



Center for Strategic & Regional Studies

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Preface

The news about the ISIS activities is being heard from various parts of the country in various times. Last week, the news about ISIS building schools and acting freely in some areas of Nanagarhar has been heard. But despite all these news, this year in a great extent the group is suppressed and its activities seems to be faded.

Recently the Afghan government has prepared a strategy to fight against ISIS and last week, the Afghan President and the Afghan National Security Council approved this strategy in principle. The President has order the Afghan security forces to eradicate ISIS fighters from Afghanistan. How did the group come to Afghanistan? How did the fight against the group go on? And how does its future seems? These are the questions that we would try to answer in the first part.

In the second part of the analysis you would read about internally displaced people in Afghanistan. Amnesty International released its recent report on internally displaced people last week. Besides the vast number of Afghan migrants in other countries, the report shows that the number of internally displaced people is also increased and that they are in really worst situation. The report has expressed concern about the dire situation of these people and has criticized the Afghan government and the international community. Why the number of Afghan migrants is growing day by day? And what are the reasons that have forced 1.2 million Afghans to leave their homes?

In this issue of the Weekly Analysis you would read the analysis of the Center for Strategic and Regional Studies about the above two issues.

The background and current status of ISIS in Afghanistan



In a meeting headed by the Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, the Afghan Security Council approved the strategy of fight against ISIS in principle and ordered the Afghan security forces to suppress the group and put an end to its presence in the country.¹

However it seems that the activities of the group has decreased in Afghanistan, but considering the recent decision of the Afghan President and the Afghan Security Council, the government seems to be serious regarding the fight against ISIS.

The question is how did ISIS emerge in Afghanistan? How did the fight against it go on? What is the current status of the group in Afghanistan? And how will be the future of the group in this country?

¹ Read more in here: <http://president.gov.af/fa/news/87059>

From Arab world toward Khorasan

After the leader of the Al-Qaida in Iraq Abu Masab Al-Zarqawi was killed, Abu Omar Al-Baghdadi was appointed as his successor. Later due to the differences that emerged between him and Al-Qaida, he distanced and separated from Al-Qaida.

In 2010, after the death of Abu Omar Al-Baghdadi, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi became his successor. In 2013, between Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and Jabhat al-Nusra in Syria serious differences emerged, and with the announcement of “Caliphate” by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in June 29, 2014, separation of the group from Al-Qaida was completed.

After the announcement of “Caliphate” by ISIS, some people in the tribal regions between Afghanistan and Pakistan welcomed it and some of them pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as Muslim Caliph. The most important of them were Abdul Rahim Muslemdest and the Pakistani Taliban’s spokesman Shahedullah Shahed.

Although at that time, ISIS was at its early stages in Afghanistan and talking about its presence in this country was early; but after a while at the beginning of 2015, the Afghan government confirmed the presence of ISIS fighters in Afghanistan and coincide with that, ISIS appointed Hafiz Saeed Khan as governor and Abdul Raouf Khadem² as deputy governor of “Khurasan”³.

After official announcement of the governor and the deputy governor of Khurasan by ISIS, some Afghans and Pakistanis joined the group but the exact number of them is still unclear. But in Khurasan branch of ISIS, both Afghans and Pakistanis are present; thus in 2015 and 2016, they have had destructive activities in both countries.

The presence and activities of the group in Afghanistan proved to be bloody for Afghans. According to the Afghan Ministry of Defense, only in the last six months of 1394 the group has killed 600 Afghan civilians.⁴

² Abdul Raouf Khadem was killed in a drone strike in Helmand on February 9, 2015.

³ The ancient land of Khurasan in the early days of Islam included all of Afghanistan and Tajikistan, parts of Iran, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and parts of the other side of Durand.

⁴ Afghan online press, «Daesh killed over 600 Afghans in six months: Defense Ministry» see it online: <http://www.aopnews.com/isisdaesh/daesh-killed-over-600-afghans-in-six-months-defense-ministry/>

ISIS confrontation with the Taliban

The Afghan Taliban were concerned about the emergence of ISIS and the appointment of Abdul Raouf Khadem as the deputy governor of Khurasan; because Abdul Raouf Khadem was the former deputy of the Taliban's military commission who along with Mullah Abdul Qayum Zakir was fired from their duties by Mullah Akhtar Muhammad Mansour.

At the beginning, the Taliban were very cautious in dealing with ISIS and tried to avoid armed conflict with them; but when ISIS launched offenses against the Taliban in some districts of Nangarhar and killed some Taliban members; the Taliban in order to avoid fight with ISIS sent a letter to the ISIS leader and asked him to bring ISIS's activities in Afghanistan under the umbrella of the Taliban. But ISIS's response was harsh and negative, and after that the Taliban's fight against ISIS began which still continues.⁵

In addition, the presence of Central Asian citizens in the ranks of ISIS in Afghanistan raised Russian concerns and rumors were heard about Russia's support from the Taliban against ISIS. But the Taliban released a statement and rejected the Taliban-Russia relations and Russia's assistance⁶.

The Afghan government and the fight against ISIS

After the emergence of ISIS in eastern Afghanistan and killing some members of the Taliban by ISIS fighters, there were some analyses that in order to suppress the Taliban by ISIS, the Afghan government does not seriously fight against ISIS. Some Afghan Parliament members also called ISIS a foreign project.

Abdul Zahir Qadir the first deputy of Wolesi Jirga and some other members of the Jirga have successively accused foreign forces and some circles in the Afghan government particularly the Afghan Security Council of supporting ISIS. An Afghan Parliament member Hazrat Ali has claimed that the helicopters of the foreign forces have landed ISIS fighters in this province⁷ and residents of Behsod district

⁵ The weekly analysis of the CSRS, Issue number 122: <http://csrskabul.com/pa/?p=2308>

⁶ Read the statement of the Taliban here: <http://alemara1.org/?p=37360>

⁷ for further information click on this link:

of this province had also said that military helicopters have landed masked ISIS fighters at the scopes of the Black mountain. Although the government announced investigations about these accusations but it is yet to offer an appropriate response to these accusations. Besides that there were some other parallel accusations but no compelling prove was provided to prove them and often they pointed out the migrants who due to the “Zarb-e-Azb” operations of Pakistani army have come to Afghanistan.

This was interpreted as if Russia has become suspicious about Afghan government’s efforts to fight against ISIS and there for in order to reduce threats to its national security has established direct contact with the Taliban.

Now although the group has weakened in Afghanistan, but for the first time the strategy to fight against ISIS was approved in principle by the Afghan National Security Council. The Afghan National Security Council has declared the group a threat to Afghanistan and countries in the region and according to Afghan security organs, from beginning of the fight against ISIS 600 of its fighters are killed in Afghanistan.

ISIS in Pakistan

The first ISIS commander in “Khurasan” was Hafiz Saeed Khan from Orakzai Agency from other side of Durand line. When ISIS started its activities in Afghanistan, some Pakistanis also came to Afghanistan in their ranks.

ISIS attacked Pakistani consulate in Jalalabad on January 13, 2016. The group was also involved in some explosions in Pakistan. In May 2015, armed individuals opened fire on a bus in Karachi leaving 43 dead and 13 injured and the “Khurasan” branch of ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack. The group was also involved in an attack on a Pakistani TV network. Despite these activities of ISIS in Pakistan, Pakistani government particularly Pakistan Ministry of Interior rejects the presence of ISIS in Pakistan. But clearly the “Khurasan” branch of ISIS after its presence in the region is more active in Afghanistan compared to Pakistan.

The future of ISIS in Afghanistan

ISIS first started its activities in eastern Afghanistan and first confronted the Taliban. Both the Afghan government and the Taliban began fight against ISIS and at the end of 1394 the group was sort of suppressed in Afghanistan. US drone strikes, Afghan government's military operations, operations and enmity of the Taliban against ISIS caused the group to be suppressed and weakened in 1395 compared to 1393 and 1394.

Although, after the death of Mullah Mohammad Omar, ISIS had the opportunity to utilize the internal conflict of the Taliban and to attract the oppositions of Mullah Mansour or to unite with them, but the decisive character of Mullah Akhtar Mansour did not allow it to happen. Mullah Akhtar Mansour killed the most influential deputy of Mullah Rasoul, Mansour Dadullah in an armed conflict in Zabul and also gained the support of most of his oppositions and those who had not pledged allegiance to him. Losing this opportunity ISIS was further weakened and the extremist idea of ISIS also resulted in the hatred of many armed groups in Afghanistan.

Another reason behind the suppression and weakness of the ISIS's "Khurasan" branch is that Russian airstrikes and anti-ISIS coalition severely hit the group in Iraq and Syria. Therefore the chance of attention and support for the "Khurasan" group was limited. Thus, now the group is fading away in Afghanistan.

The high number of IDPs in Afghanistan: the background and factors



In a recent report on internally displaced peoples (IDP), Amnesty International has said that the number of IDPs in Afghanistan has almost tripled in 2015 compared to 2013.

The report of Amnesty International under the name of “My Children Will Die This Winter” was released on May 31, 2016. The report shows that in 2013, almost 500 thousand people were internally displaced in Afghanistan while due to worsened security situation this number has risen to 1.2 million peoples in 2016.

The other part of the report focuses on the worsened condition of IDPs and states that the 2014 IDP policy is yet to be implemented and these displaced people are faced with various problems.

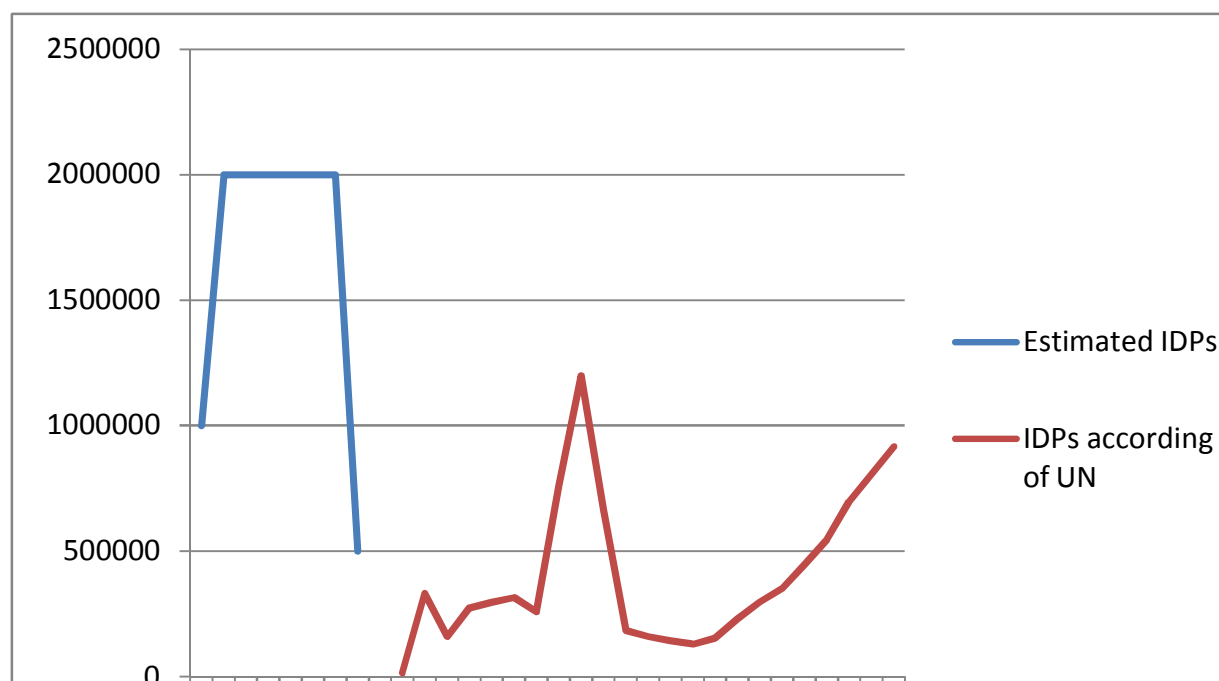
Here you would read our analysis about the beginning of internal displacement process and various stages that it has gone through, the current situation and the main reasons behind the high number of IDPs in the country.

The Background of IDPs

Throughout the history, due to various factors (war, economy, natural disasters) people are internally displaced in Afghanistan; but the number of them was not very high at those stages.

During the soviet invasion of Afghanistan, people were forced to migrate to the neighbouring countries or moved to Kabul from various regions of the country. Generally, the migrants who had gone to the neighbouring countries were people who were opposed with the system, government and ideology of that time and were mostly government's oppositions. On the other hand, the people who had moved to Kabul from various parts of the country were either low level employees of the government or government officials or people who had to stay in Kabul due to various other reasons.

The exact number of the IDPs at that time is not available; but yet according to two experts before the "Saur" coup d'état the population of Kabul was 750 thousand people; but after the Soviet attack on Afghanistan, in order to avoid war damages, some people moved to Kabul from remote areas of the country. This way, Kabul's population was doubled (around one and a half million people). Besides that people in other provinces of the country also moved to the centres' of the provinces and an overall two million people were internally displaced in the country. (See Chart-1)

Chart-1: Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in Afghanistan (1984-2015)

Source: the migration unit of the United Nations High Commissioner for refugees (UNHCR)

In the chart above, the blue line shows the estimated statistics of IDPs in Afghanistan during the Soviet invasion and the red line presents the number of IDPs based on the statistic of the UNHCR from 1992 till 2015.

Statistics of IDPs in Afghanistan

In 1990s, most of the people lived in the cities and far from battlefield. In 2001, in the aftermath of the primary attack of the US on Afghanistan the number of IDPs in the country reached 1.2 million; but coincides with that after the maintenance of security in the country the number of IDPs were reduced to 650 thousand people; and this number further decreased until 2006. At that time in a large extent security was maintained in the country; but after 2007, when insecurity increased in some provinces of the country, the numbers of IDPs in the country were also increased. In 2007, there were close to 153718 IDPs in Afghanistan but in 2015 the number rose to 916435.⁸ But according to the statistics of the Afghan

⁸ You can find details here:

UNHCR, Afghanistan, Conflict-induced internal displacement monthly update, May 2015

Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations, there were 854310 IDPs in Afghanistan in 2015⁹. (See Chart-1)

Given the security situation in 1394, the statistics of UNHCR and Afghan Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations about IDPs seems less than the exact numbers. That is why the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) has criticized these statistics and has said that in 2015 (1393-1394), there were 1.257 million IDPs in Afghanistan which is five times more than the number of IDPs in 2009. In 2015, due to emergence of ISIS, the fall of Kunduz and natural disasters, the number of IDPs in the country increased. Amnesty International agrees with the statistics of AIHRC, hence it has relied on these statistics in 2016.

Factors behind internal displacement in the country

Since 2009, the main reason behind internal displacement is insecurity in the country but yet there are also other effective factors in this issue as well, which are:

- **Insecurity:** due to the worsen insecurity; the number IDPs have increased in the country. For instance if one compares the statistics of IDPs in 2001, 2006, 2009 and 2015, one will find out that except in 2006, the number of IDPs is augmented in other years; because in 2001 due to American airstrikes and attacks the number of IDPs in this year was 1.2 million. Following the improvement of security situation until 2006, the number of IDPs decreased in the country. There were 129310 IDPs in the country in 2006; but with the intensification of insecurity in Afghanistan after 2006, the number of IDPs also increased in the country year-after-year and reached 297129 people in 2009. In 2015, this number reached to 916435 people and according to one other source this number was around 1.257 million.
- **Armed conflict and the emergence of ISIS:** the number of IDPs is very high in those provinces that are insecure. For instance, according to the media

⁹ For further information visit the link bellow:
<http://morr.gov.af/fa/page/2204>

advisor of the Afghan Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations Hafizullah Miakhail, “20 thousand families in Helmand, more than 15 thousand families in Nangarhar, 20 thousand families in Kunduz and 8 thousand families in Kabul are internally displaced due to insecurity.”¹⁰ . According to another international organization, last year most of IDPs were from the southern Afghanistan then from western Afghanistan and finally from eastern Afghanistan.¹¹

- **Unemployment and jobs in the government:** another factor behind the increasing number of IDPs in Afghanistan is that people comes to major cities of the country particularly in Kabul Jalalabad, Kandahar and Herat because of unemployment and for jobs in the government; because there is more job opportunities in the cities compared to villages.
- **Natural disasters:** last year, some families were forced to be internally displaced due to various natural disasters such as floods and landslides. It should be noted that there is no exact statistics about natural disaster’s role in internal displacements in the country; but there are statistics that shows links between natural disasters and the number of IDPs. For instances in July 2015, besides the insecurity in the country, natural disasters has caused displacement of 1157 families in the country.¹² In addition, in “Saur” 1394 dozens of families were displaced due to landslides in Badakhshan. In July 2015, floods also forced more than 350 families to be internally displaced in this province.¹³

¹⁰ Read Omid Zahirmal’s article here: [http://tkg.af/pashto/report/research/17982-%D9%BE%D9%87-%D8%AE%D9%BE%D9%84-%DA%A9%D9%88%D8%B1-%DA%A9%DB%90-%D8%A8%DB%90-%DA%A9%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%8A?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+tkg_pashto_report+\(%D8%B1%D9%BE%D9%88%D9%BC\)&TB_iframe=true&width=180&caption=%D9%BE%D9%87+%D8%AE%D9%BE%D9%84+%DA%A9%D9%88%D8%B1+%DA%A9%DB%90+%D8%A8%DB%90+%DA%A9%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%8A&keepThis=true&height](http://tkg.af/pashto/report/research/17982-%D9%BE%D9%87-%D8%AE%D9%BE%D9%84-%DA%A9%D9%88%D8%B1-%DA%A9%DB%90-%D8%A8%DB%90-%DA%A9%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%8A?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+tkg_pashto_report+(%D8%B1%D9%BE%D9%88%D9%BC)&TB_iframe=true&width=180&caption=%D9%BE%D9%87+%D8%AE%D9%BE%D9%84+%DA%A9%D9%88%D8%B1+%DA%A9%DB%90+%D8%A8%DB%90+%DA%A9%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%8A&keepThis=true&height)

¹¹ These are the statistics of the time before the collapse of Kunduz and from January to July 2015. According to these statistics there were 223278 IDPs in the southern provinces, 220434 IDPs in western provinces, 148489 IDPs in eastern provinces and 169958 IDPs in central provinces. Read more here: <http://www.internal-displacement.org/assets/library/Asia/Afghanistan/graphics/201507-map-ap-afghanistan-en.pdf>

¹² Read more in here: <http://morr.gov.af/ps/news/49441>

¹³ See the link bellow:

<http://morr.gov.af/ps/page/1872/north-east/office-of-refugee-badakhshan>

The participation of CSRS delegation in International Conference of Muslim Communities' Union in Turkey



Twenty fifth International Congress of Muslim Communities' Union was convened by the Turkish Economic and Social Research Center (ESAM) from 26 to 28 May, 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey.

The three day international conference was on “Islamic World; Problems and Resolutions” where 149 representatives of world’s Islamic movements and research centers of Muslim world had participated from 59 countries.

The chairman of the Center for Strategic and Regional Studies (CSRS) Dr. Abdul Baqi Amin had also attended the conference from Afghanistan due to official invitation by the organizers of the conference.

In inauguration meeting of the conference, the leaders of Islamic movements of Asia and Africa discussed the problems of Islamic world and in the next session; they discussed war, displacement and economic problems of Islamic world.

In this meeting, the participants emphasized on Necmettin Erbakan’s scheme about building a group of eight Muslim countries as a solution to the economic

problems of Islamic countries; and the lack of single monetary unit has been declare as a reason to link Islamic countries with other countries.

The other meeting of the conference was appropriated to women issues and some Muslim women from Europe, Africa and America shared the experiences of Muslim women’s participation in those communities.



The ending meeting of the conference was about presenting solutions and in this regard, a number of participants offered their proposals.

Dr. Abdul Baqi Amin presented his paper on “the way forward to Islamic world’s problems” on behalf of CSRS-Kabul.

Dr. Amin termed the internal conflicts of Islamic countries as a major problem of Islamic world and said that these conflicts hamper the progress of Islamic communities and are the outcome of the improper policies of western countries’ politicians. According to him we have to learn lessons from the experiences of countries like Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Sudan and etc.

Mr. Amin also said: “War has negatively affected all aspects of society in Afghanistan, from governance to healthcare, education, economy and etc. Afghanistan’s import is 96% while its export is only 4%, and the country is also in a

bad situation in other aspects of the economy. On the other hand 300 thousand people are killed in Afghanistan because of the war in the past 15 years.”

According to Dr. Amin all these ordeals were due to the continuation of war in Afghanistan and however all parties are fatigued of war, but lack of a mediator to reduce mistrust between the engaged parties has resulted the failure of the peace process in the country. He said that Islamic countries must play their part to put an end to the ongoing war in Afghanistan.



The two day international conference on Afghanistan in Islamabad



The two day international conference on “Evolving Situation in Afghanistan: Role of Major Powers and Regional Countries” was organized by Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) in collaboration with “Hanns Seidel Foundation” (HSF) on May 18-19, 2016 in Islamabad.

Experts and representatives of the research centers from Afghanistan, Pakistan, the United States, China, Turkey, Iran, Russia and some other countries, and some senior Pakistani officials such as Pakistani National Security Advisor Nasser Janjua and the first secretary of Pakistan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ezaz Chaudhary had also participated in the conference.

The Director General of the Center for Strategic and Regional Studies (CSRS) Dr. Abdul Baqi Amin and the Afghan political analyst Haroon Mir had officially participated in the conference on behalf of Afghanistan.

The conference had four sessions; the first session was regarding an overview of Afghanistan's situation. The second session was appropriated to the South Asia's

security concerns in Afghanistan. The third session was about the stakes and role of states assisting peace in Afghanistan (Russia, the US and China). While, the fourth session was about the transnational security problems and neighboring regions.

The chairman of CSRS Dr. Abdul Baqi Amin presented his paper on “Security in Afghanistan; Challenges and Solutions” in the conference.



Dr. Abdul Baqi Amin spoke about the security situation in Afghanistan and the impacts and reasons behind the insecurity in Afghanistan. He said that 'instability and insecurity in Afghanistan has put deep impacts on living system in Afghanistan and the continuance of this situation has paved the way for other issues to rise up in the region'.

He pointed out, ideological and political disagreements, foreign intervention, and some other factors as the main reasons behind the insecurity in Afghanistan.

Mr. Amin added that the impacts of insecurity in Afghanistan are not within its borders but it also threatens the security of the countries in the region as well. He said that stability in Afghanistan is beneficial for the countries in the region and that these countries must play a positive role in the Afghan issue.

Indicating the failure of the Afghan peace efforts, Dr. Abdul Baqi Amin said that misinterpretation of peace, relying on other countries to maintain peace, the lack of an impartial mediator group, Pakistan's unstable and negative stance about the Afghan issue, and the lack of the United States' willingness for peace in Afghanistan are the main reasons behind the failure of the Afghan peace process in the past and present.

According to him, Afghans are tired of war and now it is now the most appropriate time for the peace than anytime; but establishing a mediator party and a grantee axis for peace process and sincere support from within in Afghanistan, the region and the world the necessities of this process.





The end

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