Role of higher education in peace-building and strengthening national institutions

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Abstract

Socrates believes that goodness and truth, positive essences and pure ethical and moral instincts are placed there divinely in the soul. However, they are not brought to consciousness unless they are awakened or learned. Therefore, consensus on the important things in life is just below the surface waiting to be acknowledged. It is the destiny of mankind to seek out virtue such as courage and self-control, or propriety over the desires of ambitions or emotions that cloud the quest for truth. The concept of ignorance is what stands in the way of consensus, and that once one realizes that he does not know, a change in any disagreement can occur. (www.san.beck.org).

Ignorance, as opposed to knowledge, is invariably found at the root of every problem; though it might not be sole cause, yet it is a major contributor. From the journey of discovering one's own potential to the awareness of one's rights and privileges, knowledge plays a vital role. Formal education is necessary for the acquisition of authentic and useful knowledge. It can, then, be said that education has a foremost role in shaping civilized and peaceful societies. Higher education, besides providing solid platform for professional life, helps build positive mindset, brings in rationality and balanced thought, breeds reason and logic instead of asserting one's

point of view, enables one to appreciate and observe moral and cultural values, and on top of it all lets sanity prevail in all spheres of decision-making.

Pakistan is a case in point, where even after sixty years of independence the official literacy rate is 54%. It is pertinent to note that a person is said to be literate if he/she could read or write his/her name. For all practical purposes, this rate does not indicate that 54% of the population is educated or is aware of its rights or could discover its real potential. Successive martial laws, basic rights violations, state anarchy, ethnic violence, religious intolerance, corruption, crime, and the latest being terrorism are some serious repercussions of putting aside education from the agenda. In the latest survey by Transparency International, Pakistan is amongst top ten most corrupt countries and has been rated in the bottom ten in Human Development Index. It has also adversely faired on economic fronts; the official per capita income is US $ 925 and that too with food inflation in double figures, depicting poverty level. Nearly half of the population lives below the poverty line. Spending on education has now reached to only 2.42% of real GDP. Less than 2% of population land into higher education. With this state of affairs Pakistan is fast losing its sovereignty and label of 'terrorism' has been permanently tagged to it. Lately, the way judiciary has been sent home by the President is unheard of in any decent society. Lawyers and students of Higher Education Institutions were the only protesters; they are educated and could assess real motives of government in sacking the judiciary and they also know that proclamation of emergency by the government was illegal. Since the totalitarian rule did not give way to any kind of negotiations, there was no chance for reconciliation process to begin. However, it may be inferred that with the education level of Pakistan, probably the nation is destined for such kind of totalitarian rules. Recent assassination of former Prime Minister and public reaction in damaging national assets speaks volumes about state of affairs in the country.

At micro-level, we see that in rural areas where landlords-cum-politicians have virtually ruled, education level is the lowest. Tribal elders intentionally discouraged education lest any ordinary educated citizen should challenge their self-acquired authority. This is the general state of affairs in three out of four provinces of Pakistan. Consequently crime grew, sanity and wisdom gave way to fight and terrorism.

Compared to this urban areas where colleges and universities are concentrated are peaceful and civilized, though the migration from rural to urban areas brought crime and anarchy. Religious seminaries, which are now accused of breeding 'terrorism' are still not comfortable with modern education. Eventually the products of these seminaries do not get regular or decent professional jobs, and thus are pushed towards crime and terror. North Waziristan, which is labeled as hub of terrorist activities, is a tribal area where female education is forcibly shunned and male are equally uneducated. Although it is a complex situation which finds its roots in the times of Russian invasion on Afghanistan when USA and Pakistan were supporting Taliban to counter Russian advances, yet importance of education cannot be denied. Education brings in sanity, wisdom and reason which form basis of any civilized and peaceful society. Punjab is comparatively better both socially and economically as access to basic education and higher education is relatively easier.

India, like Pakistan, has problems of law and order, ethnicity, corruption, terrorism and intolerance but the intensity is lower. Over the years India has improved its educational infrastructure; higher education has improved, contributing to industrial progress; so one can see better management at national level, however, peace building and reconciliatory processes have not matured in India as yet. In contrast, South Korea, Malaysia and Singapore have emerged as 'tiger economies' in the region. Much of the progress is attributed to education. As a result crime, anarchy, intolerance, ethnicity is very low in these countries. People are aware of their rights and are law-abiding citizens. Higher education has contributed a lot in shaping these societies. Undue exploitation by the Governments and by the public is minimal. Violence is negligible. Europe and USA are much better off so far as general law and order, crime rate, corruption, ethnicity and terrorism are concerned. Prime reason is education; access to basic and higher education is much easier and cheaper in these developed nations; as a result general public is saner, wiser and reasonable in their actions and attitudes. Public cannot be fooled or hoodwinked by the Governments. Public protests are peaceful and effective. An ordinary voter in USA or Europe is much more educated, aware and mature as compared to a voter in Pakistan who could be a selling commodity. In Pakistan ignorant and uneducated are still the real voters as

they are larger in number and their loyalties could be bent anyway, compared to educated voters who are fewer in number and would like to see and discuss objectives of political parties.

This paper depicts real case of Pakistan where lack of education has contributed to most of the social and economic ills. A comparison is then made with developed countries where masses are much more educated and aware of their rights. The paper argues that higher education shall be the most important tool to evolve and establish state institutions on sound footings; though it is a lengthy process, yet time is over for short-cuts and stop-gap arrangements.

Introduction:

The paper provides a qualitative overview of the Role of Higher Education in Peace-building processes and strengthening national institutions. Study is based upon historical facts, current scenarios, ideas and experiences of opinion leaders and renowned world forums like UNESCO. Pakistan has been made focus of the study. An effort has been made to establish that today world is encountering threat to human security despite having made technological advancement, and that this can be dealt with peace-building through education. Of course it is a time-taking process but probably a sound way of cultivating 'Wisdom' and harvesting 'Peace'. It is also pertinent to mention that education is only one input to peace-building processes, others may be political, social, economic, cultural and/or psychological. However, education is certainly at the center point. It has far reaching impact on every aspect of human life.

The methodology involved in this study is critical analysis of situation in historical perspective, with a special focus on post 9/11 period. How education can help promote peace and thereby strengthen national institutions is dealt with in detail. It would not have been possible to avoid political developments, although this remains beyond the scope of this study, a brief account and analysis of socio-political dynamics has been given for the purpose of clarity. The study definitely dwells upon an idealistic approach but it also caters for ground realities. Significance of higher education, its role

in conflict resolution and management in the context of globalization and in the wake of 'terrorism', and its long term effects is the main focus.

Case of Pakistan is discussed specifically as it is at the center stage of 'war on terror'; geographically, our part of the world has remained special focus of super powers. Suicide bombing is a potential threat to human security and the way it is being dealt with is our major concern. It been some years now that the war on terror has been declared on an 'invisible' enemy but the threat has not subsided. Loss of life and property in Pakistan is on the increase. The way this war is being fought is becoming highly controversial. At this point education for conflict resolution and management may seem to be superfluous solution but there is no denying the fact that this seed has to be sown immediately to protect our next generations from the plague of terrorism. Any wise person, regardless of religious beliefs and feelings, would never want to kill fellow humans until and unless he feels life threat from challenger. Over here we are dealing with an explosive situation which on one end has a super power and on the other individuals who think that they are sacrificing their lives for the sake of religion and do not care even if innocent humans come their way. It seems that conventional warfare has failed to tackle this menace. Minds have to be transformed, ideologies need to be clarified and peace has to be inculcated on one side and on the other the sole super power has to be restrained from taking unilateral actions of disturbing sovereignty and integrity of free nations.

Historical perspective:

In this era of technological advancement, globalization and economic warfare, higher education has assumed a pivotal role, without which wheels of economy may get permanently stuck. World Wars I and II were largely fought on military strengths, relying heavily on weapons of warfare. American economy got much of the boost in Second World War through its thronging weapons industry; and from then on US economy made progress by leaps and bounds. It was not by chance that military industry grew manifold during the years of WW-II. Research and Development in warfare weaponry played a vital role. Academia worked in close liaison with industry and worked wonders. Post WW-II era, popularly termed as cold war period saw intense

technological development in USSR, USA and Western Europe. USA built its supremacy in space technology and emerged as the sole super power, especially after disintegration of USSR. Last decade of twentieth century witnessed shift from military build-up to creation of economic hegemonies by capturing international business markets. US invasion on Afghanistan, though under the garb of 'war on terror', was seen by many political analysts as an effort to reach warm waters of Arabian Sea and exploit rich natural resources of Central Asian States. It is also widely believed that Iraq was invaded for 'oil'. It can then be said that economic compulsions are main driving forces in the highest echelons of policy making. Globalization has provided further impetus to economic race. Geographical boundaries have virtually become porous in the wake of globalization. Local markets are fast turning to be international markets. Protective tariffs, which once were used to protect indigenous products from the imported ones, are diminishing fast. WTO regime is a case in point.

Globalization and Economic warfare owe, largely, to the technological advancement. The socio-political dynamics of modern world are controlled by technological imperatives. Most of the developing countries, though sovereign, are in fact 'controlled' by those providing them financial or military assistance. South American countries and Pakistan are cases in point. Pakistan has been dragged into 'war on terror' by a popular call known as 'either you support us in Afghanistan or face our attack'. Having no choice, Pakistan chose to support the big brother and is eventually embroiled in such a mess that it seems impossible to get out of it. The idea is not to condemn somebody or start blame game, as any one country enjoying the present powerful status of USA might have taken same steps to fulfill its long term objectives. Neither is the idea to justify such actions while one country becomes all powerful. Such a debate is out the scope of this paper. But since mechanics of today's world are so interwoven and interdependent, one cannot help digressing upon real issues and their reasons.

Technological advancement has been the common denominator in the foregoing discussion. The development, sustenance, implementation and continual improvement in technology rely heavily on higher education. However, higher education in isolation from industry may not bring about desired results, especially in

technological progress. USA and Western European countries have not only successfully experimented this but also showed positive results. This linkage between industry and academia is also imperative for socio-economic development. Post World War-II era has witnessed sharp rise in higher education, especially in USA and Europe. Asia and Pacific region though has followed the suit but it is yet to bloom. These countries are pursuing to build knowledge-based economies by expanding their higher education. Issues like knowledge production, research policy and research management have come to the lime light.

Internationalization and integration of higher education has been a parallel development during the later half of the twentieth century. It can be said that phenomenon of globalization has also engulfed the higher education. International accreditations, linkages between universities, split degree programs and collaborations have broken through the geographical frontiers. The impact has also been felt in developing countries. Need for the development of knowledge-based economies has gained significant importance in today's world. Socio-political development is finding its roots in knowledge-based economies.

Although societies are adapting fast to the technological developments, yet the issues like security and safety of human life and property have cropped up in the last seven years or so. The post 9/11 era has been more volatile compared to the periods of World Wars in very specific ways. Wars were declared and contenders were out in the open, but post 9/11 era has witnessed a war with at least one party invisible. Suicide bombing is case in point. Whatever might be the reasons for 'terrorism' and 'war on terrorism', one thing is very clear; this phenomenon seems to be unending and one cannot see both parties sitting across table at some forum to resolve the issue. League of Nations, which later became United Nations, at least, provided a forum to the world for reconciliation and peace building. UN has played vital role in the years after WW-II, acting as a neutral forum where disputes could be settled. UN has operated in highly organized and disciplined manner, drafting a charter which is recognized, by and large, by all countries. However, UN has faced strong opposition in the process. According to the report of UN Secretary General presented in the Security Council on January 31, 1992, over 100 major conflicts around the world left some 20

million dead, and UN was rendered powerless to deal with many of these crises because of vetoes-279 of them cast in UN Security Council.

The post 9/11 developments are so intricate and complex that even a forum like UN could not find a workable solution. Other reasons, which are beyond the scope of this paper, may be attributed to the uncontrolled situation like unilateral decision of US in attacking Afghanistan and Iraq. 'Who is responsible for 9/11 episode?' Noam Chomsky in 'Wars on Terror' says:

'It was assumed that the guilty parties were Osama Bin Laden and his Al-Qaeda network. No one knows them better than CIA which recruited so called 'radical Islamists' from many countries and organized them into military and terrorist force. The goal was not to help Afghans resist Russian aggression, which would have been legitimate objective, but rather normal reasons of state, with grim consequences for Afghans when moral equivalents finally took control.' [CHOMSKY, Noam (2003) "Wars of Terror" *New Political Science*, March.]

How the whole issue is being tackled is highly debatable, and is not producing desired results. Security of life and property of an ordinary citizen in Pakistan is in serious jeopardy. It is a global issue but Pakistan is facing most of the brunt. Although issues like conflict resolution and conflict management have been under discussion in the western world but when it came down to implement these theories, once again world witnessed conventional warfare methods in tackling the conflict. No logical end is in sight. As a matter of fact peace building process has not been initiated as yet. One may agree that handling of this issue by force can produce desired results temporarily; there might be calm for a certain period of time but it will never bring a permanent peace and the whole area is likely to remain as volatile as ever. Afghanistan's is a case in point, where Taliban were suppressed by use of sheer force but they have risen again and are rapidly gaining control of lost areas. Who knows that they may be forming Government once again in the near future? 'War on terror' has already taken heavy toll; thousands of innocent lives have been lost; millions have been spent on

waging this war; this could have been diverted to those 1.2 billion who are living below the poverty line in the world.

Considering the complex nature of human security, there might not be an immediate solution but the seed of peace has to be sown without wasting any further time. Education may be the starting point in bringing about much elusive peace, but one has to remember that it is a time-taking process.

Significance of higher education:

'Socrates believes that goodness and truth, positive essences and pure ethical and moral instincts are placed there divinely in the soul. However, they are not brought to consciousness unless they are awakened or learned. Therefore, consensus on the important things in life is just below the surface waiting to be acknowledged. It is the destiny of mankind to seek out virtue such as courage and self-control, or propriety over the desires of ambitions or emotions that cloud the quest for truth. The concept of ignorance is what stands in the way of consensus, and that once one realizes that he does not know, a change in any disagreement can occur.' [www.san.beck.org]

UNESCO's EFA (Education For All) program by year 2015 is on top of its agenda. Significance of higher education is further highlighted in one of the UNESCO's resolutions which states:

'In our complex and rapidly changing global society, higher education must contribute to the building of peace founded on a process of development and predicated on equity, justice, solidarity and liberty. To attain this objective, access on the basis of merit, the renovation of systems and institutions, and service to society, including closer links to the world of work, must be the basis of renewal and renovation in this level of education. This requires that higher education enjoy autonomy and freedom exercised with responsibility.' [UNESCO (1998) "World Conference on Higher Education"]

Government of Pakistan's Vision 2030 envisages developing a system of delivery of quality education at all levels and a completely new system of quality of education of international standard.

At present the literacy rate in Pakistan is 54% and spending on education at present is only 2.42 of the real GDP (Economic Survey of Pakistan 2005-06). Most of the educated class is concentrated in urban areas, whereas rural areas are most populated. Very few land into higher education. Low level of education has contributed to the deteriorating law and order situation of the country. Intolerant and uncivilized attitudes of general public have cast a negative image of Pakistan amongst polity of nations.

Pakistan is amongst those 25 countries that are at serious risk of not achieving UNESCO EFA targets by year 2015 [UNESCO (2008) "Global Monitoring Report"].
add insult to injury, labels of terrorism and extremism, have further aggravated the situation. Negative propaganda by the Western countries remained in play, tainting Islam at the root of 'extremism' and 'terrorism'. It is very ironic that those who came forward to defend this negative propaganda were either non-Muslims like Noam Chomsky and Robert Fisk or secular minded Muslims who actually belonged to educated and intellectual class. Had the defense been made by Muslim clergy, the impact would have been much greater; it might also have clarified the situation. However, lack of education and much-needed wisdom to handle the situation was lacking throughout and as a result world has freely maligned Islam. The reaction from general public has also been Luke-warm, rather indifferent against this onslaught of west, reason being inability to reply in the same coin. On the other hand lack of wisdom became cause of another dangerous and uncontrollable development which is known as 'suicide bombings'. Although sacrificing life in the name of religion is not a new phenomenon for Muslims but the way it is being practiced to kill 'enemy' is highly questionable. Although lack of education is not the only contributing factor to this volatile situation yet its importance cannot be denied. Areas which are termed as hub of 'terrorist' activity have least literacy rate and women are almost illiterate.

'Education is a significant social investment in preventing a recurrence of conflict. Over the past forty years around half of all civil wars have resulted from post-conflict relapses, 40% of them within the first decade. Investing in education in post-conflict situations pays high dividends, as it gives people confidence in peace by signaling that that the benefits are going to be long term and widespread. A good example of prioritization of education after a conflict is Uganda during the first post-conflict election of the 1990s. In mid-campaign, the ruling party recognized the importance of primary education and announced the abolition of school tuition fees. Enrolment doubled in the following year, signaling a belief that a peaceful future was likely and that education was an important investment for economic growth.'[CHAUVET and COLLIER (2007)]

It is generally observed that countries having low levels of education development face more conflict situations compared to those with high level of education. Education inculcates wisdom, sanity, rationality, patience, discipline, integrity, harmony and reconciliation within individuals, families, communities, societies and the world. Education has paid high dividends in western countries and USA. The technological advancement and high economic growth and comparatively better peace situation can be attributed to education. Academia has strong links with industry. Research and Development in American universities is driven by the industry and industry also reaps the fruits of university research. Democracy has also flourished in these societies and general public feels empowered. Whereas, in Pakistan and most of the Latin American countries, sense of deprivation amongst general public prevails. Successive martial laws in Pakistan have not given democracy a breathing space; as a result peace has always remained elusive; three wars with India, repercussion of providing help to Afghanistan with American help to stop Russia, menace of drugs and arms, ethnicity and now 'terrorism' are some lethal byproducts of martial laws. Suicide bombings have become a common feature. Safety of life and property is in jeopardy. Recent assassination of former Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto speaks volumes about security risks.

Where education brings wisdom and sanity, it also paves way for decent living; an illiterate person can easily be attracted to crime just for earning livelihood. As mentioned earlier education is one of the tools to bring in peace and harmony in society. Its also helps establish democracy which actually empowers people.

'The true development of human beings involves much more than mere economic growth. At its heart there must be a sense of empowerment and inner fulfillment. This alone will ensure that human and cultural values remain paramount in a world where political leadership is often synonymous with tyranny and the rule of narrow elite. People's participation in social transformation is the central issue of our time. This can only be achieved through the establishment of societies, which place human worth above power, and liberation above control. In this paradigm development requires democracy, the genuine empowerment of the people.' [AUNG, San Suu Kyi, (1994), November]

Education and Peace-building: Way forward

'Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.'[UNESCO CONSTITUTION]

It is imperative to provide physical security besides good governance and socio-economic foundations for long-term peace. Basically human being, regardless of religion or set of beliefs, is peace-loving. Peace is, however, disturbed due to conflicts arising out of differences between individuals, families, societies and countries. A sound strategy should be in place to ascertain the nature of conflict, its causes, how it could be managed and resolved and how it could be averted in future. Such a strategy could be formulated with the help of intellectuals in academia, governance, practitioners and contemporary opinion leaders. Universities could provide the platform where issues could be debated upon, causes of conflicts could be analyzed and strategies could be formulated to resolve or manage the conflicts. It, however, requires an atmosphere which is conducive enough to reap positive results; otherwise such

exercises could only be theoretical and probably fruitless. In countries, where governance is autocratic or totalitarian like military rules, such kind of exercises may be looked upon as anti-state and might be nipped in bud. However, even in such an atmosphere, theoretical debates can make a difference. Academia has to come forward and work in the larger interest of country to ensure that conflicts are resolved and peace is established. This is one way where universities can play their role but if this is done voluntarily, and it may prove to be beneficial in post-conflict scenario or in emergency situation. Instead of having a reactive approach, pro-active measures should be taken i.e. prevention prior to the outbreak of conflict or violence.

Conflict could be dealt with in three stages:

Prevention prior to conflict or violence

Managing conflict during conflict; and

Post-conflict peace-building process.

In order to formulate sound strategies to ensure all of the above measures, there is a need to have peace education or education for peace built in the curriculum of formal studies at higher education level or even at lower levels of education. But then there is also a need of teachers who are trained enough to impart such education. 'It is important in post-conflict contexts to pay special attention to the curriculum and, in particular, to prioritize peace education programmes so that distrust and hatred between groups is overcome and citizens are equipped with the tools for peaceful conflict resolution. Examples of multicultural education and peace education programmes with conflict resolution elements are found in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in Romania, where the dynamics of inter-ethnic and intercultural relationships are addressed' [MINOW (2002)].

This concept has also been discussed at length in International Symposium held in August, 2005 in Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia. Symposium recommendations laid stress upon need of Paradigm shift in higher education from narrow criteria of economic growth and market competitiveness to cultivating values, attitudes, social responsibility for the cause of humanity. It further recommends that

curriculum content and pedagogical methods of institutions should integrate values, virtues and principles that help build culture of peace. Furthermore, higher education institutions need to assess their relationship with wider society and the world, so that they could promote rights of poor and marginalized sectors in the context of justice, intercultural respect, sustainable development, human security and global solidarity. The recommendations include training of educators/teachers whereby they could be able to impart peace education and on top of it act as role models to impress upon effectively what they are advocating. [SYMPOSIUM RECOMMENDATIONS (2005) "International Symposium" Griffith University, Australia, August.]

It has also been discussed internationally that so far curriculum has been functional which helps get jobs and good earnings, rather than developing ethical character and nurturing seeds of peace and compassion within all human beings. Educational programs should actively help develop values and promote ethical formation among learners that reject corruption and the abuse of power that aggravates the inequitable distribution of basic needs and resources among all members of societies and the world.

After having established that higher education can be the best tool to control, manage and resolve conflicts; how could it be done effectively and efficiently comes next. As mentioned earlier curriculum needs to be blended with ethical values based on culture of peace and harmony. Teachers need to be trained to impart such education. Universities need to reach out societies surrounding them to get the real picture of state of human beings, especially the poor and marginalized.

Role of religion in promoting and undermining the peace process has been identified as a critical area for research and for curriculum development in Australia. Same may hold true in Pakistan where allegedly 'terrorism' is let loose in the name of religion. Islam has great influence on its followers but its understanding in entirety leaves lot to be desired amongst masses. It would be in the fitness of things if Islamic teachings and their true projections are included in modern curriculum at all levels of education. Although Muslim families have a tradition of imparting religious education in informal ways, yet such teachings are devoid of true manifestations of religion. Consequently one may adopt ritualistic aspect of religion without appreciating the spirit of religious

injunctions. In contrast, the puritan schools of religion (Islam) called 'Madressahs' shy away from modern education, assuming that modern education may distort their beliefs. As a result the products of these religious schools do not find jobs and are vulnerable to criminal acts for socio-economic reasons. Pure religious education is also lacking as Islam advocates tolerance, humility, generosity, justice, truthfulness, harmony and forgiveness, let alone killing fellow human beings for whatever might be the reason. Islam shuns all forms hatred and discrimination. The Holy Prophet Muhammad SAW, when conquered Meccah (his hometown from where he was forced to migrate some years earlier), was all powerful and was in a position to take any kind of revenge; and that too from an enemy who brutally killed his family members; but Muhammad SAW forgave, thereby promoting peace and reconciliation.

This situation needs further elaboration as it is commonly propagated that Islamic Religious schools are home to terrorists. Propaganda machines blamed Islam for Terrorist activity, simply overlooking the real causes. Though deeper debate on the causes of terrorist activity is beyond the scope of this paper, it would be worth noting that same religious schools were used to counter Russian attack in Afghanistan. Russia retreated; those who were earlier called 'Mujahideen' were now 'terrorists' and 'fanatics'. Pakistan had been the worst sufferer; Afghan refugees during the Russian invasion brought in arms, drugs and extremism. Post 9/11 era brought in 'suicide bombings'. Even if we assume that religious schools nurtured terror and hatred, the issue could have been resolved through negotiations and dialogue. The way this 'war on terror' is being fought, possibility of peace and reconciliation seems remote. Where it is the responsibility of Governments to initiate dialogue amongst warring factions, higher education institutions can play a pivotal role.

Peace education or education for peace should be made part of the formal education. It may as well be done remaining under the umbrella of Islamic injunctions. Seminars, workshops and even well designed courses like 'Islam and Society', 'Comparative study of religions' and 'War on Terror' may be introduced at all levels of education—more effectively in higher education institutions. Voluntary debates can be arranged remaining within code of ethics. It would at least bring in positive awakening in the educated class, provided teachers imparting such education are properly trained.

Higher education institutions, on finding fertile ground, may act as bridge between fighting parties. If not that at least suggest some practical solution. At this point such a suggestion may seem to be superfluous but something has to be done immediately to bridge the gap between fighting parties. Institutions imparting 'formal education and those imparting religious education (Madressahs) need to consult each other at this juncture, as majority of both institutions is Muslim. They, then, need to identify critical areas and devise strategy to soften attitudes of both the Government and 'Terrorists'. It is slow but sure way to achieve long term peace. Killings from both ends need to stop. A few days back the oldest Islamic School 'Madressah Deoband' in India has condemned 'suicide bombings' and termed this as 'UnIslamic' [Daily DAWN, (2008) February 26] which is a very welcome condemnation.

The Government (both Pakistan and US) must reciprocate and stop 'combing areas' in search of terrorists because in the process they kill many innocent people of the area. The life style in tribal areas is such that they avenge killings at any cost and that is what is going on.

People of tribal areas are considered uncivilized; they are not given their fair share in national resources; that has fuelled sense of deprivation and aggravated to inculcating hatred. The largest political party Pakistan Peoples Party, after winning recent elections has apologized from the people of Baluchistan for its past mistakes; this is also a positive reconciliatory attitude which needs appreciation; another welcome development is that leader of tribal fighters has showed his intention of working with elected Government; so peace seems to be on the anvil but it is just on the surface; we need permanent and positive solution to this aggravated situation. Much blood has been shed and image of Islam and Pakistan has worsened with the passage of time. Instead of waiting for Governments to act, public needs to fulfill its moral obligation of promoting peace activities. As said earlier, this could be done in a disciplined manner through educational institutions.

Such education would not only promote peace and reconciliation but would also strengthen national institutions. Hand-shake of Madressahs and Universities though, is a novel idea, but further research can be carried out to make it happen. Religious teachers and university teachers should get together and first try to resolve their own

differences before embarking upon larger reconciliation process. Scholars from both sides should try to work out courses/seminars whereby general public could feel that both educators are trying to evolve a formula of peace. Mutual trust, understanding and sincerity to bigger cause are the bases. Once these Muslim groups get together, they may play a larger role in bringing peace internationally. In a way, this paper is setting a ground for further research in making out the possibility of aforesaid hand-shake.

Technical and vocational education and training, especially for those who are Madressah students would pave way for decent jobs and inclination to crime, if any, could be averted. This would not only bring prosperity amongst these deprived classes but would have positive impact on national economy. Sense of deprivation and being left out in the cold are some factors which nourish and breed resentment and sometimes hatred. 'Have-nots' of society see no point in living a miserable life; it is then that they become vulnerable to brain-washing and eventually are persuaded to 'sacrifice' their lives for religion; and are alluded to peaceful eternal life (after this life). The menace of 'suicide bombing' cannot be controlled through force alone. Education in the right perspective and provision of jobs can work wonders. Undue meddling of foreign powers into the affairs of sovereign states has to be stopped. No one likes intrusion. This has been a major cause of extreme reaction (suicide bombings) over the years. Long engagement of US and European forces in Afghanistan and Iraq is the cause of resentment and reaction. It is time that people and Governments of these countries and Pakistan request pull-out of foreign forces; this would be a major step in peace-building in whole of the world. The hype created by USA of nuclear assets falling into the hands of terrorists is totally uncalled for. Hatred has grown to such a level that army, police and government officials, who once were regarded as custodians of human security, are becoming targets of revenge; crimes are also growing under the garb of 'terrorism'.

Developed countries have a role to play in persuading US to stop meddling into the affairs of sovereign states for peaceful world order; the slogan of 'war on terror' needs to shift to 'live and let live'; wars are never won but hearts can be won; Pakistan is a developing country and North Waziristan is even poorer; USA can act as big brother instead of 'big boss'.

Where higher education institutions can strive for evolving peace processes through scholarly pursuits, they can act as mediators between governments—one way is to invite foreign university teachers and researchers to initiate dialogue on peace-building processes; some working formula can be developed to resolve disputes. International Symposium 2005 held under the aegis of UNESCO in Griffith University, Australia is very good initiative of inter-faith dialogue. Symposium recommendations may serve as basis of peace-building processes. Such activities need to be geared up to have peaceful world order.

'Formal rules can only be changed by formal institutions—the legislature, the judiciary and the executive. But a country's basic law--its constitution--that gives the making of formal institutions must not be subject to the whims of people who govern. This unfortunately has been the case of Pakistan. If the basic law is to be changed is should represent consensus among different segments of society. Informal rules can only be altered by education and learning'. [BURKI, Shahid Javed (2008) "Institutions and development", daily *Dawn*, Feb. 26].

Idea is to empower people to build institutions and thus strengthen the nation.

Lessons of humanity and morality should be learnt by all. Wisdom and sanity through education should not be used to condemn and criticize only rather find solutions to problems.

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