

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



September 12, 2018

Education: At the Forefront of Efforts to Counter Terrorism

Education is one of the core targets of the terrorist groups; they attack indiscriminately education everywhere e.g book Haram in Nigeria, ISIS in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and Pakistan, Al-Qaeda in different parts of the world, Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan have pursued the same strategies and tactics on education with the same justifications.

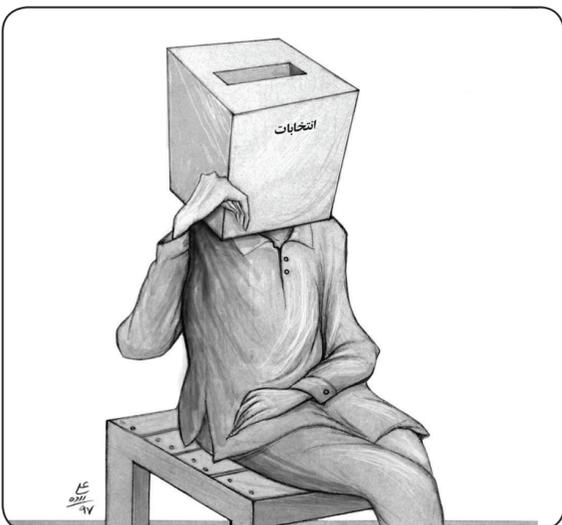
Attacking Girls' Education as the highest priority

The ISIS and the Taliban, have a long history of attacking girls' schools in Afghanistan. The root cause of such an approach to girls' education is that religious extremists hold the idea that educational institutions propagate western values. Hence, the religious extremists oppose education. They believe that gender secularism is opposed to Islam and anti-Taliban. Thus, they oppose the idea of female education and attack those institutions or personalities that support the education of girls. Considering the conservative social context of Afghanistan, the condition of girls' education and right to its access is already not very favorable due to wide differences in gender equality, traditional society, religion and culture. This situation has become worst due to religious extremism and opposition demonstrated towards females as religious extremist hold the belief that education would make girls equal to the boys which is against their beliefs.

Specific measures that Afghan Government and the International Community shall take

It is clear for the Afghan Government and the international community, how important education is in preventing the spread of violent extremism; however they require devising policies to actively counter terrorists' war on education. The US Agency for International Development and other international donors have spent millions of Dollars on Afghan education programs. But research suggests that current US government and other International Community-funded education achievements are at a high risk. On one hand, ISIS, Taliban and other terrorist groups deliberately target the schools, especially the girls' schools in the areas under control of the Afghan government and at the same time they welcome opening schools in areas under their control. So, we should be even more worried that the Taliban are now welcoming the opening of schools in areas under their control. Foreign aid may build the schools, but those who control the classrooms win the hearts and minds. And education infrastructures will change to the tools of empowering the terrorist groups and their harsh ideology. In such a context, the Afghan government and the International community should ensure both security of the education institutions, especially ensure equal access of the girls' to education and at the same time they shall ensure that terrorist groups cannot use education facilities as a strategic tool to empower terrorism ideology in the country.

One of the key conclusions one may have from this review is that in order for interventions to be more sustainable, programming for girls education should adopt multi-pronged approaches; such approaches will be more responsive to the communities being served and combined with programs that tackle discriminatory cultural and social attitudes and practices while promoting women's economic and political participation in Afghanistan. Afghan government and international community shall take approaches that span different sectors and actors, and also the humanitarian/development divide in the country.



The civilization of China and Afghanistan: Equality, inclusiveness, Mutual Learning and Diversity

By Mingzhe Ren, Shuyu Li & Daitong Liang

Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, once delivered a keynote speech at UNESCO headquarters, which on the subject of "Civilizations are colorful because of communication, civilizations are profound owing to mutual learning". Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani also expressed his appreciation for China's adherence to good-neighborliness and friendliness policy. In the future, the cooperation between two countries will further develop in an all-round way in the fields of political security, economic development and cultural and educational exchanges.

All civilizations are equal. Only through equality can Chinese and Afghan civilizations exchange and learn from each other. And different civilizations have their own merits. Nor is there a civilization that is devoid of any merit. The global tour of Afghan historical relics started in 2007. By 2018, it has been exhibited in 23 museums around the world with more than 2.5 million visitors. In addition to displaying precious cultural relics, it also spread the story worldwide that brave and loyal Afghan people protecting national cultural heritage valorously. Over a dozen years from 1990 to 2001, the national museum of Afghanistan was severely damaged, but thanks to the unremitting efforts of the Afghan people, a large amount of cultural heritage has been successfully preserved.

Civilization is inclusive. Thanks to inclusiveness, the Chinese and Afghan civilizations have an impetus to exchange and learn from each other. Therefore, all the achievements of civilization deserve respect and should be cherished. And only by maintaining exchanges and mutual learning with other civilizations can a civilization be full of vitality. On 1th Feb 2018, the world-class cultural relics' exhibition "echo of civilization" of the Afghan national museum opened at Chengdu museum in China. The exhibition covers the historical process of several periods in Afghanistan, including the Neolithic age, Greek civilization, Grassland civilization, and Guishuang civilization, presenting a picture of Afghanistan's diversified civilization from the 4th century BC to the 3rd century AD. These precious cultural relics have witnessed the historical, cultural and economic ties between Afghanistan and China, especially Sichuan area. This is also the perfect presentation and interpretation of the connotation of "the Belt and Road".

Civilizations are interconnected, and exchanges and mutual learning between the two civilizations can only be achieved through exchanges. And the dialogue between different civili-

zations highlights the mutual respect, equality and communication and combination among different civilizations. Afghanistan is a place where eastern and western cultures meet. Therefore, many similar genes can be found in the cultural blood of China and Afghanistan. China's Xinjiang borders directly with Afghanistan. In June 2017, China's Xinjiang cultural exchange delegation visited Afghanistan, which has built a bridge of communication for the cultural cooperation between Afghanistan and China. What "the Belt and Road" promotes is not only economic cooperation between the two countries, but also the infrastructure of civilization communication. It is the "belt" and "road" connecting the civilizations of China and Afghanistan, as well as the "road of civilization" promoting the mutual understanding and cultural integration between the two countries.

Civilization is colorful. The civilizations of China and Afghanistan are diverse and therefore worthy of exchanges and mutual learning. Mankind has created and developed colorful civilizations in the long history. And both the Chinese and Afghan civilizations are the fruits of the efforts of people from China and Afghanistan. With a history of more than 4,000 years, the Afghan civilization, located at the intersection of grassland civilization, Greco-Roman civilization, Indian civilization and Chinese civilization, which has formed its unique cultural charm. As the popular lyrics of the Afghan patriotic poem "Afghan song" say: "Such as jade inlay in central Asia and west Asia mountain top... After thousands of years of vicissitudes, I stand still in the mountains and my history is full of heroes and legends." This is a true reflection of Afghanistan's ancient civilization.

In the future, the two countries can promote cultural exchanges and cooperation from the following five aspects: First, establish a cultural exchange and cooperation mechanism between Afghanistan and China under the background of "One Belt And One Road"; second, to improve the China-Arab cultural exchange and cooperation platform; third, to build a brand of cultural exchanges and publicity based on the long-standing friendship and cooperation between Afghanistan and China; fourth, to promote the prosperity and development of cultural industries between Afghanistan and China; fifth, to promote cultural trade cooperation between the two countries. On this basis, an all-round, multilevel and broad-field cultural exchange model will eventually be formed, so as to facilitate the smooth development of china-arab cultural exchanges.

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An Economic Approach to Elections (Public choice)

By Mohammad Ibrahim Ehsani

In second part of our discussion we want to mention to another aspect of public choice, to "the market for votes".

There is more to interest-group politics than forming one-off coalitions to build a majority on a single issue. Politics is a continual process, with a variety of different issues coming up over time - a state of affairs that gives wide scope for individuals and groups to gain from exchanging support between each other. Again, the process starts with a group that feels intensely about some issue - the need for getting more ministries especially in nowadays Afghanistan, say. It makes a simple bargain with other such groups: you vote for our ministries, and we will vote for yours. These kind of vote trading is known as logrolling. An agreement to exchange votes on separate legislative measures, as in ministries example, is called explicit logrolling. It is common in democratic bodies, such as committees and legislatures, where votes are easily traded and - since both partners need to know that the other is delivering the bargain - easily observed. It does not work so well in secret ballots, or between large groups that cannot easily discipline their members. As in Afghanistan we had that problem about Hazarah people at beginning of Ghani government as all of their proposed ministers, maybe due to secret ballot in parliament or maybe because of weak bargain with other lawmakers.

Another mechanism, implicit logrolling, is where the different groups bundle their various proposals into a package before they are voted on. So voters or legislators who feel very strongly about one measure also end up voting for other people's measures too. This kind of vote trading is common when party election manifestos or legislative proposals are being put together. In Afghanistan we have just this kind of mechanism for presidency election because nation must vote for president and his two vicepres.

Then would be faced with a kind of pack. And also we have this kind of trading about budgets and maybe when parliament should decide about interpellations. Implicit logrolling has many benefits for legislators. By packaging their special interest measure with those of others, they can attract greater support for it, without accepting responsibility for the whole package. It is therefore no surprise that logrolling is a significant part of the democratic process. But, unlike in implicit logrolling, where the package to be voted on may be worked out in deals behind closed doors, the vote trading in explicit logrolling is at least transparent: everyone can see how votes are being traded. Even so, some 'explicit' vote trading is not

actually so explicit. Where a number of issues are coming up, as they do in legislatures all the time, there is quite often only an unspoken assumption of mutual support. Legislators will vote for colleagues' projects in the hope and expectation that those colleagues will remember the favor and return it by voting for their favored measure when the time comes.

Implicit logrolling is strong at many levels, particularly in the formation of parties and their election programmers. Parties are by nature assemblies of different interests who agree to support each other so as to build an activist group of credible size and strength. The fact that parties often suffer internal disagreements and splits is evidence of this trading partnership. But about Afghanistan obviously our parties, somehow is circling around one important famous pillar and his benefits not in really related to ordinary advocates or even other its factitive authorities. We can reach to this fact after leader's death and his son's superintendence over that party.

Once in office, political leaders also engage in logrolling as they decide on the policy measures that will go to the legislature. Cabinet ministers may agree to support legislative proposals that will benefit a colleague, even if they do not much like the measure, on the (often unspoken) presumption that the colleague will in turn support them in cabinet when the situation is reversed. And almost every measure that gets to the legislature is itself likely to become the object of implicit logrolling, as its promoters make concessions or add details that will buy the support of minorities and so ensure its smooth passage.

To take an everyday example, imagine three student roommates voting on whether to buy, jointly, a television that none could afford on their own. One is intensely keen on getting a television, but the other two are each very marginally against. If a vote is taken, the TV will be rejected; but this does not reflect the intensity of feelings within the group. If the pro-TV student paid one of the others to vote yes, or offered to return the favor in some future vote, the intensity of feelings is reflected and the group will buy the TV.

As Another example we can remember that Afghanistan's parliament's representatives voted in one so shameful enactment in 23th Juan, 2014 about their special rights and huge permanent stipend for themselves and all of them were agree with that law without just 8 represents. It was so painful when you imagine that this country is so poor and undeveloped. But it is a reality in Public choice theory and not surprising.

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