

Last Days of Autumn

Notes on the Parliamentary Elections 2005

Sayed Asef Hossaini

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Notes from the publisher:

“Last days of autumn”, written by Sayed Asef Hossaini reflects his impressions and experiences of his campaigning time for the parliamentary elections 2005. During this elections, he was a young independent candidate, running his own campaign among other 390 candidates in Kabul.

Of course all ideas and views expressed in this book is directly belonging to the author himself.

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung is publishing this book with taking into consideration the following points:

- This book is one of the very few documentations left about the parliamentary elections 2005.

- This book shows a young Afghan on the real scene of political action and it dis-

cusses all relevant subjects from the point of view of a young Afghan, thus opening a new perspective to the political discourse in Afghanistan.

□ Reading this book will motivate other young Afghans including the members of the Young Leaders Forum - an FES initiative for Afghan youths - to think about their real social and political responsibility, integration and engagement through providing them with real experiences and practice.

The FES-Afghanistan Office hopes that with publishing this book, it has taken a small step towards recognition of the role of youth and practice of their rights in the social and political context of Afghanistan.

Ursula Koch-Laugwitz
Resident Representative
FES Kabul

Foreword

“Last Days of Autumn” is a praiseworthy work in current literary production of the country. I knew Asef Hosaini through his writings, poems and his participation in literary, social and political events. “Last Days of Autumn” portrays Hosaini’s creative spirit, purity and his sociological view of the complicated condition of our society.

“Last Days of Autumn” reflects part of a restless young man’s experience. The man who is neither hopeless nor secluded, a sickly man seeking remedy. He wants to be the voice of his young peers in national assembly in an authoritarian patriarchal context. Being elected or not, it was his will that is important. This “will” has been illustrated in a beautiful way in this book.

“Last Days of Autumn” is an attractive, deep and fluent piece of a literary/sociological work and contains insights into the explorations of young man. The author recreates his dynamic self through his memories. Free of social and structural dominations of his time sees different dimensions of the society and portrays culture and politics by means of his sociological imagination.

Asef’s work is a message to his young peers that they can be free and creative. Freedom and creativity will make a new world.

Dr. Nooroddin Alavi
Lecturer at Social Sciences Faculty
Kabul University

Summary of the book “Last Days of Autumn”

“Last Days of Autumn” is generally reflecting the experiences of a young candidate in parliamentary elections held in 2005 in Afghanistan. It is also important of being the only book which is written about the first parliamentary election in new Afghanistan.

This book is not just a memorial book, but is a reflection of political environment in a post-war country and the situation of the election as an element of democratization process. It shows how traditional parties and new democratic groups were making efforts to win the elections; the competition between conservatives who were actually the strongest, and some non-experienced technocrats.

In this book it is clear how a young student from Kabul University was analyzing the political environment and balance of power in capital Kabul, and also how he made his

political strategy lonely, just with other students.

“Last Days of Autumn” in the first chapter demonstrates how a student of Sociology in Kabul University is making himself convinced for nomination in a very difficult political competition in traditional community of Afghanistan. Other chapters indicate how he could provoke other students to involve in their own country’s issues as the influential educated group. Also in this part, the young student is designing posters of other candidates to earn some money. Their policy and political manner were displayed in the book too as a wrong belief of traditional political leaders.

The other point which was really essential to show in this book is the methods of a legal campaign during the competition versus the campaigning method of other powerful candidates.

Another important point of political experience is the reaction and feedback of people during the campaign; all people from different ethnic groups became interested to help a young man who thought is responsible for his country. They were not satisfied by traditional leaders who were involved in the past civil war. They could find out easily that the

young student is really independent and poor, but he is fighting for the rights of Afghanistan people.

After the election the young candidate had a short journey to the Northern provinces with a German journalist and four other Iranian and Japanese movie-makers. It was a long time that Japanese movie-makers were following the young student to make a documentary for DNA TV. During the journey they had some important discussion about different fields of post-war Afghanistan such as: opium cultivation, Taliban threat, democratization process, government and opposition groups and... it reflects all issues of current political situation exactly.

Ultimately, this book can show other youths of Afghanistan that how a youth can independently participate in social and political issues of his country and how a young student can be influential in development of society. It can encourage very clever young leaders to share their experiences together to do political and social activities in a safer and more stable way.

Sayed Asef Hossaini
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