

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



September 27, 2015

## Accountability in a Democratic System

One of the key requirements of good governance is accountability. Not only governmental institutions but also the private sector and civil society organizations must be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders. The institutions in Afghanistan, on the other hand, have lacked this basic factor which has resulted in uncontrolled corruption and mismanagement. Therefore, it can be easily observed that billions of dollars have been spent for the development of the country yet the country is not able to develop as much as it could. As a matter of fact accountability can be achieved when there is transparency and the rule of law.

In a democratic country the ultimate authority lies within the people. And ultimately, the government is answerable to the people. Moreover, to guarantee such accountability the modern states have established and strengthened their political systems in such a way that people have most of the power, though indirectly. However, in our country, Afghanistan, which claims to be democratic, the people are suffering because of the lack of any sort of accountability of the government and the deprivation of participation in the affairs of the state. One of the basic ways the people can participate in the affairs of the state is through elections. Well-established and developed election systems can provide opportunities to all the members of the society to cast their votes and have their say in the making of the government. However, in Afghanistan this basic institution of democracy has not been able to function appropriately.

The proper and well-developed election process can play an important role in creating accountable government. A political party or a politician in order to be elected by the votes of the people tries to perform properly so that it gets chance of remaining in authority for a longer period of time. If the political parties and the contestants in the elections come to know that they can win the election even without the consent of the people, through illegal ways, they will never remain accountable to the people and would not care much about the public opinion. Afghan political scenario, at the moment, is facing almost a similar sort of situation.

Another issue of unaccountability arises when a system is made personality-oriented, wherein the individuals are prioritized on the basis of their actual or assumed personality traits. This property is mostly found in dictatorial and authoritarian forms of government. Such ideologies are basically the remnants of the monarchies that could be found long ago in human history.

The institutions, which can play a dominant role in establishing democratic culture and accountable system, are underestimated and even ignored in such systems. Our country Afghanistan happens to be a similar country. The democratic institutions are ignored to a great extent while the political system circulates around the personalities. Even the election system is designed in such a way that promotes personality-worship. The absence of political parties and their influence within election system have made many overlook the importance of political parties which happen to be very important institution for the growth and institutionalization of democracy.

It is necessary for accountability that not only governmental institutions but also the private sector and civil society organizations must be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders. Afghan government, on the other hand, has been formed in such a way that it is difficult to hold the government accountable for its policies and actions. As a matter of fact accountability can be achieved when there is transparency and the rule of law. However, both these characteristics seem to be non-existent in Afghan society. Transparency and rule of law can be maintained when there is proper separation of power and the different organs of state can function on their own - independently. In fact, judiciary and law enforcement agencies must be capable to hold the law as the top priority matter. In Afghan political system the separation of powers is not clear and the judiciary is composed of what the government decides.

Moreover, the powerful and the rich are mostly considered above the law and the poor and weak have to go through the 'quagmire of law and order system'. The present rise in corruption, which is now turning out of control, is because of the same fact that the powerful are not made accountable to the rule of law.

A thorough analysis of Afghanistan's political scenario will depict that currently the political processes are also being kept aloof of accountability along with the institutions. The current efforts for the reconciliation and reintegration processes are very much non-participatory and non-transparent. As the major stakeholders are being kept away from the processes, a sort of ambiguity and distrust is being generated within different circles and the people of Afghanistan. Moreover, there is a disadvantage of such an approach as well - it is likely to result in improper and incomplete outcomes of the processes, which will further generate controversies.

Afghan authorities have in fact kept on striving to limit the power and authority to themselves and, on certain occasions, have used the same irresponsibly. The need of time is to make the political institutions and processes accountable to the people through proper democratization of the political structure.

## The Changing Nature of a Political System

By Dilawar Sherzai

A political system is established within a state so as to safeguard the rights of its people and solve the socio-political issues that may hamper the better life opportunities. If a system fulfills the challenges and solves the problems that may erupt within a state, the system is said to be an ideal system. However, it is not possible to have an ideal system in practice but something near it may be achieved with the help of political prudence and continuous efforts. Moreover, it must never be forgotten that a political setup is a dynamic phenomenon; there have to be changes within the system so as to compensate for the ever-changing nature of human society. From the very earlier states the nature of political systems was not the same as they are today. Throughout the history of statehood, human beings have experienced different sorts of systems and setups. From monarchy to today's modern democracy, there have been myriads of political systems and political practices. The only common thing among them is that they keep on changing. Though some may take a longer time to change but ultimately they have to change as they do not have any other option.

There may be various reasons of changes within a political system. One of the basic reasons is that the human societies evolve, giving birth to new changes which give rise to new challenges. To overcome those changes the systems have to introduce changes. The need for changes may also arise when the system is not on the track to stability and fails to address the basic problems of the people. In other words it can be said that the perceived dissatisfaction from a system is directly proportional to the demands in change. The great political and social changes in the history of mankind have their roots in the same phenomenon. It can also be said that the standard of living of the subjects and their perceived satisfaction of socio-political scenario is one of the best ways of gauging the effectiveness of a political system.

There are two ways of introducing changes within a system. The first one is through amendments, i.e. bringing about necessary changes within the present system while keeping the basic nature of the system intact. Most of the changes within democratic systems take place through the same process. One of the qualities of democratic systems is that they keep on inviting changes. Moreover the democratic system proceeds in such a way that the changes become inevitable. The example of elections within a democracy is one of the most important processes in this regard. The elections guarantee government change after every specific period of time. If elections are held regularly the system keeps on moving ahead.

On the other hand, there can be changes within the overall system that actually tend to change the basic nature of the system. Such a change is basically referred to as a 'system change' and is brought about by a revolution or a military coup. For example, if a system changes from a

democracy to a dictatorship or from Capitalism to Socialism, it will be a 'system change'. The change in system becomes inevitable when all the possibilities of changes within a system are lost. The people start suffocating so much that they start demanding for a change in the entire system. Meanwhile, it should be mentioned that most of the revolutions are not very much peaceful and they involve blood-shed.

Amendments within a system are very much normal and there should not be a very strict stand on these sort of changes within a system because it would bring a society to a halt and would hamper its natural growth. Moreover, a democratic system is always a dynamic system and keeps on checking the possibilities of positive changes. It is the characteristic of a dictatorial government that dislikes changes and strives to maintain the status quo. The dictatorial systems are also characterized by being personality centered. The changes within the system are highly dependent on the personality of the ruler. Moreover, as there is no concept of regular elections in most of the dictatorial systems they do not guarantee frequent changes and the rule of the leader may last for many years.

The great democracies in the world have acquired their mature systems after many years of evolution. Changing from very immature and preliminary stages they have reached to today's position where they have been able to address most of the problems of their people. Their example is great guidance for the authorities in our country if they are really interested in establishing a strong political system and a reliable infra-structure upon which the future political setup can be built. Nevertheless, for that they have to give a great sacrifice and that is the sacrifice of their personal gains for the betterment of the majority of the people.

Currently, Afghan political setup does not seem to be compensating for the growing demands of time and has basic problems that do not let the system represent all the people within the Afghan society appropriately, especially the poor masses. At the same time, the current setup does not let the people out of troubles that they face. No doubt, we cannot expect Afghanistan to have a well-developed system as the democratic history in Afghanistan is very short, yet it must never be forgotten that in order to have a better system, changes have to be brought continuously as per the demands. There are many concerns about the political development in Afghanistan; the most important among them is the development of political institutions. Afghanistan, in this regard, has been suffering much. The Afghan society is basically a very diverse society; people from different ethnic backgrounds live here. A democratic system, truly representing people is best suited for the country; however, the development of political institutions is pivotal in this regard. In great modern democracies, it is the well-established democracies that run the state, establish order and provide the people their basic requirements. Afghan politicians, political parties and civil society members can all work together to guide the country towards the same sort of democracy; all they require is commitment and dedication.

*Dilawar Sherzai is the permanent writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan. He can be reached at email.urya@gmail.com*

## Making Persuasive Transfer of Idea Possible

By Asmatyari

Man is entitled to be a social animal, not because of his ability to socialize but because of his aptitude to sense other's need based sentiment, properly coordinate other fellow being. He might have considered the superficial agents entailing the unmet needs of man, serving as a social bond for co-existence. Nevertheless, the supporting element overshadowing the de-facto communication being the tool of tongue and beauty of minds that relentlessly feeds it for making a heartening and ear-catching communication. Handsome is he, who owes a beautiful mind associated with lenient communication skills. The vital source of diplomacy and individual's universal fame and acceptance rests on his capabilities; turning the inexplicable into homogenized and mind-blowing idea subsequent to, scattered facts converged and the sole plan diverged.

The success of an endeavor hinges on the ability to communicate effectively in today's fast paced life, everyone is asked to do more with less. In such a scenario effective communication holds the key tool. Effective communication centers round the usage of words, speed of delivery of words, pitch modulation and body language. Using the right tools to communicate the right messages at the right time can salvage crises and motivate people to work towards success. Truly said, communication works but for those who work at it.

People in organizations usually spend 75 percent of their daily time on communication through writing, reading, listening, speaking, inter-debate etc. Effective communication is an essential component for organization success, whether it is the interpersonal intra group organization or external levels. Communication skills are as important as technical qualifications for youngsters aiming at a bright career. Poor communication skills, low confidence levels and improper body language have resulted out in the job race. The person recruited will have to deal with the global clients directly. The command over the language and accent neutralization also plays a vital role in the recruitment process. The importance of communication skills exists because without communication no real or effective work could ever be carried out.

So, the importance of communication skills in a business is to promote more effective business practices and allow individuals within the organization to feel comfortable communicating with others and to feel informed with the information they are receiving. By recognizing the importance of communication skills and implementing them in daily life will perform better because everyone will know what is expected and how to perform.

Better relationships between one's family, friends, and spouse will result from good communication as well. When one effectively convey feelings and listen to the feelings of others then there will be good communication improvement skills. This al-

lows people to feel closer to other and to feel as if they know what other want and don't want. As a result of communication improvement skills there will be better relationships among people. Effective communication skills are very important in all aspects of life, be it work or in relationships. People in organizations typically spend a major part of their time in interacting with people. Thus it is no surprise to find that at the root of a large number of organizational problems is poor communications. This is most obvious in cross-cultural situations where language is an issue. But it is also common among people of the same culture. Also in developing social relationships, communication skills are of utmost importance. Proper communication skills help people in understanding each other and work together towards a goal.

Often a person wants to say something but communicates something totally different through vocal intonation and body language. These mixed signals force the receiver to choose between the verbal and nonverbal parts of the message, which may not help to get ones message across to that individual because most often, the receiver chooses the nonverbal aspects. Mixed messages create tension and distrust because the receiver senses that the communicator is hiding something or is being less than candid. Thus one must understand that communication skills are not only important to develop an impression on the other person and get the required work done, but also to not get a bad idea about themselves in society.

There are a number of situations when you need to solicit good information from others; these situations include interrogating candidates, solving work problems, seeking to help an employee on work performance, and finding out reasons for performance discrepancies at work. In society it helps in judging an individual's ability to communicate with people from diverse backgrounds.

As you can see it is very important in every aspect of life to have good and effective communication. There is no reason why one should not focus every ounce of energy on communication improvement skills. Communication skills will be around us forever and will continue to thrive and develop as time goes by. These effects on communication skills showed that one can interpret different things through one's communication skills. As one improves their communication skills it shows us how to talk, listen and communicate better with one another. As the world progresses we will see more people taking more time to develop this skill to their fullest. As an appealing communication plays indispensable role in bridging the distant, desperate and disheartened souls whilst laying the foundation stone of an effective and sustainable human bonds; the eternal demand of human civilization. Communication is an important facet of life. Persuasive communication skills are essential in all spheres of life. Be it an interview or dealing with the project leader or working out a solution with a team or writing a report, getting across the point effectively is what matters.

*Asmatyari is 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.*