

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



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## Controlling the Crimes

Currently, Afghanistan is suffering from myriads of problems and among them the rising rate of crimes is a dominant one. The persistent insecurity and instability have provided the opportunity to the criminals to take full advantage. Moreover, the prevailing circumstances - the snowballing poverty and unemployment, growing injustice and unreliable law and order system - are further pushing the people towards crimes and corruption. It is always important to see that there is a prominent link between poverty and crimes. There are many people who commit crimes only because they are not able to feed their families or they are capable of fulfilling the ever-growing necessities of life.

The important point is to realize that though poverty is one of the basic reasons of why people commit crimes, it is not the only reason. It can be observed that the criminals are mostly rich and have connections with authoritative people in the society. Moreover, there are criminals among the ruling elite and they commit huge crimes and never brought to justice.

Thus, there are different reasons behind the crimes that are committed within a society and they are not always evident to us. What is evident is the outcome of the crimes as it directly influences the people. Whether there is a murder, robbery or a kidnapping, the effect is very direct and can be felt by the victims, their relatives and other people who come across those crimes. These impacts of the crimes disturb the normal social life and may prove to be a ripple that can generate more crimes and disturbances within the society. Therefore, it is important to safeguard the society from these influences and control the crimes in the best possible manner.

Two types of strategies can be effective in this regard - short term and long-term strategies. 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 Women - The Nation's Flag-bearers

By Hujjatullah Zia

Women played a constructive role in the community and the names of heroines are recorded in the history for their active role and heroic acts. Women supported men during wars and heartened them to fight for the protection of their national values and human dignity at the cost of their lives. Although the patriarchal system and parochial mindsets, which are deeply embedded in Afghans' culture, restricted the women's role and marginalized them from social and political activities, the prominent role of women is undeniable.

The 18-year-old Afghan national heroine Malalai of Maiwand - who rallied local people fighters against the British troops in 1880 Battle of Maiwand led by Muhammad Ayyob Khan - will be kept alive in the heart of our history. Sustaining heavy casualties by British forces, Afghan fighters lost their morale and Afghan flag-bearer was also killed. Malalai took the flag and recited patriotic poetry which prompted Afghans not to abandon the battle. Her blood was also spilled in the battlefield - the blood of an Afghan woman reddened the country's soil for its protection. The blood of woman shed in the battlefield? Incredible!

Yes, she was the woman who sought to be the flag-bearer of her nation. Afghan women are not afraid of death the same as men when national values are vulnerable to harm or erosion. In the 1879 war against the British forces in Kabul, four hundred women supported men in bringing them food and drink and 43 women, out of four hundred, were killed. In the meantime, the love story of Abdullah and Zahra circulated. The two lovers had a matrimonial ceremony and henna party - in which the hands of bride and groom were hennaed. Zahra said, with sneer, that Afghan men had gone to battlefield for Jihad and Abdullah was celebrating his henna party. Abdullah confirmed her statement and left the party for the battlefield. The next day, the dead body of Abdullah was brought and laid before his only old mother. Zahra, his fiancée, gave Abdullah's hennaed finger a kiss. Condoling to Abdullah's mother, Zahra said that she would be as her daughter and stay with her for the whole life, due to Abdullah's selfless act, without marrying anyone else and she did so.

Moreover, women, including Queen Soraya Tarzi, took active part in social and cultural arenas during Amanullah Khan's regime and ran the Ershad Neswan Journal (1922). In a gathering, when Soraya talked about the development and progressive movement of women around the world and regressive movement of Afghan women, women shed bitter tears and 50 women volunteered, forthwith, to engage in educational activities and founding the first female school (Mastoorat School).

It is worth mentioning that the reformations of King Amanullah Khan passed two periods: The first stage (1919 - 1924) was

highly fruitful despite reactionary powers and foreign plots. However the second stage, which reached its peak in 1927, came to a standstill. Afghan nation welcomed the reformation with open arm and never protested against modernization and progressive movement - the rumors, suggesting that Afghans are against modernization and progress, reflect the nation negatively. The main reason behind public protest against Amanullah's regime is believed to be his men who, lately, resorted to violence and corruption. The public discontent paved the way for Amanullah's political opponents fish in troubled waters.

Therefore, they muddied the issue through spreading propaganda against his regime and urged the so-called clergy to condemn the reformation via issuing religious decree. Moreover, Soraya's half-naked photos were designed and spread among the people stating that she presented the same on her trip to Europe - these bogus claims were made to cause a sensation against Amanullah's regime and his reformation. The poisonous propaganda and officials' cruelty triggered insurgency and brought the reformation to a standstill. Subsequently, a Jirga (Assembly) was held in Paghman (1924) in which women were restricted within four walls and banned from going to school, marrying underage girls were allowed, etc. So, women's rights and freedoms were curtailed under religious terms - it was a blow to reformation and democratic movements and women took the brunt of this harm.

Following this issue, Afghan women were marginalized and confined within the patriarchal system.

They were discriminated on the grounds of their sex and had to wear burqa while presenting in public. The parochial mindsets of the reactionaries narrowed the cultural restrictions regarding women and deemed them as inferior creature. To women's unmitigated chagrin, their social, cultural and political role declined. The restrictions continued after the downfall of Amanullah's regime.

Moreover, the Taliban regime also treated women as an inferior creature and imposed strict rules on them. Afghan women had to wear burqa (a head-to-toe covering for women) and were not allowed to present in public without chaperon. Encountering with the radical ideology of dictatorial regimes and their discriminatory rules, Afghan women were marginalized and many took the desires of being the nation's flag-bearer to the grave with them. Currently, although Afghan women play active part in social and political ground, the Taliban fighters still pose threat to them and spill their blood to deter them and impose their ideology on them. It is hoped that Afghan women will be able to exercise their rights and freedoms under the nascent democracy and the state will have to empower them and protect their life and liberty.

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## Europe's Leadership Crisis

By Guy Verhofstadt

The European Union's list of crises keeps growing. But, beyond the United Kingdom's "Brexit" vote to leave the bloc, Poland's constitutional-court imbroglio, Russian expansionism, migrants and refugees, and resurgent nationalism, the greatest threat to the EU comes from within: a crisis of political leadership is paralyzing its institutions.

As if to prove the point, EU member states' leaders (with the exception of UK Prime Minister Theresa May) met recently in Bratislava, Slovakia, in an attempt to demonstrate solidarity, and to kick-start the post-Brexit reform process. The attendees made some progress toward creating a European Defense Union, which should be welcomed, and toward admitting that the EU's current organizational framework is unsustainable; but there was scant talk of meaningful institutional or economic reform.

Meanwhile, Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi's refusal, at the close of the summit, to appear onstage with French President François Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel all but confirmed fears that rudderless leadership is fueling institutional dysfunction. A summit that was supposed to be a display of unity revealed only further division.

EU leaders must take responsibility for this latest failure. For starters, they must stop issuing empty declarations. The EU's institutional impotence is apparent, especially to its enemies. So now it faces a stark choice: a leap forward toward unification or inevitable disintegration.

Few Europeans want to make that choice. Many politicians are afraid of paying a high domestic political price for pursuing an agenda of EU reform. They argue that pushing for further integration in the current political climate is reckless, and that the EU should focus on doing less, better.

But that is a false trade-off. The EU could build a more integrated economic-governance model to increase investment and create jobs, while at the same time streamlining its operations to address common complaints about red tape and dysfunction.

Few European leaders seem to understand that the real risk to the EU - and to their own political futures - is the status quo. And with populist movements across Europe pummeling traditional parties in the polls, the window for delivering real change is quickly closing.

It does not have to be this way. Too many leaders are paying lip service to domestic nationalists and populists, mistakenly thinking that this will preserve their domestic poll ratings, when they should be showing genuine leadership and fighting for the common good.

Upcoming national elections in France and Germany will be bellwethers for the future of European leadership. In recent German state elections, Merkel's Christian Democratic Union

and its government partner, the Social Democratic Party, experienced notable losses, which could mean that Germany's grand coalition is at risk ahead of next year's election. Meanwhile, support for the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) continues to grow.

Merkel has two choices: She can move to the right, as former French President Nicolas Sarkozy has done in his latest bid for the French presidency, or she can fight to hold the center by addressing the AfD's simplistic arguments head on. The choice is clear: Merkel should stand and fight, while also advancing an alternative vision for modernizing the EU.

Defeating populism will require leaders to acknowledge the people left behind as a result of globalization, but also to dispel the myth that there is a quick fix, or that globalization can simply be reversed. Contrary to populist arguments, protectionism will not reduce youth unemployment or income inequality. If EU countries reject trade deals currently under discussion, including the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership and the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, the EU's share of world trade will decrease, and the European economy will suffer for it. Likewise, if the eurozone fails to integrate further by strengthening its economic-governance structures, Europe's ongoing financial crisis will only continue, impeding social mobility and undermining social justice. It is time for EU leaders to make these arguments more effectively.

Across the West, the 2008 financial crisis triggered a political fight that is still in progress. It has changed from a battle for accountability and reform to a clash between visions of open and closed societies, between a global consensus and policies still operating at the national, local, or even tribal level.

If the EU is going to quell the revolt against globalization, free trade, and open societies, it will need more leaders and fewer managers. European leaders, frankly, should know better than to blame EU institutions, hypothetical trade deals, and refugees for their own failures to tackle unemployment and reduce inequality. The EU's current crisis-management playbook is running out of pages. We in Europe can either put our heads in the sand while the European project slowly dies, or we can use this crisis to start a new project of renewal and reform.

Here, too, the right choice is clear: EU leaders should offer Europeans a new social contract, based on the understanding that people's legitimate fears about globalization should be met with a collective, progressive European response.

The EU has been a major force behind globalization, and only the EU has the power to help manage the consequences. European leaders must explain to their voters why nationalism cannot. (Courtesy Project Syndicate)

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