

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



October 29, 2015

The Rising Rate of Crimes

Disorder and uncertainty in the country have influenced the crime rate to a large extent. The growing rate of crimes in the capital Kabul is one of the most evident examples. According to some statistics by Pajhwok Afghan News, more than 1,000 criminal cases, including robberies and murders have been registered in different police stations in Kabul during the current Solar Year. There may be many other cases that have not been reported due to reasons like fear and lack of trust on law enforcement agencies.

Police, on the other hand, has claimed that they have nabbed at least 192 suspected killers, 409 for injuring others, 393 for robberies, 79 for looting passengers and 379 in connection with immoral acts in the ongoing year. However, a comprehensive strategy to control the crimes and provide justice to those who have been affected is non-existent.

Crimes are basically offences that are considered detrimental for not only the target of the crime and criminal but for the society as a whole. There are myriads of reasons involved behind why a person tends to commit crime. Poverty is one of the basic reasons of crimes. Studies have revealed that poverty compels many people to commit different sorts of crimes that range from minor stealing to the biggest crimes like murder and theft.

Consider the countries that are suffering from poverty; there are many examples wherein people commit crimes as a result of intense destitution. Take the example of our own country Afghanistan; the statistics mentioned above shows how poverty and disorder have influenced the crime rate.

Though poverty is one of the basic reasons of why people commit crimes, it is not the only reason. There may be many other reasons involved behind the crimes that are committed within the society. Whatever may be the reason of the crimes, their effects are very disturbing and have the capacity to bring serious disturbances in the society; therefore, measures must be there to curb them. There are two strategies to control the crime. The first one is the short-term strategy and the other one is the long-term strategy. The short-term strategy is basically carried out by the law-enforcement system in the society that works through the institutions of courts and police.

Law-enforcement system within a society basically works on the principle of identifying the criminals, bringing them to the justice and punishing them. The countries with weaker law-enforcements systems suffer to a large extent in providing justice to the alleged criminals.

Such societies also suffer from lack of providence of timely justice. The system of courts is not very efficient. There are many cases that take many years in courts and yet remain undecided. The people who are influenced by such cases experience a complete change in their lives, which is from bad to worse and by the time they reach to justice, their lives are already destroyed. It has been also observed that the cases that belong to influential people are pursued immediately while the ones that involve the ordinary people are kept in files and they never reach to the courts.

And then there are detention centers that, in fact, do not transform the criminals into useful citizens, which is the basic philosophy of them. They, on the other hand, turn them into bigger criminals and if unfortunately, which mostly happens, there is a person who has been punished wrongfully; such a person becomes a true criminal after leaving the detention center.

Unluckily, Afghanistan is one of the same types of countries that suffer from weak law-enforcement system. Though there has been much development in this regard, serious concerns still prevail and raise questions about the system. The police force in Afghanistan is still in the preliminary stages and it really requires years of attention and support to reach to a truly professional stage. There are many areas in the country where the police do have enough penetration and where they cannot reach to crimes and criminals. Then there are many areas wherein the people still go to traditional courts, which are dominated by religious and tribal leaders instead of going to the courts that are established by the government.

There is a great margin of tireless efforts for the improvement of detention centers as well. The basic facilities that the prisoners get are in no way enough and the environment is not very much healthy. Even within the detention centers the criminals are able to keep their communication with the outside world and are able to lead or to participate in their unlawful activities.

It is really imperative to keep in consideration that the law-enforcement system can provide short-term solution to the crimes. If a society is really interested in controlling them there should be a long-term strategy that must deal with the basic reasons of the crime and try to nip the evil in the bud. There should be efforts to work on efficient administration, better economic condition, political stability, good governance, providence of basic human rights and control of corruption. Justice should reach to all the people of the society alike and the citizens must not feel alienated from the society. Moreover, there should not be discrimination as far as practical implementation of the criminal law is considered. Law should not serve the rich alone as is happening in many societies of the world; rather all should be treated equally in this regard.

Afghan Education Sector Left to Mercy of Insurgents!

By Asmatyari

Many states like that of Afghanistan, myopically perceive the fate of nation guided by foreign investments or donations which is unarguable fallacy. Without giving education first priority we can't keep pace with technological, innovative and scientific advancement the world has attained. The education itself is a proof to the progressiveness and development of the nations. The most developed nations in the worlds have most developed and best education systems while, the underdeveloped, struggling ones and one with the bad economy and global ranks have the bad education systems when compared to the developed ones. It is believed education is one of the elements; entailing dynamic programs of socio-political and economic riches –it can only transform us from underdeveloped state into fully developed state. We have been narrating tales of technological progress, economic gains and educational developments the rest of the world has achieved, bidding to create an inspiration to our fate makers' so that they could steer the country on the agreeable course of sustainable success. But it should be learnt without proper security arrangement every single development couldn't lead to fruition.

With rise in unrest in the war-hit region of Wardoj district in northern Badakhshan province, it is lately disclosed that the insurgents have closed down all schools in the area and are recruiting students to fight for them. This negative development is tallied by the head of Badakhshan education department unearthed round about 10,000 students out of school in Wardoj – 40% of whom are girls. The disclosure goes with edge cut coincidence of child soldier being used by insurgent in the pursuit of furthering their goals. How discouraging to find the government unconcerned about this heart wrenching development and demonstrating complicit silence combating this trend by the insurgents. It is wearisome knowing the voice of many innocent kids fall short of producing sensation of hearing in the ears of the rulers of the country.

The atrocity doesn't end with this only tale. Previously an official claimed the school teachers were being recruited and appointed by the Taliban in the Shah Joy district. This worrying stance is affirmed by the serving head of the province confirming salaries of teachers were being pocketed by the Taliban as a number of insurgents have been appointed as instructors in the schools. It's outrageous to recognize the funds reserved for educational betterment in a province are flowing into the accounts of militants and local commanders who are consecutively unleashing terror plots against the innocent civilians. It is unbelievably frightening the monetary allocation for education is funding heinous crimes –education is shunned in ignorance and militancy is supported instead. Regrettably, incriminating education which undoes the fear out of the mind and heart of people is camouflaged in the constant cloud of terror and endless fear –unluckily parasitizes on its very existence.

Formerly, the U.S. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) reported the alleged involvement of the officials from the Afghan Ministry of Education (MoE) in providing fraudulent data to donors in order to personally profit off donations for

schools. The elevated concerns of corresponding donor agencies are equitable stance and must be tried for reversal. Reportedly, SIGAR, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) had spent 769 million USD to support education in Afghanistan since March 31, 2015.

Following the SIGAR report the Officials from Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission's (AIHRC) office in Ghor province have reported findings that fraudulent school statistics have allowed commanders of illegal armed groups operating in the area to embezzle millions of Afghans intended for teachers' salaries. According to the AIHRC office in Ghor, nearly 70 percent of the province's schools are closed, and tens of local lawbreakers and illegal armed group commanders receive salaries designated for the schools' teachers.

It is heart wrenching to find education sector meagerly administered and poorly governed –the cry for lack of resources is high, however when substantiated is defrauded. Afghan education sector already suffering of poor management, is struck by severe stroke of fund misappropriation. Education sector is worst hit by meager performance –the allegation of fund embezzlement adds to its complication.

The government whether ignorant or restrained to avert the whole state of affairs marks an in-depth negligence or criminal complicity. What about the credibility of whole statistics of ministry of education after the emergence of this report. Doesn't it reflect the statistics provided about the rest of province are also merely paper work? Will the government ensue the case of such grave fraudulence and punish the culprits devoid of their socio-political standings? Will the unity government exercise greater writ over education and ensure insurgents should exploit the fund? There are several questions emerging in the minds of every loyal Afghan waiting to be responded –one being is how long will the masses be put to mercy of insurgent and power players.

This act of betrayal is shocking to learn when public officials side the wrongs means of exploiting the public resources –it ultimately earn us disgrace and indignity. The reprehensible act is analogous to self immolation –education fundamental to collective uplift is enrooted by cutting instead of adding the resources going to this department. The minimally performing education sector is deliberately pushed to abysmal of negation. The concerned public officials instead of choosing to resign after the news got public, shamelessly sticks to defend their ill deeds. Sticking to state of constant denial, owing the responsibility of mishaps undertaken in one's realm marks an in-depth degree of incompetence whilst negating any expectancy of betterment.

It is anticipated the government and concerned departments launches the state of emergency meant not only to increase the students' enrollment but also assures the provision of competing education. The allocation of most of resources into this sector is the cognition of aforementioned reality –pleading a parallel flow of resources into the said sector aided with proper security and surveillance. Being driven by motives of change, the government diverts every saved penny for educational excellence is day dreaming.

Asmatyari is the permanent writer of Daily Outlook Afghanistan. He can be reached at asmatyari@gmail.com

Will Peace Talk Curb Political Crisis?

By Hujjatullah Zia

About fourteen years, the tug-of-war continues between Afghan soldiers and the Taliban insurgents. The downfall of the Taliban's regime in 2001 and establishing democracy with the support of foreign states failed to stabilize the country. The High Peace Council (HPC) was founded in 2010 and tasked with contacting the Taliban and convincing them to join the peace process. But militancy continued and civilian deaths and injuries in the first quarter of 2015 followed the record high levels of 2014. Between 1 January and 31 March, UNAMA documented 1,810 civilian casualties, a two per cent decrease from the same period in 2014.

Moreover, the death toll of Afghan soldiers, who battle against the Taliban in restive provinces, increase with each passing day. The Taliban have compounded their inroads from the beginning of 2015 and caused great havoc and large casualties in their attacks in central parts of the country such as Shah Shahid bombing in Kabul on August 07th, deadly attacks on police checkpoint in Jalriz, which left a number of Afghan police dead, an attack on a volleyball match which led to the death and injuries of dozens of civilians, the takeover of Kunduz and now the heavy inroads into Faryab, Badakhshan, Helmand, Herat and Takhar.

Seen previously as a rural militant movement capable only of hit-and-run attacks on cities, the Taliban's aggressive campaign to capture major urban areas reveals a highly potent insurgency that poses a crucial test for Afghanistan's overstretched North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)-backed forces.

On the night of October 4, less than a week after Kunduz fell, insurgents raided the capital of northern Faryab province bordering Turkmenistan.

"Faryab simmers dangerously. Against the backdrop of the US government's latest extension of its military commitment to Afghanistan, it is worth noting that the province is precariously situated along the same political fault lines that recently rattled Kunduz province.

Continued instability in Faryab and its adjacent provinces risks undermining the country at a time when Afghanistan is bleeding on all fronts," an international security consultant Morwari Zafar writes. She further expresses that Faryab has become a safe haven to fighters from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and the Quetta Shura Taliban who have both sought to establish operational bases in a collaborative attempt to subvert the central government.

From the economic perspective, Faryab is a transit point for the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline. "Faryab maintains a key geographic position for Afghanistan's economic interests. Its location and resources are indispensable to the Afghan government's strategy of regional trade along the historical Silk Road trade route and increasing foreign investment in Afghanistan's natu-

ral resources and extractive industry."

The current situation represents a drastic escalation of fighting from August of this year, when Afghanistan's first vice president General Ahmad Rashid Dostum, personally led clearance operations in the area with the Afghan military.

Similarly, the emergence and frequent offensives of the self-styled Islamic State (IS) group have further deteriorated the security situation and unleashed a sense of public fear in the air. It is said that the affiliates of IS terrorist group are competing with the Taliban group for leadership among the extremist groups operating in Afghanistan. Moreover, UN reported late in September that almost 70 militants of the IS group are busy in forming the core of the group's branch in Afghanistan.

Showing a reaction to the current insecurity, Washington announced last week that it would slow the withdrawal of US troops from the country, with President Barack Obama admitting that Afghan forces are not yet ready to stand alone against the resurgent militants. However, it is believed that this will not be effective enough to tackle the security crisis.

Since the peace negotiation reached an impasse frequently and the "war on terror" did not bear the desired result either and the bulk of the foreign troops withdrew from the country, Afghanistan is caught in a real deadlock and has no choice other than revising its strategy for peace. On the other hand, Pakistan is pushing for negotiation despite the Afghan-Pak's bitter relations. Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif last Friday said he had told President Ashraf Ghani that Pakistan was prepared to assist with peace talks but could not bring the Afghan Taliban to the negotiating table. "Pakistan has no reason to want any violence in Afghanistan. The attacks on the Afghan government, and indeed on Pakistan, emanated from the vast areas in Afghanistan now under Taliban control," he is quoted as saying while addressing the United States Institute of Peace (USIP). Nawaz said that over the past 14 years, a military solution had been elusive in Afghanistan. "We believe it is unlikely to be achieved in the future. Thus, achieving peace through negotiations is the best option," he added.

There are reports that Afghan government has given the green light over peace talk. As soon as the High Peace Council declares an official statement on agreeing the issue, it would be Pakistan to nudge the Taliban to come on the table of negotiation. But the question remains is that will Pakistan succeed in bringing in peace through facilitating talk after frequent failure in this regard? The mistrust insists among the Afghan people and politicians. On the other hand, a new rift is emerging among the Taliban over electing new leader, how would Pakistan tackle this issue? These questions are to be answered by Pakistani officials.

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



Chairman / Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Hussain Yasa
Vice-Chairman: Kazim Ali Gulzari
Email: outlookafghanistan@gmail.com
Phone: 0093 (799) 005019/777-005019
www.outlookafghanistan.net

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