

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



October 02, 2019

## Why Women Social Inclusion Matters

**S**ocial participation of women is a major issue in traditional societies. Women and their role in such societies have been discussed and debated in different ways; mostly, they have been cursed. The attitude of their co-gender has been very much discriminating towards them and, throughout most part of history, they have been treated with violence, and inequity, yet they have not given up. They have replied the tyrannies and violence through love and warmth.

Their being is definitely wondrous and miraculous; how is it possible that undergoing so much oppression they are able to maintain their attitude to adore others and treat them with never ending love?

Nonetheless it must not be understood that praising their quality of tolerance, the tyranny that is carried out against them must be justified. Such tyranny is definitely unjust and there should be efforts made not only by the women themselves but by the governments in different states to eradicate it from its roots. Women have all the rights that the men have as the citizens of a country. Violating their rights just because they have the capacity to tolerate the worse is the worst act ever imagined. The patriarchal systems and setups require changing their attitude towards women. If a woman's nature is properly studied, it can be easily observed that she is tender and caring as well; therefore, she has the right to be treated in similar fashion - with tenderness and care. Does she get such a treatment from our society? Unfortunately, that is not the case.

Women in Afghanistan have been suffering discriminatory behavior for a very long time. The religious extremism and obsolete tribal values have played a dominant role in making every sort of violation and violence possible against them. Though they have been raising their voices every now and then but in the noise of male shrieks they seem to be negligible and get faded away. In fact, the male-chauvinistic ears are not ready to hear them though they feel their vibrations clearly. Nonetheless, the efforts in this regard must never be given up and they should continue in every possible way.

One of the ways to rise up and be counted in the social and political life is to strive participating in the social and political institutions and processes. One of the examples of such process is the election. Recently, women participated in the parliamentary elections in a large number, which will ultimately affect their overall role and status within Afghan society. They need to keep this in mind that the upcoming presidential election is yet another chance to show that they can have an imperative role in Afghan society.

Showing their commitment towards democracy and their understanding of the value of their votes, thousands of women casted their votes in different parts of the country. They may continue the same in upcoming elections as well. Moreover, many of them participated as candidates, ran their campaigns and proved through their debates and discussions that they are ready to be considered active and useful citizens of the country, like men.

Besides elections, women must also be active in other processes and events. However, to change the overall scenario the overall attitude towards women should alter and the men have to play a large role in doing so. In fact, it is a challenging task and requires the roles and efforts of both men and women.

Both women and men have to bring about changes in their attitude. Fighting the discrimination and violence does not necessarily mean that women alone should shoulder the responsibility. The men can also play an important role and they have to be made aware of it. There should be efforts to bring about changes in the attitude of men towards women; otherwise, fighting for the rights of women would be very difficult.

## China Celebrates its Seven-Decade Development

By: Hujjatullah Zia

**S**ince its establishment in 1949, People's Republic of China has played a constructive role in regional and global peacekeeping issues and sought a peaceful development. China pursues bilateral friendly relations with the rest of the world and opens its door wider to reinforce commercial and cultural exchanges.

Marking the 70th founding anniversary of the People's Republic of China with a military parade in Tian'anmen Square in Beijing, Chinese President Xi Jinping pledged that China would stay on the path of peaceful development and pursue a mutually beneficial strategy of opening-up. Xi said, "We will continue to work with people from all countries to push for jointly building a community with shared future for humanity."

The colorful parade demonstrated not only China's military muscle but also cultural diversity of all ethnic groups in China. Chinese citizens from many ethnic groups had participated in the parade showcasing their cultural tradition, which included local dresses, songs, music, dancing, etc.

Cultural diversity is one of the main features of China. People from different ethnic groups live a peaceful life in China and respect the rights and freedoms of one another. President Xi stated that people of all ethnic groups had made great achievements that amaze the world, over the past seven decades through concerted efforts and arduous struggle. Indeed, it was the great endeavor of Chinese ethnic groups and citizens who contributed to the China's development.

Meanwhile, Chinese officials, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, have rendered great service to their nation. The footsteps of the devotion and dedication of the Chinese leaders are felt in every step of China's development. If Chinese leaders did not struggle selflessly for their nation and country, China would not be the second largest economy or the largest trading nation in the world.

When the New China was founded in 1949, it was in ruins with severe shortage in daily necessities and factors of production and the market was on the brink of collapse. Facing such challenges, the commerce people explored how to build a socialist market and open up, which delivered a strong boost to the recovery and

growth of the China's economy. Chinese officials supported the establishment of points of sales at county and township levels by state-owned commercial institutions to facilitate the functioning of the distribution network and introduced a number of policies to promote the flow of goods between urban and rural areas, according to the China's Ministry of Commerce. To cut the long story short, China is seeking to accomplish its poverty alleviation project in 2020 so that no one would live under poverty line even in the remote areas of China. China is moving so fast and its economic growth, especially after the reform and opening-up policy, seems a miracle. The great achievements of China only within the past seven decades have amazed the entire world.

To cement its commercial ties with the world, China is seeking global connectivity and unimpeded trade. After all, China has proposed the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to promote commercial exchanges and people-to-people bond with the world. The BRI is believed to pave the ground for an open platform for all nations to contribute to the world's economic progress in one way or another. It will also open a door for cultural exchanges.

China can be a role model for developing countries in terms of poverty alleviation and fast growth. The developing countries have to learn from China so that they could also mitigate the level of poverty and push for economic growth.

For countries which are involved in instability, respecting cultural diversity is one of the main lessons to be learnt from China. All citizens have to exercise both religious tolerance and cultural diversity and respect the diversity since a garden is beautiful with colorful flowers.

Overall, I have seen hope, confidence, and pride in the eyes of Chinese citizens who participated in the celebration of the 70th anniversary of their country. Hope flashed in their eyes and they beamed happily. President Xi said, "Right at this moment, Chinese people of all ethnic groups and all the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation at home and abroad take pride in and give our best wishes to our great motherland with great joy."

*Hujjatullah Zia is the permanent writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan and freelance writer based in Kabul. He can be reached at zia\_hujjat@yahoo.com*

## The Roots of Hong Kong's Crisis

By: Henry Huang

**H**ong Kong, the pearl of the East, yet lives in such a turmoil. The ongoing political crisis and massive protest have drawn a large amount of international concern and attention. There are multiple explanations of what has happened in Hong Kong. Some may say it is for a "wider demands for democratic reform." [1] On the mainland side, some may argue, "The demonstrations in Hong Kong are not about rights or democracy. They are a result of foreign interference." [2]

However, people ignored another very important perspective of the protest in Hong Kong, economics. Hong Kong does have a strong economy, it still plays an important role in international trade and financial services. However, under prosperity, there are extreme challenges that will lead to explosions in Hong Kong society. The unbalanced economic development, enlarged inequality, and the failure of the Hong Kong government addressing economics issue fueled the anger of the people and dragged Hong Kong into the ongoing crisis. The extradition bill, in my opinion, is just the spark that ignited the society's anger.

Unbalanced economic development was a major issue of Hong Kong in recent years. When we look back into the history of Hong Kong, the economic booming started from the 1950s and 1960s when Hong Kong enjoyed economy booming. Hong Kong economy had the opportunity to grow in those eras by developing textile industry, electric industry, and light industry. Manufacturing became Hong Kong's main industry until the 1970s when finance, real estate, and trade pick up the main role in the Hong Kong economy. The Reform and Opening in China in 1979 further fueled the development of Hong Kong in trade and finance. Currently, financial services, tourism, trading, and professional services and other producer services are the four main industries of Hong Kong. [3] These industries have attracted 47.3% in the labor force and contributing 57.8% of the GDP. [4] However, the problem is that there is the only limited spot of high paying jobs in these industries. Many of these jobs either require higher education or does not have enough positions available for the people. According to Hong Kong government statistics, the 4 major industries are having fewer jobs opening. From 2013 to 2017, these 4 industries has only created 20,000 new jobs while more than 100,000 people joined the workforce. [5] The rising of China as an international economic powerhouse has made Hong Kong even less competitive in these traditional advantageous industries.

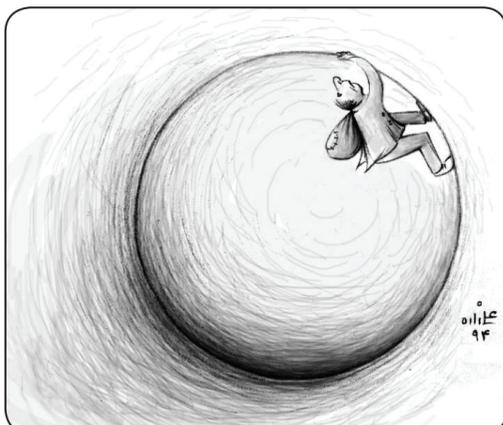
The unbalanced economic in recent years led to extreme income inequality within Hong Kong. While the high paid job in these industries is decreasing, it is harder and harder for regular people to live day today. Hong Kong's Gini coefficient has reached 0.539 in 2017, the highest in 45 years. [6] This

is also one of the highest in the world when it comes to the Gini coefficient. The highest monthly income is 60,000 Hong Kong dollars, about \$7,700 more than the lowest. [7] Meanwhile, Hong Kong has the second [8] most billionaires, and 4th [9] most millionaires living in the city. Yet, the poverty rate in Hong Kong, in 2017, is 19.9%. The medium monthly income is a mere \$2,200, comparing to its GDP, it is a relatively smaller portion. We have seen all over the world of the harsh living condition in Hong Kong for some of the poorest people. Only in Hong Kong will you see people living in cage housing. The richest of the richest has made more money than ever in Hong Kong while every day people suffered from loses. This will build up anger and instability in society.

Now, people may ask, did Hong Kong have the opportunity to avoid all these economic development issues? Yes, there were many opportunities, but the Hong Kong government missed almost every single one of these opportunities. The failure of the Hong Kong government has worsened the unsatisfactory in Hong Kong. Back in the earlier days, Hong Kong executive officer wanted to promote the manufacturing industry and public housing programs to provide a more diverse economy and housing opportunities for those who cannot afford to house in regular prices. However, none of these opportunities was ever successful. On the real estate perspective, in the first policy address for the Chief Executive, Tung Chee-Hwa, has promised to build 85,000 affordable housing for the public. However, the program has failed due to the mass protests from middle-class Hong Kong residents who lost drastically in the real estate market. The cancellation of Public Housing programs between 2004 to 2014 has made the housing affordability even worse. In the diversification of the economy, the Hong Kong government also failed. Tung Chee-Hwa also tried to promote programs such as Cyberport, a program that will help Hong Kong to develop a solid technology industry. However, the program was born in the wrong time, right before the explosion of the internet bubble. Also, the leading developer of the project, Pacific Century Regional Development, made most of the project by real estate projects in this project.

Hong Kong's problem is a political issue within itself right now. However, the economic perspective is also something that we should be keenly aware of. We all understand very clearly, that when the economy is maintained in a bad shape, when there are not many opportunities left for young people in the labor market, or in the society as a whole, something will happen. These feeling of loss in Hong Kong eventually became the anger towards the government, and the Extortion Bill was just the spark that ignited the social conflicts within Hong Kong.

*Henry Huang is a Campus Fellow at the International Institute for Peace, Democracy, and Development. He lives in Washington, DC where he is a student at the George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs*




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

Vice Chairman / Exec. Editor: Moh. Sakhi Rezaie

Email: outlookafghanistan@gmail.com

Phone: 0093 (799) 005019/777-005019

www.outlookafghanistan.net



*The views and opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not reflect the views or opinions of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan.*