially stable. Nation building ensures that the nation become strong and resistant in the long run and different groups of the people share a shared vision in terms of the critical issues of their country. To realize this, a nation should have leaders who are proactive and innovative in their approach to ensure that the objectives of the nation building are achieved and the interests of different social groups are ensured. Therefore, ensuring nation building and having a unified vision and a strong nation, require good governance: And good governance needs highly qualified and competent leaders who consider the people supreme.

The prosperity of a nation depends on its leaders. Good leaders, who consider leadership as a responsibility given by the people to them to ensure their interest, are aware of the political, economic and social issues and can make informed public policy decisions, can lead the society toward peace, prosperity and a shared vision. No society would achieve these, unless it has just and competent leaders and a good governance system put in place and led by such leaders.



## Historical Similarities between two Afghan-Chinese Provinces: Bamyan and Sichuan

By Hujjatullah Zia

The reform and opening-up unleashed by the paramount leader of the People's Republic of China (PRC) Deng Xiaoping four decades ago have borne the desired result as Chinese nation reap the fruit of market economy now. Opening China to foreign investment and global market changed it into one of the fastest-growing economies and second world's economy.

In addition to constructing an economically strong society, the Communist Party of China (CPC), which has won the hearts and souls of the Chinese mainly in the past four decades, strengthened the spirit of brotherhood and peaceful coexistence among all ethnic and religious groups following 1978. That is to say, the state has paved the ground for all individuals to exercise their rights and liberties without any discrimination on the basis of their caste, color or creed. Constitutionally, "The state protects normal religious activities" and deems the "freedom" and "dignity" of the public "inviolable". Advocating the principle of "non-discrimination" on the basis of one's gender, the Chinese Constitution states in article 48, "Women in the People's Republic of China enjoy equal rights with men in all spheres of life, in political, economic, cultural, social and family life." To put it succinctly, safeguarding people's fundamental rights - i.e. their rights to life, liberty and property - and inherent dignity; eliminating sexual, ethnic and religious discrimination; and paving the ground for harmony, peace and prosperity are the fruit of post-1978 constitution.

Few days back, I visited Deng Xiaoping's hometown Sichuan province, which is strong economically and rich culturally. The Giant Buddha and Mount Emei Temple in Deng's birthplace indicates two facts: First, China has a highly rich culture and historical monuments and pays great respect to them. Annually, hundreds of millions of tourists visit China in general and Sichuan province in particular since China supports opening-up. Second, people exercise tolerance towards one another and there are thousands of mosques, temples, churches across China. That is, people of all faith exercise their religious tenets freely and seek to respect the beliefs and faith of one another and treat one another with dignity. Mount Emei and Giant Buddha are the two great heritage of China with long history located in the China's city of Leshan, which is known the city of culture and the capital of fine food as it is said that "the best flavor of Sichuan cuisine is in Leshan". It is said that the first Buddhist temple in China was built on the summit of Mount Emei. Buddhist culture is said to be introduced into Leshan two thousand years ago through the South-

ern Silk Road. Subsequently, large-scale temple complexes were founded there. The highly beautiful scenery of Leshan city will catch the eye of anyone. Meanwhile, this city also has historical background in terms of sport and, therefore, the torch of the Beijing Olympic Games was relayed at the foot of Mount Emei on 4 August 2008. To view the Giant Buddha, which is the largest Buddha statue in the world, in the hometown of the great Chinese reform and opening-up champion, one will think that this province of China has a strong historical tie with Afghan province of Bamyan, which lies on the Silk Road and had two Buddha statues - "Solsol" measured 53 meters and "Shahmama" 35 meters - in its heart for thousands of years. Bamyan city was also a religious site for many centuries and the site was listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

However, the Buddha statues were destroyed by the Taliban in March 2001, which drew strong condemnation from around the world, including China. Despite being destroyed, this cultural site has not missed its historical background. In other words, with the Taliban's destruction, the debris in this site indicates two facts: First, Bamyan was a highly cultural site, similar to Sichuan province of China, lying on the Silk Road. Second, the debris of Buddha statues shows the radical ideology and ugly face of the Taliban to the world.

To cut the long story short, there are close similarities between Chinese province of Sichuan and Afghan province of Bamyan. It is hoped that Afghan and Chinese officials bring these two provinces to the state of sisterhood and make Bamyan the sister city of Sichuan, especially under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) project. Bamyan is one of the most secure provinces of Afghanistan with long history similar to Sichuan and deserves to be called the sister city of Deng Xiaoping's hometown.

It is worth mentioning that Afghanistan also supports opening-up and its door is open to foreign investment the same as China. It is hoped that the two countries enhances their trade and transit, cultural interaction and people-to-people exchanges so as to build trust, advocate friendly relations and the idea of peaceful coexistence and learn more about the cultural values of each other. In short, it will be highly appreciated if China shares the fruit of its reform and opening-up with its historical neighbor Afghanistan.

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## Protecting Climate-Change Refugees

By Kumi Naidoo

Governments around the world are engaged in a series of talks that could fundamentally alter how the movement of people across borders is managed. One dialogue is focused on the protection of refugees; the other on migration.

These discussions, which are being led by the United Nations, will not result in legally binding agreements. But the talks themselves are a rare chance to forge consensus on contemporary migration challenges. And, most importantly, they will offer the international community an opportunity to plan for the impact of climate change, which will soon become a key driver of global displacement and migration.

At last count, there were some 258 million migrants worldwide, with 22.5 million people registered as refugees by the UN Refugee Agency. These numbers will be dwarfed if even the most modest climate-related predictions are borne out. According to the International Organization for Migration, climate change could displace as many as one billion people by 2050. And yet no international treaty covers climate-induced migration - a gap that must be addressed now.

Not since 1951 have international standards for refugee protection received so much attention. That year, with more than 80 million people displaced after World War II, UN member countries ratified a comprehensive framework to standardize their treatment of refugees. The Global Compact on Refugees that is currently under discussion builds on this framework with strategies to empower refugees and assist host governments. Most significantly, it would commit signatories to protecting "those displaced by natural disasters and climate change."

The second agreement is even more consequential for the management of climate-induced displacement. There has never been a global treaty governing migration, and past bilateral efforts have focused almost exclusively on violence and conflict as root causes of displacement. The proposed Global Compact for Migration goes beyond these factors, and notes that climate change is among the "adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to

leave their country of origin."

This type of regulatory language reaffirms what at-risk populations around the world already know: droughts, natural disasters, desertification, crop failure, and many other environmental changes are upending livelihoods and rendering entire communities uninhabitable. In my country, South Africa, a record drought is forcing major cities to consider water rationing. If water shortages persist, migration is certain to follow.

Resource scarcity is particularly dangerous in politically unstable states, where climate change has already been linked to violent conflict and communal upheaval. For example, disputes over fertile land and fresh water fueled the war in Darfur, and even the current crisis in Syria - one of the greatest sources of human displacement today - began after successive droughts pushed Syrians from rural areas into cities. It is not a stretch to predict that climate change will produce more bloodshed in the coming years.

The two UN frameworks could serve as a basis for planning how to manage the coming climate-induced migrations. With scientific modeling to guide decision-making, states could draft orderly, dignified, and equitable relocation strategies. This is certainly a smarter approach than the ad hoc responses to date.

But history tells us that governments are reluctant to seek out collective solutions to forced migration. This failure is visible today in the haunting and inexcusable plight of refugees around the world. As we enter the final months of the Compact talks, what should we expect of those negotiating the global plan for managing unprecedented movements of people? The causes and consequences of climate change demand close attention. Displaced people must be able to get on with their lives in dignity. The test of world leaders will be whether the global compacts on refugees and migrants can achieve this.

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