

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



September 02, 2015

Ethics in a Society

It can be observed in both the individual and social lives that the actions are mostly considered in terms of whether they are right or wrong. An individual, in most of the cases, while performing actions, tries to gauge it in perspective of his individual concept or the social concept of right or wrong. Same is the case with society; while analyzing the character and the actions of an individual the social beings try to tally them in accordance to the determined concepts of right and wrong. These concepts of rights and wrongs are the norms and ethics of the society.

Ethics involves systematizing, defending and recommending concepts of right and wrong conduct. The concepts of right and wrong are derived from the social norms and traditions.

The important point, however, is to determine whether the social norms and values are humane and they keep in consideration the basic human rights. As it can be observed that in a given society a particular conduct may be socially acceptable and may be considered right but in accordance to the basic human rights they may be very discriminating; as can be observed in some of the backward societies of the world. For example, discriminatory behavior in some of the societies may be considered right but it cannot be considered humane. The question, then, is whether such actions can be considered as ethical or not.

With the globalization, there has been development of universal ethics, which, though to a limited extent, tends to invigorate the conduct based on the universal concepts of human rights and betterment. The universal ethics consider the actions that harm other human beings as wrong and the ones that benefit others as right. However, it is very difficult to promulgate and implement universal ethics to all the societies of the world as the diversities are immense in different societies, mostly because of uneven development of social lives and different cultures and religious beliefs.

Religion and culture have been the most dominant sources of ethics. The followers of different religions derive most of their ethical values from the basic teaching of their religions which are present in their holy scriptures or from the lives and behaviors of their Prophets. In this regard, most of the religions of the world clearly define the behavior that is ethically acceptable to them. They have their own systems of reward and punishment, which is to ensure that the ethical behavior is in accordance to the teachings.

Laws, mostly in the modern societies, also try to ensure ethical behavior. Mostly, laws are made by the political and legal institutions, which happen to be the part of society wherein they exist; therefore, they strive to keep in consideration the society's ethical values. Though they have been very influential in the modern societies, laws are not able to implement the ethical values to a large extent and may also contradict them in certain cases. Moreover, there are limitations of the legal systems to implement the law in its true nature.

Though societies have large impact on the lives of the individuals, their behaviors and conducts are not mostly determined by the ethical values of the societies. The individuals, on certain occasions, perform their actions on the basis of their own beliefs and thoughts, which are not necessary conforming to that of the society.

There has been concept of analyzing the ethical values on the basis of pleasure and bliss. The individuals, mostly after the advent of individualism and industrialization, have considered the actions that lead them to pleasure, happiness and comfort as ethical. Such concept can be based defined as Hedonism. Hedonism posits that the principal ethic is maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain. There are several schools of Hedonist thought ranging from those advocating the indulgence of even momentary desires to those teaching a pursuit of spiritual bliss. In their consideration of consequences, they range from those advocating self-gratification regardless of the pain and expense to others, to those stating that the most ethical pursuit maximizes pleasure and happiness for the most people.

The Afghan society, like all the other societies in the world, has certain ethical values, which are respected and pursued by most of the Afghans. Afghan society derives these values from its culture, tradition and religious beliefs. However, it should not be forgotten that Afghan society is very diverse and ethical values are not homogeneous. Nonetheless, that does not create any major issue as long as diversities are respected and tolerated. The major issue, however, is that some of the ethical values are derived from obsolete tribal values, which are based on discriminatory behavior.

The Afghans need to realize that the ethical values that are obsolete and discriminatory must be discouraged so that they should be able to make developments towards a civilized society. On the other hand the individuals must keep in consideration the welfare and security of others while performing different social actions. The different strata in the society must be dealt with in accordance to their due rights. The weaker strata like the poor, women, and minorities must be treated appropriately. Moreover, the ethics is not just about doing good to one's own-self, rather it should be based on the principles of humanity and must avoid discriminatory behavior.

ISIL - A Threat to Afghanistan

By Hujjatullah Zia

The self-proclaimed Islamic State in Iraq and Levant (ISIL) maintains highly fundamental ideology. It ushered in merciless killings and systematic sexual practices in Iraq and Syria from the very beginning. The UK-based Syrian Observatory of Human Rights reports that ISIL executed at least 91 people across Syria within a period of one month, including 39 people from its own ranks. It adds that at least 32 civilians, including two women, were among the executed. There were also 11 fighters from different rebel groups and nine members of Assad's troops among them, it said.

Since the declaration of its so-called "Islamic Caliphate" in June last year, ISIL has executed 182 of its own members who had been captured trying to flee the group and return home, the Observatory said. Additionally, ISIL executed 1,841 civilians, including 76 children and 95 women, over the past year by shooting, beheading, stoning, throwing off from high buildings and burning to death.

Based on its radical ideology, ISIL has gone about systematizing rape, sexual assault and slavery by embedding the buying, selling and gifting of slaves into a system of rewards for its fighters. Of the estimated 3,500 Yazidi women held by ISIL, survivors report being interrogated and in some cases stripped for sorting and categorizing. They have been rated according to desirability, labeled and transported across ISIL-held territory. They have been traded between fighters, and awarded by leadership as prizes.

Fundamentalism is deeply embedded in the minds and hearts of the ISIL group - which has transcended moral and religious restrictions. The ISIL's radical ideology is likely to have surpassed the Taliban and al-Qaeda's dogma. With the very emergence of the ISIL group, al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri rebuked its practices on the grounds of being extremely fundamental - when the videos of brutal killings were posted on public websites. Similarly, earlier this month the Taliban condemned a "horrific" video that apparently showed IS fighters blowing up bound and blindfolded Afghan prisoners with explosives. "This un-Islamic act... can never be justified," the Taliban said.

Reportedly, ISIL seeks to gain stable foothold in Afghanistan. The sporadic abductions of travelers belonging to ethnic minorities by unknown gunmen - mainly the abduction of 31 passengers from a bus in the southern Afghan province of Zabul in late February which was intended to foment sectarianism - were believed to be carried out by the Islamic State (IS) group. "In Iraq and Syria, you might say (IS) are in stage six or seven or eight," top US military officer General Martin Dempsey said last month. "In Libya, they are in stage three or four, and in Afghanistan they are in stage one

or two."

His views are echoed by other NATO officials who say that IS in Afghanistan are not yet capable of carrying out the sort of coordinated operations they are conducting in Iraq and Syria, although the potential exists for them to evolve into a bigger threat.

In spite of the IS's hardline ideology, a number of the Taliban insurgents, particularly in the restive eastern provinces of Kunar and Nangarhar, have adopted the IS flag to rebrand themselves as a more lethal force as NATO troops depart after 14 years of war.

Michael Kugelman, Afghanistan expert at the Washington-based Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, said Islamic State is the "flavor of the month right now. It has a dramatic appeal to a lot of alienated militants."

But the Taliban are attempting to counter that, with an aggressive drive north from their southern and eastern strongholds, as well as a wave of fatal bombings in the Afghan capital, Kabul. Experts say the escalating violence demonstrates Mullah Mansour's bid to boost his image within the Taliban, which could halt the defections to IS. US drone strikes in recent weeks have also dealt a significant blow to IS in Afghanistan, killing dozens of suspected cadres, including the group's Afghanistan-Pakistan regional chief Hafiz Saeed - this also shows the IS's active presence in the country.

NATO spokesman Colonel Brian Tribus is cited as saying that IS is an "operationally emergent" group but the Taliban pose a "greater threat" to the Afghan government and foreign forces. It is crystal clear that the Taliban's power and influence are far more formidable than the newly emerging group of IS. However, the allegiance of some Taliban militants strengthens IS and widens its realm of power in Afghanistan. Is it a matter of concern of Afghan officials?

There are also reports about the sporadic clashes between IS and Taliban militants in restive parts of the country. In other words, their ideological conflicts have led to serious tensions which narrow IS's sphere of influence. But the government has to take defensive measures to prevent IS from gaining firm footholds in the country so as not to change Afghanistan into second Iraq - it is greatly feared by the public. In case of the IS's strong influence in the country, all the investments made by western countries and international community in Afghanistan will be in vain. After all, the sacrifices made by foreign forces and Afghan civilians and police will be nil. It would be a serious threat to the Afghanistan's nascent democracy. Likewise, the social, cultural and political investments such as achievements regarding women's rights and their active participation in state positions, etc. all will be wasted. The world has to join forces to root out IS not only from Afghanistan but from the region otherwise it will pose menace to the entire globe.

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

Countless Issues Pleads Pragmatic Approach

By Asmatyari

Caught in manifold problems, deteriorating state of security stands to be the prior most predicaments; Afghanistan faces at the present. Every day innocent civilians, army and police personnel render prey to endless bloodletting executed by insurgents. Subsequent to every triumphant attack the incumbent government needlessly sticks, finding traces of involvement of foreign elements without putting the concerned department into question and owing a tougher stance crushing terrorists and extremists. The chief executive of the country instead turns apologists justifying the blood shedding of insurgents that have held country hostage and pleads them peace talks.

Afghanistan faces multifaceted issues. After a year-long period of rule, the government could not avert the escalating graph of despondency. Neither the rule of law, administrative accountability enforced nor elimination of social ills, terrorism and corruption materialized. However, the politics of allegation and counter allegation was well exercised worth seeing. Sometimes foreigners were accused of evil practices sometime internal dispute were underscored over picking ministers, the government remained the icon of achievements. High ranked public officials and senior politicians involved in bank scandals and corruption, Taliban involved in severe human rights violation, were not brought to book instead are tried to talk to, seemed not the government's concern or priority. Consequently, multiple unresolved problems were left to the new government.

The goings of governance suffers acute degeneration given favoritism, misappropriation and financial discrepancy aided by government's negligence is on the rise. Many public departments and institutions are plagued by inalienable corruption and public officials unnoticeably continue male-practices devoid of anyone's concern whilst political figures display criminal complicity or negligence. None of the institutions seems well groomed. The billion dollar military aid could not well equip and train Afghan national army (ANA), still large number happens to be illiterate. Earlier, President Ashraf Ghani strongly condemned corruption and called for a national Jihad to fight the scourge that has gripped the country. Ghani said that if corruption turns into an organized phenomenon it becomes like a "cancerous lesion" that can threaten the essence of the nation. The menace of corruption can be eradicated provided an iron clad treatment is inflicted over those who are accused of charges of corruption. It should be considered that no nepotism and favoritism is exercised whilst dealing with corrupt elements.

It is an undeniable truth that despite countless challenges left to the new government to face; financial management will be the biggest problem pleading immediate attention. To provide a sustainable backup to its financial needs, the government relies on loans accompanied with handsome amount of interest. According to finance commission head, the total loans amounted 2 billion Afghanis which were received from World Bank (WB) nine times, Asian Development Bank (ADB) 14 times, once from IMF, Islamic Development Bank (IDB) four times and Saudi Arabia Monetary Agency two times. A good amount is earmarked for interest

of these loans. The international community lending a helping hand by providing aids to Afghanistan should be relied the most that can be done by establishing better relationships with them. The government can only get rid of these lone and interests by executing short term and long term plans, playing supportive role in hasty growth of business. Additionally, there are many other recommendations the international community anticipates of Kabul government to get done earning their confidence for future funding, amongst which maintenance of human rights stand prior. It should be learned that Afghanistan cannot develop without a sustainable economical road map drawn and implemented that grants them financial independence. The state of self reliance can only be achieved when heavy investments are made in the field of human resource developmental programs.

In addition to financial independence, Afghanistan is in dire need of socio-political assistance and trained official in all fields of human endeavors. Any country extending selfless services must be warmly received. In that pursuit a cordial relationship must be developed and tried to preserve the previous ones. Afghanistan was pushed to directionless avenues of battered relation with international community; certainly serve not Afghanistan's interest.

Law and order and security concerns remains to be another obstacle on the way to successful Afghanistan. The government must enforce rules that will make it possible for Afghans to live together without conflict. Harmony promoting education and equitable distribution of resources and services narrows down the differences whilst paving the way for peaceful coexistence. There is a documented existence of law and with negligible application or prejudicial application, serve none's interest. In our beloved country, seemingly, the militants and non-state actors have grown to an extent that easily evades the loosely held net of law and order and turn triumphant.

Another issue earning bad fame for Afghans is the illicit growth and trade of life snatching drug. Many countries and humanitarian organization showed grave concerns over mass production of the drug. Moreover, the illegal drug trade has always served a part in deterioration of law and order. The government of Afghanistan instead of relying on international community must work out genuine means tackling maintenance of law and devise legitimate and standard procedure of prosecution. Ghani has earlier said that another major problem within the sphere of corruption is that of drugs. According to estimation, there are 3.5 million drug addicts in Afghanistan. According to Afghan President, the drug problem is also a driving force behind corruption which includes growers, producers and those who process, traffic and consume narcotics are all responsible.

The unexplored rich earthly resources capable of earning socio-economic possessions for the state, are not taken the advantage of, underlines the negligence if not the incompetence of ruling elites. Violence has been a dominant phenomenon browbeating every fabric of Afghan society. The fight between insurgents and government backed international allies seems unending provided civilians are not ended. No one can take us out from the calamity of problems but the political leaders.

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



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.

