

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



October 23, 2016

A Better Strategy to Deal with Crimes

Crimes within a society are actually part of a very complex phenomenon. It is not only the individual behavior, thinking and decisions that are responsible for the crimes. Though they are committed through the individuals, they are nourished through a whole process that involves the overall social lives of the criminals and the systems that they live in. And, that is the reason that the crimes in the modern societies are linked to the overall social setup and particularly the justice and law and order systems. Henry Thomas Buckle had rightly said, "Society prepares crime and criminal commits it."

Though individual decisions are important in the crimes, they are highly influenced by the circumstances. This fact can be easily observed by the circumstances in different societies. The societies that are developed and have stable socio-economic setup have relatively lesser number of crimes. On the other hand, the less-developed or under-developed societies have relatively higher crime rate. It is because prevailing conditions provide opportunities for the crimes to multiply and criminals to thrive.

The law and order and criminal justice system that value efficiency, justice and fair-play are bound to decrease the number of crimes and criminals. There are three aspects of such a system; first, the justice system that is prevailing within the society and deals with the daily matters of the society. Second, the system that prevents or hinders the crimes from being committed and the third one is the punishment and prison that are meant to amend the criminals and turn them into positive members of the society. Throughout all these phases efficiency, justice and fair-play are really important. A society that maintains justice in the first place rarely faces criminal cases; while the justice that is served quickly and on-time disheartens the criminals and crimes. Meanwhile, the justice system that does not favor anyone because of social position and class can control crimes effectively. Otherwise, if it just favors the strong and powerful and become the slave of the influential people, it would generate more criminals.

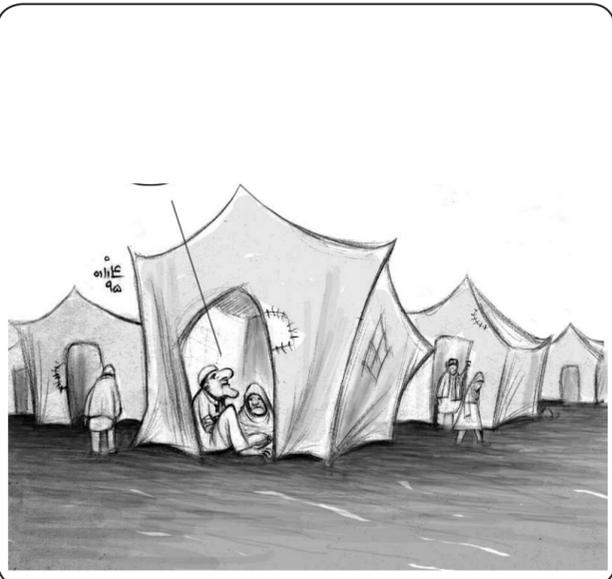
Apart from being efficient, just and unbiased, it is also important that the system must be humane and strive to deal with the criminals in an affectionate manner. It should also be kept in mind that every human being can commit mistakes, and therefore, he should be provided an opportunity to amend himself. Moreover, the prison system should be based on modern concepts and studies. In order to make the prison system useful, it is really vital to develop it as per the modern thinking. The basic purpose of the prison must not only be to confine the criminals and punish them but to transform them into better human beings.

However, it can be noticed that in most of the prisons, human beings are tortured frequently, they are disgraced and kept in the most unfavorable conditions. What they learn from all these experiences is nothing except further violence and revenge. Their revenge takes the form of further violence and crime within the society.

Unfortunately, our country Afghanistan is one of the countries where the prison and punishment system is in a pathetic condition. Prisons are the centers where the criminals are further nourished and, in fact, they become more popular and skillful in their activities after they leave the prison. Neither, the facilities provided in the detention centers are satisfactory, nor there are activities that can support the detainees to have better social lives.

Keeping such conditions in mind, can it be said that our detention centers can transform our criminals into better human beings? In fact, they would further deteriorate the situation. Most of the crimes are committed by the criminals because of their social position or the compulsion, conditioning and the pressures of society. If provided with better opportunities and social conditions, the criminals can be less motivated towards crime and thus the chances of crimes are decreased to a large extent.

The detentions centers, therefore, must have a comprehensive strategy and modern techniques of dealing with the criminals. The criminals must start believing that they have committed something wrong and that there are alternative ways of living life, as well. There should be group activities, encouraging the prisoners to become better and useful part of social life. They should be trained in the skills of their choice, so that after coming out they can find some work to support them financially. There should be better health and hygiene facilities for them so that they should not be sick and does not become burdens on society. It should be noted that the way prisoners are treated in the prisons, in the similar fashion they will react to the society after the come out. Therefore, it should be ensured that they have healthy and positive experiences so that they can reflect the same from their attitude in the outside world.



Afghanistan: The Most Dangerous Place to Live

By Mohammad Zahir Akbari

Afghanistan is one of the most dangerous places in the world to live a healthy life. Due to poor quality health care services the wealthier choose to seek care in other countries but the poorer have to frequently die and suffer. According to reports, in Kabul one in five had travelled outside Afghanistan to seek the care they required, most of them heading to neighboring countries; While border provinces almost one in ten and one in twelve had gone abroad to seek treatment for an illness of someone in their household. The long distances people must travel to seek care not only delay the provision of urgently needed treatment, but also force them to undergo perilous and costly journeys. Nevertheless, there have been some achievements in past 15 years but it is not sufficient because one third of entire population still lack access to very basic health-care services while others go abroad due to low quality services. Beside war, insecurity and long distances, high costs are also an important barrier to access healthcare for many people in Afghanistan; travelling to distant, better health facilities often increase expenses, forcing families to become indebted to provide treatment for relatives. These include non-medical costs for transport to and from the health facility, accommodation and food, in addition to the actual medical costs. Despite the fact that healthcare should be free of charge, as promised under the national free care policy (article 52 of the national constitution) this is not the case in many public facilities. Instead, people must pay for drugs, doctor's fees, laboratory tests and in-patient care. Overall, households in Afghanistan spent on average more than 9,000 Afghani on healthcare (around 150 USD). It is notable that urban households had a significantly higher level of expenditure than rural households, which is likely related to lower urban poverty levels and better access to health services. In a country where, according to the World Bank, more than one third of the people are living below the national poverty line of less than \$1.25 USD per day, such expenditures can be crippling. People always complain about the poor quality of the public health system, including of staff and services; lack of appropriate drugs; and an improperly functioning referral system. It seems that public system is obsolete; patients often had to wait for a long time to be treated. For instance, in clinics those are open only in the mornings, women experiencing complications during labour at night or other times of the day or wounded patients who need immediate medical care are not cared for in time.

Corruptions such as Informal fees, low quality or smuggled medicine and are another worrying problems, considering that costs pose an important barrier to access healthcare. People often have to pay bribes in order to be seen by a doctor in a public clinic. Others spoke of doctors in public clinics pushing people to their after-hour private practice, saying that it was better equipped. People also regularly complained that public

clinics in remote areas sold their drug supplies to pharmacies, so that patients had to buy them instead of receiving them free in the clinic. The importation of poor quality medicine is another serious issue. It is said that about 90% of Afghanistan's pharmaceutical products are imported while 50% of them are illegally imported. As a result, the quality of public services is often perceived to be low, even if this is not always the case. For instance, assessment of the public clinics in certain provinces district showed that general primary healthcare provision appeared to be functioning well. At the time of the visits, all public health centres are open and providing consultations free of charge and seemed to have adequate levels of patient attendance. But distrust in the public health system causes many people to prefer private clinics and private doctors, who are perceived to be better in terms of quality. Yet, the quality in private system is not necessarily justified; many complain of over-prescribing, misdiagnosing and even malpractice and medical mistakes by private practitioners. They also try benefit from the bad reputation of the public sector and ask high fees for their services.

More than half of Afghan girls and boys suffer damage to their minds and bodies that cannot be undone because they are poorly nourished in the crucial first two years of life. High levels of Malnutrition in Children is rate of stunting is around 60%, underweight rate is around 40%, Anemia rate is around 50% in children, High iodine deficiency: 72% (school age) and also the high levels of Malnutrition in Women is Iron deficiency: 48.4%, non-pregnant and Iodine deficiency 75% and high levels of chronic energy deficiency are 20.9% low BMI. There are about two million addicts in the country while the numbers are increasing due to lack of serious fight against opium products. Likewise, the figure of communicable disease especially HIV/AIDS are in increase because of boost in number of drug users, the number of injuries and disabled rising due to security condition in the country, the air-pollution, which is responsible for up to 70% disease of urban area, is also deteriorating.

As final points, having happy, healthy and well-talented lives depend to having quality health services and strategies; we must know that if we do not have sound body, we cannot have sound mind. We should realize that food and food experts play very important role in a society. We must understand that Pregnancy and infancy are important periods for the formation of the brain, laying the foundation for the development of cognitive, motor, and socio-emotional skills throughout childhood and adulthood. Children with restricted development of these skills during early life are at risk for later neuropsychological problems, poor school achievement, early school dropout, low-skilled employment, and poor care of their own children, thus contributing to the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

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ISKP Fomenters Sectarianism

By Hujjatullah Zia

Sectarian violence has been stoked by terrorist networks in Afghanistan and a number of individuals are killed on the grounds of their sect and beliefs. The insurgents spill the blood of men and women to trigger sectarian sentiments and fish in troubled waters. The radical ideologues are vehicle for the masterminds, who engineer the war behind the smoke-screen. Spreading hatred and sectarian tension are highly perilous for a society and will lead a nation to violence and carnage. Traditional culture held strong sway in Afghanistan for years and the nation suffered from civil unrests which originated largely from parochial mindsets and sectarian tensions. Similarly, the ethnic minorities were discriminated on the basis of their sect and ideology within the Taliban's regime. In a closed structure, where the individuals value stereotypical beliefs, the large-scale potential for sparking off sectarian tensions exists. In the evening of October 11, at least two attackers wearing police uniforms and equipped with grenades and machine guns opened fire on Ashura mourners in Kabul's Kart-e Sakhi shrine, the most popular gathering place in Kabul for mourners marking Muharram. The second attacker, who apparently fled the shrine after joining the first attacker in shooting, fought the security forces in a nearby mosque in Kart-e Chahar. There were no casualties to civilians there as the mosque was not being used, at the time. Witnesses said the attackers in Kart-e Sakhi "indiscriminately shot everyone they faced. They would not even spare women and children." The interior ministry said the second attacker was killed in the firefight early in the morning of October 12. The ministry put the number of the dead at 16 and the wounded at 54. They included children and women. UNAMA, condemning the attack, said 19 people had been killed and dozens wounded. Also on October 12, the actual day of Ashura, an explosion, again targeting mourners in the usually relatively safe province of Balkh, killed 14 people and wounded 28. A bomb had been attached to an electricity pole close to the Ashura procession in Balkh district centre. Nobody claimed responsibility for the Balkh explosion. The Kabul attack, however, was claimed on October 12 by the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) in two separate statements. These attacks indicate that the group has an operational presence in Kabul that is beyond the "nascent" stage. The group seems to have gained the capability of carrying out fatal attacks on an occasional basis in the capital, although not at a sophisticated level yet. Sending two bombers to blow themselves up in a crowd of civilian demonstrators, or two attackers dressed as police and equipped with hand grenades and guns, plus suicide belts, into a mourning crowd, or carrying

out an attack on foreign security contractors in a minibus do not require a high level of complexity. However, the execution of such attacks does need some level of confidence and precision of planning, as well as adequate logistics and surveillance. These attacks are also an indicator that the group has recruited a certain number of dedicated and experienced fighters in the capital.

What has sharpened concern among Afghans is perhaps not ISKP's capability, but its willingness to implant sectarianism into the conflict in Afghanistan. In recent decades, compared to most conflicts in the Muslim world, Afghanistan has stood out for the absence of such fratricide. ISKP, during the short period since its emergence, has, however, showed no hesitation in stepping into this un-mined area. While the Ashura and July 2016 attacks in Kabul are the most remarkable examples of sectarian violence by ISKP, the overall sectarian trend that is emerging since the group's advent has been much wider. Over the eighteen months, there have been a number of attacks and assassinations targeting Sufi, Hanafi and Shia entities. Salafis have also had their share of victims, in what appear to be revenge attacks.

Fermenting sectarian hatred would complicate the Afghan conflict with new motifs and grievances, and put it onto a more unpredictable trajectory. If a sectarian tone did become ingrained in the violence, it would be hard to easily reverse it. Any sectarian projects of the Afghan conflict would carry long-term consequences for the stability of Afghanistan. It is relatively easier to recover from political violence once there is a political settlement and reconciliation. However, it is harder to recover from sectarian strife, as it shatters the community's social cohesion.

Fomenting sectarianism is a project being implemented not only by ISKP but also the self-styled Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). According to public belief, abducting the travelers from ethnic minority group and slaying them were carried out by the ISIL group to spark off ideological conflicts and sectarianism.

Afghan nation should be cautious enough not to fall for the militants' trickery and have to practice religious tolerance towards one another. The clergy and the Ulema Council are responsible to preach against the radical ideology and inhumane practices of the extremists - who trample upon the rights and liberty of the people on the grounds of their race, sex, sect and creed. Moreover, the media are to reflect the militants' intentions and spread awareness regarding their schismatic projects so as to prevent from widening gaps among the nation.

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