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

Daily Outlook AFGHANISTAN
The Leading Independent Newspaper

May 30, 2017

How the Social Evils Originate?

It can be easily observed in our society that whenever a person does something wrong, his parents are blamed for it, his family background is held responsible and the nourishment and teachings of the parents are questioned. All these lead to the misconception that parents are responsible for all the evils that erupt in the society. One of the main causes of such a conception is the tribal thinking. In a tribal setup, family plays an important role and is considered as the center of all the activities. All the attributes that are developed within a personality are thought to have roots in the family. People are recognized as per the name and status of their families. Therefore, their actions are judged in the similar fashion. The evil-doers are thought to have learnt the evils from their families and their parents.

This sort of thinking is really narrow-minded and fails to understand the whole truth. It only sees one of the aspects of the fact while getting blind towards most of the others. It is important to have a scientific and rational understanding of the issue, though it would be a bit difficult for those who have been greatly influenced by tribal thinking and have the habit of jumping to the conclusion without going through the details. The formation of a personality is highly dependent on various institutions; from family to political system, there is a long list.

Though family is the basic one, the institutions like schools, social, cultural and religious institutions and ceremonies, offices, sports and others have their undying influences. All these institutions have different practices and there are different personalities in them that imprint their marks on a person's psychology. It is difficult to say that a particular behavior within a person is the outcome of the family or the parents alone as there are different factors involved at the same time.

Parents' nourishment, their care and their neglect have influence on the children, this cannot be rejected. It is believed and believed rightly that a mother's lap is the first academy for a child. But there is a long journey between how a person is treated by his parents and his choice to commit an evil.

Moreover, the imprints of parent's behavior on the minds of the children are not like reflection in a mirror – it does not come back in the same form; or it is not like the input and output in the computer, where the output is as per the demands of the users. If it was so, parenting would not be difficult at all, but it is not so and the parents living in our society are the witness to it.

The love from the parents will not necessarily result in a good conduct of the children – observations show that children with great love and attention from their parents have committed crimes and evils that have made history; similarly, their neglect does not necessarily result in the children becoming evil-doers. There are many children in our society, who are the victims of their parents' negligence, yet they show great values and behavior and even hate evils. Simply, human behavior and psychology is not like mathematics where two plus two is equal to four. The evils that we see in our society are, in fact, the responsibility of the society as a whole. As Henry Thomas Buckle had said, "The society prepares a crime, the criminal commits it".

This suggests that there are many socio-economic conditions that are involved in the preparation of the crimes which are the biggest evil in our society. The social injustice, the economic disadvantage, the political corruption, the religious intolerance, all these factors and many others play their roles in motivating the criminals and the evil-doers to commit them. Suppose a person steals money and becomes a thief.

There are certain possibilities, all of which towards the role of the society in it – the person stole money because he was compelled by his economic conditions. He might have had financial problems and have been incapable of providing basic requirements of life to his family members. He might have a patient at home, waiting to be cured, which is only possible in today's society through money as health services have become a great business. Thus, there are so many social factors that have nothing to do with the parents alone and which even compel the parents to nourish and guide their children in a certain way.

In fact, if we see from a wider perspective we will soon realize that parents themselves are among the effected, how can they be the cause? The vicious circles of the unjust economic and political systems have bound the people in such a way that they have no way out and no clear idea what to do except blaming each other.

That's why we find parents blaming the children and children blaming the parents, and many others blaming both of them, when in fact both are innocent. However, as mentioned earlier, to understand this concept a wider approach is required while many people are just peeping through the lock hole to see the whole room, which does not assist them in any way to see the whole truth.

The Nonstop Cycle of Peace Game

By Hujjatullah Zia

With the Taliban's intensified attacks in Afghanistan, Beijing has hosted the first round of trilateral Practical Cooperation Dialogue (PCD) constituting of Afghanistan, Pakistan and China. The three countries believed that the trilateral cooperation would lead to peace and stability. On the other hand, insurgency continues unabated and inflict heavy casualties upon Afghan civilians and soldiers.

The Afghan-Pak relations hit rock bottom within the two past years and the blame game continued with the escalated insurgency. The mutual relation went from harsh rhetoric and strong condemnation to military clash. Both the countries put the blame on each other after being targeted by terrorist networks, which compounded the tension. This issue stoked strong mistrust between Kabul and Islamabad and left no possibility for supporting the peace process, especially when Pakistan could not nudge the Taliban to peace table.

No wonder, the Afghan-Pak relation plays significant role regarding peace process but this relation has been fragile and shaky. Pakistan is believed to be more pessimist about the India's role in Afghanistan. "Pakistan is concerned about international isolation and sees its position through the prism of India's rising international status, including India's expanded foreign outreach and deepening ties to the United States," Dan Coats, who, as National Intelligence director, leads a team of more than a dozen spy agencies, including the CIA and FBI is cited as saying.

"Pakistan will likely turn to China to offset its isolation, empowering a relationship that will help Beijing to project influence in the Indian Ocean." Now India's declaration about sending troops to Afghanistan has worried Pakistan more than ever before.

Kabul has constantly urged Islamabad to use its leverage in bringing the Taliban to peace table – which has been promised but never fulfilled by Pakistan.

The persistent peace offering by Ghani's administration was welcomed only by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar but turned down by other warring parties, including the Taliban. The interminable fluctuation of peace talks, which have come to a stalemate, never led to peace. Afghan nation is suffering painfully as a result of terrorist attacks and suicide bombings. The question is that will the trilateral peace talks hosted in Beijing put an end to the escalated insurgency through pushing the Taliban to the peace table?

It is believed that two seats are still empty in the recent tri-lateral talks: one for the Taliban's representatives and the next for the US officials. A unanimous decision needs to be taken to put an end to the current insurgency. For instance, what if Mullah Haibatullah is targeted by the US drone, the same as Mansour, after the Taliban's positive answer to peace negotiation as a result of the trilateral talks? Earlier this week, a Republican congressman, Adam Kinzinger, suggested resuming air strikes on alleged terrorist targets in Pakistan, and observers in Washington said the Trump administration might do so if terrorists targeted US military personnel and installations in Afghanistan. In such a case, all the efforts regarding peace process will be proved abortive.

There are many ifs and buts about peace in Afghanistan. For example, the US policy for Afghanistan about increasing soldiers is disagreed by Russia and India's policy is reacted negatively by Pakistan and vice versa. In other words, the US and India seem to support military deal, whereas Russia and Pakistan are in favor of peace talks. The question is that which one of the two groups is right?

Since both "war on terror" and "peace process" failed to bear the desired result, this question still remains unanswered. After all, it is hard to predict Trump's strategy in this respect.

To break the deadlock in peace process, all countries, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, US, Russia, France, China, etc., will have to form a peace committee so as to bring warring parties to peace table or form a military coalition to target all terrorists' safe havens. In brief, thawing relations only between Kabul and Islamabad will not break the stalemate.

Similarly, the trilateral talks will not cover all the challenges, which has been proved regularly. I am in favor of a comprehensive military coalition to target terrorist sanctuaries and root out global terrorism, since Afghanistan has been the victim of foul play in the peace game.

The rising graph of human casualties and Afghans' unmitigated sufferings continue despite the peace talks. The Taliban are likely to have no bona fide intention regarding peace talks. They have capitalized on this term for many years. There were many trilateral and quadrilateral groups with the aim of breaking the peace deadlock.

My question is that why there were no such groups after the failure of "war on terror" to target the Taliban's sanctuaries? Don't you think that the nonstop cycle of peace talks is no more than a game?

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The Social Bases of Radicalism

By Mohammad Qasim Erfani

The social basis of radicalism and tendency towards it have been ignored or paid less attention in the process of combating terrorism or Islamophobia. It is likely that the social ground is one of the main reasons behind the growing radicalism in the Islamic developing countries, including Afghanistan. States had played its role unintentionally in constituting the grounds.

In other words, states smooth the path for disorder which triggers radical reaction. So, in addition to military deal, negotiation and diplomatic struggles, finding out the social bases of radicalism and adopting practical strategies must be considered by governments. This commentary is the outcome of a research about the groups ready to join Islamic radicals.

The commentary has been supported by the sociological ideas of Karl Marx, Max Weber, Emil Durkheim and Burger – who believe that social and economic deprivation spark off tendency towards religious radical beliefs. Similarly, Ericsson's psychological view will be useful in analyzing some layers in favor of radicalism. Hrair Dekmejian, a prominent researcher in the arena of radicalism in the Middle East, has discovered five social groups inclined to succumb to radical temptations. Discovering such groups and the reasons behind their tendency will change the general outlook about combating terrorism.

1- Youths

Youths are the most vulnerable group to radicalism. The youths' mental and spiritual states on the one hand, and their education and social-economic status on the other hand will lead to revolutionary and sensational movements. For example, the educated youths who studied educational and technical fields such as medical, math, engineering and also primary seminary students, unlike those who studied human science, will be more susceptible to radicalism. Because purity, certainty and fundamentalism lie in the nature of medical and technical science, whereas social science has analytical and intellectual nature and it is more flexible and skeptical. Additionally, identity crisis, unemployment and social inequalities will prompt the youths to join radical groups. Exploiting the genuine intention of this social class, terrorist networks mobilize them against the so-called west-oriented states.

2- New Urban Elements

The uncontrolled process of emigration from village to city is one of the factors of instability in the developing countries, including Afghanistan. This trend, which is associated with population density in large cities such as Kabul, will be considered rural-making rather than urbanization. The villagers are usually settled in suburbs, where facilities are lacking, without being integrated into urban culture. This will lead to cultural crisis and mental restlessness among the people and leave them at the mercy of radicalism. Realizing the social and mental conditions, radical groups will seek to attract these individuals.

3- Dissidents

This social group consists of most aware individuals that involve in conflict for being against the mechanism of power-sharing and foreign affairs. The political dissidents are ethnic nationalists and monopolists pushed to armed campaigns by the spirit of their totalitarianism. To legitimize their terrorist activities, this faction will resort to Islamic slogans veiled in religious fundamentalism. Members of Khalq Party who joined the Taliban in 1990s and Iraqi Baathists who initially joined al-Qaeda and then the Islamic State (IS) after the fall of Saddam's regime are the clear examples. They are engaged in horror and terror under the mask of Jihad and Islam.

4- Traditional-Native Elements

The micro-bourgeoisie, bureaucrats, traders and instructors will be the fourth social group vulnerable to radicalism. This group will feel that their traditional beliefs have been weakened by cultural invasion and western values. This group deems foreign individuals and states a serious menace to their religious and traditional identity and has strong potential for being attracted to radical parties. Of course, more urban part of this class will suffer less human casualties for supporting radicalism through financial and spiritual aids.

5- The Lower Class of Society

Poor peasants, the urban poor and the residents of tribal belts are the three main parts of lower class. According to Marx, this class will be inclined to resort to revolutionary acts against the society's wealthy and ruling class. Promising them happiness in the world and in the hereafter, terrorist networks are able to mobilize them. The lower class, which is a cheap force, will be subject to radicals. The tribal men and poor farmers act as amateur soldiers for terrorist groups by being paid small amount – this fact is proved in our country.

Considering the above analysis about the categorization and grounds and tendency for radicalization, political strategy for discovering the social hotbed of terror should be implemented to reduce their tendency in this respect. This strategy will be implemented in a violence-free process and make the challenge of radicalism manageable. I believe that the challenge before Afghanistan is stronger in persuading the minds of our youths, new urban elements, dissidents, traditional-native elements and the lower class rather than challenge in combating terrorism. Producing and deepening the discourse of moderate Islam compatible with modern civilization on the basis of religious principles, the process of urbanization, the systematic mechanisms of legal power-sharing, fighting corruption, and bridging the wide gap in the system of income will be the significant solutions in this regard.

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