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In this issue:

Preface..... 2

Donald Trump's Doctrine and his predicted policy agenda

- Why Trump won?.....4
- Trump’s tough stances..... 5
- Trump and Afghanistan..... 6
- The US future foreign policy..... 7

Foreign troops’ bloody re-entry to Afghan battlefield

- The Killing of Civilians and Afghan Security Forces..... 10
- Why is the Afghan government silent about such incidents?..... 11
- National and international reactions to the Kunduz incident..... 12
- Consequences of civilian killings..... 13

Preface

The US Presidential election was monitored in all over the world, and finally the republican Donald Trump won the US presidency with securing 290 electoral votes and thus defeated his democratic rival Hillary Clinton who had secured 228 electoral votes. Although Donald Trump does not have political experience and anti-Trump protests erupted but his rival already accepted her defeat right after Donald Trump was announced the winner.

Since Trump had made tough expressions about the US foreign policy and some international issues during his campaigns, his victory in the election was assumed to be an indicator of significant change in US policies. Since the US war in Afghanistan was started by republicans and the US soldiers are still present in Afghanistan and both leading candidates had not expressed their views regarding Afghanistan during their campaigns; the questions is, besides regional cases, how will Trump deal with Afghanistan?

On the other hand, only few days before the US Presidential elections, in US troops' airstrikes in Kunduz 30 civilians were killed including children. This incident triggered harsh reactions inside and outside the country and the Afghan government showed a soft reaction.

This is not the first and the last incident of its kind; in the past one and half decade and particularly after the formation of the National Unity Government (NUG), such attacks on the Afghan forces and civilians has been carried out repeatedly. The Question is why the NUG do not react seriously against such attacks and with this silence of the Afghan government what will be the consequences of the continuation of these attacks?

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

Donald Trump's Doctrine and his predicted policy agenda



Republican candidate for the US Presidential Elections Donald Trump won victory, defeated his rival Hillary Clinton (predicted to be a winner in elections), and became the 45th President of the United States.

Prior to elections, due to his various remarks, particularly his remarks about women, in many opinion polls Donald Trump was behind Hillary Clinton; but still he dramatically won the elections and surprised both the world and Americans.

Trump's victory resulted in stock market's tumble and some anti-trump protests erupt within the United States.

What are the reasons behind the failure of Hillary Clinton? What are the views of the President-elect of the United States regarding hot issues? And in particular what will he do different in the region and Afghanistan? These are questions that are analyzed here.

Why Trump won?

The followings are the main reasons behind the loss of Clinton and winning of Trump:

First; whites votes: Round about 62% of Americans are whites. 58% of whites voted for Donald Trump and 37% of them voted for Hillary Clinton. 63% of white men voted for Donald Trump and 31% of them voted for Hillary Clinton. In the meanwhile 53% of white women voted for Trump and 43% of them voted for Clinton¹.

Second; blacks and Latino American votes: almost 12% of the US population is black and 17% others are Hispanic and Latino Americans. Although most of these two ethnicities voted for Clinton but Clintons' votes are less than the votes that Barrack Obama had gained in previous elections. 88% of blacks voted for Hillary Clinton while 93% of them had voted for Obama. Latino Americans voted 65% for Clinton while they had voted 71% for Obama².

Third; The reemergence of Nationalistic thoughts: currently the world and the west in particular are headed towards anti-globalization and nationalistic opinions. For instance Brexit (which, to a greater extent, was due the efforts of Boris Johnson who is currently UK's Foreign Secretary and is known for his nationalistic views), anti-migrant opinions in Europe and Putin's increased popularity in Russia also influenced the United States. Besides that, there were some other issues in the United States, which paved the way for such nationalistic opinions of whites and Americans in general.

Fourth; investigation of Hillary Clinton's emails by FBI: during her service as Secretary of States, Hillary Clinton had used her personal email for government affairs. The issue was once investigated by Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); but during the campaigns, once again, this issue was raised by the head of this bureau which influenced the decision of voters.

¹ Jon Henley, White and wealthy voters gave victory to Donald Trump, exit polls show, see it online, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/09/white-voters-victory-donald-trump-exit-polls>

² ibid

Trump's tough stances

Although Trump is a new player in politics and has previously worked in business-oriented fields and it is hence hard to predict his policy agenda; but still we will look into opinions and remarks that he has made during his election campaign and in a recent few years about a variety of issues.

Migrants: Trump is highly criticized for his remarks on migrants within the United States. About the migrants, he had said that he would deport 11 million undocumented migrants, who are currently in the United States; he would build 1000 miles long wall across the US border with Mexico. He has also said that he would ban the intake of Syrian migrants and would deport the existing Syrian Migrants and he would temporarily suspend the migration from the countries that have a history of exporting “terrorism”.

ISIS in Iraq and Syria: first Donald Trump had suggested to the United States should wait the conflict in Syria and then fight the remnants of Bashar ul Asad or Islamic State. However, after bloody incidents of Paris, he said that he would take tough measures against ISIS so that this group would not be able to recruit through Internet. During his campaign, Trump said that “we have no choice but to eliminate ISIS”; Trump also supported deploying American soldiers in other country in order to suppress ISIS.

Saudi Arabia and Iran: Trump's expressions about Saudi Arabia and Iran are also contrary to Obama's policies. Trump demanded to double and triple the sanctions on Iran because, he believes, Iran was the biggest supporter of “terrorism”. It was due to Trump's these comments, while congratulating Trump on his presidency, Iranian Foreign Minister demanded to remain committed to international regulations and signed agreements. Trump had also threatened to stop buying Saudi Arabia's oil in case Saudi troops did not take part in suppression of ISIS.

China and Russia: Trump has widely spoken against China (than against Russia) mostly in regards to the US-China trade relations. He criticized China for lowering the value of its currency (Yuan); because it is due to the devaluation of Chinese currency, the United States has suffered losses in bilateral trade. He has also accused China of stealing the US intellectual properties and pledged to prove

these accusations. He said that he would instruct the US trade representatives and the World Trade Organization (WTO) to bring trade cases against China. On the other hand, the US owes great amounts of money in debt from China and in this regard Trump has said that he would decrease these and other national debts and he would increase the US military presence in Asia-Pacific so that the US get upper hand when dealing with China.

Trump wants to form a new coalition with Russia in order to “reduce disagreements” with this country. After Trump’s victory in the elections, Putin congratulated him and expressed hope that Moscow and Washington would work together to improve relations so that these joint efforts would have positive consequences to the tackle world’s security threats.

Trump and Afghanistan

Since 2004, this was the first time that Afghanistan’s issue was neglected during election campaigns. There are several reasons for that, first issues such as ISIS, Syria, migrants, Russia, China, terrorism, “terrorist” attacks that occurred in the United States and the US internal situation were considered more significant than Afghanistan. Second; now after 15 years, the Afghanistan case is as it was in 2001. Since the republicans had started this war and later in two subsequent periods democrats failed to resolve it, both sides tried not to raise this issue.

However, since 2012, Donald Trump had several remarks about Afghanistan. For instance, in 2012, Trump had said that he would pull out all its troops from Afghanistan. In 2013, when a number of US soldiers were killed by some Afghan soldiers Trump reacted and said: “let’s withdraw from Afghanistan; our soldiers are killed by those Afghans that we have trained. We wasted millions of dollars there, it is unacceptable.”³

Later-on, Trump changed his opinion and demanded to keep the 9800 US soldiers in Afghanistan; because, now he said, the US presence in Afghanistan is also necessary for Pakistan. In addition, in 2015, Trump said that the US’s ongoing war in Afghanistan was not a mistake.

³ Jafar Haand, What Trump has said about Afghanistan, VOA, see it online: <http://www.pashtovoa.com/a/donald-trump-remarks-on-afghanistan/3282242.html>

The US future foreign policy

Generally, in all countries, policies during power are different from the stances made during electoral campaigns. Many candidates, in order to attract voters, make great promises during campaigns but, to a greater extent, they do not fulfill these promises. Therefore, these tough expressions of Trump may also face the same fate. In the meanwhile, Trump that has not had political experience before this, entering the US bureaucracy and Presidential system, would not be able to make those revolutionary decisions that he had pledged to make during his electoral campaigns.

In his victory speech, Donald Trump briefly raised foreign policy and said: “we will get along with all other nations willing to get along with us. We will have great relationships. We will seek common ground, not hostility; partnership, not conflict.”⁴

However, Donald Trump’s policies regarding Russia, China and Islamic world will be different than those of its predecessors and would be, to some extent, close to what he has promised during his campaigns.

In our respective region, Trump would establish better relations with India compared to Pakistan. Hindu residents in the United States had campaigned for Trump and he had once participated in these campaigns. If the United States did not undertake tougher stance against Pakistan it would at least do not soften its current stance. It is the reason why the US Ambassador in Pakistan has said that, the US’s policy towards Pakistan would not change with Trump coming to power.

Afghanistan can be affected by the US future policies if decisions are taken in the following two areas:

First; the US soldiers in Afghanistan: Trump’s expressions in the past few months has shown that he is not going to withdraw the US troops from Afghanistan;

⁴ CNN, Here's the full text of Donald Trump's victory speech, see it online:
<http://edition.cnn.com/2016/11/09/politics/donald-trump-victory-speech/index.html>

because it is not in the interests of the United States. He would keep 9800 US soldiers in Afghanistan as he had supported this policy before.

Second; the US economic aids to Afghanistan: the Afghan government would mostly be concerned about the US financial aids. The United States may link its financial aids with tougher conditions in the future.

Foreign troops' bloody re-entry to Afghan battlefield



On 3 November 2016, in an US airstrike in Kunduz province, 32 civilians including many children died, 20 others were injured, and several residences were destroyed.

The airstrike was carried out after two American soldiers were killed during a joint operation with the Afghan forces, in this province, and the local people have presumed it as a vengeance attack.

Releasing a report, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has said that in five days (from 30 October to 5 November 2016), at least 95 civilians were killed and 111 civilians were wounded. Most of the responsibility for these civilian casualties goes to foreign forces and this situation raises concerns about their return to the battlefield in Afghanistan.

In the past one and half decade, tens of thousands of civilians were killed in Afghanistan and according to the statistics of the United Nations, from 2007 to 2015, there was a total number of 62375 civilians either killed or wounded in the

war in Afghanistan⁵. All parties of the war (the Taliban, the Afghan government and foreign forces) share responsibility for the fatalities of innocent lives. The statistics of UNAMA mostly distributes the responsibility for civilian casualties to the Taliban but civilian and the Afghan forces' casualties in the airstrikes carried out by foreign forces were also a controversial issue in the past 15 years and has been the main reason behind the opposition of the former Afghan President Hamid Karzai with the United States.

The question is why is the NUG silent against the bloody airstrikes and the casualties of the Afghan forces and civilians in foreign forces' attacks?

The Killing of Civilians and Afghan Security Forces

The first airstrike of the foreign forces, which resulted in mass killing, was an attack on a wedding ceremony in Urozgan where dozens were killed including the bride. At that time backing the US forces, the Afghan government officials had said that Mullah Baradar was in the wedding and the bride was his relatives; but later it was cleared that the victims of that incident were relatives of those who had helped Hamid Karzai during overthrow of the Taliban regime. From 2001 to 2014, such incidents kept repeated and in recent years of Karzai's rule, it triggered his anger towards Americans.

After the formation of the NUG, foreign forces, particularly after returning to the battleground and resuming night raids have repeatedly targeted the Afghan forces and civilians and have caused heavy casualties.

In July 2015, the US helicopters attacked on an Afghan military base and killed and wounded a number of Afghan forces while no military operation was active in the region⁶. According to official reports, nine Afghan soldiers dressed in the Afghan army uniforms were killed and six others were injured. In September 2016, the Afghan security officials in Uruzgan province announced that eight Afghan police soldiers were killed in an arbitrary operation of foreign forces⁷. After some days,

⁵ <http://csrskabul.com/pa/?p=2026>

⁶ <http://www.darivoa.com/a/us-force-attack-afghan-forces-security-post-in-lugar-province-today/2870090.html>

⁷ <http://www.avapress.com/vdcui5az3t1azq2.cbct.txt>

17 Afghan national army soldiers and 6 Afghan police soldiers were killed in a US airstrike in Nad Ali district, Helmand province.⁸

Afghan civilians were also killed in such attacks. In the beginning of October 2015, after the collapse of Kunduz city at the hands of the Taliban, 42 Afghan civilians were killed and several others were injured in an airstrike by foreign forces on a MSF hospital⁹. In another incident one month ago, 27 civilians were killed and wounded in a US airstrike in Nangarhar province¹⁰. The Kunduz incident is also one of these incidents in which civilians were targeted by foreign forces.

Why is the Afghan government silent about such incidents?

The NUG has never condemned such attacks nor has it reacted in response to the irresponsible attacks of the foreign forces and even in some occasions the spokespersons of the NUG have justified these attacks.

In response to the recent incident in Kunduz, which had raised national and international reactions, releasing a statement, the Afghan Presidential Palace though termed this attack a “humanitarian catastrophe” but has had no indication to foreign forces and their commitments to protect civilians and has even somehow justified the attack¹¹. In its statement, the Afghan Chief Executive’s Office also without raising finger toward foreign forces has said that the attack was carried out on the Taliban strongholds and that its responsibility goes to the Taliban.¹²

The statements of the Afghan Presidential Palace and Chief Executive Office in relation to such incidents only signify the weakness and lack of willingness in the highest ranks of the Afghan government to protect its citizens. These statements are rather similar to the statement of the American forces that they release after such incidents and in which they regret killing innocent individuals and sympathize with the families of victims.

⁸ <http://avapress.com/vdci5uaz5t1ap32.cbct.html>

⁹ <http://da.azadiradio.com/a/27423589.html>

¹⁰ <http://www.asianews.af/8439/>

¹¹ <http://president.gov.af/fa/news/188180>

¹² <http://ceo.gov.af/fa/news/229589>

In these statements, the Afghan government does not point out the commitments of the US forces in Bilateral Security Agreement with Afghanistan and only demands from US forces indirectly and very gently to be completely careful in the future so that such incidents may not be repeated. These phrases mean that the US troops have been careful but they need to be more careful.

The reason behind this weakness and silence of the Afghan government in such incidents is the financial and military support of the United States and the NATO from the NUG. This government was created as a result of the US intervention in Afghanistan and is even from the beginning it is formed in a way that it should not create obstacles on the way of the US long-term objectives in the region. Therefore, the NUG sees its survival in silence in such incidents.

National and international reactions to the Kunduz incident

Despite the strategic silence of the Afghan government, the bloody strike of the foreign forces in Kunduz has sparked national and international responses.

In response to this incident, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and Head of UNAMA said, “The loss of civilian life is unacceptable and undermines efforts toward building peace and stability in Afghanistan”. Releasing a statement, UNAMA said that it will conduct an “independent” and “impartial” investigation about the civilian casualties in Kunduz and urged the Afghan authorities to “ensure” an independent, impartial and prompt investigation.¹³

On the other hand, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also condemned the Kunduz incident and has demanded impartial investigations. According to Russian officials, it is not the first time that, innocent civilians are targeted in Afghanistan, but such incidents had repeatedly occurred in the past as well and if those responsible for such incidents were punished, such incidents would not be repeated.

Russia has reacted against the US airstrike on civilians in Kunduz while its relations with the United States are tenuous over regional issues particularly in Syria.

¹³ <http://unama.unmissions.org/unama-investigating-allegations-32-civilian-deaths-air-strikes-kunduz>

Washington has also criticized Russia for carrying out airstrikes in Halab city of Syria and killing civilians.

The Kunduz incident has sparked reactions inside the country as well. The former Afghan President Hamid Karzai, Wolesi Jirga (lower house of the Afghan Parliament), Meshrano Jirga (upper house of the Afghan Parliament) and the Afghan civil society have condemned the incident and even some parliament members have demanded to revoke security agreement with the United States.

Consequences of civilian killings

Killing civilians may be justifiable once or twice as “mistake”, but considering the past 15 years, repeatedly killing civilians and justifying it as “mistake” would not be acceptable to people.

One of the factors that have resulted to the continuation of such incidents is not punishing those responsible of such incidents. If an Afghan soldier is punished for killing foreign forces then measures must also be taken against foreign soldiers that carry out such attacks. Such dual approach and justifying such attacks would increase distance between the Afghan government and the people.

Generally, beside harsh reactions, killing innocent civilians also triggers disgust and hatred against the perpetrators of such events and plays a significant role in the continuation of conflict in the country.

The end

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