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Preface

Mullah Omar's family have pledged its allegiance to new Taliban Amir, Mullah Akhtar Muhammad Mansoor and due to this the internal disputes in Taliban ranks is gradually going towards an end. In this weekly analysis, we would be discussing the impacts of internal disputes on the peace process and the continuous war.

In the second part of weekly analysis, we would be analyzing the insecurity and its impacts on the NUG, and the breaking of Ghazni jail. Since many years, Taliban have evacuated its members from jails and Ghazni's incidence is its last example for instance, where Round about 400 prisoners broke jail in due to Taliban's attack. In this part of analysis we would be discussing Taliban's strategies, and the causes of corruption in security organs of the country.

In the last part, you would read about the report of roundtable conference titled, **'Afghanistan and Pakistan: towards an ideal bilateral arrangement'** jointly organized by Center for Strategic and Regional Studies, Kabul and Institute of Policy Studies, Islamabad.

Mullah Omar's family swear allegiance to new Taliban Amir: Its impacts on War and Peace process



Last week, Mullah Omar's brother and son swear allegiance to new Taliban chief, Mullah Akhtar Muhammad Mansoor. For the last two months, news about the internal dispute over Taliban succession was circulating in the media outlets. However, with Mullah Omar's family pledging allegiance to new Amir, Taliban have put full stop to these internal disputes.

After this new development, the High Peace Council of Afghanistan is hopeful that Taliban would once again start the peace process. On the other hand, Taliban are also delighted with the allegiance of Mullah Omar's family and that the internal disputes didn't had damage its unity.

In this weekly analysis we would analyze the impacts of Mullah Omar's family allegiance to new Taliban leader on the continuous war and the Peace Process.

Background

While just becoming the new President of Afghanistan, Ashraf Ghani gives some privileges to Pakistan with the hope that Pakistan will force Afghan Taliban to sit on negotiation table with Afghan government. Moreover, Kabul was also cautious over its

relations with New Delhi due to Pakistan. On the other hand, the Pakistani government and the military also made such promises that they would later break it. It was from here that the Pakistani government, due to Kabul's pressures, forced some Taliban members to talk with Afghan government in Urumqi, but these talks were rejected by the Afghan Taliban.

In the Post Urumqi talks, Afghan government continued to build Pressures on Pakistan and wanted direct talks with Taliban's leadership council. On the other hand, the relations between the chief negotiator of Taliban in Qatar's office Tayyeb Agha and Pakistan were severed. Tayyeb Agha didn't want to talk to Afghan government under Pakistani pressure. Therefore, slowly, Taliban's relations with Pakistan became soured. It was from here that Pakistan builds up its pressures on Taliban and due to these pressures Taliban sits in the peace talks of Murree with a condition that this would be kept as a secret and hence by doing so it will also reduce Pakistani pressures.

In addition, Taliban too, didn't send its members of Qatar Office to Murree; they were very much concerned about the disclosure of talks. Therefore, they thought that if they would send some Taliban members other than Qatar's office they would easily reject these talks simply by saying that it is the Qatar's office that is responsible for such talks, not others.

On the other hand, looking to the difference of Tayyeb Agha with Pakistan, Taliban felt that the Qatar office might not participate in these talks, therefore, in order to decrease Pakistani pressures Taliban took part in the Murree peaceful process and later, too, didn't reject it either.

The reasons behind disclosure of Mullah Omar's death

After the negotiations between the Taliban and the Afghan government in Murree , the Afghan government based on the precise information of Pakistani officials, officially broadcasted the news on death of the leader of the Taliban, Mullah Mohammad Omar. With the announcement of this news, it stopped the peaceful process and still the questions are raised that why in such a critical circumstances this news was given to Afghan government by Pakistan, and published by Afghan government and then confirmed by the Taliban? Some of its reasons are as follows:

- The Afghan government thought that this news would weaken the morale of Taliban to a large extent; impact its unity and speed up the peace process.

Besides that, it would be considered as a victory of the Afghan government; however, the result was against the prediction of the government.

- Pakistan disclosed this information to Afghan government at such period of time, when it was under pressure from Kabul and international community and its disputes with the Taliban were also on the increase. Therefore, from one hand, they wanted to suspend the peaceful process, the promises it had given to the Afghan government to be amended and to consider everything ended with the news about Mullah Omar's death. On the other hand, it also wanted to show the Taliban that it has access to its top secret information and can disclose them whenever they want.
- For Taliban, it was too hard to further keep the death of Mullah Omar as a secret after two years, because some rumors about the death of Mullah Omar were broadcasted by the media and a group named Fidai Mahaz. Besides, Taliban themselves were too raising its concerns about the life of Mullah Omar and were requesting for the voice message of Mullah Omar. Moreover, suspending the Pakistani-controlled peace process was also possible through confirming this news.

Impacts of Taliban's Disputes on the Battlefield

When Taliban confirmed the death of Mullah Mohammad Omar on July 30, 2015, a series of disputes were raised among the Taliban on appointing Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour, as the new leader of the Taliban. Family of Mullah Mohammad Omar and the head of the Qatar Office, Tayyib Agha, were heading these disputes.

Domestic and international media covered these disputes widely; however, they did not have attention to this that it was Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour who played major role in the movement of the Taliban in last five years. He was the one who started the Qatar peace process and had direct contacts with the Taliban commanders; all of these caused the provincial governors of the Taliban and most of the commanders to pledge its allegiance to Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour.

It is mentionable that the power of the Taliban is entirely based on its warriors in the battlefield, whenever, these warriors are in the ranks of the Taliban and whenever these ranks are united, the war would be continuing. So, Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour

recognized this truth and that's why he appointed Sirajuddin Haqqani, the leader of the powerful Haqqani Network as his deputy.

On the other hand, the political figures which are separated from the Taliban have not have any influence over the Taliban's military forces and war. For example, separation of Mutaseem Agha Jan and other Taliban leaders have not impacted the war of the Taliban; unlikely, the war has intensified. Meanwhile, the raising disputes of Mullah Mohammad Omar's family and Tayyib Agha have not impacted the war; several explosions took place in Kabul, war in the North of the country intensified and strategic districts (like Musa Qala) faced collapse in the South of the country.

Whether the Internal Disputes of Taliban are ended?

Immediately after disputes were raised, the new leadership of the Taliban started efforts to gain the support of the military commanders and due to this, he received the support of most of his military commanders and provincial governors. Besides that, he sent a number of delegations to the family of Mullah Mohammad Omar in order to have its support. After the entire military officials pledged its allegiance to Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour, the family of Mullah Mohammad Omar announced its support from the new leader of the Taliban and also encouraged other opponents who suspended its pledge of allegiance due to the family of Mullah Mohammad Omar.

According to news, the leadership of the Taliban has sent a delegation to Qatar in order to make Tayyib Agha satisfied and if leadership of the Taliban could make him satisfied and end the political disputes, it would be a big political achievement for the Taliban, then.

Unity of the Taliban and its impacts of the Current Situation

Pledging allegiance of Mullah Mohammad Omar's family to Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour would have the following impacts on the ranks of the Taliban and the peace process:

1. It would increase the legitimacy of the new leader;
2. Returning of Mullah Mohammad Omar's family would increase the morale of the Taliban warriors;

3. Originally, the peace process was initiated by Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour; however, he, after the death of Mullah Mohammad Omar and his appointment as the leader of the Taliban, called this process as “enemy’s propaganda”. Of course, the reason behind this speech was gaining support of the military wing of the Taliban. Now, as Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour is considered as legitimate and accepted leader of the Taliban and as the family of Mullah Muhammad Omar had pledged its allegiance to him, he would be capable to enter into the peace process with more courage, once again. Of course, it would take some time and starting the peace process soon would be a little bit problematic for him.
4. If the peace was made with a part of the Taliban and another part was kept out of the play, it would not bring the real peace to the country, but, the real peace would come when the negotiations were conducted with the Taliban after they became united.
5. Taliban would not stop considering its basic circumstances during negotiations, but, they would continue its war until the foreign forces have presence in Afghanistan and the present unity encourages them to do so more than ever.
6. If the Taliban became ready to have talks with the Afghan government, they would enter the negotiations with a powerful position.

The Government and a War on Two Fronts



However, the country's security officials always emphasize on having necessary preparedness for struggle against insecurity, but, freeing hundreds of prisoners from the Ghazni Jail through conducting a group assault and armed conflict that lasted for hours is an obvious sign of uncontrolled security in Afghanistan and the security forces are incompetent in dealing with security.

This is not the first time that the Taliban become succeeded to release their imprisoned comrades through conducting armed raids; however, there is one difference in the latest operation which is having a precise plan for direct assault and achieving the goal with minimum casualties.

If all of them were being summarized in the planning and combat capabilities of the Taliban, there was no need to have profound concerns, but the concerns are more serious than they appear; there are hidden hands in the Afghan security forces that are involved in these insecurities and also the ground for the latest prison break, to some extent, was facilitated by these hidden hands.

The Background of Prison Breaks

On June 2008, a group of armed Taliban attacked on the Kandahar Prison, they blew the prison gates with a massive truck bomb and flooded inside, attacking the guards and freeing the inmates, they freed 900 prisoners which 350 of them were the important individuals or the warriors of the Taliban.

Moreover, the Taliban in 2011 made a world record in jail breaking by digging a tunnel of about half a kilometer and they made 475 inmates to flee through this tunnel. They were digging the tunnel for almost four months and took the necessary precautions including carrying oxygen to the entire tunnel through the pipe.

Besides that, the Taliban freed a number of prisoners by using different techniques; however, they freed the entire 400 prisoners from the Ghazni Prison as a result of a direct attack on the prison last Monday night.

Taliban's Fighting Techniques

The fighting of Taliban is not based only on weapons and achieving the targets by using force, but, in most of the cases, they also get use other techniques that the security sources do not want to talk about these techniques. And, the reason is that that government wants to introduce the Taliban nothing but an illegitimate group of warriors.

One of the techniques that the Taliban uses for attracting support of the people is doing the propaganda. Taliban have a commission named "recruitment" in their administrative mechanism. The individuals related to this commission attend villages and encourage people to not send their sons to the Afghan security forces and need to mention that this commission has had achievements, also.

The name, father name and residence of those who have left the ranks of army, national and local people as a result of the propaganda of mentioned commission is published in the official websites of the Taliban every month and sometimes, this number reaches up to hundreds, but the goal of this commission is not only to make the people leave the rank of the government. Another section of this commission is busy with recruiting those inside the armed forces of Afghanistan in order to cooperate with the Taliban, when they are needed.

These are the truths of war in Afghanistan that are being experienced for several times during the last 35 years. Considering the special circumstances in the country and dissatisfaction of people with the government, especially due to corruption, has eased the mission of the Taliban, who are making the soldiers to leave their duties. Usage of money is also a mean to encourage the soldiers and officers to cooperate with the anti-government elements. Corruption is not limited to the civil section of the governmental mechanism, but, it is highly promoted among the military officers, also.

The country's security sources do not neglect the cooperation of military personnel with the Taliban in breaking the Ghazni Prison and the spokesman for the Interior Ministry talks about arresting some police officials regarding the incident.

Leaving the Ranks of the Armed Forces

There are plenty of information, videos and photos regarding the soldiers in appropriate uniforms and officers in dramatic and stylish uniforms having presence in luxury buildings. The building for Afghanistan's Defense Ministry is called small Pentagon that has capacity of hundreds of employees and about 2500 of employees can work there at one time. This building costed 160 Million Dollars and only the expenses for its furniture and Information Technology are estimated about 50 Million Dollars.

However, there is a bitter truth behind the glossy appearance that both foreigners and the Afghan government are trying to hide it. The main problem is desertion among the armed forces of the country.

However, the related organs do not provide the exact statistic of desertion among the personnel of country's armed forces, but, some other sources have published shocking reports regarding this matter.

According to a report of SIGAR that investigate about the US expenditures in Afghanistan, 40,000 individuals of the military forces of Afghanistan have left their duty from January 2013 to January 2014. These are the individuals that the US spent huge amount on their training.

However, the Defense Ministry of Afghanistan had rejected this report on that time and considered these statistics as they had technical mistakes and problems, but, as every American officials after his/her visit to Afghanistan insists on the presence of American force in Afghanistan, it is the sign of existence of such a problem. Even, some of these

officials warn that if the foreign forces leave Afghanistan, the entire achievements of America in Afghanistan would be lost, then.

Mohammad Omar Daudzai, the former Interior Minister talks about this issue with more clarity. A few days ago, he, on his twitter account, had expressed concerns on lack of human resources in the country's defense and security forces and had considered it as an "alarm" for Afghanistan and had requested the President of Afghanistan to perform his duty as the supreme commander of the country's armed forces well.

Reason behind Weakness in Battlefield

One of the achievements of the new government after the Taliban collapsed is creating national army and police in Afghanistan. At the beginning and after the Bonn Conference I, Afghanistan was supposed to have an army consisted of 70-80 thousand individuals, however, after considering the security situation, it was planned to increase the number of army forces and equip them with modern weapons and due for this a lot of programs on training these forces have been conducted by several countries.

US were the biggest donor of the Afghan security forces during the past 14 years that spent hundred billions of dollars on equipping and training these forces. At the beginning of 2013, the number of Afghanistan's national army reached to 352000 individuals that, according to amount, were equal to Pakistan's armed forces, however, beside the entire expense, it looks like the army is not capable of handling the security situation in the country, and in many cases, the advancement of the Taliban is considered for lack of soldiers in the battle ground.

Successfulness and advancement in this war is not based on soldiers and weapons only but the morale of the soldiers in the battlefield is the first thing to be considered. Afghan soldier as a citizen of this country wants good governance and better future for his/her family and children. In a country where the families of senior governmental officials live abroad in a peaceful environment and in a system where corruption and looting rampage, how could we suppose a soldier to sacrifice him/herself for such kind of a government?

Progress in the battlefield in the first place needs the war against corruption to be won and corruption is an infelicitous phenomenon that weakens the bases of a system from inside. The obvious sign of weakness of the system is seen in the morale of the soldiers in the battlefield. If the government of Afghanistan did not overcome on the struggle against corruption, it should never have hope of overcoming on the war against the armed opposition.



A Two-Day Conference on Afghanistan-Pakistan Ties holds in Islamabad



The conference titled “**Pakistan and Afghanistan: Towards an Ideal Bilateral Arrangement**,” jointly organized by Centre for Strategic and Regional Studies (CSRS), Kabul and Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad successfully conducted in Islamabad on 16-17 September.

The roundtable was addressed by a number of Afghan scholars and policy analysts including Dr. Abdul Baqi Amin, director general, CSRS, Dr. Fazal Hadi Wazeen, member of academic board, CSRS, Dr. Waheedullah Muslih, deputy director, CSRS, Eng. Hamid Durrani, member of academic board, CSRS and Hekmatullah Zaland, CEO, CSRS. Also, Ahmad Shakir Qarar, the Secretary of Afghanistan’s Embassy in Islamabad has presence in both days of the conferences. From the Pakistan side the key discussants were Ambassador to Afghanistan (retired) Rustam Shah Mohmand, DG-IPS Khalid Rahman, Air Commodore (retired) Khalid Iqbal, Brig (retired) Said Nazir, Ambassador to Afghanistan (retired) Ayaz Wazir, Irfan Shahzad, lead coordinator research at IPS, Dr. Anwar Shah, and Mairaj-ul-Hamid.

Before the conference started, the delegation from CSRS and officials from IPS held a joint meeting and discussed about the joint cooperation and the upcoming programs.

At the opening ceremony of the conference, Dr. Abdul Baqi Amin and Khalid Rahman welcomed the participants of the conference and enlightened the importance of this conference.

Conference had four sessions; the first session was titled **“Afghanistan-Pakistan Relations; Current Scenario and Future Perspective”** in which Dr. Fazal Hadi Wazin mentioned the problems and opportunities between both countries and called for that they should be discussed and addressed. The other presenter of this session was former Pakistani Ambassador to Afghanistan, Ayaz Wazir who mentioned the existed obstacles and opportunities toward the relations of both countries.



The second session was titled **“Afghanistan’s Peace Deadlock and Solutions”** in which Dr. Abdul Baqi Amin and Rustam Shah Mohmand presented their academic articles and considered inter-Afghan understanding in the Afghan peace process as “important” and emphasized that main reason behind failure of the peace process is lack of a third party which would be accepted to the entire sides of the war.

The third session was titled as **“Afghan Refugees in Pakistan; Current Scenario and Future Perspectives”** in which Dr. Wahidullah Muslih spoke about the situation of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and said that the issue of refugees and displaced persons should be approached as a long-standing linkage between the two societies; and a conducive environment needs to be created for a smooth, mutually agreeable, lasting solution which, above all, is respectable for refugees and displaced persons themselves.

The fourth session was titled as **“Afghanistan-Pakistan Economic relations; Challenges and Opportunities”** in which Eng. Hamid Durrani and Dr. Anwar Shah, university professor, presented their academic articles and focused on strengthening economic ties between both countries.

At the end of every session, the participants warmly welcomed the discussion and raised their questions with the speakers and shared their views on related issues.

Speakers from the both sides insisted that the policymakers, both in Kabul and Islamabad, must not waste further time and immediately initiate comprehensive dialogues and take confidence building measures to lay the ground for strong and everlasting relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan and counter the nefarious designs of the international and regional players who are bent upon creating differences between the two brotherly nations trying to derail every single effort to bring sustainable peace and stability in the region

The conference called on following:

- It called for an immediate need to rebuild the confidence and trust between the two countries with visible and tangible steps;
- It called for immediately initiating a process of sincere dialogue with clear goals and objectives;
- Inclusive and addressing all issues;
- Respecting each other’s national interests and bringing them on the table.

Besides that, the negative role of a segment of policymakers, media and intelligentsia in the two countries was also criticized as major cause of hatred between Afghan and Pakistani nations and promoting vested interests of foreign powers in the region.

Both the sides emphasized that the civil society, research centers and think-tanks in particular can play a vital role in promoting relations between the two countries. They

can influence the policymakers and stakeholders; therefore such institutions should come forward actively, and collaboration between them should be strengthened for mutual understanding.

This two-day roundtable was carrying the message of that common faith, history, culture, languages and interlinked socio-economic realities and opportunities provide the basis and way forward for both Afghanistan and Pakistan to ensure peace and build their bright future together.



The End

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