



The Changing Scenario in Afghanistan: Past, Present and Future

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ABSTRACT

The United States and its allies have abandoned Afghanistan after a 20-year war in the world's most dangerous country. Throughout the country's history, Afghans have faced several wars as well as invasions by foreign countries. After Russia's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979-1990, the country's scenario will change. The United States creates many terrorist organizations across the world to aid Afghan people in their struggles against the Soviet Union, such as the Taliban, al Qaeda, and other minor groups.

In Afghanistan, the major two parties, the Northern Alliance and the Taliban, are fighting for power and control. In 1996, the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan, and Mullana Umar became the new leader of the country. Following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the United States and its allies launched an assault on Afghanistan to overthrow the Taliban regime in Kabul. The Taliban's leaders segregated separate mountainous areas of the nation and began resistance against the United States and the Afghan government until 2021.

On February 28, 2020, the United States and the Taliban signed the Doha Agreement in Qatar, with the goal of ending conflict, bringing peace, and restoring stability to the area. The agreement called for the departure of all NATO soldiers from Afghanistan in exchange for a Taliban promise not to allow al-Qaeda to operate in regions controlled by the Taliban, as well as continued discussions between the Taliban and the Afghan government.

On 15 August 2021, the Taliban take control of Afghanistan, and President Asharf Gahni flees to Oman. On the 31st of August, all US troops in Afghanistan will depart. Taliban celebrates become autonomous as US soldiers withdraw.

Keywords:

Afghanistan, USA, Taliban, Doha, Northern alliance, Russia, Al Qaeda, Kabul

Introduction

Afghanistan's history as a country began in 1880, with the end of the Second Anglo-Afghan War, when it became a concern. To maintain control of the territory, the British fought three wars.

The first battle fought between Afghan rulers and British India. From 1838 until 1842, Britain sent an army to Afghanistan to replace Dost Muhammad with Shah Shuja al Mulk, a pro-British king. Shuja's rule was eventually

destroyed in 1841, when British Indian forces in Kabul were annihilated during their withdrawal to Jalalabad (1842). Kabul was retaken the next year, but British troops were removed from Afghanistan. The British believe Dost Muhammad has strong links with Russia and wish to replace Dost with shoji. Dost, on the other hand, is looking to strike a balance between power and relationships. The British launched a 45,000-strong attack on Kabul on January 6, 1842, after which Shoji died and the

British withdrew from the city. Dost Muhammad was reinstated to the throne in Kabul in 1843.

The second battle, which took place between 1878 and 1880, was likewise fought to keep Russian dominance at bay. Britain gained land and the right to have a Resident in Kabul with the Treaty of Gandamak (1879), but the Resident, Sir Louis Cavagnari, was slain in Kabul in September of the same year, and several wars were fought until the British withdrew.

The third war began in 1919, throughout the conflict, Ḥabībullāh Khan, the ruler of Afghanistan at the time, was able to maintain a policy of non-intervention. When Ḥabībullāh Khan was killed by anti-British forces on February 20, 1919, his son Amanullh Khan ascended to the throne. when Amanullah, the new Amir of Afghanistan, invaded British India and secured Afghanistan's independence through the Treaty of Rawalpindi, despite being beaten (1919).

Treaty of Rawalpindi:

Great Britain and Afghanistan signed it on August 8, 1919, in Rawalpindi. In accordance with Article 5 of the Treaty of Versailles, Britain recognized Afghanistan's independence, promised that British India would not expand beyond the Khyber Pass, and halted British aid to Afghanistan. As a result, Afghanistan decided to accept the Durand Line (1893) as the international boundary between the two countries as an independent entity.

Amanullah Khan advocated for a number of Western-style changes in areas including education, legislation, and women's freedom. Many religious and tribal leaders were enraged by the changes, which were widely despised. The Afghan Civil War began in 1928 when one of the Pashtun tribes revolted. Amanullah Khan was permanently exiled after the Afghan Civil War (1928-1929) lasted a year. In the aftermath, in 1929, Mohammad Nadir Khan, a descendant of Dost Muhammad Khan, entered Afghanistan and was proclaimed Shah of Afghanistan. After the ten years of ruling Nadir Shah was killed in 1933, and his

19-year-old son Mohammad Zahir Shah took his place on the throne, (Andre, 2018).

The emperor of Afghanistan, Shah Mohammed Zahir Shah, was overthrown in 1973 by his cousin Mohammed Daoud Khan who established the Daoud Republic of Afghanistan. He proclaimed himself leader of the new republic but in 1978 a military coup d'état with help in 1973 from the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) rose to power after the Saur Revolution in April the same the year. The country's and party's first communist leader in Afghanistan, Nur Mohammad Taraki was assassinated by fellow communist Hafizullah Amin. Amin was known for his independent and nationalist inclinations, and was also seen by many as a ruthless leader. He has been accused of killing thousands of Afghan civilians. The Soviet Union looked at him as a threat for communism in Afghanistan and Soviet Central Asia. In December, 1979 Amin was assassinated by the Soviet soldiers killing Amin and his 200 guards. After the assassination the Soviet army swept into Afghanistan, while the Soviet government forced Babrak Karmal to leave Czechoslovakia, where he was Afghan ambassador, to return to Afghanistan as its new leader. Karmal's leadership was seen as a failure by the Soviet Union because of the rise of violence and crime under his leadership. He was replaced with Mohammad Najibullah, who was able to cling to power until 1992, three years after the withdrawal of the Soviet army. After the Soviet withdrawal, the Republic of Afghanistan continued to deal with attacks from the Mujahedeen. They received funding and arms from the Soviet Union until 1991 when the Soviet Union collapsed. the several years the government army had actually increased their effectiveness past levels ever achieved during the Soviet military presence. But the government was dealt a major blow when Abdul Rashid Dostum, a leading general, switched allegiances to the Mujahedeen in 1992 and together they captured the city of Kabul, (M.Jahangir, 2015).

Geography Of Afghanistan

Afghanistan is landlocked which occupies approximately 647,500 square kilometers. Afghanistan lies in Central Asia, bordering Pakistan to the north and west, Iran to the east, and Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan to the south. The Wakhan Corridor, which runs from northern Afghanistan to China, is a small stretch of land. China is 76 kilometres away, Iran is 936 kilometres away, Pakistan is 2,430 kilometres away, Tajikistan is 1,206 kilometres away, Turkmenistan is 744 kilometres away, and Uzbekistan is 137 kilometres away, (August, 2008).

Soviet Military Interventions

The civil war started when insurgency broke out against the people's Democratic party of Afghanistan, which had taken power in Saur Revolution on 27th April 1978. This event led indirectly to the soviet military intervention in Afghanistan. Under the guise of preserving the Soviet-Afghan Friendship Treaty, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan on December 24, 1979. The two countries promised to offer economic and military support when they signed the pact in 1978.

Soviet-Afghanistan treaty of friendships:

President Leonid Brezhnev of the Soviet Union and Afghan Prime Minister Noor Mohammed Taraki signed a 20-year "treaty of friendship, good neighborliness, and collaboration" in a Kremlin ceremony. It guarantees the countries mutual economic, military, and technical support, (Klose, december 6, 1978).

The Soviet Union deployed thousands of troops into Afghanistan at the end of December 1979, and took total military and political control of Kabul and vast swaths of the nation almost immediately. This incident marked the start of Moscow's decade-long campaign to end the Afghan civil war and retain a friendly and communist government on its southern border. It was a turning point in the Cold War, since it was the first and only time the Soviet Union invaded a country outside the Eastern Bloc, a strategic move that drew widespread condemnation. While the enormous, lightning-

fast military operations and brazenness of Soviet political aims were referred to as a "invasion," the term "intervention" more appropriately depicts these events as the climax of rising Soviet dominance dating back to 1973. Without a doubt, Kremlin authorities anticipated that a swift and thorough military takeover would cement Afghanistan's status as an instance of the Brezhnev Doctrine, which said that once a nation became communist, Moscow would never allow it to return to capitalism. The US and its European allies, inspired by their own containment strategy, strongly condemned the Soviet incursion into Afghanistan and planned a slew of tactics to force Moscow to get out.

The new government met with hostility, which led to the Soviet war in Afghanistan. Afghanistan's anti-government rebels, known as the mujahedeen (those engaged in Jihad), found support from a variety of countries including the United States, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and other Muslim nations. The final Soviet troop withdrawal began on May 15, 1988, and ended on February 15, 1989. Three years after the withdraw, the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan collapsed to the mujahedeen resistance. Several years later, the Taliban rose to power after the fall of Kabul in 1996.

Taliban Control In 1996

After the fall of Kabul to the Taliban on September 27, 1996, Uzbek General Dostum joined forces with the Tajik Ahmed Shah Massoud to form the Northern Alliance, a grouping of non-Pashtun militias that aimed to defeat the Pashtun Taliban. Both parties espoused Islamic fundamentalism, and wished to impose Sharia law in the country. The Northern Alliance began to get funding and arms from Russia and Iran, who both feared the Taliban's growing influence, while the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia backed the Taliban as ideological allies. Pakistan also backed the Taliban, as they were viewed as the only capable group of bringing peace to Afghanistan - a goal which would allow Pakistan to open trade ties with the Central Asian republics, while at the same time

allowing for the return of the some 3 million Afghans who had taken refuge in Pakistan.

In October 1996, the Taliban began to strike points north of Kabul with jets and artillery while Dostum and Massoud massed forces in preparation for an offensive. On October 19, the alliance pushed forward with tanks, armoured personnel carriers, and heavy weapons into the Bagram airbase, which was the first major victory against the Taliban since they lost Kabul. They continued their advance and vowed to retake Kabul, with Massoud's front line commander stating "God willing, we will be in Kabul today or tomorrow." But fighting raged for several days and the lack of a major breakthrough forced the Alliance to withdraw to northern positions.

In 1997 the Taliban began an offensive against the territories held by General Dostum that caused some of his forces, led by General Abdul Malik, to rebel and join the Taliban on May 20. This led him to flee Afghanistan, leaving much of his army behind, and seek refuge in Uzbekistan. The newly Taliban-friendly forces handed over the city of Mazari Sharif to the Taliban. Soon, however, their strict stance against Shiite Muslims led to a confrontation between Hazara militias and the Taliban.

In intense fighting in the city of Mazar-i-Sharif, the Taliban were defeated, and 3,000 of their soldiers were captured and executed. The forces of Massoud attempted another push towards the capital. After making gains north of the capital, they once again met heavy resistance in Kabul. The Taliban continued to push into the Alliance's territory, however, and reached Mazar-i-Sharif, taking it again by August 8, 1998. Upon taking it, they began a mass killing of the locals; 4,000 to 5,000 civilians were executed, and many more reported tortured. This offensive by the Taliban left them in control of 90% of the nation.

On September 9, 2001 and Massoud's Death

On September 9, 2001, a suicide bomber, posing as journalist, blew himself up after gaining access to Ahmed Shah Massoud office. The suicide bomber was killed along

with one of Massoud's followers, and the Afghan commander's guards killed the second person posing as a journalist. Massoud was struck in the chest with shrapnel from the bomb, which was either hidden in the camera or concealed around the waist of one of the terrorists. Massoud died shortly after being taken to Tajikistan for emergency care. On September 9, 2001, Massoud was murdered by two al-Qaeda assassins in a suicide bombing that was directly authorized by al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

But did not the attack left the Northern Alliance leaderless, and removed "the last obstacle to the Taliban's total control of the country. Lead to chaos as some had feared. The Northern Alliance held together and would go on to work with the USA and its coalition in Operation Enduring Freedom. At the time of Massoud's assassination, Northern Alliance strength was estimated at 11,000 troops and the Taliban at 45,000.

After 9/11

Due to the 3000 individuals who died in the twin tower and global trade centre attacks, the world's scene altered after 9/11. Al Qaeda was accused by the United States.

The 9/11 attacks were a series of aero plane hijackings and suicide bombings carried out by 19 militants affiliated with the Islamic extremist group al-Qaeda against targets in the United States in 2001, making them the deadliest terrorist assault on American territory in US history.

The United States Attack in Afghanistan on 7th October 2001, Following the Taliban's refusal to hand over al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, US President George W Bush starts "Operation Enduring Freedom" in Afghanistan less than a month after the September 11 attacks. The Taliban, who had been in power since 1996, was deposed by US-led forces in a couple of weeks,

According to the Al-Jazeera news, Osama bin Laden, the head of al-Qaeda and the architect of the 9/11 attacks, is killed by US Special Forces in Pakistan on May 2, 2011. The United States wishes to remove its soldiers from Afghanistan after a 20-year conflict. On

July 16, 2016, Obama announced that 8,400 US troops will remain in Afghanistan until 2017.

The United States struck a peace agreement with the Afghan Taliban in February 2020, committing to withdrawing US troops from Afghanistan. The United States' longest battle against the Afghan Taliban insurgency was to come to an end with this historic agreement. It revolved on a deal in which the US would withdraw troops in exchange for Taliban assurances that Afghan land would not be utilized for international terrorism. For most of the negotiating process, American negotiators pressed the Afghan Taliban to commit to not repeating the policies that led to the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States, believing that such policies were the root of the assaults. During that time, the Afghan Taliban offered sanctuary to al-Qaeda, who reportedly paid the Taliban up to \$20 million per year for the safe haven. Al-Qaeda exploited Afghanistan as a safe haven to set up training camps. In exchange for halting assaults on US forces and severing connections with al-Qaeda, the Taliban and the Trump administration agree to withdraw US troops by May 1, 2021, (Mir, 2020).

The 14th of April 2021 President Joe Biden says he will support Trump's pullout deal but that the date will be pushed again. He claims that by September 11, 2021, the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 events, all US forces will have left Afghanistan.

Taliban take over Afghanistan

Before US soldiers leave Afghanistan, the Taliban take control of Kabul on 15 August 2021. Taliban provides the world assurances that they have complete authority over Kabul, which is unbelievable. President Ashraf Ghani leaves the nation as the Taliban storm Kabul with minimal resistance. Even the most pessimistic assessments from Western intelligence agencies have been turned upside down by the speed with which the Afghan government has fallen apart, sending countries scrambling to evacuate citizens and vulnerable Afghans through Kabul airport, which is now under US military control.

Futures of Afghanistan:

Afghanistan's future is determined by the Taliban's policy in the country. Taliban knows how to cope with in-country and out-of-country situations. The West wants Afghanistan to become a secular society, while the Taliban wants to impose Islamic duties.

Afghanistan is in the midst of an economic crisis, which is likely to deepen as a result of fresh Western sanctions against the Taliban leadership. The Taliban does not have the necessary policy experience to deal with the problem on their own. However, if it isn't solved quickly, the party will struggle to maintain its dominance. Unrest and economic stress might spark new refugee surges, resulting in violent resistance. Financial aid from other countries is essential.

Because the Taliban previous government worked as a terrorist act, the Taliban's foreign policy is dependent on the country's future. However, the world today wants to put a stop to terrorism both within and outside of countries.

Al Qaeda is a global terrorist group with close ties to the Taliban, with whom it has collaborated in Afghanistan since 2001. However, the Taliban has promised the United States and the rest of the world that Al Qaeda will be unable to operate as a terrorist organization anywhere in the globe. Pakistan, Iran, and China have also been assured by the Taliban that they will not be able to utilize Afghanistan as a safe haven for terrorists elsewhere in the globe.

In Afghanistan, ISIS, TTP, and other minor terrorist groups exist, but how will the Taliban survive with them in the future.

The future of women's rights is dependent on Taliban ideology, since the Taliban force has ended co-education, made it compulsory to cover all women's bodies, and stopped doing work for females in many sectors.

Following are the major points on which the Taliban government is based on futures.

- Taliban domestic policy
- Taliban foreign policy
- Women's education in Afghanistan
- Women's rights, jobs, and the Hajab

- End of terrorism in Afghanistan and the rest of the world
- anti-terrorist capability
- sever ties with Al Qaeda, ISIS, TTP, and other terrorist organizations

Conclusion

The War on Terrorism, which began on October 7, 2001 as the United States military operation, 'Operation Enduring Freedom' was launched by the United States and United Kingdom in response to the September 11, 2001 attacks. The purpose for the invasion was stated to capture Osama bin Laden, destroy al-Qaeda, and remove the Taliban regime which had provided support and safe harbor to al-Qaeda. The United States' Bush Doctrine stated that, as policy, it would not distinguish between al Qaeda and nations that harbor them.

The Taliban have won a major military triumph that has stunned the whole world. The world continues to be shocked that a 300,000-strong Afghan military force withdrew without a fight.

One of the major reasons was that the Afghan military was relying a lot on the US military and their sudden withdrawal from the country as well as the internal weaknesses of the Afghan army led the Taliban to occupy Kabul so quickly. It also seems that the Taliban had support from some portion of the Afghan army.

Afghanistan's people were dissatisfied since their nation had been at war for four decades and they wanted a stable and long-lasting peace. The choice of the American president to remove US soldiers was condemned, but he had made a bold decision to end the 20-year conflict, and he would be recognized in history.

The United States has been defeated in the war, and its standing as a superpower has been irreparably damaged. After seizing Kabul, the Taliban delivered a positive message to the rest of the world. Northern Alliance and Taliban were battling each other before the Russian pullout, and despite extensive discussions to establish a coalition administration, no recognizable faces of other

communities and groups could be seen in this interim government.

The Taliban's announcement that women can work and study while wearing the hijab is encouraging. They've also declared a nationwide amnesty, which is a good indication, and they recognise the freedom of different religions. All of these actions were excellent, but the temporary cabinet's declaration contradicts them. He recalled that when the Taliban first formed the government, it was not recognised by the Northern Alliance and the non-Pakhtun population, which includes Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras, and others, because they had previously been ignored by the Taliban in the government, and there are fears that the country will be thrown into another civil war.

No country can be left in political or diplomatic isolation in today's world, which is a global village. He said it's crucial to examine how the Taliban plans to develop diplomatic connections with the rest of the world.

Pakistan will be affected both positively and negatively by the shifting scenario in Afghanistan. Taliban will confront several problems, including international restructuring, bringing peace to Afghanistan, earning the trust of Afghans, improving the economy, determining their relationship with neighbors, and combating narcotics and weapons, among others.

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