

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



September 22, 2015

NUG and Corruption

One of the major challenges for National Unity Government (NUG) was to adopt a comprehensive strategy to curb rampant corruption in the country. Though there were promises by NUG, so far the practical measures are not really tangible and it requires taking immediate steps if it is really interested in curbing the menace of corruption.

However, the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC), in a press conference on Thursday, said that NUG was yet to include the anti-corruption struggle in its priorities.

Rashid Behroz, MEC head in a statement said that they had submitted many recommendations to the unity government, but they were not incorporated in the 100-day action plans of ministries and independent government institutions. Some of the ministries and independent institutions, that had included anti-corruption effort in their work plans, could not complete it as they were really ambiguous and unachievable. He also mentioned that out of 25 ministries and independent departments, only 18 ministries and four departments had presented their 100-day plans while the rest of ministries had refused doing so.

With such a situation in hand it is really difficult to expect that NUG will be able to eradicate corruption that has deep roots within our society. Afghanistan is considered as one of the most corrupt countries in the world and fighting it would require extra attention and dedication, but unfortunately the government does not seem in the mood to offer such attention and dedication. Yama Torabi, another member of the committee said, "We have sent 380 recommendations to government entities after the committee commenced its job, but only 128 of them have been implemented... We are happy over some anti-corruption steps the government has taken, but as a whole the unity government could not fight the menace as they promised at the London Conference."

Afghanistan has not been able to fight with corruption properly and it has penetrated deep within our society. Most of our individuals and institutions have been vehemently dominated by it, and we seem crippled against it. It is hapless to say that we have been unsuccessful both in intention and action. There are many, who, knowing the fact that corruption is poisonous for our society and even having the authority to control it, do not take measures against it, as it would go against their interests. At the same time, there are many others, who only pay lip service and fight against it theoretically; therefore, they are not able to design and carryout proper actions against this nuisance.

Billions of Dollars poured in the country for both military support and development projects. But if we analyze the socio-political and socio-economic scenario in the country the development does not seem as great as it should have been. Most of these aids were devoured by corruption instead of being spent for the intended purposes. Either the money that was to be spent through government or the NGO sector, both the ways corruption had the largest share.

Today, corruption has penetrated into our social behavior. It is now a part of routine life to be corrupt. From a very minor to the most major matter, we find corruption ruling the roost.

One of the main issues in fighting with corruption in our society is that the control-mechanism has a large share in it. The government that should be on the vanguard to curb this hazard, itself has been a leading contributor in this regard. There have been numerous incidents of corruption when administration has been held responsible for being directly caught up in the matter. In most of the major corruption cases, the government has not been capable of extracting itself out clean. On most of the instances the government has blamed the Western supporters to be generating corruption in the country, but that would never suffice.

It has to be accepted now that corruption in Afghanistan is a multifaceted phenomenon that needs wide-ranging efforts from both national and international authorities to be resolved. Certainly, the anti-corruption institutions, authorized with power and facilities can be major factors in controlling it and Afghan government needs to establish them and promote them appropriately. However, it is also important to note that the honest efforts on individual level can be helpful to eradicate corruption to a great extent. The realization, on individual level, that a person commits the biggest injustice and violates the right of fellow-being while being involved in corruption is the crying need of time. The individuals can then teach the same to their family members and friends and the whole process can go on.

It is important to understand that there are many issues that are linked with corruption. Rising insecurity, social injustice, growing menace of drugs and many other social issues are to a large extent supported by corruption. Therefore, if the government is really serious to control all these problems, it must start from curbing the rampant corruption in the country.



Peace Comes Via Harmonious Co-Existence!

By Asmatyari

Since antiquity man has strived for political, economical and cultural dominance over his fellow man. On emergence of nations states, rivalries transformed into hostility, disputes into conflicts resulting into devastating wars, eliminating several human generations. World War I proved to be the deadliest conflicts, with over 37 million military and civilian casualties. There were over 16 million deaths and 20 million wounded.

Equally, World War II was another deadliest military exercise in human history with multiplied casualties, over 60 million, which was over 2.5% of the world population. Civilians killed totaled from 40 to 52 million, including 13 to 20 million from war-related disease and famine. The total military dead ranged from 22 to 25 million, including deaths in captivity of about 5 million prisoners of war. To halt conflicts and wars between countries and to provide a platform for dialogue and persistent peace, UN was founded in 1945 after World War II to replace the League of Nations.

Peace is a term that most commonly refers to an absence of aggression, violence or hostility. In the world, a country or a society, peace begins to dwell where differences are celebrated than being contradicted to the point of no-return. Peace is based on politics, culture, education, family values, experience, & history but the basis is the same to co-exist without dispute, bloodshed, and undermining fellow beings. Imagine world devoid of peace; the whole human race will be destroyed, as modern war involves atom bomb, hydrogen bomb, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction. So, war should always be avoided for world peace. Currently world's peace and harmony face various threats. Terrorism, extremism, regional imbalance, economic disparity, and social inequality are some of the factors threatening enduring peace. Peace is the mother of all human progress. Exclusive of peace a nation cannot propel towards an eminent material accomplishment. So peace is ever desirable. Every leader in the world must aim to find a lasting solution to the problems that beset our planet. The enormous significance of long-lasting peace can only be materialized and publicized with its gigantic celebrations and propagations. The "International Day of Peace", sometimes unofficially known as "World Peace Day", is observed annually on September 21. It is dedicated to peace, and specifically the absence of war and violence. The day was first celebrated in 1982, and is kept by many nations, political groups, military groups, and peoples. The theme of this year's commemoration is "Partnerships for Peace - Dignity for All" which aims to highlight the importance of all segments of society to work together to strive for peace.

The root causes of many conflicts are directly related to or fuelled by valuable natural resources, such as diamonds, gold, oil, timber or water. Addressing the ownership, control and management of natural resources is

crucial to maintaining security and restoring the economy in post-conflict countries. Good natural resource management can play a central role in building sustainable peace in post-conflict societies.

The International Day of Peace offers people globally a shared date to think about how, individually, they can contribute to ensuring that natural resources are managed in a sustainable manner, thus reducing potential for disputes, and paving the road to a sustainable future. Imagining durable peace in Afghanistan became a dilemma, facing almost continuous war for more than 30 years, first against the Soviet Union, then a civil war, and, at present, the Al-Qaida led insurgency against the United States and its allies, all of which have contributed to its status as one of the world's least developed nations. Security conditions in Afghanistan today remain a serious concern and could worsen as foreign troops depart. Afghans have watched civilian casualties steadily increase in recent years, and insurgent groups control many parts of the country. The United States has tried to encourage peace negotiations but is also operating on the assumption that the war will continue. Without the political conditions for peace in Afghanistan, economic development will be highly depressed. Most wars end through negotiated peace agreements rather than military victory. A peace accord would bring security and stability to the Afghan people, provided the insurgents agree on complete disarmament, pledging to abide by the constitution of Afghanistan and cordially admitting to the supremacy of law. Research shows that peace processes are most successful when they are comprehensive and inclusive, with strong international backing. The chance of success also improves when agreements are monitored and policed by all stake holders, oppositions, civil society and media personnel taken on board. This will require continued international involvement and support for Afghanistan, but with a greater focus on peacemaking instead of war-fighting. Politically stating, lessening national and international conflicts by persuasion, conciliation and arbitration, guarantees world peace to a greater degree. We have to be agents of change and ambassadors of good will. We should learn to live with our neighbors peacefully and do business with each other fairly and honestly.

History documents, the degree of repression accelerated where cowardice apathy prevailed indefinitely. Repression subsided not, continued instead wrenching the elements of peace, tranquility and concord, unless reciprocated iron handed. The reassurance of peaceful coexistence accredits the lengthened subsistence and stability of the state, the incumbent government of Afghanistan is blind to read, the ineffaceable lines of history. A state renders invincible, only when elements of peace and security draws substantial importance - maintenance of law and order secure top priority. Nevertheless, the government stuck to indifference on endless discriminate bloodletting intimate otherwise. When we start with doing well to other people, we can inspire others to do the same. If we expect peace to be omnipresent, we have to convert the dream of peaceful coexistence, into reality.

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Afghanistan as Bridge in Transferring ISIS to Central Asia

By Mahdi Munadi

Death of Mullah Omar, the leader of Taliban and possible increase of divergence among his followers, especially between Akhtar Mohammad and son of Mullah Omar and Mahaz Fadaiee; rapid growth of Islamic State in different provinces of Afghanistan and affiliation of local militants to the ISIS change the condition of Afghanistan and radical militants. In as much as local militants get more ISIS oriented, they tend to take the place of Taliban in Afghanistan. By increasing the power of ISIS, the scenario of ISIS transfer to Central Asia automatically gets stranger.

In a dominant scenario, ISIS will take the position of Taliban, but with a different approach in the region. Taliban have been concentrating on Afghanistan and been recruiting regional radicals into Afghanistan since 2001. There were about seven to nine thousand radicals from Xinjiang, Fergana Valley and Chechen fighting for Taliban. While ISIS with the goal of great Khorasan cannot concentrate only in Afghanistan, rather strategically will scatter its groups to the whole region and especially to the central Asia.

There are numerous militant groups which have been using the unstable condition of the country in favor of tribal and personal benefits. In many cases, these groups were working as soldiers or partners for Taliban, against Government. These groups, with the purpose of securing their region and obtaining money for keeping soldiers and their organization, were strategically cooperating with Taliban. With the emergence of ISIS as a rich and well-organized organization, a new opportunity has been provided for these local militants to replace weak Taliban to a new strong organizer and donor. Changing the white flag of Taliban to black flag in various districts of Afghanistan proves this claim. Joining Hekmatyar to the ISIS by asking his local militants to support ISIS in combating against Taliban will facilitate a new leadership under Hekmatyar. Hekmatyar due to his experiences with Mujahidin can play a serious role in organizing local militants.

On one hand, by increasing ISIS recruitments, the remaining leaders of Taliban get more concerned about losing their dominance and fighters. This process will lead to a new confrontation between Taliban and ISIS in near future. On the other hand, Taliban, by losing their power and fighters, will get more serious to participate in peace process. However Molla Akhtar Mohammad Mansor strategically denied peace process for the purpose of unifying Taliban on the basis of hostility with government and obtaining ISI support. By the way in a difficult scenario in long term, there will be peace between Taliban due to the exhaustion of Taliban fighter. Peace with the government will bring changes to the structure of power between ethnic groups inside Afghanistan. Taliban see a portion of power in government, which will reduce the ethnic portions of power, which is difficult for the other ethnic groups to accept. Overall, it is a difficult task for all sides to reach an agreement in peace process. In the long run, the remaining Taliban do not have any other choice except agreement in peace process. In a best-case scenario if Taliban change to Political and military government oriented wing, ISIS is forced to scatter in the region.

Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and the radical wing of Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan led by Sheriff Hemat Zade, the most important groups of this region, have the capacity to work with ISIS. Islamic Parties due to the non-Islamic policies of Tajikistan and the totalitarian policies, Karimov have facilitated the emergence of anti-structural groups which increases the possibility of their coordination with the radical parties and ISIS. This internal radical source inside Central Asia can easily be affiliated by the ISIS. Thus, Afghanistan's insecure areas which are widespread and culturally suitable to be used as soft and hard bridge for ISIS. ISIS can take this opportunity to transfer their weapons and forces and idea to different radical sources of region, especially to Fergana valley in Central Asia.

At the same time, Central Asian countries' relations, due to the water, border and ethnic problems, are mostly based on competition diplomacy. Competition between these countries not only prevents working together against terrorism, but sometimes they use radical groups against each other. Internal situation in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan is dangerous because of the low standards of living and education and distrust of the authorities. The only power capable to maintain security and peace in the region is a Russian-lead SCO military alliance, comprising Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Belarus with the support of China and Iran. China and Russia are connected with The Shanghai Cooperation Organization combating against terrorism, separatism and extremism. These organizations are not well organized in working together against Islamic State oriented militants in the region. However recent news on Russia's plan on fighting terrorism, might change the condition, but still we need time to that.

Although president of Turkmenistan had called ISIS as great fiction, currently, Radical militants have been preparing for an attack on Turkmenistan from two main directions: Murhaba and Amu-Darya. Advance from Murhaba direction threatens Galkinish and advance from Amu-Darya threatens the whole gas infrastructure of Turkmenistan supplying China, Bagtiryalyk field on the left bank of the Amu Darya and transitions across the river. Probably, Islamic State does not have plans for full scale intervention because of the complicated situation in their home front in Afghanistan. However, territory of Turkmenistan will be systematically hit by break-ins. These circumstances will probably stop developing of TAPI and TUKC gas projects.

Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan will be at risk. The most possible actions of militants for Tajikistan are taking of Badakhshan, attack on Horog, intervention into Hatlon region, taking of border settlements and raids on Kurgan-Tube. Also, there is capacity of movement into Kyrgyzstan by Tahar-Tavildara-Garm direction. The one more opportunity for militants is to exercise mass disturbances and establish an independent Islamic State in Badakhshan. May be IS starts water blockade of Turkmenistan by attacking on Karakum channel. These threats can affect Central Asia from Afghanistan. Hereby if these countries do not work with Afghanistan government to defeat Islamic State, insecure places and the militants in this country will play a threatening role in creating a bridge to transfer Islamic State to Central Asia.

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