

The Measure of Progress

News:

Sialkot: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday vowed to take the country forward and turnaround its economy through increased investment in human resource development and provision of higher and quality education to the youth.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of a new campus of a women university here, he said higher education and rise of a country were interlinked. The main reason behind the countries moving forward was knowledge and economy. He cited the example of Singapore, which despite having a small population of over five million as against Pakistan's 210 million, invested in education and its annual exports stood at \$330 billion in contrast with Pakistan's annual exports of \$24 billion.

He said the United States emerged as a super power only after its universities created a large number of graduates in the 20th century. (The News 29/11/2018)

Comment:

It is a popular idea that the more educated a nation is, the more progressed it is; in this way many politicians will sell the idea of investing in education as if this will turn everything around. Coupled with this is that Islam encourages seeking knowledge and places its acquisition amongst a personal obligation, so the idea can be easily sold and easily taken up to the general masses.

Will more education translate into more progress? In actuality a nation's progress is not measured by more Universities or the booming economy. The current way of measuring a healthy economy is by the Capitalist standard, which is to produce more and this measure does not mean all individuals have their needs met. We can see this in all the "successful" economies, where there is still poverty amongst some people. Nor is it the case that every educated person can contribute to the economy as there may be job shortages or opportunities are not easy to avail due to nepotism and bad management.

Real progress is revival that occurs in all areas of the society. A sound economy, a sound education system, a sound social system, a sound foreign policy and sound governance comes when you have a clear ideological vision. Adding more University buildings will not mean you can solve the problems of a country since you have more educated people.

Whilst a particular project can assist some people in some way, THIS alone will not lead to progress. Progress will only come for Muslims in our lands when we look at the root cause of our decline. Our decline happened when we stopped referring to Islam as the benchmark and the source for progress and when we started to imitate others. The USA did not rise to power with more universities, it has an ideology that it believes in and is willing to propagate, hence it is the dominant nation.

Prime Minister Imran Khan's statements show a lack of ideological vision. He presents aspects of other nations as ideals, without looking at each aspect of that society and how that society as a whole is functioning. This superficial thinking is the plague of all our rulers. Big buildings, roads, schools etc. are not signs of revival but just show that there is investment in that project.

The Muslim Ummah has the ideology of Islam, this was the source of motivation for the Muslims in the past and it led to the education system of the Islamic state being seen as the ideal for the other nations. This system was based on a clear thought about our life's purpose and how to proceed in life with that idea. Its education system taught Islamic Aqeedah, Arabic, fiqh and the sciences and allowed this Ummah to be a shining light of guidance. Due to the correct thought and such subjects coupled together, the Ummah had leading scientists, mathematicians etc.

Taking education from other sources and expecting this to solve our problems will not lead to revival, it will give more certificates to more people and allow them to compete for jobs in the current economy, which is itself not an ideal we should seek. The Capitalist economic system is the cause of misery for people in Pakistan and the whole world. It is the complete system of Islam, through the Khilafah based on the methodology of Prophethood which will provide the real solution for Pakistan.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Nazia Rehman