

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



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## Schools Must Ensure Balanced Development

The aim of education is not only to impart some factual knowledge to the students but to ensure their overall and balanced development. Children do not need only mental development but also physical, social, moral and emotional ones. All these needs cannot be met only with book reading. They need specific activities to satisfy these needs. And, these needs can be satisfied through proper co-curricular activities. Unfortunately, these facts are not realized by different schools in our country. Both the public and private schools in Afghanistan lack facilities and even the will to give proper preference to co-curricular activities. The public schools are mostly irresponsible in this regard, while the private schools have their businesses to pursue. Therefore, the schools in our country require to have comprehensive co-curricular programs as they ensure proper development of the students.

Co-curricular activities ensure a balance and wholesome personality development. They make children well-adjusted physically, mentally, emotionally and socially. They are helpful in moral training. Children find opportunities to decide and choose the right things and to learn the great values of self-control and moderation. Through the community life of games and activities, the children learn an inner discipline which remains with the children as a directing and restraining influence when they are away from the school. Students, through co-curricular activities, develop a sense of cooperation. They study, work, play and visit together and co-operate with each other. So a spirit of team work and coordination develops among them.

By taking part in co-curricular activities, pupils realize the relation of the society to the individual and of the individual to the society. The pupils become members of the group and thus they learn universal brotherhood, true democracy and cooperation. In fact, schools can become a sort of primary training ground for democracy. They should be organized and administered on democratic lines. This will help students to become active citizens and to develop civic sense.

Co-curricular activities retain not only the physical health but also the mental health of the students. By doing regular exercise their bodies become healthy, which ultimately generate healthy minds. At the same time, because of the psychological training involved in such activities the students get ample chances of improving their mental health.

One of the most important aspects of the co-curricular activities is that they will inculcate discipline among the students. Every activity has some rules and regulations. During these activities students abide by these rules and regulations and they become well-disciplined. The same discipline learning can support students to develop a sense of respect for discipline in other spheres of life. Most of the co-curricular activities are performed in the form of teams and groups which need a leader. So leadership qualities are created in the students.

And, when students spend their spare time in constructive and positive activities, their time is saved to be wasted in destructive and negative work. Moreover, during co-curricular activities students attend different matches and compete with each other in order to win these matches. Thus, they develop a sense of competition which is of great help in their future life. There are different sorts of activities that can be adopted as co-curricular activities by the schools in Afghanistan. One of them is school assembly. By arranging school assembly, the students get together, recite verses from Holy Quran, sing national anthem and raise national flag. These all acts will develop a sense of patriotism among the students.

Students can also be allowed to organize unions and associations for different sorts of purposes, for example, art council etc. These unions and associations can help students in their social lives in future. Sports and games form an integral part of co-curricular activities. Therefore, the schools must ensure that they have enough space for sports activities, like football, cricket, basketball etc. Unfortunately, most of the schools in our country only have some classrooms while there are many others that even do not have classrooms, as well.

Different sorts of competitions like debate, quiz, writing and many others can support students in developing their skills like oratory and speaking skills and show their different sorts of talents, as well. They will also enable them to express themselves freely and confidently.

The government authorities, particularly Afghanistan Ministry of Education, requires to have a proper check on the schools and ensure that they include co-curricular activities in their programs. Limiting the students only to the books will limit their thinking horizons and ultimately deprive them of different skills and advantages which they have the potential for and, at the same time, the right to learn. In the run for quantity, mostly the quality has been ignored in education sector in the country. Many public and private schools have been established only to increase the number of the schools and the students attending them, not to generate proper education and personality development of the students.



## The Need for Criminalizing Ethnocentrism in Offices

By Syed Ali Mutahari

The ethnocentric movements of some individuals in government's body, mainly in the field of employment, was followed by a wide reaction from the public. This was called against the constitution, national unity, and coexistence of Afghan nation. The backlash from high-ranking officials, political figures and the public against those who foment ethnic and factional issues, will be an effective start for a legal plan to criminalize hateful and abusive behavior. The need for criminalizing the ugly deed of ethnocentrism is crystal clear. There is a direct relation between ethnocentrism and crime. In short, this issue is one of the main reasons behind discrimination, violation of citizens' rights, conflicts, unemployment, poverty, and corruption in the government's machinery in Afghanistan. The root of many crimes against the integrity of body and soul and against dignity and property come from tribal, factional and linguistic behaviors.

Criminalization is a process through which the state forbids an act and seeks to prosecute perpetrator. Sanction is a severe response to a criminal act. In fact, the principles of criminalization are the fundamental criteria by which the state restricts citizens' rights and freedoms and introduces norms and legal behaviors. These principles will be as following:

Principle of harm: In legal instruments, this principle is defined as the most significant justification for restricting rights and liberty. Based on this principle, an act will be known as crime when it harms the society or people. Religious tenets in Islamic legal system and international instruments do not only confirm this issue but also place emphasis on forbidding detrimental acts and stipulate certain punishment for perpetrators. So, criminalizing an act and restricting one's rights and liberty will take place on the basis of being harmful to society or people.

The principle of legal paternalism: This principle justifies state coercion to protect individuals from self-inflicted harm, or in its extreme version, to guide them toward their good. In modern philosophy and jurisprudence, it is to act for the good of another person without that person's consent, as parents do for children.

Paternalists advance people's interests (such as life, health, or safety) at the expense of their liberty. In this, paternalists suppose that they can make wiser decisions than the people for whom they act. The essence of paternalism is based on goodwill of the citizens; that is, "I understand your goodness better than you." Thus, the acts which harm the body, soul or self-morality of a person or property will be known as crime and punishable.

Legal moralism: This is the theory of jurisprudence and the philosophy of law which holds that laws may be used to

prohibit or require behavior based on society's collective judgment of whether it is moral or not. Legal moralism goes beyond the Harm Principle and argues that the law is supposed to promote morality and that the immorality of an action is a reason to make it illegal. Legal moralism is best articulated in Plato's Republic where Socrates argues that the job of the state is to create and enforce laws to foster moral citizens.

Even if an action only harms the person engaged in the activity, or occurs with the consent of others, the fact that society deems the practice immoral can be reason enough to make it illegal. Legal moralism does not mean that every immoral action should be criminal, but only that the immorality of an action is a reason to consider making it illegal.

In addition to the aforementioned principles, ethnocentrism is considered crime in religious tenets, national laws, and various international instruments. The Holy Koran has underlined equality of mankind, tribes, and ethnic groups and defined tribes the sign for understanding one another. All human rights instruments - including the law of Cyrus the Great and King Hammurabi and the first declarations of human rights endorsed in England, America, France, and International Covenants and Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) - have emphasized on the equality of mankind and forbid any kinds of discrimination or superiority.

Afghanistan's Constitutions also states in article 6, "The state shall be obligated to create a prosperous and progressive society based on social justice, preservation of human dignity, protection of human rights, realization of democracy, attainment of national unity as well as equality between all peoples and tribes and balance development of all areas of the country."

Based on the said criteria, the logical reasons in national law and international instruments suggest that despicable and disgusting behaviors such as ethnocentrism and superiority should be criminalized. The issue of ethnocentrism will be highly destructive for the society and all three powers (judicial, legislative and executive powers) should pay attention to this issue. Needless to say, if ethnocentrism is not particularly criminalized, it will result in irreparable loss and horrible consequence in the country. This issue is detrimental for both national unity and national interests. In brief, Afghanistan is the common home for all citizens regardless of their ethnicity, the issue of ethnocentrism should be criminalized in order to prevent from harm, and uphold the moral values, social order, national security and interests, and public welfare.

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## The Imminent Resurgence of Al-Qaeda

By Hujjatullah Zia

Following the decline of the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), al-Qaeda is likely to extend its reach. Osama bin Laden's son Hemza bin Laden threatens through video clip to revenge his father's death urging the militants to continue their insurgency with greater force. The schism between the Taliban and al-Qaeda has been bridged. Both warring parties will keep on their acts of horror and terror in the region.

One of the main reasons behind the Taliban's persistent refusal to peace talks is believed to be its alliance with Haqqani network and al-Qaeda, who is still reeling from the death of its spiritual and political leader Osama bin Laden, the person behind the 9/11 attack on Twin Towers. Now the time is ripe for political masterminds to capitalize on Hemza bin Laden and pursue their sinister objectives via reinforcing militancy.

It is widely believed that the current insurgency whether in Iraq, Syria, or Afghanistan is proxy war rather than ideological one. For instance, if warring parties were not bestowed safe havens or financial supports, they would not be able to continue their insurgency for years. Moreover, the Taliban, in Afghanistan, are involved in smuggling drugs as the ISIL was smuggling oil from Iraq, which are systematic crime. Hence, the militant fighters act as Mafia masking their ominous objectives in the frame of ideology. In short, the escalated insurgency is backed by political masterminds and invisible hands or simply by members of criminal groups such as Mafia.

Being debased in the eye of the world in the wake of its unsavory practices, the ISIL group is losing ground in Iraq and Syria. The ISIL militants perpetrated every possible crime: raping women under the mask of religion, slicing the throat of children, beheading men before the eyes of their families, and destroying ancient monument and cultural heritage - which will be recorded as shocking deeds in the history and have revealed their real face.

Despite the debacle of ISIL in Iraq and Syria and the death of its leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, though it is not confirmed but his absence indicates his death, the death knell for terrorism is not marked. After the fall of their regime, the Taliban have continued insurgency up to now although forming a civil society void of violence and terror was the dream of Afghan nation and state. The ISIL guerilla fighters will continue terrorist attacks in Iraq and Syria and other parts of the world.

If the Taliban, al-Qaeda, and ISIL amalgamate their forces

- which is not impossible - insurgency will mount to a greater extent. Now it is too early to celebrate the defeat of ISIL since its footstep is heard in Afghanistan and Pakistan and has its individual loyalists in many parts of the world. The decline in insurgency should be celebrated when the sanctuaries of militant fighters are destroyed and they would no more be able to orchestrate large-scale attacks against any nations or countries.

What if al-Qaeda is organizing an attack similar to September 11? With the persistent political turbulence and the issue of ISIL which absorbed the world's attention, al-Qaeda must have been garnering financial supports from Arabic countries; extending their radical ideology in seminaries, and recruiting people with poor or criminal backgrounds. This pregnant silence is likely to be the harbinger of an escalated militancy that will be carried out by al-Qaeda. Some political pundits are of the view that al-Qaeda has the potential to carry out an attack with the same nature as 9/11, but they will not do it to be immune from the world's attack. Based on this view, al-Qaeda group is moving very cautiously.

With the ISIL's decline, the world will have to combat al-Qaeda and the Taliban with all their roots so that there will be no room for their resurgence as strong groups. The threat of Hemza bin Laden should not be underestimated. The Taliban have been told a thousand and one time either to choose peace table or military deal. The former has been refused up to now.

To sum up, region will be prone to escalated insurgency for many reasons: First, although the ISIL lost its territory in Iraq and being defeated in Syria, it has gained firm foothold in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Second, al-Qaeda will resurface with stronger force. Third, the Taliban are most likely to continue their acts of terror being deaf to the constant calls for negotiation.

Rather than the war of faith, analysts believe that it is the war of drug or the war of oil or simply proxy war since there is no unanimous agreement for combating terrorism or devastating their hotbeds and financial supports. The bulk of militants come from poor or criminal backgrounds masked with ideological or religious façade. Do you not think that peace talks will jeopardize their self-interests? Indeed, they show no tendency to be restricted within the frame of law being banned from smuggling drug or oil, satisfying their carnal desires in legal way, and respecting people's life and liberty.

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