

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



October 21, 2017

## Unemployment Has Done Great Damage

The menace of unemployment is influencing almost every province of Afghanistan. Though Afghanistan has a very young population, which means that it has great potentials that can support the country in development and economic growth, the country has not been able to provide job opportunities to its youngsters and thus it is not able to take advantage of this distinction.

As the country has been largely dominated by different era of disorder and instability, the socio-economic infrastructure has not been developed much and as a result the job opportunities have always been limited. Though Afghan society is an agricultural society, the sector has not been able to absorb a large number of unemployed people. Mostly the people have been engaged in agricultural activities on personal basis and the sector has not been developed into an industry on modern grounds; therefore, the ones who own lands can benefit from them while the ones who do not own such lands are bound to remain out of work.

Undoubtedly, unemployment has done great damage to Afghan society. The people who have not been employed have mostly become the part of terrorist networks or the filthy business of narcotics, or even they have become addicted to drugs. As they do not have any other work to do or any way of making both ends meet they do not have much option but to join insurgency.

There are many educated youth in the country, who have no other choice but to join the ranks of insurgents as there are no job opportunities for them. It is really vital that the government must understand the link between the growing unemployment and increasing insecurity and instability. More than any other thing, government must concentrate on providing job opportunities to the educated youngsters and thus pave the way for prosperity and development. It is really unfortunate to note that the youth who should be having a constructive role in the country are now supporting the ranks of the terrorists.

It is essential for Afghanistan to create job opportunities for its population. Job opportunities would definitely enable the residents of the country to make positive use of their capabilities for betterment and development of a society. It is important to understand that a state and its population are highly dependent on each other. It is difficult to imagine any of them living separately. As the state guarantees better life opportunities for its population, the population in return must, through thinking and action, strive to make the state stronger.

However, if the job opportunities remain limited and the unemployment remains rampant, the consequences will be really severe. Though unemployment in itself is a severe problem, it is also the root of many other problems. Unemployment is basically an injustice done to a population. It is basically the unavailability of jobs when there are people who have the required qualifications to be employed for different positions. Thus it is injustice, as the qualified people do not get what they deserve – a respectable profession to join so as to use their education and knowledge.

The people who spend a lengthy process of completing their education or acquiring particular skills should be absorbed by the job industry as soon as they are ready to work. Failure to provide such an opportunity may influence those people to a great extent. They, in order to live alive, need to earn a livelihood, which is threatened by unemployment; therefore, they seek to find out other ways of earning a livelihood. In the process they either join a profession that may not be of their choice or they may join illegal ways of earning, which would damage the society to a large extent.

It is also feared that in the post withdrawal era, the country would face major economic challenges. The financial support has already started decreasing for Afghanistan. In near future one of the biggest challenges would be to create job opportunities for Afghan people. In absence of sufficient job opportunities, it would be really very difficult to maintain peace, tranquility and order. The international community and the Afghan authorities must make sure that they create enough jobs so as to save the country from falling into instability and economic crisis.

The role of economy is very much vital for a country. It, for a country, is as important as circulatory system within a human body. As without circulatory system blood cannot be pumped through different parts of the body, in the similar fashion without economy, money and other basic requirements of life cannot reach to different parts of a country. And the economic system can only be strengthened when the capable and skilled individuals participate in strengthening the economic system.

Especially the youngsters who get qualified from universities must be given opportunities to present and use their skills in the profession of their choice and interest. Young blood equipped with determination and patriotism can definitely play a significant role; all they need is equitable treatment from the prevailing system.

Moreover, equal job opportunities must be created for girls and women as well as they form an integral part of Afghan populace and can play a tremendous role in improving Afghan economic system.



## Tension Resurfaces in Iraq

By Hujjatullah Zia

It is my constitutional duty to work for the benefit of the citizens, and to protect our national unity that came under threat of fragmentation as a result of the referendum that was organized by the Kurdish region," these words were spoken by Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi. Following the defeat of the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), a skirmish broke out between Iraqi federal government and Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) in the wake of a controversial September 25 referendum on Kurdish secession that Baghdad had declared illegal. Federal forces launched a major offensive over two fronts on Monday and took full control of Kirkuk. Kirkuk is highly significant for both sides. It is said to be one of the two main oil-producing areas of Iraq, believed to have around four percent of the world's oil resources. Kirkuk lies in a wide zone with an enormously diverse population and has been multilingual for centuries. There were dramatic demographic changes during Kirkuk's urbanization in the twentieth century, which saw the development of distinct ethnic groups. Kurds, Turkmen, Arabs and Assyrians lay conflicting claims to this zone, and all have their historical accounts and memories to support their claims.

There were also signs of divisions among the Iraqi Kurds' two dominant factions, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), just a day after their leaders put on a show of unity by rejecting a demand by Baghdad to cancel the outcome of the referendum as a precondition for talks. Kurdish Peshmerga forces took control of oil-rich Kirkuk after the Iraqi army fled from a major offensive by the ISIL group in 2014. Since then, there has not been an agreement between the KRG and the federal government in Baghdad about who should control the area – and benefit from its vast oil wealth. Tensions between the two sides have been running especially high since Iraqi Kurds overwhelmingly voted for secession in last month's referendum.

The tension will be a strong blow to Iraq's stability and is likely to be brushed with the paint of sectarianism. Perhaps, if an armed conflict between Peshmerga and government forces continue, Iraq will plunge into political turmoil similar to Syria. This conflict will undo Iraq's victory which was gained in years of battles against the ISIL group. In other words, the strife will pave the ground for terrorist

activities and return of ISIL fighters. To view the issue of Syria, ISIL capitalized on its political turbulence and infiltrated Syria to launch a proxy war. Now Syria is stuck in the quagmire of violence and bloodshed and there seems no way to get out of there.

Iraq paid heavy sacrifices in battles against the ISIL group and still suffers from militancy and indiscriminate terrorist attacks. Terrorist fighters, mainly the ISIL, seek to fuel sectarian violence so as to pressurize Iraqi government. The ISIL's cruel practices towards the Yazidi ethnic minority group reflect their sinister aim of triggering sectarianism. Notwithstanding losing the ground in Iraq, ISIL militants are still searching for a gap between Iraqi state and nation. As soon as the gap emerges, it will be filled by militants. So, both Iraqi government and KRG must be cautious enough not to let a rift emerges between them. The second point is that following the fall of dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein, Iraq changed into a democratic state with elected president and representatives and constitution. Based on Iraq's constitution, Iraq is an indivisible state and no individual, including the Kurdish forces, is allowed to claim independence from the central government. Hence, the referendum for fragmentation is against the Constitution and will be a punishable act.

In this critical point, unity is a dire need for Iraqi nation and state. To protect their victory, they have to do their best to stand an iron fist against their common enemies namely terrorist fighters. Any act which put their unity under question will be put an adverse effect on that country. KRG will have to lay down its arms and present its demand explicitly to the federal government. Violating constitution or standing against the government will never ever resolve the problem. If Peshmerga forces operate side by side with Iraqi soldiers to protect Iraqi nation and territory, the security situation in Iraq will improve in near future. On the contrary, persisting on division and encountering with the government will necessarily destabilize Iraq and leave it vulnerable to militancy. It should be noted by KRG that Iraq has just been freed from ISIL group and the security situation is still fragile. After all, conflict will lead to civilian casualties that might fill the victims' families with revenge and cause mistrust between state and nation. On the other hand, Iraqi officials should act very cautiously and do its best to resolve the issue peacefully. Otherwise, it will be lose-lose episode.

Hujjatullah Zia is the permanent writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan. He can be reached at zia\_hujjat@yahoo.com

## 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Establishment of Diplomatic Relations Between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan

By Mustafayev Bahtiyor Rustamovich

Exclusive for the Daily Outlook

October 13 this year marks the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The first documents regulating the Uzbek-Afghan relations were signed in October 1992, during the visit of the head of Afghanistan Burhanuddin Rabbani to Uzbekistan. Since then, bilateral relations between the countries have been developing in a constructive spirit taking into account mutual interests.

A significant impetus to the development of bilateral relations was given during the meeting of the First President of our country Islam Karimov with the head of Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani in June 2016 within the framework of the Tashkent SCO summit. The subsequent meeting of the Afghan leader with the Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev on September 3, 2016 in Samarkand gave a fundamentally new quality to cooperation between the countries.

Meetings of heads of states as well as ministries and state departments on regular basis gives the evidence of the high level of interaction between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan. This year only, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh.M.Mirziyoyev held three meetings with the leader of Afghanistan A.Gani within the framework of Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Organization of Islamic Cooperation summits (Astana) as well as UN General Assembly (New York). Currently, the issue of Afghan President's visit to Tashkent is under consideration. In January 2017, the delegation of Uzbekistan led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs A.Kamilov visited Afghanistan. During the stay in the city of Kabul, negotiations were held with the president of Afghanistan A. Gani, the executive chairman of the government A. Abdullah, the foreign minister S.Rabbani and other representatives of state bodies. As a result of the meetings, a number of documents on bilateral cooperation were signed in the political and trade-economic realms including the Action plan ("Road Map") for the further development of full-scale cooperation between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan. In addition, the parties announced their intention to increase mutual trade turnover from USD 400 million to 1.5 billion by the end of this year. During the visit, the Trade House of Uzbekistan was opened in Kabul which was another confirmation of the parties' commitment to intensification of trade and economic cooperation.

In this context, it should be noted that the establishment of the Special Representative of the Uzbekistan's President to Afghanistan in May 2017 shows the distinct attitude of the Uzbek leadership to the whole all-round relations with Afghanistan. Moreover, in July this year a delegation from Afghanistan consisting of the presidential adviser on national security issues H. Atmar, the senior presidential adviser on infrastructure, human resources and technology H.Kayumi, the president's special representative for development of cooperation with the CIS countries and Russia Sh. Korgan and other officials visited Uzbekistan. During the visit, the Afghan delegation held a number of bilateral meetings in a number of ministries, state departments and leading enterprises of Uzbekistan to discuss concrete proposals for expanding bilateral cooperation. All these events are the consequences of modern Uzbek-Afghan relations, demonstrating dynamism, deep mutual trust, business spirit and the broadest prospects for good-neighborliness and cooperation. The principled position of the Republic of Uzbekistan towards Afghanistan for three decades has laid a solid foundation for a confident and consistent development of bilateral cooperation covering the interests of both countries.

First, since the first years of independence, Uzbekistan has positioned itself as a country that has always taken an unbiased, principled approach to the resolution of the Afghan problem and constructive line without promoting own interests. The Republic of Uzbekistan has traditionally pursued a good-neighborly friendly policy towards the IRA taking into account historical experience and a strong commitment to

long-term stability in this country. In his speech at the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh. Mirziyoyev stated that "the only way to peace in Afghanistan is a direct dialogue without preconditions, between the central government and the main domestic political forces. Negotiations should take place with the predominant role of the Afghan people in Afghanistan and under the auspices of the United Nations. The wise Afghan people have the right to determine their own fate independently".

Second, Uzbekistan demonstrates its determination in helping to stabilize Afghanistan by implementing exact projects for the peaceful construction of the economy of a neighboring state. In particular, in 2010 Uzbekistan completed the construction of the "Hairaton - Mazar-i-Sharif railway. At the appeal of the Afghan government, Uzbekistan has built 11 bridges and crossings on the Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul road section. After commissioning in 2010 of LEP-220 "Hairaton-Puli-Khumri-Kabul", the capital of the IRA was provided with electricity from Uzbekistan. Third, solid legal framework of bilateral relations has been created, containing about 40 documents on cooperation in various fields including political and trade as well as economic partnership. Thus, on March 15, 2015, the Railway company "Uzbekistan Temir Yollari" and the Ministry of Public Affairs of the IRA have concluded a new 3-year contract for the management, operation, maintenance and training of railway personnel.

Fourth, Uzbek-Afghan relations have been successfully diversified in a wide range of areas and cover all important spheres of cooperation - trade and economic, investment, political, etc. 70 enterprises operate in Uzbekistan with the participation of the Afghan side counting 20 enterprises with 100% foreign capital. 12 Afghan representative offices and companies are accredited in Uzbekistan operation in the sectors of services, trade operations, production of building materials. On the territory of Afghanistan, 6 enterprises with the participation of the Uzbekistan's residents were established.

Fifth, the cultural and humanitarian cooperation between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan is not remaining without attention. It is proved by an increase in delegation exchange between the parties. Afghan musical groups are regular participants of the international music festival "Shark Taronalari". In 2013, the Afghan group Obshor gained the first place in the festival. Cooperation continues within scientific and educational programs. In 2014, the Afghan delegation headed by the Director of the Academy of Sciences M.Afzali visited Uzbekistan in the framework of an international conference dedicated to the great historical scholars and personalities.

In March 2016, the delegation of Uzbekistan headed by the chairman of the "International Fund" named after Babur Z.Mashrabov was in the city of Herat and carried out restoration and landscaping works around the mausoleum of Alisher Navoi, and also reassembled the tomb of Kamaliddin Behzod.

Currently, the issues of short-term vocational education programs for advanced training of the Uzbek language teachers of Afghanistan's higher educational institutions as well as training of Afghan citizens in the fields related of railway transportation at the Tashkent Institute of Railway Engineers are at the stage of elaboration.

All these points are positive results and at the same time a solid basis for the further development of friendship, good-neighborliness and alliance of the two countries in the twenty-first century.

In general, it should be noted that Uzbekistan will continue to take effective steps to strengthen good-neighborly relations based on mutually beneficial cooperation with Afghanistan. Undoubtedly, the developing constructive bilateral dialogue, coupled with the implementation of promising joint projects in the trade, economic, investment, transport and communication spheres will contribute not only to the sustainable economic prosperity of Uzbekistan and Afghanistan, but also contribute to the strengthening security in the region.

Mustafayev Bahtiyor Rustamovich is the Deputy Head of the Center Institute of Strategic and Interregional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

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

Vice-Chairman: Kazim Ali Gulzari

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.