



Center for Strategic & Regional Studies

Kabul

Weekly Analysis-Issue Number 118 (May 16- 23, 2015)

Weekly Analysis is one of CSRS' publications, which significantly analyses weekly economic and political events in Afghanistan and the region. The prime motive behind this is to provide strategic insights and policy solutions to decision-making institutions and individuals in order to help them to design best policies. Weekly Analysis is published in local languages (Pashto and Dari) and international languages (English and Arabic languages).

In this issue:

- Preface 2

Agreement with ISI: nor that hatred and neither this friendship!

- The definition of a common enemy..... 4
- Pakistan welcomes the agreement..... 4
- Joint operations on both sides of the border 5
- The fight against separatism..... 6
- Conclusion..... 6

Russia's increasing interests and concerns in Afghanistan

- The Russians defeat and Moscow's paradigm shift 8
- Afghan-Russian post-2001 relations 9
- Russia's increasing interest and concerns.....11
- The withdrawal of American Forces..... 11
- The deterioration of Kabul-Washington relations..... 11
- "Islamic State" 11
- Drug trafficking.....12
- Insecurities in northern Afghanistan.....12

Preface

The agreement between Pakistan and Afghanistan's intelligence agencies on mutual cooperation has provoked Afghan parliament and former officials and called this agreement against Afghan interests. Pakistan has welcomed it and Pakistani media have published some of its materials. However, in Afghanistan the public opinion is of the view that this agreement is only in the interest of Pakistan but not Afghanistan, therefore they demand to terminate this agreement.

The question arises, what is the objective of this agreement? Is Afghan government has signed an anti-national interest agreement? In addition, what would be the impacts of accepting and rejecting such agreement?

Moreover, in the past week Russian minister of interior and Russian president's special envoy to Afghanistan-Pakistan has visited Kabul and met with Ashraf Ghani. Moscow is concerned about Afghanistan and therefore it is taking more interests in it.

The analyst's desk of Center for Strategic and Regional Studies in Kabul discussed the aforesaid topics in this week's analysis.

Agreement with the ISI: nor that hatred and neither this friendship!



The enemy of Afghanistan will not be a friend of Pakistan!” This was the statement of Nawaz Sharif, prime minister of Pakistan, in his last trip to Kabul in a joint press conference with Ashraf Ghani.

The simple interpretation of this statement is that terrorism is the common enemy of both countries and the joint struggle against this phenomenon requires that Pakistan sees the enemy of Afghanistan the enemy of Pakistan, and treat it as enemy, but on the other hand they expect the same from Afghanistan too.

Nawaz Sharif's statement could be considered just a friendly commitment which is very common in diplomatic speeches, but the disclosure of the issue took place between both countries' intelligence services, the ISI (Inter Service Intelligence) and the (NDS) Afghan National Directorate of Security signed an agreement for joint cooperation, encouraged Noises in Afghanistan, particularly the secrecy of the government to disclose the text of the agreement became an opportunity for the media to mobilize public opinion against it, and this issue had strong reaction even in parliament.

It is mentionable that some time ago reported in media about the bilateral agreement of both countries' intelligence services. For example it was said that ISI officials interrogated the prisoners in Afghanistan. In this case the Afghan security forces have carried all important Taliban officials from provinces to Bagram by the request of ISI to help the interrogation process for their officials.

The definition of a common enemy

Lack of trust between the two countries over the years made such a high wall in relations that cannot be removed in the short term. Over the past years in Afghanistan, over the past year in Afghanistan, behind every destruction and killing that took place Pakistan was considered accused at the back of each activity.

Calling the joint enemy by Pakistan and advertising for that naturally made the enemy's definition differ in both countries. Particularly India which is the only enemy of Pakistan in the region and proved a true friend for Afghanistan by its generous economic assistances in the past years.

So it is difficult in short-term to change the image of the ISI as an institution to which the Afghan National Security forces know well factors behind the events, and had an important role in the strengthening of Afghans minds, eliminated, and say to the people that the issues like "strategic depth" in Afghanistan and efforts of Pakistan to made Afghanistan the fifth province which is unchangeable desire of the leaders of Pakistan are the incorrect ideas and both countries have common enemy.

Pakistan welcomes the agreement

Pakistani media has welcomed the agreement and considered it an important step in fight against terrorism. According to Pakistani media, beside the general purposes of the agreement such as common fight against terrorism, it has other issues as well that warrant Pakistan's national profits, including a joint struggle against the enemy's intelligence agencies and the fight against separatism.

What intelligence organizations in the world have seen the enemy, the definition is not provided in this agreement; but after the trips Asif Ali Zardari, and Pakistan Prime

Minister Nawaz Sharif on May 7 and May 12, 2015 in Kabul, Pakistani media wrote that in these meetings, the issue of use "RAW" a spy agency to India from Afghanistan against Pakistan, was discussed.

Before Nawaz Sharif's and Rahil Sharif's trips to Kabul "Nawa-i-waqt" daily quoted from the sources near to Pakistan government that Nawaz Sharif with General Rahil Sharif Chief of Army Staff of Pakistan and Rezwan Akhtar Director of ISI will inform Afghan officials from the India intelligence service "RAW" also they will tell about the India activities that do not want strong Pakistan. These interventions taking place through Afghanistan by Baluch separatists in Baluchistan and the TTP under Mullah Fazlullah, particularly in Khyber Pashtoon khwa. Pakistani security officials will also provide documents about the case to Afghan officials.

Joint operation on both sides of the boarder

Previously it was said that the two countries have agreed that their forces on both sides of the border should do joint operations against terrorists, but Afghan officials later denied the rumors and Pakistani officials said that the two sides coordinated operations on both sides of the border are advancing and it do not mean joint operations.

But it seems that Pakistani operations in Afghanistan, has taken a different form. Pakistani officials understand the sensitivity that intervention might bring them inside Afghanistan, this is doing by soldiers in military uniform doing in coordination with Afghan forces. Sending militias of this country on a mission of information with the coverage of the Pakistani Taliban and their war against the Afghan Taliban could be considered a civil war between the Taliban. What is already in some districts of Nangarhar as Nazian and Achin launched a large number of people have been displaced.

First rumors were heard that this war has been launched between the Afghan Taliban and the Islamic State "Dash" but later was told that they were Pakistani Taliban to gain more territory in the East against the Afghan Taliban fighting in Afghanistan. Pakistanis claims that Maulana Fazlullah, the leader of the Pakistani Taliban with a number of supporters, have taken refuge in this area, and with the help of Indian intelligence, "RAW" doing black operation in Pakistan.

The fight against separatism

One of the element of this agreement is the two sides' joint struggle against separatism in both countries. Separatism is not Afghanistan's problem but this is the problem that exists in Pakistan, and when it comes to talk of separatism in Pakistan, the Baluchies of this country are coming to people's minds.

According to Express tribune and other Pakistani media, Pakistan has captured roundabout 30 thousand people from all over the Pakistan, 10 percent belonged to Baluchistan which makes 3466 persons in the recent time.

This is crystal clear that Pakistani Taliban is not only behind the insecurities in Baluchistan, the Baluch separatists are also involved in the continuous fights with Pakistani security forces. The Pakistani government sees Indian intelligence agency behind all this via Afghanistan.

Conclusion:

Without any doubt, both Pakistan and Afghanistan wants cordial relations with each other and these relations must be based on mutual agreements and memorandum of understandings. But, specifically secrecy in this regard between such countries that have controversial relations with each other would only bring negative reactions and increase the mistrust. Therefore, the agreement between ISI and NDS of Afghanistan has faced harsh criticism in Afghan Parliament and even this act was compared to treason. The disagreement with this agreement is at such a stage that we might soon see its termination. But, this might increase the insecurity in the country too.

Pashtun and Baloch people recent capturing in Pakistan may consider a part of the both countries cooperation of NDS (National Headquarter of Security) and Pakistan ISI, and be pessimistic about Afghanistan, especially the Khaiber Pashton khwa arrests have connections to the other matters such as "Economic Corridor Kashgar" that will continued from Gawader to China's boarder. It was supposed to pass through the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will leave a positive impact on the economy of the area, but the central government is trying to change the route to the Punjab. Arrest of 16,813 people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, is also not unconnected with this issue.

The training of Afghan intelligence officers by Pakistani intelligence and cooperation in technical terms as it is published by Pakistani media are part of this agreement, but it is rejected by afghan side. The question arises where lies afghan national interest in this agreement?

Russia's increasing Interests and Concerns in Afghanistan



Since the last decade, Russian's interests in Afghanistan are increasing. Moreover, the propagated presence of Islamic State group too increased the worrisome of Moscow. During the last few months, the statements and remarks of Vladimir Putin, Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov, and Moscow's special representative for Af-Pak region Kabulov and now Russian Minister of interior's visit to Kabul shows such anxiousness.

The Russians defeat and Moscow's paradigm shift

Afghanistan is familiar with Moscow since ages. It was Afghanistan, which became a battlefield between Russians and Englishmen during the nineteenth century. While in the twentieth century, Russia becomes one of the largest economic and military supporters of Afghanistan. From 1954 to 1978, Moscow's economic and military assistance to Afghanistan increased beyond \$1 billion. At the times, Afghanistan once again like the Great Game becomes a battlefield between great powers. But, this time Russians faced Americans instead of Englishmen. Americans too helped Afghanistan but their level of assistance was little compared to Russians.

Until 1991, Russian's policy of assistance was greatly influenced by ideologue and the coherence in international politics. But when the Russians were defeated in Afghanistan they changed their policy and in November 1991, the President of Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin received a delegation of the four of seven groups of Mujahedeen, led by Borhanuddin Rabbani and the Russians upon releasing groups of Soviet POW's affirmed its pledge to curtail its arms shipments to Najibullah and pledged to withdraw its military advisors¹.

It was since this time that the Russians changed their policy regarding Afghanistan which continued until 2001. The Russians had kept relations with Mujahedeen but attacks on twin towers in September had changed everything.

Afghan-Russian Post-2001 Relations

When the 9/11 incidents happened and in response the USA and NATO attacked Afghanistan; the Russians welcomed the invasion. Because at the times of Islamic Emirate, the Taliban does not only have recognized the Chechens' but at the height of the war of Russo-Chechen war, in 2000, hosted a Chechen 'embassy' in Kabul. Therefore, when Taliban left Kabul, a group of Russian diplomats came to Kabul in order to open their embassy on 28th December, 2001.

Marek Menkiszak divides post-2001 Russian Afghan policy into three different periods:

1. From 2001 to 2002;
2. From 2003 to 2006;
3. From 2007 until now

In the first period, the bilateral visits were exchanged and in the meantime mostly Russian attention increased towards Afghanistan due to the many faces in the new afghan interim government who belonged to Northern Alliance and they in turn had very closed relations with Moscow. Therefore, in February 2002 Russian Foreign minister visited Kabul and invited Karzai to visit his country. On 12 February, 2002, Marshal Mohammad Qaseem Faheem visited Moscow in order to discuss weapons for Afghan army. Younis Qanooni, afghan interior minister, also visited Moscow on 28th

¹ Richard Weitz, Moscow's endgame in Afghanistan, Conflict Quarterly, Winter: 1992

February. Later, on the invitation of Russian Foreign minister, Hamid Karzai twice visited Moscow first in March and later in June.

According to Marek Menkiszak, from 2003 to 2006, Russo-Afghan relations were slowed down, but at the period of time Russo-Afghan military relations were on the rise. From 2002 to 2005, Russia provided Afghanistan worth \$30 million of military hardware, training and logistical services². In 2005, Russia provided helicopters and military equipment to Afghanistan worth \$30 million.

But when at the end of Hamid Karzai's first tenure, Kabul-Washington relations deteriorated and Hamid Karzai's relations with the United States were greatly damaged due to Barack Obama's winning the 2008 presidential elections in USA and during Afghanistan's 2009 presidential elections Richard Holbrooke and USA was involved to change its outcome. In the meantime, Russian-American relations were too damaged in 2008 due to Russian occupation of Georgia and thus challenging the American interests there.

When both the Russians and Afghans relations were deteriorated with the USA, Afghan-Russia relations become warmed. Russia at this stage, canceled \$11.1 billion of the \$12 billion of afghan debt. Later, in 2010, it canceled the remaining \$891 million afghan debts too. In the same year, Russia delivered 20 thousand AK-47 rifles to Afghan National Army, trained some 250 afghan police, modernized the Naghlu dam, and in 2011, Hamid Karzai himself went to Moscow on his third official visit³.

In addition, the trade volume between the two countries also increased since 2008. In 2008, total bilateral trade was \$200 million while in 2010 it became \$571.3 million and in 2013 the numbers crossed the \$1 billion mark.

Later in 2011, Moscow's highest-ranking politician to visit Kabul so far was the speaker of Parliament. After this visit, the bilateral exchange of visits increased. When Ashraf Ghani became Afghan President, Moscow sends their new ambassador, Alexander Mantytskiy to Kabul. He was a diplomat in Russian foreign ministry and ambassador in India, Pakistan and Nepal. Moreover, Russia's special envoy for Afghanistan Zamir Kabulov very often visits to Kabul. He too came after Russian interior minister's visit to Kabul and discussed the matters of mutual interest.

² Thomas Ruttig, From Point Zero to 'New Warmth': Russian-Afghan relations since 1989, Afghanistan Analysts Network, 2014

³ ibid

Zamir Kabulov and Russian interior minister's visit is happening in such period that the news of Islamic state in Afghanistan is spreading, the insecurity in the northern Afghanistan is increasing and the drug trafficking has worried the Russians.

Russia's increasing interest and concerns

The question that why the Russians are taking interest, cautious and worried about Afghanistan, has the following reasons:

1. The withdrawal of American Forces:

The reason behind the increasing Russian interests and worriedness in Afghanistan is because of American announcement that they would leave and withdraw from Afghanistan. This announcement has not only has increased Russian interests but worries as well. They fear and are worried that with the American withdrawal from Afghanistan, it would face insecurity and it would in turn insecure the central Asian republics and Russia as well. It is from here that the Russians are slowly militarily helping Afghanistan.

2. The deterioration of Kabul-Washington relations

One of the reasons, which brought Russia closer to Afghanistan, was that at the times of Georgia conflict (2008), Afghan-American relations were too not warmed; as a result Russia becomes closer to Afghanistan.

3. "Islamic State"

From the last few months, behind the Russian worrisome is the presence of Islamic state in Afghanistan. In this regards, from the Russian President Vladimir Putin, Russian foreign minister Lavrov, and Russian interior minister Kolokotsiv to Russian ambassador in Kabul and special presidential envoy Kabulov's remarks shows such worriedness.

Regarding Islamic state's presence in Afghanistan, Russian president Vladimir Putin commented on Islamic states influence and said: ISIS is trying to seize parts of Afghanistan⁴. In addition, Russian foreign minister Lavrov too commented on this that

⁴ For further studies, see it here: <http://af.farsnews.com/politics/news/13931004000594>>

Islamic state is becoming day by day nearer to Russian territory⁵ and in March, 2015 Russia stated: Islamic state has roots in Afghanistan and is now threatening Russian allies⁶. Later, when Hanif Atmar met with Russian foreign minister Lavrov in Moscow he said that Russia is ready to work with Kabul in fight against terror and the last week's Russian officials' visit were due to this motive.

4. Drug trafficking

The drug trafficking and the large number of its addicted in Russia is another worrisome sign to Russia. Therefore they are very much interested in Afghanistan. Because as according to United Nations survey the number of addicted people in Russia is nearly as much as it is in European Union collectively (70 tons to 88 tons). Moreover, out of about 100 thousand drug addicts dying each year worldwide, between 30 thousand and 40 thousand are Russians. Moscow relates this problem more with Afghanistan, because it still supplies 90 percent of the world's drugs⁷. One of the agenda of Russian interior minister's recent visit was also cooperation on how to curb down drug trafficking between two countries.

5. Insecurities in Northern Afghanistan

The increase in insecurities in northern Afghanistan; the increased military operations in Kunduz, Faryab, Badakhshan and Takhar have wondered the Russian-top-officials. Therefore, in this regard, the Russians have expressed their worrisome because they are fearful that it shouldn't spread to central Asia and Moscow.

The End

Contact Us:

Email: info@csrskabul.com - csrskabul@gmail.com

Website: www.csrskabul.com - www.csrskabul.net

Contact: (+93) 784089590



⁵ For further studies, see it here:< <http://www.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=13931004000520>>

⁶ For further studies, see it here:< http://dari.sputniknews.com/dari.ruvr.ru/news/2015_03_05/283210744>

⁷ Dmitri Trenin and Alexei Malashenko, Afghanistan: A view from Moscow, Carnegie Endowment, 2010, p: 15