

## **The Problem of Homelessness in Kabul City**

### **Summary, Debate, Conclusion and Recommendation**

Kabul City has a long history of more than 5000 years. Because of its geo-political and strategic location many emperors tried to occupy this city, but they failed. Ahmed Shah Durani took possession of Kabul City in 1747 and this city became the capital and metropolitan of Afghanistan in 1776. In Kabul City new buildings were built from 1940-1979. This city was badly destroyed during Civil War of 1979 – 2001. After, September 11 of 2001 United States of America in a war against terrorism bombarded Kabul City and because of those bombardments the city was more demolished. On the basis of these bombardments America forced the Taliban to leave Kabul City and other parts of Afghanistan.

It has to be mentioned that the Kabul City is **344 square Kilo Meters**. According to 1978 Kabul City Master Plan. This city had the capacity to accommodate 2,000,000 people, but on one hand, due to the rapid growth, the 5,5 million people in 2011 and on the other hand, because of the rapid growth of the population, and due to the destruction of many building in wars the Kabul City residents faced big challenges; Therefore, the state of Afghanistan paid more attention to Kabul City in order to accommodate 300,000 people in the Eastern high lands of the city and thought about the development of the Kabul City towards in the North which could be a very good alternative. This was the reason that the Afghan Council of ministers (Cabinet) in one of its meeting in March of 2009 made a decision about the building of Kabul New City. The area of Kabul New City is 740 square Kilo Meters (Dah Sebz 540 Square Kilo Meters and Baricab 200 KM<sup>2</sup>). Based on this calculation the Kabul City area as a whole reaches to 1088 KM<sup>2</sup>. The Kabul New City whole attraction capacity for the people is (3) Million population. This New City which will have the old Rawalpindi-Islamabad and the New Delhi and Istanbul model will be equipped with canalization, modern roads/ streets, hospitals, and parks, and will have health facilities and for learning it will reserve schools and universities.

The Kabul New City will have both high story buildings and apartment houses will be of three kinds: low price houses, middle price house and high price houses. These houses will be characterized by having markets and within these houses the rural life agrarian system will be maintained.

In this manner within the present Kabul City, the load of additional population which causes different types of pollutions will reduce. The adaption of this project in which 80,000 units of houses are planned will greatly help with regard to the reduction of the prices of land and buildings.

In order to reduce the problem of homelessness in Kabul City, it is necessary to adapt National Settlement policy and program step by step on the basis of transparency and accountability. The government of Afghanistan should allocate enough amount of money in their annual budget to build houses for their civil servants and employees. The government should consider and pay more attention to the social houses, so that the Kabul City each resident on the basis of their financial capacity could possess a house.

This activity could only be adaptable to provide city facilities for the owners of the houses that are built without plans and Municipality and Ministry of City Building put down house building and division of plots for house building on the first page of their plans and build houses for those people who are entitled to it and are poor.

**Results:**

Kabul City has 344  $Km^2$  areas. If 1300 persons live in the area of one hectare land than 44,720,000 individuals could be accommodated to Kabul city and live in it. In Kabul City in each hectare of land live 160 persons and it is considered as a city having additional population. In addition to that enough capital has been invested in construction affairs of Kabul City at present but in respect to the houses building, less investment has been taken into consideration. The main cause for this is that the price of land is very high and 10 percent of the people in this city are those individuals who are homeless and do not have enough fund to buy house because the price of land is very high and therefore purchasing price of a house goes very up.

The looters of land have usurped many houses of people and state land. The usurping of houses and land is a big barrier against regular development of Kabul City. Today among the group's developing countries such as Afghanistan, the ministries should have a resident provision program for themselves and their employees. The ministries of Afghanistan do not consider any budget for provision and instruction of residents for their employees till now. If the government does not have a program for provision of residence for their employees and the prices of land remain high, the solution for homelessness will not be impossible it may be very problematic.

If the National Residence program and policy addition commences regularly go ahead, as it is mentioned in the policy that social houses are to be constructed, and also the government divides these houses to people according to their ability and power, and those 80 percent buildings that are constructed are reconstructed and city facilities are provided for them and these houses are given legal form and identity, and for the future, the growth of population in Kabul City on the basis of returnees numbers the division of land and house building are planned, all these activities will support the solution of homelessness problem.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that, if the government of Afghanistan take into consideration the problem of homelessness of their employees, the need for houses building in the market, making a plan for division of land for residence construction, high residential buildings and apartment houses, this plan and these activities will reduce the problem of homelessness in 5-10 years.

In addition to all these activates, if the Kabul New City plan in which different types of social houses are considered to be adapted, if this plan commences and proceeds regularly and the Kabul City is connected with modern roads and city facilities such as drinking water, electricity, canalization, health facilities are provided and have schools and universities and parks all these together as whole can reduce the problem of homelessness drastically.

### **Recommendations:**

In order to reduce the problem of homelessness in Kabul City following activates are recommend to be carried out:

1. It is obvious that the growth of population in Kabul City is very rapid. The provision of tiring facilities such as safeguarding security, employment, provision of health facilities, education and construction of residence, prevention of war and natural catastrophes and/ or reduction of their effects in Kabul City will reduce the numbers of emigrants.
2. In each province the construction of small model towns, such as model town Gardez for emigrants, are necessary. The attraction of emigrants to large cities such as Jalalabad, Herat, Kandahar and Mazar-e-Sharif should be prevented.
3. There are three municipalities in New Delhi. Also, Jahansbug City in South Africa has four municipalities. We also can divide Kabul City in four municipalities and in this way we will be able to work out about provision of facilities and provide residence for those who are homeless and in this way reduce the homelessness problems.
4. Eighty percent of the houses in Kabul City have been constructed obstinately and without plan and 67 percent of the populations of Kabul City are living in these houses. These areas of the city require reconstruction, historical places in them. Those houses and areas which have relatively possess some conditions and facilities of city should kept safe and should be reconstructed, and the city facilities should be provided to them, if any of the houses during the construction process become destroyed, the government should provide a pieces of land for each of them to construct a house in it or give them an apartment house.

5. Each ministry should allocate enough amount of money in their budget to construct house for their employees.
6. Kabul Municipality and the Ministry of City Construction should construct social houses for Kabul Citizens. These houses should be suitable for the living situation of poor people.
7. The New City of Kabul and the present Kabul City should be connected to big highways and both of them should take the Rawalpindi-Islamabad, Old and New Delhi and Istanbul forms and patterns.
8. Based on the homelessness, number, the rate of population growth and the numbers of emigrants and returnees to Kabul City, Kabul Municipality and Ministry of City Construction according to a plan should consider the distribution of land blocks for house building and the construction of high apartment houses building.
9. In present Kabul City, where the living facilities and city facilities are available and such as roads, drinking water supply, electricity and other should be provided and land blocks distribution should be taken into consideration for high apartment houses.
10. The construction affairs of Kabul New City should be made rapid. This activity will help to reduce the land and building price.