

Instability in Afghanistan: Implications for Pakistan

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Abstract

In terms of foreign policy, Afghanistan is the most important determinant for the policy makers in Pakistan. Since its formation in 1947, Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan have not been cordial. In the aftermath of 9/11, this country has become a flash point of clashing interests among different powers. Due to the Indian involvement in the country, the western borders between Pakistan and Afghanistan have become very insecure. Pakistan has always been a victim of the instability in Afghanistan. In this study an effort is made to evaluate the impacts of instability in Afghanistan on Pakistan. Also it aims at sorting out factors and policy goals of actors involved in the war on terror in Afghanistan. A historical and analytical research effort has been made to bring about the real facts and the prospects of the issue.

Keywords Instability; Implications; Flash point; Decades

Introduction

For the last three decades or so Afghanistan faces serious challenges of instability due to internal strife and wars. Firstly, the internal race for power between different groups since Sardar Daoud took over the government of his cousin in 1971; secondly, the USSR supporting groups made different Coup from time to time [1]. In 1979 USSR entered their troops into Afghanistan and a war started between the Mujahedeen and the Red Army. This battle created destruction, ruined the infrastructure and made the country instable. Due to war the country became underdeveloped. Their people had to take refuge in different countries to save their families and children. They were striving to find food and shelter for their children. To make their own hands strong they used army to kill the innocent people, create terror and fear in their hearts. Due to eleven years long war in Afghanistan its people suffered and also the neighbouring countries especially Pakistan.

Reasons behind long lasting wars in Afghanistan

The war brought instability, hater, disparities and destruction in Afghanistan. This war was imposed by the Afghan elite and the credit goes to their wrong decisions. Afghanistan was a prosperous country before the war. A large number of tourists were coming to Afghanistan which in return provided huge amounts of revenue to the national exchequer. The main cause of instability was the ideological war of two super powers USSR and USA during the cold war era. Both had their own interests in Afghanistan. USSR wanted to reach warm waters and have access to the Middle East's oil resources. While USA wanted to contain USSR with the help of her allies Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and the Afghan Mujahedeen. The main elements which smoothen the way for hatching the eggs in Afghanistan were; (a) political and military elite; (b) rural people; (c) insurgent groups; (d) war lords; (e) geographical location; (f) roughly terrain and hilly areas, having no road connection with central government; (g) poverty; (h) and extremism.

When the government fails to provide employment to its masses, remove poverty and change their life standards, then the huge bulk of youth could take guns and join terrorist group [2]. Extremist thoughts also played very decisive role in destabilizing the country. Due to illiteracy of her people the mullahs could easily misguide the innocent people in the name of religion. After the withdrawal of USSR from Afghanistan the USA and her allies left alone those Mujahedeen who fought against the USSR. They were once called by the allies as holly warriors. But after, no attention was given to establishing a unity government in Afghanistan. The arms which were taken by the fighters against the foreign invader were turned against each other. This battle for power continued for six year. The war lords introduced their self-imposed punishments which were enough to speak for its cruelty and barbarism. The Afghan society became wild, brutish and nasty. There was no sign of rule of law because there was no law at all. There was no concept of center governmental. The conditions resembled the Hobbs state of nature. Powers who could bring war destiny to the Afghans did not look back for peace. All the people were fed up from these wild animals.

Rise of the Taliban

A new group came into the front which was called the Taliban. The word means those students who received religious education from madrasas [3]. Many of them fought against Russia and were familiar with the war tactics. Ninety percent (90%) area of Afghanistan was captured by them very quickly. They imposed Islamic law or the Sharia law as the state law. Pakistan was the first to recognize the Taliban government. As compared to the past there was peace and stability during the Taliban regime.

After 9/11 terrorist attacks on the USA, Taliban were demanded to hand over Osama Bin 4 Laden to them. Denying which brought another devastating war to Afghanistan. The USA and her allies attacked the country with sophisticated technology and modern arsenal. The soil of Afghanistan became a weapon test-ground where everyone had the opportunity to test his own weapon. They had no concern with the consequences. They had no answer to the question – what is the target! And who is killed? Many children were killed, many

wounded and many affected psychologically. Many of them fled to neighbouring countries to find shelter. A huge number of them came to Pakistan as refugees. Some of them had to find shelter in Iran and other neighbouring countries.

Strategic importance of Afghanistan

The main cause behind the instability in Afghanistan is the involvement of neighbouring states and world powers. They want to grind their own axis by establishing puppet governments to take advantages of the geo-strategic and geo-political importance of Afghanistan and have an access to the energy rich CARs. The USA wants to make strong position in Afghanistan to contain Russia, China and Iran. But on the other hand want a permanent air base to explore the central Asian resources [4]. Afghanistan is a gateway which every state wants to use on his own style. During the last century it had been a focal point between USSR and British India at last an agreement was reached between the two which gave it the status of a buffer state.

In 1947, after the partition of India cold war started between the two super powers [5]. When USSR attacked Afghanistan, the USA had a policy to stop them on the Pak-Afghan border. She succeeded in her antagonistic designs to stop the USSR with the help of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. The two neighbouring states Pakistan and India were against each other in Afghanistan. Each of them wanted to have their supported government which would guarantee their interests in Afghanistan.

The New Great Game

Since long, India has been using the Afghan soil for her own interests. She wants to reach the energy rich CARs. Pakistan has an advantage over India because it borders Afghanistan. Being landlocked Afghanistan depends on Pakistan's Sea ports for mobility and trade. Gawader port and Pak China Economic Corridor (PCEC) will be equally beneficial to Central Asian countries and Afghanistan.

Pakistan is also working on a motorway project from Gawader to Peshawar then Torkhum and Kandahar to provide transit trade facilities to Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics. On the other side India made Iranian port Charbahar functioning. Iran through an agreement has given Charbahar port to India for ten year lease. Also a 300 km road from Charbahar to Afghanistan is constructed.

With the advent of USA and NATO a new great game has been started in Afghanistan. Saleem Safi an anchor person and journalist in Pakistan called the situation as the game of Buzkhashi [6]. He compares Afghanistan's situation to this game of Buzkhashi and calls it a great game [7]. In which all the countries involved are trying to fulfill their interests by exploiting Afghanistan. That is why Afghanistan becomes so important for the world powers.

Afghanistan is located amidst of Central Asia, South Asia and Far East which increases its significance several times inside and outside the region. Afghanistan is also positioned at the crossroads of three most important powers of Asia Iran, Pakistan and China while the other two major powers Russia and India are located at a short distance from Afghanistan which makes it exposed to the outside interference [8].

No state in its neighbourhood near or far is ready to permit other states to achieve dominance in Afghanistan. Such behaviour has destroyed greater part of Afghanistan. Blame for much of the political instability and flight of its people goes to the external powers -

struggling hard to attain their strategic, ideological and economic interests in the country. Afghanistan is a pearl in pursuit of which different powers are involved. India, Iran and US factors are very crucial because their involvement is destabilizing Afghanistan, and have direct bearing on Pak-Afghan relations.

Afghan instability, implications for Pakistan

Due to civil wars no group is in a position to form multi ethnic government in which due share is given to everyone on the population basis. Due to the rivalries of different world and regional powers, peace is far away dream in Afghanistan [9]. The last three decades of war has darkened the destiny of Afghanistan people it has also brought destruction and affected the whole region in general and Pakistan in particular. The instability in Afghanistan is impacting the order of life in Pakistan. Due to wars, instability and involvement of world and regional powers, Pakistan has been affected very severely. The details are as followed:

Socio-political impacts: Afghanistan has been facing instability, wars and destruction for the last three decades or so. Afghanistan is not affected alone but the neighbouring countries also do. Pakistan being a front line state affected very severely. Pakistan is a poor country which was not in a position to face such huge bulk of refugees which came to Pakistan due to war. About 3 million people came to Pakistan which is a great challenge for the poor country having fragile economy. The daily cost of the Afghan refugees is \$1 million in which half is donated by UN and the remaining half comes from Pakistan. It raises the debt burden on Pakistan economy [10]. It also affects Pakistan's education, health and infrastructure. When the Russia returned and new government formed, very small number of refugees went back to Afghanistan.

After 9/11, America attacked Afghanistan which generated a fresh inflow of refugees to Pakistan. Due to this unchecked inflow of refugees militancy has grown in Pakistan. Pakistan is not in a position to handle such a huge number of refugees and the international community is not seriously supporting Pakistan [11]. Another great impact is that camps of Afghan refugees are becoming nurseries of terrorists and militants which is a great threat to the security of Pakistan.

Since her independence Pakistan has been facing a big enemy in the shape of India. The eastern border has remained insecure due to India war like attitude. She spares no efforts to harm Pakistan and till to date three wars have been fought between the two. Now India is involved in infiltrating terrorists into Balochistan, KPK and other parts of the country to destabilize the law and order situation and posture Pakistan as a failing and terrorist state in the world. The Indian intelligence agency RAW is involved in distributing weapon and financial support to the rebels of BLA (Balochistan Liberation Army) and BLF (Balochistan Liberation Front). She has opened consulates in Jalalabad and Kandahar near Pakistani border. Where insurgents are trained and equipped with arms and weaponry to carry out terrorist activities in Balochistan and KPK [12].

To stop the infiltration of terrorists, militants and extremists Pakistan has deployed more than 80,000 army personals on her western border. Due to long stay of Afghan refugees, Pakistani society has been infected with sectarianism, Kalashnikov culture, drugs, puppy and religious extremism [13]. Sophisticated and conventional weapons were supplied to Afghanistan for war purpose but instead they were

supplied to, and used in Pakistan. Camps where Afghan refugees stayed inside Pakistan became places of criminals and gangsters.

Due to instability in Afghanistan drug trade is high because on large area of Afghanistan poppy is cultivated. The income coming from heroine trade is used by terrorist because its cultivation is mostly done in terrorist dwelling areas. According to a report all the region is affected by the drugs and about 800,000 people in Pakistan alone are abused. About 400,000 in five Central Asian countries and almost 2 million in Iran are drug addicts [14].

Insurgency, the rise of TNSM and Taliban

After 9/11 a new wave of terrorism began in Pakistan's tribal areas and KPK. The USA and NATO strikes in Afghanistan made the terrorists and foreigners take shelter in the FATA and tribal area of Pakistan. From these attacks Afghanistan once again became a battle field. Pakistan being a front line state decided to become ally of USA in the war against terrorism. Because of long border consisting mountains and terrain area between the two states, it was easy for the militant to safely escape from Afghanistan to FATA. After this many local group started kidnapping, robbing, looting and even killing innocent people. These developments affected the socio economic and political arena of day today life.

They became so proud that they challenged the writ of government in FATA, tribal areas and Malakand division. In reaction Mulla Fazal Ullah with his group started their activity in Malakand division in the name of Sharia and Islamization. Fazal Ullah called it TNSM (Tehreek-e-Nifaz Sharia-e-Muhammadi). Due to this the group was once imagined to have been creating a state within the state. They enforced their laws and installed self-structured courts system which had nothing to do with Islam and Sharia. One who disobeyed and went against their orientation was given severe punishment. These practices greatly disturbed the socio economic and political life of the common people in Malakand division.

TNSM movement of the Taliban destroyed schools, hospitals, colleges, cinemas, robbed banks and centres where people were engaged in their daily businesses. Even they threatened government servants who were working in different departments.

The government decided to take military action against the group. In the wake of it a large number of people were internally displaced (IDP's). They were temporarily settled in the districts of Mardan and Swabi. It was a difficult task but Pakistan done it well [15]. Rail, roads and infrastructure was damaged by it in the entire country. In swat also called "the Switzerland of Pakistan" tourism the main source of economy was greatly affected. Tourists were discouraged by the group activities, so the country tourism industry was damaged.

Prevailing sate of insecurity

These wild acts of terrorism have challenged Pakistan's security, integrity and defense. There is a feeling of insecurity in the mind of every citizen because men of law enforcement agencies and VIP personalities have been targeted by them. For example ex-president Musharraf was attacked, attack was made on ex-PM Shaukat Aziz, and Suicide attack was made on the leader of ANP a political party. An attack was made on Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore which closed the doors of international cricket on Pakistan.

The ICC cricket world Cup matches were scheduled in India, Pakistan Bangladesh and Sri Lanka but due to security reasons all the

cricket matches which were to be played in Pakistan had been cancelled and rescheduled. Pakistan's important places such as GHQ Rawalpindi, PNS Mehran Karachi, Police stations in different parts of the country were targeted by the terrorists. FC training centre, Army public school Peshawar, International Islamic University Islamabad, Manawa police training school and Bacha Khan University Chersada were attacked by terrorists. Terrorism had greatly affected the education and health sectors.

The terrorist had targeted the polio vaccination teams and leady health workers. Many have lost their lives and most of them became disabled. Terrorists attacked the schools in different parts of the country. The education department of KPK has reported that nearly 65% of schools had been affected due to terrorist attacks. Majority of them were girls' schools and colleges and 42% were boys' schools and colleges. Due to which 150,000 students left their education incomplete. Due threats from these groups almost 8000 lady teachers have become jobless [16].

Operation Zarb-e-Azab

To eradicate terrorism from its roots, Pakistan army started operation Zarb-e-Azab in Waziristan Agencies. Due to which millions of its residents were affected and took shelter in plan areas. According to reports 929,859 people migrated from the area and took refuge in camps in Kohat and Banu area. The government provided them with food, medicine and other goods of daily use from its own resources not demanding international community support [17].

The Violations of State's Sovereignty by US Drones

Another serious impact is the violation of sovereignty and integrity of Pakistan by drone attacks, which are carried out by USA in FATA and Waziristan. These drones not only killed the terrorists but also innocent people and children's. Pakistan raised her voice against it at different forums on different occasion. Since 2005 till 2016, 320 drone attacks were made in which 2,806 people killed and 353 injured. The following table shows the number of drone attacks and its impacts: Table 1.

Rise in Sectarian Violence

Another impact is sectarian violence which destabilizes Pakistani society very badly. The terrorists are taking great advantage of Shia and Sunni divide and using it for their own evil gains. This strife is considered to be the fossil of Afghan Jihad. During Soviet invasion Pakistan became safe haven for those elements that had to participate in Afghan Jihad. It was also the beginning of sectarian tussle between Shia and Sunni and other groups.

They started targeting one another places of worships and religious rituals, which affected Pakistani society and outlook very deeply. From sectarian stripes, since 1999 till 2009, some 22,000 Shia became victims of terrorist attacks. Most of these sectarian attacks took place in Kurram agency; Para Chinar, Hungo and Orakzai agency, majority of affected were Shia population [18]. These sectarian attacks not only paralyzed Pakistani society but also created internal security problems. In response to it, the government banned some jihadists groups like Sipah-e-Sahaba, Sipah-e-Muhammad, Jaish-e-Muhammad, etc. These groups were mainly responsible for sectarian violence. The number one enemy of Pakistan, India took advantage of the situation and used these groups for her own evil designs. India supplied arms and provided financial support to these jihadists to destabilize Pakistan.

About 80,000 people have died and thousands injured in the war on terror. Some \$70 billion were lost in this war.

Year	Incidents	Killed	Injured
2005	1	1	0
2006	0	0	0
2007	1	20	15
2008	19	156	17
2009	46	536	75
2010	90	831	85+
2011	59	548	52
2012	46	344	37
2013	24	158	29
2014	19	122	26
2015	14	85	17
2016	1	5	0
Total	320	2806	353+
Source: http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/database/Droneattack.htm			

Table 1: Drone attack in Pakistan: 2005-2016.

Another very affected city from terrorism is Karachi, which is economic and social hub of Pakistan. About 60% of our revenue comes from Karachi. But for the last two decades or so, Karachi has become a battle ground for different ethnic groups like, MQM (Muhajir Qaumi Movement), Pashtuns and Sindhi. All these groups are against each other and target killing each other workers. MQM had strong hold in Metropolitan Karachi. Like all other cities, Karachi is also affected from war on terror. Many gangster groups have strengthened their positions.

TTP and other terrorist organizations are found involved there. They kidnap people, doing bank robberies, street extortion and ransom. Some foreigner elements are also involved in terrorist activities in Karachi. NATO used the Karachi port for transportation of weapons and other equipment's of their forces in Afghanistan. Some NATO containers were stolen by terrorists containing weapons, which they used for their terrorist activities in Karachi. Due large population, its residents have been limited to their residences due to terrorist activities. Anything can happen at any time there, one would see roads are blocked, and someone is killed by someone unknown. The ransom and money raised from illegal means is used in these kinds of activities which aim at terrifying the government to stop operations against these groups in different areas.

Due to long lasted war, insurgency, bomb blasts and suicide attacks, Pakistani people have become psychological patients. Majority of the people are suffering from stress and strain. Some have become mentally disturbed because their relatives were killed in bomb blasts and suicide attacks. Most of them become disable after survival due to which street begging is rising. Many of them are children who have lost their parents and now having no resources cannot get education and striving hard for their livelihood. The estimates and analysis drawn

from the available data suggests that Pakistan has suffered more than Afghanistan from the war against Al-Qaeda and terrorism.

Economic impacts: Peace and stability is the primary concern of every country. If there is peace and stability then the economy will be ok, more people, companies, will come and invest there. This will raise the life standard of the native people and employment opportunities would increase. Literacy rate will rise and people life standard go up. On the other hand a country which is facing long term war and instability then there will be no development and the infrastructure will be destroyed. A huge bulk of people would migrate to other countries to save their lives.

Same was the case with Afghanistan, when Russia attacked on it; about 3 million migrated towards Pakistan. It had a great economic burden for economically weak state, almost unprepared to face this challenge. The daily cost of the Afghan refugees was \$1 million, in which, half was donated by UN and half by the government of Pakistan. It raised the debt burden on Pakistan economy. It also affected education, health and infrastructure. The Afghan government refused to receive them back due to lack of resources. When the Russia withdrew, new government was formed in Afghanistan but only a small number got back.

Refugees Influx

After 9/11 a new dilemma in the shape of refugees' influx started. In the shape of refugees some militants also entered Pakistan which disturbed law and order situation in the country. Pakistan was not in a position to handle this new inflow of refugees without international community support. This also affected the development and growth rate in all sectors of economy. For the last three decades, Pakistan has been paying a huge price in men and material. The instability in the neighbouring country has created security challenges for Pakistan. A huge amount of economy is spent on war on terror. This situation is impacting the export order around the world. Due to which Pakistan failed to meet the requirements of world business community. Pakistan has not been in a position to meet her competitors in the world market.

The export targets fixed in the annual budgets is not met which slows down the economic growth rate of the country. In this critical situation, the world business community had shifted their capital and businesses to the economically stable countries of the region. This affected the entire economic fabric, and inflation rate went high. This instability cause unemployment, and jobless youth is produced, which is a great burden on the fragile economy. Our population consists of about 80,000 million youth but the government had scarce resources to handle them. In developed countries of the world such a huge number of youth (if skilled) is a sign of development but in Pakistan it is a sign of underdevelopment. Due to governments' inability to provide jobs to them, they can easily be deceived by terrorists for their evil designs. The ministry of industries and some autonomous bodies of provincial governments presented a report which shows the yearly losses in Pakistan due Afghan instability (Table 2).

From this report we can conclude that from 14 years war on terror Pakistan has lost \$106.98 billion which is a big amount for an economy facing instability. Pakistan needed to extend its resource base, to enhance economic growth rate. Terrorism has been destroying Pakistan physical and human capital since 2001. Terrorism destroyed our health, education, water sanitation, medical care centers and infrastructure which are basic elements for economic development.

Due to its trade activities becoming limited and economic growth slowing down. It also restricted the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

Years	\$ Billion	Rs Billion	% Changes
2001-02	2.67	163.9	-
2002-03	2.75	160.8	3
2003-04	2.93	168.8	6.7
2004-05	3.41	202.4	16.3
2005-06	3.99	238.6	16.9
2006-07	4.67	283.2	17.2
2007-8	6.94	434.1	48.6
2008-09	9.18	720.6	32.3
2009-10	13.56	1136.4	47.7
2010-11	23.77	2037.3	75.3
2011-12	11.98	1052.8	-49.6
2012-13	9.97	964.24	-16.8
2013-14	6.63	681.68	-33.5
2014-15	4.53	457.93	-31.7
Total	107	8702.8	

Source: Report presented by the (MoF), Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Joint Ministerial Group.

Table 2: Estimated Losses in Pakistan (2001-2015).

Public development funds are used in purchasing sophisticated and modern weaponry to meet the challenge of terrorism. The terrorist activities have far-reaching impacts on the economic system. It not only creates social problems but also economic problems. Due to terrorism and less economic output our GDP dropped from 7.5 to 1.6 in 2010. To fulfill the annual budget deficits the government has to take foreign loans from international monetary organizations, like, IMF and World Bank with high interest rates which is also weakening our economy. The war on terror Coalition Support Fund (CSF) given by USA cannot be spent on developmental activities.

Due to terrorism FATA is very severely affected where almost 60% people are living below the poverty line. Education ratio there is very low as compared to other areas, and female education ratio is 0%. Another impact is drug trafficking and smuggling of daily life commodities from Afghanistan to Pakistan. They are cheaply available in Bara market in Peshawar. Which is duty free and cheaper compared to Pakistani products, this also impacts the state of economy.

Karachi is the major contributor of Pakistan's economy, which produces 60% of the total budget. Due to sea ports, it plays a vital role in Pakistan's economy. But for the last two decades Karachi has become a terrorist zone which not only affects the social and economic life of its masses but also the economy of the country. Karachi is economic power hub; people come to work here from different parts of the country.

In the aftermath of 9/11, it is also under the sway of terrorists. Many terrorists came to Karachi and started to receive Bata, bank

robbery; kidnapping and ransom were taken from the business community. Due to risk and terror they shifted their businesses to other countries of the region. The money collected through these means is used in terrorist activities. The activities are also supported by some leading political parties for their own interests. In result of all that goes on either in the suburbs or in the metropolitans, beside all, severely impact the state of Pakistan's economy.

Conclusion

Pakistan is the neighbouring country having very close and brotherly relations with Afghanistan. She hosts almost 3 million Afghanistan refugees. A stable prosperous and developed Afghanistan is in the greater interests of Pakistan. To use Afghanistan as a gateway to Central Asian Republics Pakistan wants cordial relations with Afghanistan. She wants a friendly government in Afghanistan which could guarantee her interests inside and outside the country. Pakistan wants peace in Afghanistan which would make possible the withdrawal of US and NATO forces from Afghanistan. The stability in Afghanistan will pave the ways for the return refugees which are a big burden on her economy. The instability creates a lot of problem for Pakistan socio, economic and political sectors. A number of criminals and extremists come to Pakistan in the shape of refugees, which is disturbing the internal peace and stability of Pakistan. Pakistan faces joblessness, inflation, no foreign investment. Therefore, for the stability, peace and development in Pakistan, a stable and peaceful Afghanistan is a prerequisite.

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