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Preface

From a while, struggles on rebuilding Afghanistan-Pakistan ties and reinitiating the Afghan peace process are going on. This time, it was tried to rebuild the bilateral ties and revive the stalled Afghan peace process through “Language diplomacy”. A few days ago, a number of Pashtun leaders from Pakistan had a visit to Kabul and, in order to pave the ground for a meeting between Afghan and Pakistani leaders in Paris. The Pakistani delegation was also carrying a message from Nawaz Sharif. As a result, the leaders of both countries met in the Paris Climate Change Conference and talked about bilateral ties and the peace process. You will read about the future of Kabul-Islamabad ties and the impact of the latest development on rebuilding these ties and reviving the stalled peace process.

In the second part of the Weekly Analysis, you will read about the Paris Climate Change [international] Conference. Last week, 150 heads of governments and tens of leaders of [international] organizations were gathered in Paris in order to yield an agreement to prevent Global Warming. In the last 100 years, the global average (land and ocean) surface temperature shows a warming of 0.85 [0.65 to 1.06] °C. The temperature in Afghanistan has increased to an average of 0.6°C since 1960 and researches show that the level of rain is decreased by 40mm in spring.

Leaders of the most powerful countries including America, Russia, China and India provided their speeches in this conference which is officially named “COP21”, and insisted on shared international efforts on changing global climate. Afghan President, Ashraf Ghani, also gave a speech in this conference and cleared the demands and position of Afghanistan in this regard. How and why the Climate Change occurs; what are the predictions regarding this issue and what would be impacts of the global warming on Afghanistan.

These are the issues which will be discussed in details in this issue of weekly analysis.

Pak-Afghan Ties: From Language Diplomacy to Peace Process



Last week, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Pakistani Premier Nawaz Sharif met in Paris at the sidelines of Climate Change Conference. Before this meeting, both leaders met in a trilateral meeting with the British Prime Minister (PM). In both meetings, Pakistani side talked about the revival of peace and reconciliation process with the Taliban.

Five days before this meeting, leaders of the Pakistani Pashtun nationalist parties had a 3-day visit to Kabul. However, the Pakistani delegation was invited by Afghan President, but they had also brought Nawaz Sharif's message; and meanwhile, they encouraged President Ghani to meet the Pakistani PM in Paris.

After the death news of Mullah Mohammad Omar, the Afghan peace process became stalled; Pakistan, insistently, talked about reviving the stalled peace process and, as a result of this, the regional diplomacy became active (for further information on this topic, read [142nd](#) issue of the Weekly Analysis) and, these reasons, once again, provided the chance for direct talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

In this analysis, you will read about the impact of recent two meetings between Ashraf Ghani and Nawaz Sharif on Pak-Afghan ties and their role in reviving the stalled peace process.

Pashto and Pashtuns: The Elements of Pak-Afghan Diplomacy

It is not the first time that Kabul and Islamabad used “Pashto” card in their foreign policy; before that, Kabul and Islamabad had used this card during the Cold War and then in Hamid Karzai’s era.

During the Cold War, Pakistan’s Pashtun leaders were living in Kabul for several years; therefore, Kabul’s support from Pakistan's Pashtuns and the 'Pashtunistan' issue were among the important factors of Afghanistan’s foreign policy. Meanwhile, Pakistan had also sheltered a number of Afghan Pashtuns in its soil and calls its support from them as a “necessity”. This issue, to a large extent, had deep impacts on Kabul-Islamabad ties.

Later, in Hamid Karzai’s era, Kabul invited Pakistan’s Pashtun leaders and, in 2007, it held a Grand Jirga of Pakistani and Afghan leaders in order to make the Pak-Afghan ties better and tranquilize the armed position in both sides of the Durand Line. About 700 leaders from both countries participated in this Jirga, and it was the first of its kind, in which the leaders of both sides had officially participated in it. This Jirga established a 50-member committee in order to present their solutions regarding the peace process. However, this Jirga failed, because neither the Afghan Taliban and nor the tribal leaders were invited to it. Pakistani leaders were also participated in this Jirga and the former Pakistani president, Pervez Musharraf, also participated in the closing ceremony of the Jirga.

After Ashraf Ghani became President, he, during his visit to Pakistan, invited a number of Pakistani parties' leaders in order to come to Kabul; therefore, Pakistan Pashtun Nationalist leaders attended Kabul in January, 2015.¹ Now, Ashraf Ghani, once again, invited the leaders of Pakistan's Pashtun political parties to Kabul in this case the Kabul-Islamabad ties are worse than every other time in the past one year.

The "Pashto" Card in Foreign Policy

During the Cold War, Pakistan and Afghanistan had sheltered the opposition elements against each other; however, after the Cold War, both Kabul and Islamabad used the "Pashto" card in remaking its bilateral relations. Hence, many Pashtun delegations from both sides had visits to each other's Capitals in order to establish good relations between both countries.

The Pashtun leaders' visits to Kabul in January 2015 had brought optimism to a number of diplomats in Pakistan's Foreign Ministry. Because, they believe that they, through their shared language, will not only shortened the gap of mistrust between Afghanistan and Pakistan but they can use it in rebuilding the ties, also.² This time, Pakistan, through Pashtun leaders, tried to rebuild its ties with Afghanistan; in the case, it, from a while, makes efforts to reinitiate the peace process and rebuild the ties between both countries.

Pakistan's Pashtun leaders' visit to Kabul

A few days ago (11/25/2015) a delegation consisted of ten members from three Pakistani nationalist parties attended Kabul as a result of the Afghan President's invitation. Asfandiyar Wali Khan, leader of the Awami National Party, Afrasyab Khattak, Dr. Saleem Khan (Son of Afzal Khan Lala), Mahmood Khan Achakzai,

¹ For further information, please read "CSRS Weekly Analysis: Issue Number 100, from 10-17 January 2015"

² Inamullah Khattack, Pakistan launches Pashto Diplomacy to woo Kabul, The Nation, 11 Jan 2015, see it online: <<http://nation.com.pk/national/11-Jan-2015/pakistan-launches-pashto-diplomacy-to-woo-kabul>>

leader of Pashtunkhwa National Awami Party, Aftab Ahmed Khan Shirpao, leader of Qaumi Watan Party, Shawkatullah Khan, former governor of Pashtunkhwa, Ayaz Wazir, former Pakistan's ambassador to Afghanistan and a number of other personalities were among this delegation. This delegation participated in a conference in Kabul that was praising the memorial of Afzal Khan Lala; briefly, the aim of this visit was to rebuild the ties between Kabul and Islamabad.

Politically, the visit of this delegation was very important to Pakistan due to following reasons:

First: Kabul-Islamabad ties, after the establishment of the National Unity Government (NUG), are worse than compared to every other time.

Second: Since a month, Kabul is making efforts to rebuild its ties with New Delhi. Haneef Atmar, National Security Advisor to Afghan President went on an official visit to India and the Deputy Foreign Minister; Hekmat Khalil Karzai had also a visit to India. Both Afghan officials requested India to provide military assistance as well as to implement the bilateral strategic agreement.

Third: This visit was important because it paved the way for a meeting between Nawaz Sharif and the Afghan President in Paris and, it was a chance for Pakistan to ensure the presence of Afghan high officials in the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process Conference that is going to be held in Islamabad in next week; because if the Afghan high officials did not participate in this conference, it would impact Pakistan very negatively.

Ashraf Ghani-Nawaz Sharif meeting in Paris

Leaders of Pakistan's nationalist parties had brought the message of Pakistani premier, Nawaz Sharif to Afghan president and had requested him to meet Nawaz Sharif at the sidelines of the international Climate Change conference. The meeting with Pakistani PM was not included in the agenda of Afghan president; but after Pakistan's nationalist leaders visit to Kabul this meeting became a part of Afghan President's agenda, Afghan officials said.

On 30 November 2015, both leaders, before meeting each other alone, met in a trilateral meeting consist of Afghan President, Pakistani and British Prime Ministers. After the trilateral meeting, the Afghan President, Ashraf Ghani and the Pakistani premier, Nawaz Sharif held a bilateral meeting and talked about the relations between both countries. “Reinitiating the peace and reconciliation process was among their talking, also”.³ Pakistani PM established the details of this meeting in a statement; the important points were as following:

- Both leaders agreed that they will work with those who participate in this process as legitimate political players. Pakistan alongside the Afghan government will stand against those who do not want peace;
- Pakistan believes that the US and China, which were associated with Murree reconciliation process, are vital partners in this process. We would also welcome the support of other friendly powers in this endeavor. Pakistan would, therefore, welcome a quadrilateral initiative to restart the reconciliation process. To this end, the forthcoming meeting of Heart of Asia - Istanbul process, to be held in Islamabad on 09 December 2015, provides a welcome opportunity to evolve a common roadmap for result oriented reconciliation in Afghanistan;
- I look forward to the visit of President Ashraf Ghani to Islamabad, for jointly inaugurating the 09 December Heart of Asia meeting, and for discussions on the sidelines on how the two countries and the US and China can work together to pick up the thread of the reconciliation process, from where it was left off in July 2015;
- Pakistan looks forward to coordinating closely with Afghanistan at political, diplomatic, military, and intelligence levels, to take our joint fight against terrorism to its logical conclusion.⁴

³ See Online:http://www.pmo.gov.pk/press_release_detail.php?pr_id=1259

⁴ For reading the detailed press release of PM Nawaz Sharif Online; See: <http://www.mofa.gov.pk/pr-details.php?mm=MzI5OA>

The Future of Pak-Afghan Ties

The 70-year Pak-Afghan relations have seen a lot of ups and downs; however, distrust has covered these bilateral ties to a large extent. After the formation of NUG, the relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan unprecedentedly became better; but after insecurities increased in Afghanistan and the peace process became stalled, these relations, once again, went on distrust. Although, Pakistan, by using language diplomacy and the Pashtun card, once again, met the Afghan President, Ashraf Ghani at the sidelines of the Paris Climate Change Conference and invited him to the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process; so, these efforts brought hopes for the peace process to become reinitiated and for the ties between both countries to become better.

It is worth mentioning that these meetings, conferences can play a vital role in rebuilding the bilateral ties; but the Pak-Afghan ties, in mid-term and long-term, to a large extent, are mostly dependable on the successfulness of the peace process and stability in Afghanistan; and whenever, Pakistan fell short in fulfilling its promises, the relations between both countries would automatically become worsen and besides that, the trust-building process would be faced with various challenges in the future ahead.

Climate Change: Where is Global Warming taking the world?



The Paris Climate Change Summit attended by and representatives of 195 nations and international organizations is another warning about the dangers of global warming. The warning is that inhabitants of the earth led this planet to serious and deadly problems through improperly using its resources.

If the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century fundamentally changed the human life and brought new opportunities for the inhabitants of this planet, but from the other hand, it gradually caused horrible changes in the environment of human as well as in other creatures. Today, we have reached a point that Francois Hollande, in his opening speech at the Paris Climate Change Conference, said that the planet has never been faced with such a great challenges.

At the Paris Climate Change Conference, the devastators of the environment- the countries that increase in global warming is associated with their economic policies- did not provide any commitments to bring serious changes in this regard, and this situation was predictable from the start.

The reasons behind Global Warming and its impacts on the Environment

Decades ago, Scientists had warned about the negative impacts of “Carbon Dioxide” on atmosphere; however, the industrialized countries did not take these warnings seriously.

Carbon dioxide is released to the atmosphere through burning fossil fuels. It prevents sunrays with longer wavelengths from reaching the earth and it traps heat within earth atmosphere, which causes global warming.

Sunrays have a vital role in earth climate. It not only causes global warming but also keeps the earth's atmosphere balanced. Unfortunately, humans have seriously harmed this balance through seeking control on the nature.

The big risk is that over the past 30 years, new countries such as China and India have stepped into industrialization. In these countries, the consumption of fossil fuel for industrial development is inevitable. From the other hand, rivalries between these new powers and old industrial powers in the West have causes serious hindrances towards controlling the greenhouse gases, therefore, the future of humanity is faced with serious dangers.

The population growth and increasing food production facilities have caused a large part of the forests on the planet to become destroyed and converted into agricultural land; and to reduce the possibility of absorption of carbon dioxide from the air.

The Reaction of Earth

Humans, as the main factors behind climate change, have stood against nature and, so the nature, sometimes, resists against them and sometimes, warns them and reminds them that the risk is too serious. Enormous storms such as Hurricane Katrina in America, mistime intense rainfall, fire in forests, the elimination of glaciers are the warnings that the nature is giving to human-beings, but human still do not take these warnings seriously.

Kyoto Protocol

In 1997, representatives of 160 countries gathered in Japan and approved the “Kyoto Protocol” in order to reduce the process of global warming. In this protocol, 36 industrialized countries were asked to reduce the rate of their greenhouse gas emission by 2012 to 5% below the average of their production in 1990.

However, the protocol stated that the implementation of this protocol will be taken when its member reached to the level of producing a total of 55 percent of the world’s greenhouse gases. This condition met when the Russian Federation joined the Kyoto Protocol.

Responsible America!

However, America is the only industrialized country that does not implement the Kyoto Protocol. According to the politicians in America that are dependent on large businesses and oil companies, reduction of greenhouse gas emission in this country would mean reduction in economic growth, unemployment of millions of people and huge financial losses to investors.

America a country with 25 percent of greenhouse gas emissions is the biggest destruction of the environment in the world and, China with about 15 percent of greenhouse gas is the second largest producer of this gas in the world. In the United States, any agreement that has not approved by the Congress, does not contain the legal requirements and according to the US Federal Law, carbon dioxide gas is not considered as a greenhouse gas.

In August, Obama announced a new plan to reduce the level of carbon gas production in 2030 by 32% in compare to 2005 and to produce 28% of the total energy from other alternative sources like wind and sun; however, the entire politicians in America do not believe in controlling global warming and even deny this as an accepted scientific issue.

Famous businessman and a leading republican candidate in 2016 U.S. presidential elections neither believe in climate change and nor looks at it as a U.S. problem. He says that China and other countries do nothing in this regards and global warming drama is just for destroying U.S. position in industrial competition against China.

Senator Ted Cruz from Texas also does not accept the scientific theory of global warming. Senator Marko Rubio from Florida, who is the third leading candidate, according to the recent toll, says that the struggle against global warming should hit the economy. Rubio says that China is at the top of CO2 producers. He does not want to make the situation tougher for American companies while Obama administration did not have any plan for the climate change.

Democrat senator Bernie Sanders says that as long as the fossil fuel companies pay for Republican candidate's election campaigns, it would be difficult to take effective steps regarding global warming.

Impacts of Climate Change on Afghanistan

The poor countries are big victims of the climate changes while; they have had the least part in damaging it. They suffered frequent floods and droughts in the last half of the 20th century.

Afghanistan is a mountainous country. Its nature has played important role in keeping central and southern Asia climates balanced. Afghan mountains are snow reservoirs in winter, which makes rivers after melting in summer. In fact, these mountains are tankers, water reservoirs and air purifier for neighboring countries. (For example, winds that blow in Baluchistan of Pakistan in specific times of the year are called Qandahari winds. Furthermore, 120-day winds in western Afghanistan, affect eastern areas of Iran as well.) That is why president Ghani said in the Climate Change Summit in Paris, "Afghanistan's development trend would not increase carbon fuels usage but it would decrease greenhouse gases in India and Pakistan."

However, we can easily observe the negative effects of global warming in Afghanistan through comparing the present climate with a few past decades. In the 1950s and 1960s, snow layer depth in Kabul streets was reaching two meters which made difficult walking on foot. Now, Kabul has not seen such a snow since years. Air warming caused winters with less snowfall and rainfall. The old proverb says, "Kabul could be without gold but not without snow" is not true anymore. The situation is the same across the country.

Afghanistan witnessed droughts in the past, which were repeated in eight to ten years period, but during the last half of 20th century, the periods are decreased to four years. Afghanistan is now dependent on other countries' wheat products because mostly Afghanistan's wheat productions were obtained from rain fed lands.

Some researchers believe that global warming can even cause more earthquakes and volcanic activities. Afghanistan and its neighboring countries witnessed more earthquakes in the past four decades compared to the past. Although there are a difference about global warming's effects on earthquakes, recent 7.5 Richter earthquakes were unprecedented in Afghanistan. These events could not be merely judged as an accident.

The End

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