



**Center for Strategic & Regional Studies**

**Kabul**

**Weekly Analysis-Issue Number 299 (April 27 –4 May, 2019)**

Weekly Analysis is one of CSRS’ publications, which significantly analysis 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).

---

**In this issue:**

Preface..... 2

**The grand consultative Jirga and its impact on peace**

Head and Delegates’ election for the Jirga ..... 3

Inside the Auditorium ..... 4

Questions for discussion ..... 6

Resolution and its effect on the peace process.....7

**International Worker’s Day, Hundreds of thousands of Afghan laborers in pursuit of employment**

International workers’ day ..... 9

Employment and labor law of Afghanistan..... 10

Recommendations.....12

## Preface

Besides altercations and boycotts, the grand consultative Jirga for peace started last Monday on 9<sup>th</sup> of Sawar, 1398 [solar] and ended after five days. The purpose of the Jirga was to define peace, determine its limits and give advice to the government about peace. The government considers the inauguration of the Jirga as the opening point of intra-Afghan talks.

The first part of CSRS weekly analysis discusses the need for conduction of Grand consultative Jirga, its type, purpose and results.

The second part of the analysis elaborates the condition of workers and employment in Afghanistan. While the International workers' day was celebrated this year on 1<sup>st</sup> of May (11<sup>th</sup> of Sawar), there were two million unemployed people in Afghanistan, according to the ministry of work and social affairs. The ministry has reported that 8.5 million labor force is available in Afghanistan. War, corruption, lack of resources and facilities are the main causes of unemployment in Afghanistan.

Hence, the second part represent answers to the following questions: how is the condition of unemployment in Afghanistan? In what state the economic refugees of Afghanistan are live abroad? And what should the government do?

## The grand consultative Jirga and its impact on peace



Despite disagreements and altercations, the grand consultative Loya Jirga for peace inaugurated last Monday on 29 April and lasted 5 five days. The purpose of the assembly was to define peace, determine limits for it and give important advices to the government. The government considers the inauguration of the Jirga as the opening point of intra-Afghan talks. Through this, the government strives to enter the peace process.

The Afghan government has a predetermined definition for peace and their peace has specific limits. But regarding the government's definition of peace, there is not only absence of consensus, but has led to weak government's role in the peace process and has sometimes pushed the government towards the edge of opposing the process. The public, political parties, civil activists, ex-president Hamid Karzai and some other influential personalities have criticized government's stand regarding peace and has accused it of indolence. Moreover, Zalmay Khalilzad, special representative of the United States for Afghanistan has also repetitively criticized the government. Because of such reproaches,

antagonisms, pressures and political isolation, Ashraf Ghani felt necessary to conduct the peace Jirga and strengthen his stand.

## **Head and Delegates' election for the Jirga**

The government announced that delegates for the Jirga will be partially elected. Among the 3200 participants, 1000 delegates will be from Kabul and the rest will be from other provinces. In provinces, a commission, which included the head of provincial council, director of women affairs, head of scholars' council, and others, under the supervision of the governors, determined delegates for the Jirga.

Complaints regarding the delegates' election process got published by the media. It was claimed that most of the delegates elected for the Jirga were either government officials or those who were favorites of the governor or the provincial council.

When the government decided to call up consultative Jirga, dissensions began since then. Political parties adjudicated the Jirga as Ashraf Ghani's campaign for the upcoming elections, thus, boycotted the Jirga. Hamid Karzai although agreed with holding Peace Jirga at the beginning, but later, termed it unnecessary and suspected its results. Gulbudin Hekmatyar, the leader of Hezb-e-Islami also entitled the Jirga unnecessary and an obstacle for peace. Most importantly, Abdullah Abdullah, chief executive complained that he is not consulted regarding the peace Jirga, and thus, boycotted the Jirga.

Despite boycotts of prominent figures, Ghani was able to convince to accept the leadership of the Jirga. The person who still has a place among the Jihadi leaders and holds a spot among the political figures of the countries. He is a professor of Islamic sciences and has an influential verbal communication skills. These characteristics do not exist in Ashraf Ghani and any other assembled individuals. Sayyaf was therefore the savior of the legitimacy crisis of the Jirga.

## Inside the Auditorium

The Auditorium of the Jirga had a special message and efforts were made to display the Jirga as a national assembly. Despite Abdullah Abdullah's boycott, his picture was hanged near the stage. In addition, only the National Television of Afghanistan had the monopoly to broadcast the first day of the Jirga and other news agencies were not allowed to enter the auditorium and talk to the delegates. The organizers' decision was to keep the activities of the committees and speeches of delegates behind closed doors. The logic was enable comfort for delegates to speak without any fear and worry. However, when the news reporters complained about the issue, some of the reporters were allowed to enter the auditorium and interview the participants. Despite the images and symbols in the auditorium, monopoly and restriction of news coverage indicated that the organizers wanted to comprehensively control the assembly and avoid unforeseen events.

Besides broadcast monopoly, the appointment of the head and attempt to appoint administrative board members indicate that the government strived the control the flow of the Jirga, and thus, control its results.

## Questions for discussion

The government had pre-specified questions prepared for discussion. The questions which were represented to the participants for consultations and were arranged according to their importance, were mostly concentrated on issues about which, the government stressed during the last few months of peace negotiations.

The first and most important issue was how convince the Taliban for peace. Here, the purpose wasn't to say that the Taliban do not want to make peace, but to know how to make the Taliban to negotiate. Thus far, the Taliban refused to negotiate with the government and considered it against the legitimacy of their war. The Taliban say that their negotiations will be with civilians and political

parties, not with the government officials. While through the Jirga, the government strived to pressure the Taliban and the United States to initiate negotiations with the government, as a government entity.

Answers to the questions differed among the participants. However, some similar points included inauguration of the Taliban's office in Afghanistan, scheduled pullout of the foreign forces, ceasefire, and releasing prisoners for eliminating trust issues.

The foreign forces pullout is not the authority of the government, but the U.S. has agreed to pullout if conditions are favorable. Releasing prisoners is a logical action, but it will not force the Taliban to negotiate with the government. Opening the Taliban's office in Afghanistan was a demand of the government and the government has shown preparation for it. However, it is not applicable, as the Taliban will not be willing to negotiate peace under the shadow of the government.

The second issue was about securing values. Before the Jirga, the government has insisted on preservation of the constitution in the peace process. This stance of the government was implicitly by the U.S. and openly criticized by political parties and influential figures. The government tried to legitimize their stand via the Jirga, and the resolution of the Jirga also supported the government's stand. The consultative Jirga has mentioned about preservation of many other values, but the preservation of the constitution, elections and regime were something that government needed the most.

The fourth issue was about formation of negotiation team list for peace talks. The government felt necessity for this issue because last time's altercations in intra-Afghan talks were due to the list of delegates for negotiations. The government strived to find a way out about the issue through the Jirga so that it can be represented and used as a national decision in the future. The Jirga had a common solution for the issue which was: the list should be all-inclusive, experts and delegates of the Jirga should be included in the list and should short. The president had an appropriate response to the demand.

The fourth issue was about the government's stand about the involved countries. This issue was above the authority and knowledge of the Jirga. The Jirga's consultation was general and unrealistic due to lack of understanding of the current conditions.

### **Resolution and its effect on the peace process**

After five days of consultations, the consultative Jirga published a resolution which had 23 articles. The Jirga requested a sustainable peace and foreign forces pullout should be scheduled based on agreement of all involved sides. The pullout issue was not discussed extensively before. The resolution emphasized on preservation of National establishments and regime. In addition, the constitution should be preserved and can reformed based on need. The Taliban and the government should facilitate to maintain human behavior and should exchange prisoners. The Jirga strictly requested stoppage of false propagandas and should urgently announce permanent ceasefire.

The Jirga also requested political parties, prominent figures and Afghan government to begin intra-Afghan negotiation as a national unit. Another request was to prepare a non- partisan list of Jihadi and national figures, experts, experience individuals and scholar for the intra-Afghan talks.

During the closing ceremony, Presidnet Ghani said he is ready to announce ceasefire. However, it needs to be mutual and Taliban should also step up. To respect the holy month of Ramadan, the government announced release of 175 prisoners of the Taliban.

undoubted, to overthrow the unity of the national unity government, it resolved the isolation that was about peace, and launched an initiative; the world and the Taliban made it clear that in Afghanistan it was impossible to achieve peace without a national unity government.

The Peace Consultative Meeting in Kabul ends when the United States, Russia and China tripartite meeting on peace in Afghanistan last week, a statement issued from the Russian Foreign Ministry's address stating that the withdrawal of foreign

troops from Afghanistan should be responsible and In order to achieve peace in Afghanistan as a first step, they have pledged to support the inclusion of all Afghans and Afghan leaders in peace efforts andWe are going to help kind with Afghans.And the Special Representative of the United States, Zalmay Khalilzad, praised the meeting and called it important Afghan peace accords that they agreed on a peace accord in Afghanistan, and the government of Afghanistan praised the efforts of the countries of America, Russia and China.



## International Worker's Day, Hundreds of thousands of Afghan laborers in pursuit of employment



International workers' day is celebrated on 1st of May (11th of Sawar) all over the world, while the greatest wish of Afghan workers is respectable and permanent employment.

Afghanistan also celebrated the day, despite the fact that 30.7% out of 49.66% of labor force is unfortunately unemployed in Afghanistan. Moreover, according to central statistics organization of Afghanistan, 51.7% of the people of Afghanistan are facing multidimensional poverty. The organization also reported results of a survey by ICON institute in 2018, which indicated that 54.5% of Afghans lives below the poverty line.

Here, we discuss the history of International workers' day, condition of work and laborers in Afghanistan.

## International workers' day

International workers' day is of the officially recognized international days which has history of more than 133 years. On 1st of May, 1886, American laborers of Chicago city protested to demanded reduction of working hours from 14 hours to 8 hours. In result, the U.S. police harshly responded, which in result, a number of the protesters were killed and some imprisoned.

After 33 years, the sacrifices of Chicago laborers resulted the establishment of International labor organization within the United Nations through the Warsaw pact in 1919. In addition, International labor organization officially joined the United Nations in 1946. Earlier, based on the recommendation of the representative of American workers, International workers congress named 1st of May as the International workers' day in 1889, in France. This day is still celebrated in all around the world as workers' day.

Afghanistan however, where limited number of factories are operate and the number of laborers is also low compared to other countries, strong laborers' agencies were not established throughout the history, neither the labor day was celebrated largely. Although the day was officially celebrated during the governance of Khalq party, but not a remarkable change was witnessed in the condition of workers and alike other stratum of society, laborers and farmers were imprisoned and executed, under the name of anti-revolution characters. However, Gulbahar factory Laborers' strike, during the time of kingdom in 1965, is worth mentioning. The strike ended with the imprisonment of the leaders of the strike. In addition, worker congregated in Hotel Plaza square of Kabul to revolt against oppressors and unite laborer on 1st of May, 1974.

But obviously, the best time of workers' movement was after April of 1978, since labor concepts, working class and labor movement entered the political and social literature of the country and classes and unions of laborers were established.

## Employment and labor law of Afghanistan

Although the labor law of Afghanistan has considered all of the rights and privileges of laborers, but due to insecurities, weak economy, unstable political condition and poor management, workers are forced to accept all difficulties and law-breakings of employers, or tolerate dozens of dangers of travelling abroad to avoid joblessness.

Article 11 of the labor law of Afghanistan clearly says “In economic and social areas, workers have the right to be provided with health services, work and production safety, trainings and skills development, improvement of professional knowledge and provision of social protection”. However, 44% of the labor force of Afghanistan is busy in agriculture sector and their income is obtained through primary equipment such as shovel and hack. In addition, deputy director of central statistics organization of Afghanistan, around 2.7 million children are busy working. Moreover, According to article 59 and 64 of labor law of Afghanistan, wages should be paid considering the quantity and quality of work, with no regard to rank, grade and without any discrimination and should be paid on time. Nonetheless, even those workers who hold bachelor degrees are paid 150 Afghani per day by the private sector. In addition, dozens of laborers congregate in Kabul and provinces, hoping to find work. But unfortunately, they do not usually find work and return home empty handed.

Moreover, it is stated in article 14 and 101 that there have to be a written agreement between employer and employee through which employee shall be obliged to work for the employer for a definite or indefinite time, in return, he/she will obtain salary and/or other privileges. Work contracts can be terminated in case of 20 days employee absence without a cause or according to the content of (part 3, 4 & 5) article 95 (salary deduction, change of duty station, or repetition if contract is repeated two times in a year). However, contracts mostly do not exist in private sector and even if do, they are prepared unbalanced. Thus, laborers are unsafe in Afghanistan, since whenever employers want, they dismiss employees and hire new ones.

According to the officials, Afghanistan has signed 19 international work agreements, while more than two million people are unemployed in Afghanistan and around 400 thousand are entering the labor force.

## Recommendations

- Since the vital challenge related to work is high unemployment rate, therefore the government should initiate infrastructural projects such as, dams, modernization of agriculture, sustenance private sector and enablement of mine extraction, in order to provide work opportunities for the citizens.
- The government should strategically send workers to partner countries, so that the economy can improved through the inflow of money, at the same time, unemployment rate can decrease.
- In order to improve workers' condition in private sector, the government should provide budget so that advantage is not being taken of the constraints of workers.
- Provision of working skills improvement programs by the government can increase workers' knowledge and can lead to innovation and improvement in workplace.
- As issues related work and laborers are not greatly discuss through the media, it is necessary for the media, especially Televisions, to pay attention to work related issues, so that rights of laborers are given and the law is implemented.

---

### Contact Us:

Email: [info@csrskabul.com](mailto:info@csrskabul.com) - [csrskabul@gmail.com](mailto:csrskabul@gmail.com)

Website: [www.csrskabul.com](http://www.csrskabul.com) - [www.csrskabul.net](http://www.csrskabul.net)

Office: **(+93) 202564049 - (+93) 784089590**



Researcher and Editor of Weekly Analysis: **Ahmad Shah Rashed**, [ahmadshahr786@gmail.com](mailto:ahmadshahr786@gmail.com)