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The Stratification of a Society

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The social and political changes in Afghanistan, in the post-Taliban scenario, have been able to cast diverse effects on Afghan society. Among different changes the stratification of society into rich and power classes is a dominant one. The differences have been intensified and are affecting the society as a whole. It has not been the stratification of a society in different classes that causes much trouble to a society rather it is that the stratification has become intense, which has caused the society to suffer or even suffocate.

The wealth that has poured in the country in the last decade does not seem to have benefited the needy people of the society rather that has been accumulated by certain authoritative people who use it for their own benefits and grandeur. Though the stratification into rich and poor classes existed in Afghan society earlier as well, but it has changed its primitive shape; and in the urban regions the stratification is more like modern upper class and lower class division. Some may consider the stratification of the society in different strata as a necessity. They believe that it is because of interaction of various strata that the society tends to function as whole. However, this argument is debatable. Actually the class based setup in a society is mostly the outcome of the practice of Capitalism. Capitalism, at least in theory, tends to follow justice and demands that everyone should be gifted according to his ability. Thus, people with more ability can have as much as they deserve lawfully. Further, the system of Capitalism also allows the individuals to have lawful private property. This system seems to be working for some of the countries, but there are controversies regarding the future of the system. In fact, if this system has been working for those countries, there are few pre-requisites that are maintained to a varying extent by these countries that have been helping the system to develop instead of facing a failure. First,

it has been made sure that justice should be maintained in its true spirit, i.e. it must not favor only the upper class; rather the upper class itself should be treated by the law and order system in the same way as the other two classes; namely, lower, middle and upper classes. In those countries, in fact, social stratification has not been changed to social injustice. Second, social mobility has been made very easy in such societies. For example, it has not been very difficult for a person taking birth in a lower class to work hard, develop the capability and move to the middle and even to upper class. There have been equal opportunities for almost all the members of the societies to excel in their lives and become rich.

The reverse has been maintained as well, i.e. the people born in rich families but not working hard have been pushed to the lower strata. Social mobility has been able to provide some oxygen for the social setup to inhale so that it must keep on living. In certain cases the stratification of a society into upper and lower classes can be very much detrimental. The division of society into upper and lower classes can become the root cause of all the exploitation in the society. As the upper class has the means of production in its control therefore it has the control of the entire society, wherein the labors just suffer for the self-centered incentives of the upper class. At the same time, it cannot be ignored that in practice there are some major problems in some of the stratified societies. The intensification in class differences have given birth to so many social problems. This has also lead to the stagnation of societies and made only few enjoy the most. The societies like Afghanistan where the wealth has poured in without much accountability and weak check and balance system, the stratification has led to sufferings.

The upper class in Afghanistan cannot be said to be in the form as it exists in an industrialized society. Rather, it includes the landlords, tribal heads and religious leaders. Both political and economic systems tend to revolve around these people who are in total control of entire wealth and its distribution. Further, it is also true that all these people do not seem to have the ability for what they are gifted. They, in pursuit of their own benefits, have only made the opportunity of development favor themselves. The poor people of Afghanistan, who have been badly stricken by decades of wars, have only suffered the worst manifestations of poverty. There are millions who do not have the basic requirements of life and are compelled to live their lives in the remotest areas, without much support and attention. Food, cloth, shelter and other requirements like education and security are non-existent for them. And at the same time there are people who own properties worth millions of dollars. These are all the results of an intense stratification. The poor do not seem to be having many opportunities of improvements in their lives and that means that social mobility, which can provide oxygen to a stratified society does not exist, while the social injustice is on the rise. The law and order system, instead of treating everyone alike, has served as the slave of the upper-class. The current scenario if goes unchecked can bring further misery to Afghan society