

Third Word Projects: True Beneficiary Are Capitalist Companies

News:

Tanzania media outlets report on a plea made by the President Magufuli for a fresh bid to speed up a deal of Hoima-Tanga oil pipeline. The appeal was made by him when he was hosting Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, where he asked Tanzanian and Ugandan ministries to oversee the construction and of the multi-billion dollar project to be completed next year.

Comment:

The President Magufuli emphasized that the project should be speeded up since it is very important for citizens of both nations. The Uganda–Tanzania Crude Oil Pipeline (UTCOP) project started in 2016 and lasted three years at a budgeted cost of US\$4 billion, intended to transport crude oil from Uganda's oil fields to the north eastern Port of Tanga, Tanzania on the Indian Ocean.

Uganda has oil reserves of about 6.5 billion barrels, of which about 2.2 billion barrels are recoverable. Apart from local usage, most of it will be exported via pipeline to the Indian Ocean coast.

In spite of this project being regarded as having significance in terms of benefiting citizens of both nations, in the real sense there is little to gain since the grand lion shares are in the hand of capitalist multi companies. Total (French) 35%, China National Offshore Oil Corporation 35%, Tullow Oil (UK) 10%. Uganda has 15% while Tanzania has only 5%.

Even though governments are always promising their citizens with many expectations from such third world grant projects as supporting factor to harness development and well being of their citizens, such as social services like health, education and employment, but in fact they do not bring expected fruits.

Governments are happy for the projects because they will increase income due to tax collection of different kinds like payee, investment tax and custom duties. While those tax collected are mainly benefiting few people like political elites and high ranked figures for high salaries, allowances and other incentives while other employees, such as civil servants, continue struggling in 'hand to mouth' salaries and wages.

Even in some cases, governments invest in social services, such as hospitals and schools, but these services in most cases are of low standards and quality lacking vital facilities, only being used by poor and low incomers, since politicians and wealthier people do not use neither public schools nor public medical facilities.

The real beneficiaries of this project are the investors (capitalists) who enter into an unequal terms with governments. Most dirty jobs in these projects are being done

by poor who are oppressed by the investors, and if any industrial conflict emerges, in most cases governments support investors. A vivid example is a rich mineral nation, South Africa, where its citizens live in absolute poverty. When miners stand to demand their rights, investors and government fuse together to murder them like in the event of 17 August 2012 in which 34 killed and 78 injured after police open fire striking workers in Lonmin Mines.

In the areas where projects were established, the properties of people, such as land, fields, crops, plantations and even their houses are confiscated. When governments or investors compensate such properties, they usually underestimate the value of people's properties.

This is in addition to the environmental concerns that lead to catastrophic destruction of agricultural activities as well as people's health. The world still remembers the issue of murder and the execution of the Nigerian writer and TV producer, Ken Saro-Wiwa, and eight others on 10th November 1995 who protested against Royal Dutch Shell company which polluted their land and harmed people in the Niger Delta in Nigeria.

Islam allows individual people, firms and government to invest in various projects like constructions, factories and transportations but it forbids having ideological agenda of exploitation and domination.

As concerning public properties projects, such mines, oil etc., being owned by either individual or firms are totally forbidden since the Prophet (saw) said:

«المسلمون شركاء في ثلاثة في الماء والكلى والنار»

“Muslims are partners in three things, water, fire and pastures”

Also, the Khalefah is obliged to provide all necessary social services and basic needs to all citizens whether they are Muslims or not. These services are not intended for profits but they are an obligation upon him.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Ali Amour

Member of the Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir in Tanzania