

THE KABUL TIMES

Farid Ahmad Fahang, Director of Govt. Dailies

Mob: 0704008080

Editor-in-Chief: Hamidullah Arefi

Mob: 0700163868, 020-230,1766

E-mail: Hamidullah_arefi@yahoo.com

Deputy Editor-in-Chief: Fahuhari Akbar

Mob: 0707005865-0202501767

Graphic designers: Edris Akhary and Bakhtash Shaibani

Distribution: 2300387 - 0798531513

Address: 2nd Floor, Liberty Printing Press Building
2nd Microway, Kabul, Afghanistan

Editorial

Int'l community's supportive role vital in Afghan peace process

Peace has remained elusive in Afghanistan and all efforts made in this regard came to a stalemate. Several countries and institutions made efforts with the hope of replacing war with political discourse and peace, but the war continued unabated.

President Ghani's call for ceasefire during Eid al-Fitr days signalled a new hope for peace, as thousands of Taliban fighters came to major cities and celebrated the Eid days together with Afghan soldiers and the people. The government has also been planning to announce another ceasefire in the coming Eid days.

Meanwhile, media reports suggest that Taliban has confirmed it held direct talks with the United States in Qatar this week on finding a negotiated end to the 17-year war in Afghanistan. A senior Taliban official told VOA that Alice Wells, the State Department's deputy assistant secretary for South and Central Asia, led the American delegation in the meeting in Doha.

The insurgents official, speaking on condition of anonymity explained the "preliminary" dialogue focused merely on "laying the groundwork for future contacts and meetings" between the Taliban and the U.S.

"The United States is exploring all avenues to advance a peace process in close consultation with the Afghan government," said the State Department official to VOA when asked for a reaction to reports of talks with the Taliban. The official made it clear that the Afghan government was fully involved in the effort to jump-start peace talks. "Any negotiations over the political future of Afghanistan will be held between the Taliban and Afghan government," said the State Department official.

Meanwhile Afghan presidential spokesperson in Kabul while responding about the talks in Qatar said her government would welcome any step that would restore peace in the country. Dauran Waziri emphasized, however, that foreigners are playing "a supportive role to facilitate the peace process but Afghans themselves will lead it."

The international community's cooperation is vital for boosting the peace process. Meanwhile regional powers, especially Afghanistan's close neighbors, have influence over the Taliban, they can convince the Taliban leaders to sit down with the government of Afghanistan to reach an agreement on ending the war in their country. No direct negotiations with others to bring positive results on the ongoing war in the country if the government of Afghanistan is not involved in the process.

Considering the temporary ceasefire in the country which was an Afghan-led and owned initiative, Taliban can hold direct talks with the elected and legitimate government of Afghanistan and put end to the ongoing bloodshed and violence in the country that only take lives of the innocent Afghan masses.

It is worth to mention that the region should acknowledge the Afghan-owned nature of the peace process and support the process for the sake of stability and peace in itself too.

It is in the interest of countries in the region to have their supportive role and do their best to stop the conflicts in Afghanistan, otherwise it could spread to neighboring countries and eventually destabilize the entire region.

Political coalitions should have plans to end Afghanistan problems

A new political coalition was formed and declared as "Grand National Coalition of Afghanistan," which was their goal to address current crisis in the country.

In the past two days, declaration of the new political coalition has been widely reflected in media. Afghanistan government is a statement has welcomed coalition of new political coalition but said: "National Unity Government will come programmatic approach to negotiations and plans by political parties, coalition and civil society provided they're in accordance to the laws and wishes of the Afghan people."

But, a number of political experts and representatives of people in parliament in their interviews with The Kabul Times correspondent expressed their vision over formation of the new coalition.

"These coalitions have been formed for particular goals and not aim to get power and

position," an Afghan political expert Jamal Farahmand said. He said people of Afghanistan have experienced of such political coalitions and parties as these coalitions have had no plans and programs for Afghanistan.

He added that most of political parties in Afghanistan were thinking of their interests rather than national interest; therefore, they did not last long and disintegrated after facing with differences.

Farahmand believes if the new political coalition really want to stop current state of the system, with close cooperation and coordination of the government they should also mechanisms that will be constructive for addressing current challenges in Afghanistan.

On the other hand, a representative of people in parliament Hekmatullah welcomed formation of the new coalition in Afghanistan said: "cre-

ation of political coalitions could exert pressure on the government to change its agenda and address national demands of Afghanistan people."

"On the threshold of parliamentary elections, political parties and coalition can have effective role in the country's election process and the Afghan people are expecting the formed coalition to work effectively for solution of Afghanistan problems," Hamidullah said.

Sayed Hassan Mawasi, another Afghan political expert, said that no opposition groups have been able to last longer as there was no coordination among them, but now they should learn from past and should make effort to last longer or work for addressing the demands of Afghanistan people.

"The people of Afghanistan hope that the new coalition should have constructive plans and programs to address problems of the people, otherwise, they won't last longer," he added.

Over 12m people being smuggled annually: UN

July 30 in the World Day against trafficking in Persons which is an ugly phenomenon that has been painfully increasing in our country and recognized as the biggest crime in current circumstances. This phenomenon leaves families in the mourn of the children with unknown awaiting.

Human trafficking includes export, import, legal or illegal transfer of people on borders, complicity or to threatening, deceits, kidnapping, abuse of power, use of weakness of victims to compulsory work, slavery etc. These incidents appear beyond social events like violence, increasing poverty, destitution. Every year tens of

thousands of people leave the country illegally through illegal smuggling and kidnaping and most of them have been abused.

According to UN report, every year, over 12 million people are being smuggled for different purposes on the earth and the criminals earn over US\$ 3.9 billion annually.

According to experts, there is a difference between human trafficking and kidnaping. Smuggling could be called kidnap but legally kidnapping cannot be called smuggling.

The Afghan government has signed the UN charter, international treaties and IOM

and takes steps accordingly. The law on fight against human smuggling and kidnaping has been enforced by a presidential decree to prevent smuggling of youth and teenagers.

UN reports show that due to illegal migrations through sea, large number of illegal migrants including Afghans were drowned that included children too and caused great casualties.

The UNSC asked the countries who have border with Mediterranean Sea to find legal ways for applicant migrants and prevent human catastrophe.

Some families hand over their children to human traffickers to rescue them from wars and insecurity.

The Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled have adopted preventive measures against human trafficking and established special control branches on borders and customs. Despite of certain efforts by concerned authorities, due to necessity in the country, this crime has been going on.

If there are security and employment opportunities in the country, no doubt human trafficking would also decrease.

Lahamu Noori



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