

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



November 23, 2015

Zabul Witnessed Another Mass Abduction

The individuals driven by evil motives, forged ideologies and aggressiveness has put them in the rate race to dominate –leads to formation of a human society we witness at the moment, characterized by rule of violence, aggression, characterized by innumerable bloodshed, abduction and ruthless killings of fellow man. Amidst the continuing military operation at some parts of country –a faction of militants have set to storm cities and provinces instead of relying on explosion and bomb blasts simply –others have planned to soar the anguish of masses by kidnapping non-combatant civilians.

It was an unfortunate Saturday morning when a group of militants intercepted 4 buses along Zabul-Kabul highway, went with identity checks, segregated 20 passengers and took them away to an unknown destination but within the terrain of Afghanistan where the hold of government is minimum. According to official the incident has happened near Nawrak district about 35 kms from Qalat, the capital of Zabul. Meanwhile the president's office has vowed to track down the kidnappers behind the plot seems more or less a vague promise. The government seemingly is making efforts to ensure their safe release, yet no major breakthrough has materialized.

The highways are turning perilous for passengers travelling across the country. The militants are using every possible means to underline the existing weaknesses within the government. Abduction is another weapon the militants have resorted to, formerly. Mass abduction has always been used either for financial gains or furtherance of political cause. The prisoner swap between government and the militants that led to release of most of 31 abductees had earned them loftier standing –a trend that is hitherto used for political blackmailing. Significantly, the militants are attempting to strike at ethno-sectarian harmony that is likely to resonate with shaken loyalties.

Previously, seven Hazaras including women and children went through decapitation who were captured by ISIL fighters almost two months ago –in the height of cold blooded, indeed was a rare heard killing. The incident sparked a massive demonstration through the streets of Kabul two weeks ago. Tens of thousands of demonstrators carried dead bodies through the streets of the capital, calling for justice, end in ongoing bloodshed and kidnappings following the inexplicable heart wrecking Zabul beheading incident. The said incident reportedly taken place mere some km away from the point where Daesh militants kidnapped 31 bus passengers in February. Following the release of most hostages, the last five were freed a week ago. It is utter failure when a single route and area turns no-go despite the government being asked to deploy military post is repeatedly turned down, is denial on concerned issue.

Following the Zabul tragic beheading incident, President Ashraf Ghani came up with strong condemnation on meeting the families of victims. Unfortunately, the government resorted to condemnation and promises –the statement neither contained any clue relative to perpetrators nor plans to hunt them down before they turn wilder. Hardly weeks passed that tragic incident another identical incident took place on the same route –alike the past incident the public officials resorted to promising. The government either by erroneous policy or unwillingness has turned blind eye to the roaming death squads.

The masses of Afghanistan suffer at the hand of Taliban, Al-Qaida, ISIS and their affiliates –driven mad by the motive of revival of caliphate system in the country –is unlikely to solve the giant problems of Islamic world, they deem. The interesting and common about all of them is; they share same ideology and similar tactics to enforce their stateley law and rule of business –is repression and violence. Nevertheless, Taliban previously asserted to have setback from the very extreme position and had pledged to get in line with democratic changes crystallized in the Afghanistan. Surprisingly, it has too claimed to have gunned down the terrorist behind the decapitation of seven Hazaras in Zabul. Conversely, the ISIS is endeavoring great deal of atrocities to leverage their political influence, is leading reason behind growing atrocities and multiplying terror.

Who is responsible for the incident must be sought out quickly and efforts should be hastened to release the poor victims. It is the responsibility of a government within a state to ensure peace and security of its citizens within the country whose dears' ones are anxiously waiting their safe return. The government seems to be determined doing away the worries of masses by extending improved governance. The government must learn following the security threats the people have greatly restricted their movements within the country which has equally impacted passengers, the poor wagers and transporters alike. Significantly, how many terrorists are let loose to undermine the writ of government –owing sound, well trained and large standing army is unlikely to turn blind at masses' widening woes.

Despite the government's assurances that everything possible is being done to secure the release of the Hazara hostages, no progress has been made known, and, overall, the process has been cloaked in secrecy. They are passionate about hearing good news from security officials rendering successful in setting free their dear ones. The government is said to have dispatched military forces to ensure safe rescue of abductees will earn acceptance only when it has exercised their release through some acquiescent development. As the day advances the government coming to nothing earns intensified criticism by civil society, the poor masses and relatives of affected families. The masses shocked with tragic beheadings of seven civilians had not properly recovered that another saddening abduction took place depicts the miseries are yet elongate.

Economic Stability Leads to Political Stability

By Dilawar Sherzai

Economy plays a vital role in development and progress of a country. Without sound economy it is a figment of imagination to think about order and stability in other fields of life. It can be observed in today's world that the countries with stable economies are dominant in various areas, the most important of which is politics. The international political arena is basically overshadowed by giant economies. Just consider the level of influence that the developed countries, like USA, UK and China have in contemporary international politics.

Politics is the game of power and power erupts from money, while money is generated through a proper economic infrastructure. However, it must be understood that power is a vague term and it has different interpretation. In the international politics it may relate to different sorts of influences that may affect various decisions in international relations. Whether it is conflict or agreement, diplomacy or war, international organizations or national policies, power has a decisive role. And, that power rests with the countries that have large GDPs and great businesses. Therefore, it is easy to see the world powers having strong influence and say in different diplomatic undertakings and conflicts and wars in international political order. In fact, the current political order is designed by the most dominant economies among the developed nations of the world. The current political order, wherein capitalism and democracy have joined hands and reign most parts of the world is not very different from what the gigantic capitalist economies want them to be.

A thorough study of economy and politics will reveal that economy is the root of a political system. For example, when human societies mostly had agriculturalist economies, there were no democracies and the political systems were based on monarchy and landlordism. However, as the societies evolved to industrialized economies there was a shift towards democracy. Thus, economy to a great extent decides the form and nature of the political system and, therefore, instable economy gives rise to instable political order and stable ones gives birth to stable political systems. It can also be observed that the societies where the people are mostly poor and do not have the facilities of life, there are more chances of political upheavals. The discontented people, suffering from destitution would ultimately strive to overthrow the political order and would never respect such a system. Resultantly, it can be said that the societies that are economically instable are more prone to revolutions, disturbances and chaos. The third world countries can be observed in this regard. As the people are poor, do not have basic requirements of life and suffer from unemployment, they are more vulnerable to be the cause of instability. And, that is why we find them to be more attracted towards rebellions, crimes, terrorism and

thus instability.

Afghanistan is one of the countries where economic instability has given birth to political instability. As there is no stable economic infrastructure, the country's democratic structure has shaky foundations. In Afghanistan insecurity has been influencing the economic life to a large extent. Both national and international businessmen are not readily willing to invest in all the sectors and they do not see positive prospects of their businesses. As insecurity has been overwhelmingly influencing the country, the development in the basic infra-structure has been meager.

The doubts and uncertainties of the Afghan market have made the international investors to think thousand times before they take an initiative to start their businesses in the country. Though there are great opportunities in Afghanistan and the country is blessed with different types of mineral and other natural resources, the economic infra-structure has not been able to get enough attention.

Apart from that there are other factors as well that have been influencing the economic system of Afghanistan. The insufficient and unfavorable business environment is also one of the issues affecting Afghan economy. There have to be strong business laws governing the society and controlling the business. The laws should not only safeguard the rights of investors and businessmen but also make sure that the competition within the system is maintained on strong and fair footings. The evils like monopoly based on unfair competition must be tackled with properly and there should be strong bodies that control the prices within the markets, which at the present are non-existent and the businessmen are fixing the rates on their own. This has given rise to a political system that, on the exterior, is called as democratic but in reality is an ad-hoc arrangement that has no strong foundation. Afghan economy, therefore, require structured development towards a capitalist society. And in this regard, businesses can play a vital role. If within a system there are consistent investments and different businesses, the system is on a track towards development and prosperity. Since the very inception of human society, human beings have required businesses so as to have their requirements fulfilled. Throughout human history, businesses have taken different forms and characteristics and today have reached to a very advanced form. From the barter system to today's advanced era when the businesses are taking place online, there has been a series of different practices, but the vitality of the business has never been lost. Having developed its economic infrastructure based on capitalism or free market economy marked with stability, Afghanistan's political system can continue its journey towards a truly democratic country dominated by stability.

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Good Legislation but Poor Implementation of Law

By Hujjatullah Zia

According to law Men are equal irrespective of their race, color or position. And law, unlike moral values, is binding and whoever is entangled in crime s/he will have to be prosecuted. It is believed that legal principles originate from ethical code and/or religious values in a community – so as not to be against social faith. In Afghanistan, moreover, religious values weighs heavily in state law, as it is said in article 3 of Afghanistan Constitution, "No law shall contravene the tenets and provisions of the holy religion of Islam in Afghanistan." Similarly, a number of high-ranking officials, including the president, take the oath of office, after being assigned a political position, to do their utmost while fulfilling their duties.

However, the social practices are not always in accordance with law. Men naturally pursue their pleasures and interests at the cost of others' rights. In other words, one's dignity and basic rights – i.e. the rights to life, liberty and property – are violated to a great extent in daily life. The ugly headlines are hackneyed on national newspapers. A man is slain on the ground of his race or creed, a woman is stoned to death in a desert court, a girl suffers violence and honor-killing for being born female, a child is slaughtered like a sheep without an iota of mercy, etc.

Additionally, the high-ranking individuals are considered beyond law and hardly prosecuted in social life – which is in conflict with the country's Constitution. The executive branch fails to implement the law properly via bringing the perpetrators to justice. Although, government has the duty to "execute the provisions of this Constitution, other laws, as well as the final decisions of the courts, maintain public law and order and eliminate every kind of administrative corruption...." But when corruption is committed by a high-profile person, s/he barely stands trial. Correspondingly, a minister is frequently impeached or incapacitated in case of not fulfilling his/her official responsibilities.

Unsurprisingly, the law is strict concerning ordinary citizens. For instance, when one is involved in a case, he is supposed to pump money into courts if he wants to win or just to get rid – especially when the case passes all the three phases: the primary, appeal and supreme courts.

The US-based non-profit association World Justice Project (WJP) released that Afghanistan is ranked the second-worst country in rule of law after Venezuela from 102 countries.

Addressing a conference, General Anoyled, the head of the transparency unit for the NATO-led Resolute Support (RS) mission in Afghanistan said last week that corruption is a serious concern for the Afghan government and urged the Interior Minister to launch a serious campaign to eradicate the problem in order to secure continued international aid for Afghanistan. "Transparency and account-

ability should be increased in the ministry in order to witness the continuation of the international community's support to Afghanistan," he is cited as saying. Moreover, a committee of evaluation and assessment in the fight against corruption determined that there is still the possibility of corruption within the Ministry of Interior (MoI) – particularly with regards to contracts involving uniforms, food and vehicles.

There are also reports that Afghanistan is world's third largest opium producer after Myanmar and Laos and produces some 90 per cent of world's illicit opiates. An Afghan official said that Mafia and terrorist groups are annually receiving \$70 billion from narcotics in this country and Pakistani Taliban, who carry out acts of terror in Afghanistan and Pakistan, are the beneficiary of \$2 billion. So, the law is not enforced regarding the perpetrators of major crimes and some are excused under the circumstances.

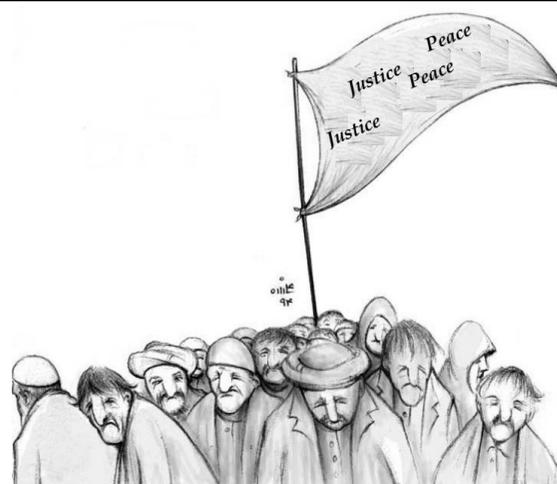
Since the concept of democracy is often expressed in terms of "thin" and "thick" definitions, it is synonymous with popular sovereignty or majority rule: in some forms, democracy can be exercised directly by the people; in large cities, it is by the people through their elected agents. Or in the memorable phrase of Abraham Lincoln, democracy is government "of the people, by the people, and for the people." Therefore, what we know as democracy in its ideal form generally also includes governance by rule of law and the protection of civil rights and public liberties.

Democracy rests upon the principles of majority rule and individual rights. Democracies guard against all-powerful central governments and decentralize government to regional and local levels, understanding that all levels of government must be as accessible and responsive to the people as possible.

Democracies understand that one of their prime functions is to protect such basic human rights as freedom of speech and religion; the right to equal protection under law; and the opportunity to organize and participate fully in political, economic and cultural life of society.

To extend the life of nascent democracy in Afghanistan and alleviate the current challenges, the government has to enforce the law strictly and prefer no citizens to others – regardless of their social and political positions. The state must "attain a prosperous life and sound living environment for all inhabitants of this land; and eventually, regain Afghanistan's appropriate place in the international family". It is believed that the legislative branch is perfect enough to address the society's problems; however, the main trouble is that the three divisions do not go parallel to one another. For instance, when one is considered criminal in the eye of law, the jury will interpret the law otherwise or the executive branch will overlook the issue – it is a matter of great concern for the public.

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