

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

Daily Outlook

AFGHANISTAN

The Leading Independent Newspaper

November 22, 2017

Keeping the Youth Away from Crimes

Crimes and delinquency within a society are very cruel. When the way for them are paved and they are allowed to multiply, they target all the sections of the society alike. Even they do not spare the innocent children and youngsters. Unfortunately, when the youngsters are caught in crimes, they tend to suffer in the ways that they do not even realize. More importantly, they make the society suffer as well – the society not only faces the consequence of addition in the number of criminals but it also loses an opportunity of betterment. The youngsters are full of potentials and energy. Their involvement in crime tends to divert all those potentials and energies towards negative activities, instead of betterment and development. It is, therefore, essential that a society must value its children and youngsters and it must make sure that they are provided facilities wherein they are able to improve themselves and the society as a whole. It is mostly the social conditions that decide the social roles and responsibilities of the youngsters. If a society is a well-developed society, it would definitely provide better opportunities for the youngsters to become positive part of the society but if it is underdeveloped and has many social problems, it is bound to influence the youngsters in a negative manner as the opportunities for the youngster to play a constructive role would be limited and they would be pushed towards miseries and crimes. The dearth of proper opportunities in Afghanistan has created an environment that can promote crimes among the youth. The socio-political and socio-economic scenario in the country have been very much vulnerable for the youth. The opportunities for getting education, particularly higher education are limited and the employment opportunities are scarce. Poverty, on the other hand, has incapacitated the youngsters to pursue education and careers of their choice. Most of them do not have clear idea about their roles and responsibilities and neither are they sure of their future. Therefore, most of them saunter aimlessly in society instead of becoming a part of a larger whole. The circumstances are further deteriorated by the continued wave of insecurity and terrorism. Though there have been certain improvements made since the installation of so-called democratic government, crime among youngsters keeps on hampering the process of improvement. Apart from the traditional crimes like mugging, rape, robbery and murder, youth in the country are dominantly caught in the web of terrorism. There are many fresh recruits in different terrorist groups who serve as potential cadre for such evil organizations and presently they have been serving as the man power for suicide bombings. In many of the cases of suicide bombings that have taken place in different parts of the country, the bombers have been youngsters. Moreover, there have been many youngsters involved in the smuggling and production of drugs in the country that has been a dominant evil for us for the last few decades. To add fuel to the fire, there is scarcity of special courts or special training for youth and rehabilitation centers where young delinquents can be treated, trained or guided. If they are caught in their crimes they are put in the same prisons as adults and treated in the same manner as adults. Therefore, this does not only violate their rights but also diminishes their chances of improving themselves. There are many youngsters in different prisons in Afghanistan who seem to have no special protection or treatment. Living with the criminals who are mature and aged, these children lose their chances of coming back to their normal lives and amending themselves. They get caught in more developed webs of crimes and criminal groups, and at the end, they come out of the prisons with developed skills and more connections to get settled in the world of crimes forever. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that the children must have their special prisons, rather rehabilitation centers where they are treated professionally so that they have more chances of becoming positive members of the society when they go out. It is important to note that training centers for youngsters should be based on modern guidance and training techniques. Only keeping the youngster separate from the adults does not solve the issue; therefore, the issue should be dealt in a more logical and scientific manner. The unchecked crimes among youngsters in the country really points at serious concerns for the future of the country. Necessary measures must be introduced by the government in this regard to curb the situation appropriately and as per the requirements. Only confinements and severe punishments cannot guarantee a crimeless society and in the case of youngsters the matter gets even more complicated. Special considerations, special laws and special treatment must be in place to deal with the cases of juvenile delinquency; otherwise, the circumstances may get worse rather than getting any better.



Unless You Create Good Universities; You cannot Move into the Next Phase of Development!!

By Hamid Bamik

The title of this paper is derived from the book of The New Asian Hemisphere written by Kishore Mahbubani, the dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, one of the top universities in the Asia. Mahbubani argues in his book that the only way for Asian countries to attract the best minds of the world is creating good and successful universities as the western countries did and have been doing. Asian countries also can move into the next phase of development through founding rigorous and highly qualified universities. If we have a critical glance at Afghanistan's private and public universities, to what extent are we on the right track in higher education, and how much we have been successful in this regard? Is Afghanistan able to move into the next phase of development with holding the extant private and public higher education institutions? I am trying to respond to the above questions in this paper. Currently there are 82 private institutes of higher education and universities (Afghanistan Analytical Network, 2014) and there are 22 public universities active across Afghanistan (Ministry of Higher Education's website). Of the above public and private universities and institutes of higher education in Afghanistan, a few of them are pretty able to compete with other neighboring countries' universities, and those are mostly private universities. When Mahbubani is arguing that the prerequisite for moving into the next stage of development is establishing good universities, in my mind, he is talking about the importance and significance of soft power that higher education bestows to a society. In today's world having soft power is the most important power that a country can have, and most importantly this soft power is enriched, enhanced, and achieved via educating the people. This essential of prosperity, functionality, and as Mahbubani says "next phase of development" includes academic power, cultural power, and social power. According to Joseph Nye, the privileged of this terminology (soft power), soft power is the ability to shape the preferences of others through appeal and attraction. Now the question crossing in my mind, maybe in everybody's mind, is this that how much the public and private universities in Afghanistan have the power of attraction and appeal to form the preferences of Afghanistan's youths to prefer studying at public and private universities inside Afghanistan rather than going to foreign countries for pursuing their higher education? The answer to this question is hard and challenging. When the young citizenry of Afghanistan is moving to foreign countries for higher education, it echoes two things: either there are not qualified and professional cadres at public and private universities or the universities themselves do not have the soft power of attraction and appeal to convince the young generations to pursue their higher education inside Afghanistan. In my view, there are adequate professional cadres in Afghanistan who have master's degree and PhD from top

universities either of neighboring countries, European countries, or America. But unfortunately, most of the higher education institutions in Afghanistan particularly public higher education enterprises do not have professional, standardized, and rigorous educational leadership and effective policymaking mechanisms for attracting the students and recruiting the qualified instructors. Public universities in Afghanistan besides their weak and abortive managerial and leadership systems have a specific glass ceiling for recruitment of new faculty, and anyone crossing that level, their chance to be recruited is controversial or it gives the signal of rejection. But what about the private universities? Since they do not have such unbreakable glass ceiling, when they are not able to attract both the talented students and highly potential faculty, it showcases that there is something wrong either with their recruitment policy, leadership and managerial mechanisms, or with their entire academic essence and ethos. Nobody can deny that private and public universities in Afghanistan brought many effective and vital changes in the society. We started almost with zero, eroded and damaged educational infrastructures after the fall of Taliban's regime, and currently there are 82 private institutes of higher education and universities and 22 public universities in Afghanistan. It projects that in terms of quantity we went ahead very fast and well but how much in terms of quality, the higher education in Afghanistan improved, is the question that every citizen of Afghanistan is asking themselves. In effect, some of the private institutions in Afghanistan are doing great and have enough potentials for tangible and considerable advancement and development; in other words, can move Afghanistan into the next phase of development providing that they are managed well. When Mahbubani is talking about entering the next phase of development, he refers this valuable and important obligation to higher education institutions of a country. Indeed, higher education institutions are the cornerstones of a country. In order to move Afghanistan into the next stage of development, higher education institutions in Afghanistan need to embrace a central and instrumental change. Public universities need to standardize and renovate their faculty recruitment policy, teaching methodologies, examination procedures, entrance matriculation, and their staff and students' evaluation process. Moreover, public institutions need desperately to substitute meritocracy and academic competencies in lieu of kingship and nepotism in the crux of their performances, and must restructure their leadership and managerial schemes accordingly. Likewise, private universities need to streamline their mission statement from trading on their credentials to serving the public on their credentials, and bring fundamental and key metamorphosis in their leadership approach regarding the essence of higher education. Hamid Bamik is a Graduate Student in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis University of Missouri-Columbia. He can be reached at the hbqwf@mail.missouri.edu

Political Hullabaloo in Pakistan

By Hujjatullah Zia

After Pakistani Prime Minister and Pakistan Muslim League -Nawaz's leader Nawaz Sharif disqualified by Supreme Court (SC), a sense of political hullabaloo emerged inside Pakistan. Some argue, however, that the circumstances of Sharif's dismissal in this case mark a departure from the typical in Pakistan's checkered past with democracy. With the act of SC, Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan, who supported the case, welcomed the decision wholeheartedly and said it marked the start of a new era in the history of Pakistan, where justice will be held supreme. In his recent statement, Imran Khan said that Pakistan could not make any progress without eradicating corruption. Likewise, the head of Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Sami (JUI-S) believed that his country had been besieged by enemies and there was a need for a united struggle to face the current situation. The two parties (PTI and JUI-S) have agreed to formulate a "joint strategy" for Pakistan next general elections. Pakistan is embroiled not only in political rivalries but also in militancy. The issue of terrorism looms large in Pakistan as people are targeted on a large scale. The security situation was deteriorated in Pakistan as terrorist parties kill people on the grounds of their race and religion. As a result, ethnic minorities are targeted largely by terrorists. They are not able to exercise their religious rituals freely. They even fear to go shopping, since some people were killed in mall, vegetable stores, on the way to their home from bazaar, etc. Similarly, students, political activities, and journalists are killed every once in a while. It is most likely that the killers are not terrorists but their opponents and influential figures whose secrets were probably disclosed by journalists. Militancy in Pakistan is a great challenge before the government. When citizens are not able to exercise their freedoms, the rate of public discontent will rise. Now Pakistan is supposed to provide security for its citizens through campaigning against terrorism. That is to say, although Pakistan fights terrorism, it should prove it for Pakistani citizens and provide security for all regardless of their race, color, or creed. It will, indeed, put the government under question when ethnic minorities are singled out and killed by terrorists. Corruption in the government's machinery and the case of Pakistani former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif made people and political parties lose their trust in officials. Sharif's case has not been finalized and he is still defending himself. Anyhow, Maulana Sami ul Haq, who is also known as the

"father of the Taliban", is a religious scholar who ran Darul Uloom Haqqania, a Deobandi Islamic seminary, and is said to have a close tie with the Taliban. In August, Sami ul Haq said that the Pakistan Army would not take any action against the Haqqani network. Addressing a press conference at the National Press Club, where he lambasted US President Donald Trump's remarks about Pakistan, he said that those he was affiliated with "were still fighting the Americans in Afghanistan", according to Dawn, a Pakistani newspaper. He also blamed the government of Pakistan for pursuing a "failed foreign policy" and demanded that parliament register their protest on the matter. On the other hand, PTI seeks to promote freedom of thought, abolition of personal income tax and dismantling religious discrimination in Pakistan. According to the 2013 election results, PTI was the third largest party in National Assembly, and emerged as the governing party of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. PTI wants to set Pakistan on a course to political stability, social harmony, and economic prosperity for all religious, ethnic and racial communities. The PTI has argued for religious tolerance and greater representation for minorities. Christians, Sikhs, and Hindus have joined the PTI. It has also spoken out for senior citizens, poor people, and women. Considering the ideology of both political parties, one will wonder how the two parties came close together despite having contradictory views. That is to say, Sami ul Haq is a radical politician who is in pursuit of implementing a radical sharia similar to Taliban; whereas PTI's door is open to all ethnic groups, including non-Muslims, and it supports religious tolerance. It is believed that there are two reasons behind their agreement. First, both the parties are discontented with Pakistan's policy. Second, the heads of both groups disfavor Pakistan's attitude towards the US. For instance, PTI organized a protest against drone attacks in Pakistan on November 23, 2013 in Peshawar, where it called on the federal government to force an end to U.S. drone attacks and to block NATO supplies through Pakistan to Afghanistan. So as to strengthen its foreign policy and domestic security, Pakistan needs to narrow the chance for radical figures such as Sami ul Haq to come to power. Moreover, joining a strategy with JUI-S will be Imran Khan's political error. If he does not end joining strategy, he will find himself in trouble with Sami. Hujjatullah Zia is the permanent writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan. He can be reached at zia_hujjat@yahoo.com

Chairman / Editor-in-Chief: Moh. Reza Huwaida

Vice-Chairman: Kazim Ali Gulzari

Email: outlookafghanistan@gmail.com

Phone: 0093 (799) 005019/777-005019

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