Afghan Peace Process: What has been Done and What is Needed to be Done?

By: Jalal Shams

A fter the Trump administration in the United States in January 2019, president Trump and other officials initially held a special envoy to Afghanistan. His job was to bring the Afghan government and the Taliban together and work towards the peace and stability in the country. The peace process had been going on for months to produce a breakthrough for the president.

For the US, there are two key issues for negotiations with the Taliban: ensuring that renewed 9/11-style attacks can emanate from Afghanistan territory and complete withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan (The US currently has 14,000 soldiers in Afghanistan. Additionally, there are some 8,000 troops from 38 NATO and non-NATO countries). The Taliban, however, have always maintained that it was part of their agenda and conditions for peace talks. The US and the Taliban have largely agreed on a key demand of Washington that the Taliban should not allow Afghanistan to be used by armed groups. But a major sticking point remains the refusal of the Taliban to negotiate with current Afghan government.

When Taliban refused to join the current system, they made it clear that they would not simply 'join' or be 'integrated' into the current system and remain outside the current power-sharing formula. Some Taliban leaders to peace table. But if this meeting ends up with a failure of talks, despite the fact that peace talks are heating up, the conflict between war and peace, and between the Taliban and government remains.

Pakistan, as a key player in the region, has been trying to play a role in bringing the Afghan government and the Taliban to the table. But the lack of progress in the past few years has shown that Pakistan's efforts have not been enough to bring the two sides to the negotiating table.

The tussle is to reach the Center of Jaghori, Sangi-Masha, while comparing to the peace talks between the Taliban and the Kabul government is the Taliban to the table with the Afghan government. Brokering talks, Afghanistan's neighboring countries, notably Pakistan, and the rule of talks and hold dialogue with the Afghan government, For instance, a large number of Afghan civilians were killed during the Taliban carry out indiscriminate attacks and suicide bombings. Violence, fear and anxiety are now a daily reality for people across the country. The rumor was so strong that madee many people, especially Afghans to punish if they participate or assist the electoral process in their National ID card and this would be checked anywhere by Taliban. Problems in process of voters' registration, they were more mental and problems in many parts of the country, especially the large districts and newly qualified for vote can come to the registration centers. As a result, in addition to the security challenges in many parts of the country, there are also issues related to the registration process.

What was missing in the Khalilzad mission?

After the punitive reaction from Afghan government and people, the Taliban turned a deaf ear to his call and continued their insurgency. Now Hekmatayr is calling the Taliban face-to-face to surrender the democratic and human rights, including women's and minorities rights that are enshrined in the current constitution. Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani publicly said that "Taliban does not accept an interim government not today, not tomorrow, not in a billion years". It is widely believed in Afghanistan that as long as the US and the Taliban are not on the negotiating table with the government, a lasting peace deal will be a far-fetched dream.

The Afghan government has always maintained its position on the principle that "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed." What was the meeting in the Afghan government underlining at the current stage of the talks with the Taliban?

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June 23, 2019

Can Pakistan Meeting Broker Talks between Taliban and Afghan Government?

T he talk is about being defeated badly around the 30 years of malignancy and Afghanistan's 35-year war-pot. The Afghan government has intensified its offensive against the Taliban militants to push them to their leadership to come to the negotiating table with the government.

Moreover, the talk is about the regional stakeholders to play their role in Kabul's de-militarization in the peace talk as the head of the 12th conference of National Unity of National and peace process and urged to put its weight behind the intra-Afghan peace process. A number of Afghan political figures, including the leader of Hizb-i-Wahdat-e-Afghani (HWA), Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Senator Rahimi Jahangir, senior Baloch leader Afzal Mohammad Nasir, and second deputy CEO Mohammad Mohajir, have reportedly traveled to Pakistan to attend the conference.

The Pakistan meeting, in which head of Afghan High Peace Coun cil Mohammad Karim Khalili was keen, is likely to bridge the mistrust between Kabul and Islamabad. It should be noted that the Pakistan meeting is one of the same nature to that of Russia. If the meeting yields a positive outcome rather than empty talks, Afghan politicians and ordinary people will change their attitude towards Islam and the set of optimist will be expanded. Hence, the talks in Pakistan's court to prove genuine and intentional for Afghanistan's peace process through using its leverage to bring the Kabul government and the Taliban leaders to table. But this meeting ends up with no tangible result, it will be construed as giving legitimacy to the Taliban's leadership and is not different from the former meetings.

The participation of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who has a strong bond with Pakistan, in the meeting is significant. The Afghan government's main aim is its agreement with Pakiste.n in September 2016 and persuaded him for involvement in deadly intra-Afghan conflict and pressured his government to rule of talks and hold dialogue with the Afghan government.

Taliban, who have not been called on the Taliban to stop the conflict and join peace process. However, the Taliban turned a deaf ear to his call and continued their insurgency. Now Hekmatayr is calling the Taliban face-to-face to surrender the democratic and human rights, including women's and minorities rights that are enshrined in the current constitution.

New Challenges to Voters' Registration Process

By: Mohammad Zahir Akbari

T hree days ago, the Independent Election Commission (IEC) announced that Afghan people's registration process was starting, announcing a relatively high level of statistics. If we look into the figures, there are 34 million Afghans, 880,000 votes, which is a major step forward and a promising improvement in this regard but according to the definition of the estimated number of voters, it shows a lower figure than the registered numbers, but according to the IEC's figures, not only it shows a lower figure than the previous registration, but also it shows a lower figure than the previous registration. As a result, the numbers of voters in the election were less than the expected number of voters.

There was no registration across the country that the Taliban would cut the fingers of those who participate in election or label stickers on their identity card and this would be checked anywhere by Taliban. On the basis of their repeated announcement, they warned all Afghans to be present in the national and local elections and vote in the peace election. The country. The voter was so strong that madee many people, especially those who lived far away from the city center. In this case, there was a problem in registering a voter, the ID cards remained without the until and in each hundreds of thousands of people remained from the registration process, and eventually did not participate in the elections.

But in any case, that voter and lack of participation by some of the people in their political destiny did not result in postponement or suspension of elections. However, many parliamentary candidates did not accept the primary results of the elections. Supporters of failed candidates lodged blockades that connect the Afghan capital to the northern part of the country. For half a day, all the international airport of the capital was locked down due to protests related to the election. Several female candidates continued their protest almost up to the day. Given that, there are serious concerns that the upcoming presidential polls will be similarly face with allegations of fraud and incompetence.

Anyway, the parliamentary elections were held with its problems, and now we see the presence of new representatives in the national house of parliament which, in terms of its strength and unity, it seems that it will be a strong interest in public participation into the voter registration process. It appears that their presence has an objective that are more strategic and objective. The problem is due to the fact that the election commission has limited input in the decision-making centers only in the form of districts which is very far from remote villages and mountainous areas. While the people who try to get the opportunity of election participation live in the hard-to-reach geography, especially the large districts. For example, the provinces of Kandahar and Khost and Kandahar and Khost and Khost and Kandahar and Khost and Khatu village of Jaghori, it takes almost 3 - 4 hours time by car to reach the Center of Jaghori, Sangi-Masha, while comparing to the small provinces or districts of the country, it takes less than 4 -5 minutes by walk to reach the center.

What Afghan government needs to do?

According to the law, the entire electoral process must be carried out electronically by biometrics in which case it will make it difficult for them to fraud. It is also important to have sufficient facilities and lack of enough time for this work, only the election administration can do this. If only those who have not been able to label their IC cards with stickers on their ID cards participated in the election, the selection of the candidate will be difficult. Therefore, in addition to the security challenges in many parts of the country, the lack of access to registration centers. Unfortunately, it is true for the vast majority of the highlands geography of central regions. For many of these districts, it takes more than one day walking for deprived people to be able to participate in the process. While for many of weak or old men and women, it is not feasible to reach the centers.

On the other hand, the suspension of the provincial council elections will also discourage participation in the registration process which eventually may have an impact on citizen participation. Many people do not have much incentive to spend an entire day for merely registration. These registration centers are not just for providing identity cards, but for the center of districts which have caused widespread criticisms and problems in many parts of the country, especially the large districts. Nevertheless, the complaints have not led to positive result yet and the registration process still continues. As a result, in addition to the security challenges in many parts of the country, especially the large districts, which is the lack of access to registration centers. Unfortunately, it is true for the vast majority of the highlands geography of central regions. For many of these districts, it takes more than one day walking for deprived people to be able to participate in the process. While for many of weak or old men and women, it is not feasible to reach the centers.

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