

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind

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Experts Discuss: How can the Government Protect Kabul City from Terror Attacks?

Terrorists groups have focused their attacks on cities, especially Kabul city as the symbol of progress and development of Afghanistan. Generally, even a small and tactical attack in Kabul has strategic consequences for Afghanistan and is considered as a strategic achievement for the terrorist groups and their supports. Such attacks create huge horror and fear among Kabul citizens and the international community organizations working in Afghanistan. As a result, terrorist groups aim the confidence and trust of the people and international community by attacking Kabul. These attacks already have put Kabul under the strong criticism of the Kabul citizens. As a result, the Afghan government has been elaborating Kabul security with different stakeholders and experts to come with a comprehensive security protection plan. Dividing Kabul to four security zones and considering Dasht-e Barchi, West of Kabul, as a green zone are the options that government may opt to improve the security of Kabul citizens.

However, some security experts hold that, to curb the terror threats, preventing the suicide bombers and suicide vehicles, executing and identifying those who carry out explosives to Kabul, the government needs to bring fundamental reforms in the security sector. And it shall equip the security institutions with the up to date security technology and train them how to use such technologies.

Some other security experts believe, methods how to prevent carrying out explosives and suicide bombers for conducting suicide attacks in Kabul and other cities of Afghanistan, are some of the most critical security challenges that either have not been used or have not been used efficiently in Afghanistan. Security analysts hold that numerous police check points, various entrance points into Kabul, too many and ineffective security districts, lack of efficient use of security forces and equipment at the disposal of police and NDS, and lack of information exchange among the security sector institutions and government institutions are among the main challenges the Kabul security is faces with them.

Further, some security experts hold that, physical NDS security districts are ineffective as a result all intelligence activities shall be coordinated by a unified central office. Such a Unit shall have two sections: Intelligence gathering center and operational center. This shall be done through the least bureaucracy in order to curb the terror activities in an efficient and effective manner.

On the other hand, urban policy makers think that it is time the security community starts discussing cities. According to the urban policy makers, safety and well-being in cities have been seen as a subject for other policy areas, in terms of general well-being, or urban architecture. In fact, urban security is a clear area of concern within the general field of security studies and security policy which hasn't been looked at closely enough in the Afghan security sector policies.

Cooperation between People and Security Institutions

Co-operation between the police and the security services, and community relations are considered as key tools. When we talk of practical questions entailed in providing security in a city, we come to the excluded communities; they are communities who feel sympathetic with the terrorist in one or another way. These communities are both a strategic human resource that terrorist groups recruit new terrorists including suicide bombers from among them and also provide shelter and other terrorist facilities to the terrorist groups. According to the security experts, these communities shall be mainstreamed and their grievances shall be addressed. Also, the police have to build trust by providing security in the communities. In terms of Kabul, Police and other security forces shall identify and keep an eye on the areas that they may provide shelter and facilities to the terrorist groups. In terms of top terror targets; police and other security forces shall beef up security in these areas. As the community members in these areas strongly support the national government and security forces, they shall use the huge public volunteers who want to cooperate with the security forces to maintain the security and curb the terror attacks.



Waves of Criticism over The New Waves of Violence

By Mohammad Zahir Akbari

According to the media news, Afghan government lost about 150 security forces in few last days as Taliban insurgents launched multiple attacks on different parts of the country. They stormed the security forces in the northern part of the country, killing at least 37 troops since Sunday. The Khamab district in Jawzjan, Daymirdad district in Maidan Wardak, a capital village in Sar-e Pul and a number of military bases in Baghlan and Kunduz provinces have been collapsed to Taliban so far. The hardest-hit area was the Daymirdad district of Maidan Wardak, where nearly 40 security forces including its commander district, Sayed Younis were killed by the Taliban. While the Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed that the fighters had captured Daymirdad district and killed 70 ANA soldiers. He also confirmed the killing of four Taliban militants and injuries to six others in an overnight clash.

In Jawzjan province, the Taliban forces captured the Khamab district. In addition to killing ten Afghan security forces, the group has captured several others, seized a large number of arms and weapons. The Khamab district became the latest of more than 20 of Afghanistan's 407 government districts to fall to insurgent control. Forty or more other districts are listed by the American military as "insurgent influenced," and many others as contested.

After launching attacks from four different sides on the center of Sar-e Pul province, the rebels reached at a distance of two km from the building of the province. Reports suggest, the Balghali village in the suburbs of the city has been fallen to the Taliban and at least 30 Afghan forces were killed during the attacks. The other attacks in the north were at widely scattered locations. The insurgents killed 14 police and uprising forces in Samangan Province.

Thus, the Taliban "Red Unit" forces carried out simultaneous assaults on a number of outposts in the strategic Dasht-e-Archi district of Kunduz Province just after midnight, killing 15 army soldiers and wounding more than 20 others. In another raid, the Taliban militants stormed a national army base in the central Baghlan, killing at least 40 soldiers of the army and Police.

However, the Ministry of Defense spokesperson, Ghafoor Jawid in a press briefing said, "Afghan forces have inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. Taliban shadow district governor in Burka district of Baghlan province along with his eight militants was killed as result of air strikes carried by Afghan Air Forces (AAF)." MoD officials claimed that the ANDSF check-posts or bases have never fallen to the enemy in Baghlan, adding sometimes due to pressure, and for better responding and fighting against the enemy, there are tactical retreat. With the tempo of the Afghan conflict steadily increasing, it was a bad few days for the Afghan government. The fighting has demonstrated that the insurgents have a capacity for carrying out ambitious operations from multiple directions.

In reaction to these waves of violence, the parliament angrily called to summon the heads of security, Tariq Shah Bahrami the defense Minister, Wais Ahmad Barmak the interior Minister, Masoom Stanekzai the chief of National Security Department to brief lawmakers about the situation but the three refused to appear in parliament. Lawmakers said the security chiefs insulted them by not attending the session and in turn called on the three leaders to step down. But other MPs went even further and called for the resignation of President Ashraf Ghani and the reexamination of the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) between Afghanistan and the United States. "Mr. Ghani should step down from the presidency in an honorable way," said Arif Rahmani, an MP. "The bilateral security agreement between the US and Afghanistan must be reviewed," said MP Shakiba Hashemi.

Barmak and Stanekzai, however, have said that they were not able to attend the session because they were working on plans to ensure security during the month of Muharram – which started on Tuesday. "Security and intelligence organs must be held accountable, you should send a message to them that their excuse is not acceptable, they must be summoned or impeached by parliament this Wednesday," said MP Abdul Qadir Zazai. "The security and defense leadership is busy in view of security being on red alert for the national and religious ceremonies," said Irfanullah Irfan, second secretary of parliament.

"The strategy of the house towards the security must be taken into consideration and the national security strategy of the country must be reviewed," said MP Abdul Qayoum Sajjadi. MPs went on to say they will decide on the fate of the three officials at their next meeting. This new development comes after Kabul was hit by a double bombing at a sports club that killed at least 26 people.

However, such attacks are not the first incidents and will not be the last; the war has been increasing since 2014 and the Taliban insurgents have occupied more territory and killed more security forces in well-coordinated assaults across the country. According to the special inspector general, nearly half the country is either under their direct control or deeply influenced by them. According to the latest reports by United Nation nearly 40 thousand people were killed or wounded in recent years, and nearly 8 million Afghan were compelled to leave their homelands.

Though the Afghan and international partners augmented their efforts to hold peace talks with Taliban. The US officials met with Taliban representatives in Qatar in July and there is speculation the two sides will meet again this month, raising hopes for peace but the local analyst are not optimistic about the outcome.

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Who Really Creates Value in an Economy?

By Mariana Mazzucato

After the 2008 global financial crisis, a consensus emerged that the public sector had a responsibility to intervene to bail out systemically important banks and stimulate economic growth. But that consensus proved short-lived, and soon the public sector's economic interventions came to be viewed as the main cause of the crisis, and thus needed to be reversed. This turned out to be a grave mistake. In Europe, in particular, governments were lambasted for their high debts, even though private debt, not public borrowing, caused the collapse. Many were instructed to introduce austerity, rather than to stimulate growth with counter-cyclical policies. Meanwhile, the state was expected to pursue financial-sector reforms, which, together with a revival of investment and industry, were supposed to restore competitiveness.

But too little financial reform actually took place, and in many countries, industry still has not gotten back on its feet. While profits have bounced back in many sectors, investment remains weak, owing to a combination of cash hoarding and increasing financialization, with share buybacks – to boost stock prices and hence stock options – also at record highs.

The reason is simple: the much-maligned state was permitted to pursue only timid policy responses. This failure reflects the extent to which policy continues to be informed by ideology – specifically, neoliberalism, which advocates a minimal role for the state in the economy, and its academic cousin, "public choice" theory, which emphasizes governments' shortcomings – rather than historical experience.

Growth requires a well-functioning financial sector, in which long-term investments are rewarded over short-term plays. Yet, in Europe, a financial-transaction tax was introduced only in 2016, and so-called patient finance remains inadequate almost everywhere. As a result, the money that is injected into the economy through, say, monetary easing ends up back in the banks.

The predominance of short-term thinking reflects fundamental misunderstandings about the state's proper economic role. Contrary to the post-crisis consensus, active strategic public-sector investment is critical to growth. That is why all the great technological revolutions – whether in medicine, computers, or energy – were made possible by the state acting as an investor of first resort.

Yet we continue to romanticize private actors in innovative industries, ignoring their dependence on the products of public investment. Elon Musk, for example, has not only received over \$5 billion in subsidies from the US government; his companies, SpaceX and Tesla, have been built on the work of NASA and the Department of Energy, respectively. The only way to revive our economies fully requires the public sector to reprise its pivotal role as a strategic, long-term, and mission-oriented investor. To that end, it is vital to debunk flawed narratives about how value and wealth are created.

The popular assumption is that the state facilitates wealth creation (and redistributes what is created), but does not actually create wealth. Business leaders, by contrast, are considered to be productive economic actors – a notion used by some to justify rising inequality. Because

businesses' (often risky) activities create wealth – and thus jobs – their leaders deserve higher incomes. Such assumptions also result in the wrong use of patents, which in recent decades have been blocking rather than incentivizing innovation, as patent-friendly courts have increasingly allowed them to be used too widely, privatizing research tools rather than just the downstream outcomes.

If these assumptions were true, tax incentives would spur an increase in business investment. Instead, such incentives – such as the US corporate-tax cuts enacted in December 2017 – reduce government revenues, on balance, and help to fuel record-high profits for companies, while producing little private investment.

This should not be shocking. In 2011, the businessman Warren Buffett pointed out that capital gains taxes do not stop investors from making investments, nor do they undermine job creation. "A net of nearly 40 million jobs were added between 1980 and 2000," he noted. "You know what's happened since then: lower tax rates and far lower job creation."

These experiences clash with the beliefs forged by the so-called Marginal Revolution in economic thought, when the classical labor theory of value was replaced by the modern, subjective value theory of market prices. In short, we assume that, as long as an organization or activity fetches a price, it is generating value.

This reinforces the inequality-normalizing notion that those who earn a lot must be creating a lot of value. It is why Goldman Sachs CEO Lloyd Blankfein had the audacity to declare in 2009, just a year after the crisis to which his own bank contributed, that his employees were among "the most productive in the world." And it is also why pharmaceutical companies get away with using "value-based pricing" to justify astronomical drug-price hikes, even when the US government spends more than \$32 billion annually on the high-risk links of the innovation chain that results in those drugs.

When value is determined not by specific metrics, but rather by the market mechanism of supply and demand, value becomes simply "in the eye of the beholder" and rents (unearned income) become confused with profits (earned income); inequality rises; and investment in the real economy falls. And when flawed ideological stances about how value is created in an economy shape policymaking, the result is measures that inadvertently reward short-termism and undermine innovation.

A decade after the crisis, the need to address enduring economic weaknesses remains. That means, first and foremost, admitting that value is determined collectively, by business, workers, strategic public institutions, and civil-society organizations. The way these various actors interact determines not just the rate of economic growth, but also whether growth is innovation-led, inclusive, and sustainable. It is only by recognizing that policy must be as much about actively shaping and co-creating markets as it is about fixing them when things go wrong that we may bring this crisis to an end.

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