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The Effects of the Afghan Issue on Pakistan's Political Dynamics: An Analysis of the General Musharraf Administration



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Abstract: After the incident of 9/11, Afghanistan emerged as a terrorist state before the face of the world. To eradicate the militant factors the USA initiated a war against terror with the help of her allies on the soil of Afghanistan. This paper aims to analyze the efforts of Pakistan to bring harmony, peace and development to Afghanistan. The Afghan political scenario is a "multi-political scenario" in which different types of stakeholders show their political legitimacy over the masses. The capitalist class led by the USA and the socialist class by the Russians are the antagonistic factors in this regard. Another major group in this regard is the Islamic agenda group, having a culture of arms and is also a main participant in the Afghan political setup. The political legitimacy of the different groups has de-railed whole the system on the verge of chaos. The main focus of this paper is to determine the struggles of Pakistan to restore the true political system in Afghanistan through the participation of all the stakeholders in the scenario.

Key Words: Harmony, Islamization, Legitimacy, Negotiations, Pakistan's Struggles, Peace, Taliban, wars in Afghanistan

Introduction

Pakistan and Afghanistan have had close relations since their independence of Pakistan. However, there exist some crucial points leading to deteriorating the relations between both countries. Both countries have many common points of mutual understanding; the people of Pakistan and Afghanistan have close ties with respect to their religion, ethnicity and traditions. These close ties among the masses of both countries are responsible to make a strong bond of the mutual relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The peace and political stability in Afghanistan are the focal point of the foreign policy of Pakistan. The impacts of the cold war between the two world powers, the USA and USSR can be seen in the land of Afghanistan. The enmity between these powers brought instability and insecurity to Afghanistan. The USSR war from 1979-1989 and the USA war from 2001-2021 are responsible for the destabilization and poor government system in Afghanistan.

However, Pakistan always tried her best to normalize the situation with positive dialogue and negations because Afghanistan is a neighbour and a Muslim country (Durrani, M.U et al, 2009). The

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tri-party dialogues in Geneva among the stakeholders of the Afghan war of 1979-1989 also bore fruits due to the peace interest of Pakistan in the region. Instead of serious efforts by Pakistan, some countries like Iran, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan pointed out Pakistan as the partner of the Taliban in Afghanistan (Sultana, 2015). The USA is also a main participant in the political scenario of Afghanistan. After the incident of 9/11, the interests of the USA turned towards the Afghan land. Despite the arms race and the trillions of amount in Afghanistan, she could not get her interests. As we consider the point of legitimacy in the political nature of Afghanistan, then it is a fact that the culture of arms always remained as a nominated factor. We cannot eliminate that culture at all, but reduce it to some extent. It needs to use, the arms culture in Afghanistan to bring peace and stability in political matters rather than that of destruction. In the year 2010, Afghan President Hamid Karzai formed the HPC (High Peace Council) to dialogue over the issue, but the Taliban (the legitimate jihadi group for the government in Afghanistan) refused to join the council (Kuehn, F. 2014).

Despite the world's pressure on Pakistan after 9/11, Pakistan never seeks the Afghan resolution in military aspects because the instability in Afghanistan is also dangerous for Pakistan due to the ethnic relations of the masses across the borders of both countries (Ali, M. *et al* 2020). Now, it is the obligation of UNO and the world's economies to restore peace and development in Afghanistan to eliminate the weeds of the 9/11 incident.

Research Methodology

For the collection of data, there are two broad sources. These sources are the primary and secondary sources of data collection. Primary data mainly consisted of interviews and questionnaires, and the secondary data is in the form of books and articles etc. In the current research, the data is collected by using of secondary source of data collection. The books, articles related to the Pak- afghan relations and documents on Afghan history are critically examined.

Historical Context of the Afghan Problem

The issue of political instability and mass destruction initiated with the commencement of

the USSR on Afghan soil. Afghanistan has a special geographical location due to its neighbouring the formal USSR. After world war second the "cold war" between the world's powers is witnessed in Afghanistan. USSR struggled to her best to grow the seeds of socialism in Afghanistan, as the "antagonistic economic philosophy" of the United States. Many other experts revealed that USSR wanted to secure the "Ainak Copper Reserves" so; she made the way to Afghanistan (Mazhar, M.S, et al 2013). However, the role of Pakistan is considered vital to restoring peace and prosperity in Afghanistan. Pakistan has close relations with Afghanistan and similarities in religion, culture and traditions in many aspects. During the Afghan War of 1979-1989, Pakistan served 5.5 million Afghan refugees; it was a great number of people in this regard. Pakistan facilitated these refugees with all kinds of good (Grau, L.W, 2014). Pakistan showed her concerns towards the Afghan issue and assisted the Taliban against the USSR intervention. On the other hand, India has considered the assistance of Pakistan towards the Taliban as an anti-state policy against India (Kuraishi, 2012).

Pakistan's Initial Attempts to Bring Peace to Afghanistan

The political role of Pakistan is considered vital in the formation of the "Geneva Accord" on April 14, 1988. That was a tri-party political commitment to disarm the region from external intervention. The stakeholders of the accord the USA, USSR and Afghanistan consolidated on a framework to pull out the USSR forces from Afghanistan on the considerations of Pakistan. Due to its geostrategic position, Pakistan has an important place in the politics of the region. Pakistan assisted the Mujahedeen groups in the Geneva Accord for the withdrawal of the USSR forces from Afghanistan (Hanif, K, et al 2021). The political shift of Pakistan has the core value to determine the political dynamics in Afghanistan.

The Tragic Events of September 11 and Pakistan's Current Political Climate

Another major shift in Pakistan's political setup occurred over the incident of 9/11. After the incident of 9/11, a "new political arena" was developed in Pakistan. Now the directions of this arena turned towards the West as the antidynamics to the *Al-Qaeda* and *Taliban*. That was a

highly political change in Pakistan's stance due to the world's pressure. Pakistan fought a "double game" after the 9/11 incident and adopted proxy war strategies against the USA interests in the favor of Taliban (Wasi, et al 2021). A new world order was released to eradicate the roots of terrorism from the world. Pakistan faced serious problems from the insurgent groups from Afghanistan and also within the country. The president of Pakistan General Pervaiz Musharraf said "The United States was not only the casualty of 9/11, the attacks hit Pakistan differently, but with the equally savage force we feel the ramifications to this day. No other country has faced as many threats on as many fronts" (Musharraf, 2006). Due to joining the war on terror, Pakistan faced many types of national security issues within the country from religious groups. The government of Pakistan justified its stance towards the new world order to restore the vote of confidence before its masses. But the religious groups, civil society, and many political parties showed their concerns about that change in the policy.

Pakistan's Political System Following the Attacks of September 11

The political dynamics of Pakistan shifted towards peace after the 9/11 incident. Pakistan joined the world club against the militants' factors. Afghan National Security forces, NATO and Pakistan fought a joint session of war in Afghanistan. On the other hand, some USA military officers and the civilian government blamed Pakistan for the help of the *Taliban and Haggani* network against world interests (ICG, Asia Report, No. 262, 2014). Pakistan also saved many core objectives behind this joining the war on terror. Firstly Pakistan got the favour of world powers on the issue of Kashmir, second, is the security of national assets and the third is the measurements to boost up the economic interests. The USA also supported Pakistan with many types of aid in the form of weapons and handsome amounts due to its cooperation with the USA in this critical situation. Pakistan has achieved the status of a non-NATO allies' country and gained the sum of Billions of dollars in the form of a coalition support fund (Fair. C, 2009). The amount of humanitarian aid was also in the remarkable figures during the days of the war. So, the shift of Pakistan's national stance in the favor of the world club has the amalgam of harms and benefits for Pakistan.

Demands Made by the United States of America to Pakistan's Government

The world witnessed the destruction of important buildings in the USA on Sep11, 2001 at the hands of terrorists belonging to Al-Qaeda. All the major powers of the world became a unit against these terrorist groups. Pakistan was also invited to take the necessary actions against all the wings in the country and also across the border. On Sep13, 2001, the USA Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage handed over an envelope containing the demands of the USA from Pakistan in the hands of ISI Chief Gen. Mahmood, the USA demand letter contained the seven demands,

- Pakistan will provide the blanket flight to the USA and NATO jets to destroy the Al-Qaeda places and operation centres.
- Pakistan should provide all the territorial access to the USA and NATO alliance countries to trace Osama Bin Laden.
- Pakistan will also provide its intelligence sharing with the USA to eradicate the hidden heavens of the terrorists.
- All the food and fuel supply to Afghanistan should be stopped at once, so the operational abilities of the Al- Qaeda and Taliban s can be minimized.
- Pakistan will also create an anti-terrorist stance in the masses; the anti-American sentiments in the public should be eradicated.
- Pakistan will cut off all relations with the Taliban government on all basis and forums.
- Pakistan will stop all Al-Qaeda operations from its land and across the border areas (Woodward, 2002).

Terrorism within Pakistan after the attacks of September 11

Pakistan suffered the cancer of domestic terrorism after joining the war against terrorism. The terrorist attack on the key personalities of Pakistan and also on the common people of Pakistan. The main focus of the terrorist activities was the foreigners and the minorities living in Pakistan (Kronstadt, 2004). That was the anger of terrorists toward the Pervaiz Musharraf regime

due to his anti-militant stance against terrorism. Pakistan faced the multiple challenges during the war on terror like.

- The sentiments of fear among the masses.
- The loss of human resources.
- The killing of armed forces and citizens.

The Anti-American and Extremist Positions toward Religion

Another major problem during the days of the war in Afghanistan was the factor of religious extremism in Pakistan. Pakistan faced the factor of religious extremism by the different religious groups in the country. The common people in Pakistan also showed the disgrace for the USA and her interests in Pakistan. A survey was conducted in March 2004 seeking the opinion of the masses over the USA- Pakistan relations and the war on terrorism in Afghanistan. The survey results showed that only 6% of Pakistan is in the favour of USA's war on terror, while 55% of people think that the USA is not sincere to cut out terrorism (Joseph, 2004). Most of the experts and analysts analyzed that the people of Pakistan have the most anti-American sentiments as compared to the other nations in the world. The Western-based or pro-American political elites have their opinion contrary to the Islamic and religious groups (Joseph, 2004).

Initiatives for Closer Ties with the USA

Pakistan and USA have the changed patterns of relations since the independence of Pakistan. During the cold war era, both countries remained close to one another. After the collapse of the USSR, US foreign policy dynamics turned towards the negative mode for Pakistan. The martial law of 1999 also helped the factors which brought weakness in the relations between both countries. After the incident of 9/11, Pakistan and USA came close to one another to fight against terrorism in a collective campaign. After the positive response of Pakistan against terrorism, USA president G.W. Bush visited Pakistan in March 2006. Pakistan and USA turned towards the "Strategic partnership" and "strategic dialogue" to combat the terrorist actors. President Pervaiz Musharraf and USA President G.W. Bush released a joint statement and vowed to cooperate in the areas of economics, energy, peace, security-related issues, development of the social sector in Pakistan, the areas of Science and technology, development of democracy, trade and commerce, nonproliferation matters after the presidential visit of G.W Bush other officials from USA also visited Pakistan to make strong the relationship with Pakistan. In these personalities, the USA under Secretary of State Burns, and the USA under Secretary of Defense Department Edelman also visited Pakistan for strategic ties. Other than these visits the USA central command Gen. Abizaid and USA coordinator of the counterterrorism department Crompton also visited Pakistan to negotiate over the defence and security-related issues.

The Capture of Senior Leadership from Al-Oaeda and the Taliban

Due to the coup of 1999, Pakistan was labelled as a military-ruled-based country by Western countries, and Pakistan also faced economic sanctions. The status of Pakistan shifted towards the "failed state" before the world. More ever the US authorities also had concerns over the nuclear assets of Pakistan. The US policymakers showed their high concerns over the whole nuclear program of Pakistan (Zahra, 2004).

Due to the continuous work of the armed forces and secret agencies of Pakistan, at last, Pakistan was enabled to catch the key leadership of both terrorist wings. After some years after 9/11, Pakistan caught several hundred militants (Kronstadt, 2004). Al-Qaeda and Taliban also responded to Pakistan and attacked the major cities of Pakistan, which caused the loss of economic and human resources.

Some names of the arrested terrorist are,

- Abu Zubaida (March,2003)
- Ramzi-bin-Al Shibah (Sep, 2002)
- Dawood Ibrahim was also demanded by the USA as per the desires of India.

The main armed-based religious groups in Pakistan like Lashkar-e-Taiban (LeT), and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) was also banned in Pakistan to use their power in the territory of Pakistan (Joseph, 2004).

Prospects for Pakistan

The joining of Pakistan in the war on terrorism has many windows of opportunities for Pakistan; Pakistan achieved her basic interests by joining the world club i-e Pakistan became able to join the Commonwealth of Nations because, after the coming of the military government, the membership of Pakistan from the community of commonwealth of nations was eliminated. Pakistan has got the status of a Non- NATO country; in this regard, Pakistan has achieved a handsome amount from the USA and other countries. Pakistan enabled herself to remove her isolation from the world countries. Pakistan also received military and non-military budgets from many countries, so the economy of Pakistan after 9/11 became strong compared to the past decades. Due to the stance of Pakistan against the terrorist actors, the head of the armed forces of Pakistan General Pervaiz Musharraf succeeded to run his presidential ship for the next years (Hilali, 2005).

Pakistan's Contribution to the War on Terror

The United States initiated its first war of the 21st century from the soil of Afghanistan. The USA started the Operation of Enduring Freedom (OEF) against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Another major military formation was also established in the name of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to conduct strategic operations against the militants' wings in Afghanistan, especially in the Southern part of the country and Kandahar province. ISAF issued a Joint Campaign Plan (JCP) to achieve the objectives of the Afghan war. ISAF worked on the four points agenda (1) To give a comprehensive focus on the affairs of the Afghan people (2) To make their best efforts to increase the logistics capabilities of Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), (3) To make the Afghan governance process strong and better, (4), Build the better and affective relations with the Afghan neighbouring countries, especially Pakistan. That was the ultimate and sudden change in the United States' foreign policy dynamics Afghanistan.

In this war, NATO, non-NATO allies and Pakistan participated. Pakistan trained the major war groups in Afghanistan from 1979-1989 and shared important information, so that was a critical situation for Pakistan especially (Sial, S, 2013). Pakistan has faced the multi-directed threats. These threats were from religious parties in the country, religious insurgent groups, Afghan

Taliban and also from Russia. Pakistan remained an anti-state against the USSR in the Afghan war from 1978-1989. So, that was a crucial time for Pakistan to save her interests against USSR's rivalry. On the other hand, there was also a chance of India's surgical strike over the territory of Pakistan due to India's presence in Afghanistan on the Western border of Pakistan (UK. Diss, 2019). The long-term strategic partnership between India and USSR was also a sign of danger for Pakistan.

The Taliban Factor's Impact on Pakistan

The *Taliban* factor is also a significant factor in the overall strategy of the war. Pakistan has to reduce the two types of *Taliban* influences. The first is the physical attacks of the Taliban on the masses and the second is the Taliban myth in the people of Pakistan. General Zia-ul- Haq, the former chief of army staff consolidated the Taliban factor with Islamization to hold over the government, so that was difficult to discriminate between both types of factors (Sikand, K, 1990). Generally, the people of Pakistan have the anti. US sentiments so, that was a point of difficulty for the government of Pakistan to come over these sentiments. To point out these Taliban factors, Pakistan security forces launched a wide range of search operations in Madaris. Many initial and necessary steps were taken to cut the Talibanization from the country. Besides the search for madaris, all the madaris were registered under a single governmental organization "Wafaqi Tanzeem al Madaris" headed by the central government.

Key Suggestions & Recommendations

- The "Game Theory" of the world's powers should be stopped immediately in Afghanistan.
- The external influence over Afghan land should be stopped especially the Indian activities over the western border of Pakistan through Afghanistan.
- The mining production and natural resources of Afghanistan are the right of the Afghan people, so they should recognize them as their natural rights.
- All the Afghan government stakeholders should make harmony in their groups.
- The culture of arms should be minimized, and gradually streamlined with negotiations in all political matters.

Data Analysis

The political history of Afghanistan witnessed two major changes and these changes brought a "Shift Policy" towards Afghanistan policymakers in Pakistan. These are the USSR intervention in Afghanistan, and the incident of 9/11. The analysis and comparative study of these stages revealed the reasons behind the political decisions of Pakistan. The post-9/11 era is the era of anti-Talibanization at the world level. Pakistan also got the favour of the world powers to do so, according to their desires. The words of U.S. president G.W Bush "With us or against us" created a long-term shift of policy dynamics in Pakistan. Another military dictator in Pakistan in that situation vowed to join hands, to consolidate his powers. That was the era of anti-Talibanization in Pakistan, the religious classes and some right hands political parties, like Jamat-e- Islami criticized the government policies. A pro-US setup was installed in Pakistan to launch activities against the militants' wings in Pakistan and Afghanistan. After the terrorist activities in the USA, Pakistan showed her favour in choosing the Western club. This decision of Pakistan created many domestic problems for the people of Pakistan. The major cities of Pakistan were attacked by the militant's wings. The sectarian issue was also rebirth at that time. However, Pakistan was facilitated by the allies' countries to patch up its losses due to joining this war. It is also noted able that Pakistan also got a vote of confidence over some international issues from the major powers of the world.

Conclusion

Pakistan and Afghanistan are neighbouring countries and have common religious aspects. Both countries share a border of 2250 km along the mountainous region of "Koh-e- Hindukush" on the western border of Pakistan. Due to the geographical location of both countries, this region always remained a focal point of world powers. But unfortunately, the game theory between super powers of the world deteriorated the peace and stability in Afghanistan and also along its borders sides in Pakistan.

The peace in Afghanistan has been paralyzed due to the series of foreign interventions and intra- political activities among the different groups in the country. Pakistan has "Zigzag" policy patterns towards the Afghan issue. The shift of these patterns can be categorized as the Islamic and anti-Islamic steps in the political history of Pakistan. Behind these ups- downs in the policy formations are backed by the military dictators, economic interests and Islamic sentiments in the masses. Pakistan and Afghanistan have their concerns over the matter of the "Durand line" because Afghanistan wants to spread its boundaries in the tribal areas of Pakistan, which were occupied by Nadir Shah Durrani the king of Afghanistan (Anjum, N, et al 2019).

Pakistan is a developing country and always saved her interests against any interruption in Afghanistan. Some military dictators like, General Zia-ul- Haq and General Pervaiz Musharraf also benefited from the shift of policy formation towards the mujahedeen and Western pole respectively to hold over the political system of Pakistan. During the USSR- Mujahedeen war, Pakistan, the USA and Saudi Arabia jointly assisted the Afghan jihad groups against the USSR interests by sharing strategic information and the supply of arms (Carter, W.R, 2013). After 9/11 Pakistan saved the USA's interests against the Taliban. In the past, the leader of Al- Qaeda, Osama bin Laden assisted by the USA and Saudi Arabia to use him against the USSR intervention in Afghanistan. After the USSR withdrew from Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia expelled him in 1994 from the country (Kobek, P. et al 2013).

The Afghan war after 9/11 influenced the whole political scenario of Pakistan. This war created both positive and negative impacts on Pakistan. A major part of the population was affected directly or indirectly by this war. The common citizens and many armed persons have lost their lives as a result of this war. But there was also a positive point in it, and that was the economic assistance of Pakistan by the USA and other Western partner countries of the war. This economic assistance helped Pakistan to reconstruct its ruined infrastructure and to fulfil many other economic losses of the country.

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