

Idea Without Method: The Absence of Political Vision and Neglect of Affairs in Sheikh Hibatullah Akhundzada's Speech

(Translated)

News:

On the first day of Eid al-Fitr, Sheikh Hibatullah Akhundzada, the supreme leader of the Taliban government, delivered a sermon in which he urged patience in the face of poverty, warned against the dangers of division, and emphasized full adherence to Islamic Sharia, explicitly rejecting any form of non-Islamic legislation.

Comment:

At the outset of his speech, Sheikh Hibatullah described poverty as part of a divine test and advised people not to complain about their hardships, but rather to accept the decree of Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He. While such a statement may be personally valid and theologically sound, it becomes a point of concern when articulated by a ruler. In Islamic jurisprudence, one of the fundamental duties of a leader is to provide for the essential needs of the people, both individually and collectively. If a ruler is either unable or unwilling to secure basic necessities—such as food, clothing, and shelter—then the people not only have the right to voice their grievances, but doing so reflects intellectual awareness and religious consciousness, not ingratitude toward divine decree.

Moreover, a ruler's responsibility is not limited to the intention of addressing people's problems; the nature and basis of his efforts are equally critical. An Islamic leader is obligated to solve societal issues through legitimate Sharia-compliant means. Even well-intentioned measures that appear beneficial—such as resorting to interest-based banks, imposing unjust taxes, or relying on financial aid from hostile powers—lack legitimacy if they fall outside the framework of Islamic law. Such actions not only undermine the Islamic basis of governance but also subject the ruler to accountability under Sharia.

In another part of his address, Sheikh Hibatullah highlighted the issue of division within the Muslim Ummah, identifying it as a root cause of the suffering endured by Muslims worldwide. He called on the people to strive for unity and avoid discord. This message carries two layers: First, it subtly reflects concern over internal divisions within the Taliban itself—particularly amid Western efforts to categorize the group into “moderate” and “hardline” factions. In this context, Sheikh Hibatullah is often portrayed by the West as the symbol of the hardline camp, committed to a strict interpretation of Islamic law.

Second, he attributed the Palestinian cause's stagnation to disunity in the Muslim world. However, instead of proposing a clear Sharia-based strategy for achieving unity, his message remained confined to moral exhortations. Yet Islam provides a comprehensive framework—legal, procedural, and political—for unifying the Ummah. Unity is not achieved through preaching alone; it requires the establishment of an Islamic system and a return to the prophetic method. It is the responsibility of those in power to initiate this process, particularly through the re-establishment of the Caliphate, which serves as the institutional basis for Muslim unity.

Further, Sheikh Hibatullah reiterated his consistent stance on Sharia, declaring that he would not accept even a single un-Islamic clause in governance. He stated that should anyone from his circle request such a compromise, he would rather step down than act against Sharia. While this reflects his personal piety, it is insufficient in the realm of leadership. A ruler must not only personally abstain from implementing un-Islamic laws but must also actively oppose any such attempts and prevent societal deviation. Resigning in the face of unlawful demands, rather than confronting them, signals a weakness in political vision and an absence of principled ideological thought.

Sheikh Hibatullah's remarks portray him more as a preacher than a political leader. His view of religion appears individualistic, interpreting collective obligations through a personal lens. Such a perspective cannot rescue a society from crisis. Economic hardship is not alleviated through sermons, nor is unity achieved through advice alone. The Muslim Ummah needs principled ideological leaders—those equipped with an Islamic vision and method—who are ready to implement Islam in practice. Only under such leadership can the Ummah be delivered from poverty, division, and deviation.

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