

## Abdul Samad Khan's Perceptions of Pashtoonistan:

By

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### Abstract:

*Pak-Afghan border remain one of the important factor, which influenced Pak-Afghan relation since the emergence of Pakistan. It is important to highlight the significance of Durand line in historical perspective. At one end Durand line is internationally agreed as border between Pakistan and Afghanistan but on the other side time and again officials from Afghanistan denied it. This resulted in the sparking of a movement in Pashtun areas of Pakistan to undo Durand Line and include the Pashtun areas of Pakistan in Afghanistan. This movement was named as Pashtoonistan movement and it lasted basis in the province of KPK and Balochistan. The main supporters of the moment were some Pashtun nationalist, whom politically supported the idea of Pashtoonistan. This paper is dealing with the perspective of Abdul Samad Khan Achekzai regarding Pashtoonistan. Abdul Samad Achekzai was the pro-Pashtun nationalist leader, whose political idea dominated Pashtun-nationalist political perspective in Balochistan. This research aims to explore and analyse the perceptions of Abdul Samad Khan Achekzai regarding Pashtoonistan. This work is important as Pakhtunkhwa Mili Awami Party (PkMAP) inherited the legacy of Abdul Samad Khan and PkMAP is one of the dominant political parties of Balochistan (Southern Pakhtunkhwa).*

**Keywords:** Pashtuinstan, Abdul Samad Khan, Durand Line and Pak-Afghan Relations

### Introduction:

The worsening security situation in Afghanistan as well in Pakistan is associated with the cross-border management of both neighboring countries. From 2009 the cross border incursions highlights border areas of Pakistan in international media. At one end it was considered as matter of significance for the success of War against Terrorism in Afghanistan, and on other side for the internal security of the two neighboring countries

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of Afghanistan and Pakistan (Janjua, 2009). Both countries are blaming each other for their involvement, in cross-border infiltration. Afghanistan is blaming Pakistan for supporting the religious extremist groups, which are menacing security in Afghanistan. Similarly

Pakistan also blames Afghanistan for their support toward insurgencies; especially in Balochistan (Mishra, 2016).

These blaming of each other has a long history, which started at least from 1947; when Pakistan got independence. Tariq Mahmood provided with history of Pak-Afghan relation and established his point of view that from beginning the relation between these two states remain in worst position. He further elaborated that initially Afghanistan government shows antagonism toward newly established state of Pakistan. He further coined the Durand Line as one of the main cause for the Afghan hostile attitude toward Pakistan. Afghanistan government from 1947 tried to undo the Durand Line agreement, which allow British India and her successor (Pakistan), to have control of the Pashtun areas. Afghanistan in response supported Baloch and Pashtun tribesmen to raise separatist's movement in Pakistan (Mahmood, 2008).

Afghanistan government supported both Pashtun and Baloch ethno-nationalists to initiate separatist movements in Pakistan. The Pashtun ethno-nationalist movement was known as Pashtoonistan or Pakhtunistan. This movement was considered as constant threat for the security of Pakistan. It was in 1979 that government of Pakistan remain successful for accumulating external support to minimize the risk of the issue. In 1979 during Russian invasion of Afghanistan, not only the anti-communist powers especially U. S. A. but also many of the Muslim powers such as Saudi Arabia supported Pakistan to counter Russian forces in Afghanistan, by supporting Mujahedeen in Afghanistan (Cheema, 1983).

Pashtoonistan issue remain the most effective factor in Pak-Afghan relation. The resolution of the issue will ease both the state to establish friendly relations. This study deals with Pashtoonistan issue but main focus is laid on the perception of Abdul Samad khan regarding Pashtoonistan. The perception of Abdul Samad khan provided a balance and democratic point of view. Analysis of the Abdul Samad Khan's perception of Pashtoonistan is also important because it serves as legacy for one of the leading political party of Norther-Balochistan (Southern Pashtunkhwa) i.e. Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP).

### **A Short Overview of Pashtoonistan:**

Hallberg's socio-linguistic analysis of Pakistan's Pashtu-speaking populations conveys that Pashtuns have very optimistic attitudes toward their particular language. It is not only virtually the merely language of use in maximum domains, but also Pashtu is perceived as a strong stain of their identity and pride (Hallberg, 1992). Hallberg though does not touch the history of the Pashto being as a movement, the efforts made by

contemporary Pashtuns to promote the custom of Pashtu in the spheres of power. The only evidence available about these determinations is in articles forms, which are generally in Pashto. Shabbir Hasan Josh (an Urdu-speaking poet of Pashtun origin from Malihabad UP India), informs us that the Pashtuns of India grabbed pride in their ethnic orientation and reflected themselves brave and aggressive (Josh, 1964).

Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the well-known Pashtun ethno-nationalist of Pakistan, accounts that in 1920s when he went to Afghanistan; at the loftiness of the Hijrat movement (migration to Afghanistan) as India was professed a non-Muslim country. He saw the ignorance of Pashtun nationalism. When he meets the ruler of Afghanistan; Amir Aman ullah Khan, he finds that Amir did not pay any attention for the development of Pashtun Nationalism and Pashto. During a meeting while having a conversation with Amir Amanullah, Ghaffar Khan said that, “what a pity it is that you, who know so many languages, do not know Pashto, though it is your mother tongue and your national language!’ The King agreed with me and soon he began to learn Pashto” (Khan, 1969).

Pashto being as a language was promoted during the rule of Aman ullah khan and later by his followers in the kingdom of Afghanistan. Barth argues this insignificance to Pashto in kin to the up keeping of identity. He claims that closeness to centralized power made the affirmation of autonomy and classlessness. He wrote that: “The elite and urban middle class in this purely Afghan kingdom have shown a strong tendency to Persianization in speech and culture, representing I would argue a sophisticate’s escape from the impossibility of successfully consummating a Pathan identity under these circumstances” (Barth, 1969). But this ideal-type society is almost fictional in the urban areas and even in the tribal townships of Pakistani Pashto-speaking areas. The urbanized Pashtuns of Pakistan and Afghanistan in the 1920s roused the Pashto and Pashtun identity movement which was supported by Afghan State. King Amir Aman ullah, who even himself, cannot speak Pashto, encouraged the language promotion of Pashto in the 1920s. As anxiety to British India, Abdul Ghaffar Khan pioneered the tendency of emphasizing Pashto and Pashto language as Pashtun identity. In British India the Pashtuns needed a symbol for unity to confront the British Raj. Thus this Pashtun movement of unity was suspect by the colonial authorities and, also of its descendants (Ibid, p. 129).

The British took control of the NWFP province from the dominions of Ranjit Singh when British annexed Punjab in 1849. NWFP was ruled from Lahore; till 1901. In 1901 it was declared a separate province supervised by a commissioner. The status of full-plague province was given in 1932. British language strategies were subjective under their imperatives of imperial regulation. After the war of 1857, the Pashtuns were measured trustworthy and were employed in large numbers in British army. Their European officers were particularly initiated to learn the Pashto language for the control of Pashtuns, which helped the British

officers for making and appliance of imperialist policies over the Pashtun subject of Indo-Pak (Bernard, 1985).

It seems that the British strategy towards Pashto learning was merely for control while they were denying the use of Pashto in the spheres of power, which was centred on their imperialist benefits. Pashto was being used as identity marker of Pashun as a nation; by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan (1890-1987), who was the founder of Khudai Khidmatgar movement. Which began in the NWFP in 1929 and it was the anti-British, pro-Congress movement. The Khudai Khidmatgars were seen as Soviet-inspired revolutionaries and supporters for Afghanistan's claims of Pashtoonistan by British authorities as well by the Pakistani authorities (Khan, 1969). In short, the language of Pashto was seen as an important and necessary ingredient for Pashtun ethnicity and the development of their ethnic nationalism, which was supposed to central to the progress of their ethnic group.

The arrogance of the Pakistani governing elite towards Pashto can be assumed superior in the light of Afghanistan's claim to parts of North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and northern part of Balochistan. This area was called Pashtoonistan (the land of the Pashtuns) by the Pashtun nationalists. The Pashtun ethno-nationalist leaders were being suspected of their support for Pashunistan movement (Dupree, 1973). All India Muslim League (AIML) wanted a referendum on the question of accession to Pakistan or India. The referendum was aimed to know the opinion of the people of North West Frontier Province as they want to join Pakistan or Hindustan (Shah, 1992). The Indian National Congress acknowledged the Muslim League's demand but Abdul Ghaffar Khan boycotted from the referendum. Abdul Ghafar Khan was of the opinion that if referendum is to be held, it should be an open choice at all not the question of joining any of the two domains (Khan, 1969). Abdul Ghafar Khan initially defined Pakhtunistan as a "free Pashtun state" on June 24, 1947 (Tendulkar, 1967).

In this regard Tahir Amin, a very famous contemporary Pakistani writer wrote that, "Later, the terms 'Pakhtunistan' and 'Pakhtunkhwa' were also used by Khan Wali Khan, as a substitute for the British name 'NWFP' for this Pakhtun-dominated province. This change of stance from demanding independence to mere symbolic assertion of cultural autonomy reflects the decline in separatist tendencies in the NWFP" (Amin, 1988).

The Afghanistan government used the word Pashtoonistan for their claimed area Pakistani territory. These claims can be seen in the statements of the officials from Afghanistan like Muhammad Tarzi (Zaidi, 1994) and also of Mohammad Daoud (President and Prime Minister of Afghanistan). Daoud in an interview while explaining Afghanistan's stance over Pashtoonistan stated that "The decisions of the Loya Jirgah and the Parliament and the official statements of the governments in Afghanistan about Pashtoonistan have been given at every occasion and opportunity in which our position has been explained" (Daoud, 1974). He also declared Pashtoonistan issue as the one and only factor influencing Pak-Afghan

relations. He stated that, "... [We] cannot accept negotiation with preconditions. I wish to tell you clearly that between Afghanistan and Pakistan no other problem exists except that of the Pashtoonistan issue. If a solution based upon reality is found for it then, as I have stated times and again and say again now, no other problem will remain when this sole issue is solved" (Ibid, p.3). Pakistan governing elite developed a deep distrust of even the words Pashtunkhwa and Pashtoonistan.

During the 1950s, many factions of Pashto also supported Pakhtunistan. Some of them work in partnership with Afghanistan as well with India. Intelligence reports reveal that the administrator of the Pashto Unit at All India Radio (AIR) in New Delhi, with the name of Anwarul Haq Gran was also the Chief Co-ordinator of the Pashtoonistan movement (NDC, 4 March 1950). Nasrullah Khan Nasr was the Secretary of the Adabi-Tolae (organization for the advancement of Pashto), used to provide news to Afghan Consul in Peshawar about the run of the movement in NWFP. Simillar reports were also given about the patronage of Pashtu in schools to provide base for the movement (NDC, 4 March 1950). The government of Pakistan's state agent at Federally Administrative Tribal Area (FATA) shows the number of Afghan agents, who support Pashtoonistan movement were 1,500 (NDC, 19 January 1950). The "Pashto Tolane" of Kabul was also reported to be involved in the support of Pashtoonistan movement against Pakistan. A secret report reveals that, "[The Pashto Tolane] is the main organisation responsible for the development and propagation of the Pashto language and literature for the dissemination of Pathan culture in Afghanistan. Actually it serves the double purpose of a Pashto Academy and a mighty machine that is zealously advocating the Pathanistan ideal" (NDC, August 20, 1950).

These reports made Pakistani government officials so suspicious of Pashto that all Pashto publications were to be monitored. As Pashtuns nationalists, the supporters of Khan Ghaffar Khan and his son Wali Khan gave primacy to their Pashtuns identity over the Muslim or the Pakistani one, discussions on the issue often grew bitter. Pashto, being a symbol of this identity, was always supported by the Pashtuns nationalists

### **Abdul Samad Khan's Perception of Pashtoonistan:**

Abdul Samad Khan Achekzai had political alliance with Indian National Congress (INC) and after the foundation of Pakistan the Pashtoonistan issue was boosted by Pashtun ethno-nationalists with the help of Afghanistan government. The Pakhtunistan was perceived at least in three ways. The Afghan Government wanted it as a separate state comprised of Pashtun areas of Pakistan. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his followers perceived it as movement for joining Afghanistan and establishment of Pashtun state comprised of Afghanistan and Pashtun areas of Pakistan. Abdul Samad Khan perceived it as separate province of Pakistan comprising all Pashtuns of Pakistan. However, the Historian could not differentiate between the political thoughts of Wali Khan and Samad Khan. In November 10, 1969 in a press conference Abdul Samad Khan Achekzai

clearly stated that “I was against the Idea of Pakistan, but with the formation of Pakistan, I am a patriot citizen of Pakistan. The peculiar person can oppose Pakistan. He further explained that we will oppose every action of Afghanistan, which is against Pakistan (Tareen, 2007).

In 1972, Abdul Samad Khan Achekzai rejected the views of Afghan Foreign Minister, who claimed that Pakistan forcefully included Balochistan as a part of Pakistan. He believed that the accession of Balochistan was done through democratic process although he participated as a spokesman of Indian National Congress (INC). It was done through referendum; in which all the members of Shahi Jirga, which was the political authority of Balochistan at that time (Tareen, 2006).

However, earlier in 1939, Abdul Samad Khan rejected the idea that Anjuman-e-Watan is a branch of Indian National Congress. In the annual session of Anjuman in 1939, he clearly stated that the working and its effect on the local level cravings that it should remain a local party instead of a national level. In the same session he further highlighted the misperceptions about the Anjuman on both public and official level. Abdul Samad Khan in his presidential address stated that, to represent Anjuman as Congress of Balochistan is a false thinking, which propagated by those who wants to defame a political party which is established on the basis of local interest. This cares the rights of local, especially the welfare of workers and formers. I do not want nor is needed to waste my time for explaining and answering that Congress is a Hindu party. If Anjuman would become Congress, I will not object nor feel shame of it. But at the time being in it wrong and not correct to say that Anjuman has the applied system and ideology of Congress, which is spread all over India. It (Congress) has its own members, committees and plague, as well ruling in eight provinces. Thus I am going to announce that our party (Anjuman-e-Watan) is not part of it (Congress), nor appellation with it, nor we worked according to the advice of Congress. We also have no intentions to become part of Congress, earlier this year (1939) and last year (1938) we had rejected such two proposals. Here I have to explain that nor I am member of any committee of Congress, nor do I have any political relations with the leadership of Congress. My relations with congress leaders are in personal capacity, which are just caused by the British cruelty toward our political workers. We just want to secure ourselves from the cruelty of the members of British Jirga and their masters the British (Ghano, 2003).

From the above facts the concept of Abdul Samad Khan is clear, that he was neither part of Congress plan against the creation of Pakistan and never opted for the creation of a separate state. He was working for the rights of Pashtuns, as he perceives Pashtun as an oppressed nation. The misconception was the result of ambiguities produced by the name Pashtoonistan. Abdul Samad Khan was demanding the unification of Pashtun under a single administration. For him this unified administration was to be named as Pashtoonistan, Afghanistan or Pashtunkhwa.

However before not only the creation of Pakistan but also the commencement of Pakistan in 1939, when Abdul Samad Khan was addressing the annual session of Anjuman-e-Watan he rejected the congress and also express his sorrow about the attitude of leadership of Muslim League for their ignorance of British Balochistan. Abdul Samad Khan expressed his feelings in these words. In the recent session of All India Muslim League ... focused was laid over those issues which are the result of its rivalry with Congress. Similar is the case of Congress. Both parties are playing with their old rivalries. In Punjab, Sindh and Sarhad (Frontier) none of them established government... but was of mutual understanding of the locals. Similar is the here (British Balochistan). In this session (of Muslim League) the resolutions are passed over issues of national level and also over the political opposition (of Congress), but the local issues, tribal rivalries and the (local) public were ignored (Ghano, 2005).

Analysing the political ideas of Abdul Samad Khan it become clear that he was not against the creation of Pakistan but his concentration was on local issues, which he thought were ignored by the All India Muslim League. After the creation of Pakistan, he appreciated the policy of Muslim League for the amalgamation of the princely states of Pashtun inhabitation in a single administration. Abdul Samad Khan expressed his concerns that the prevailing conditions will push Pashtuns for separation. Therefore, he was requesting each member of the committee to have notice of that point. He stated that, "I am providing this proposal with the aim to direct the cause of separation idea and to normalise and dilute the feelings for integration as well to minimize the privileged fairing thoughts of discrimination. The feelings of ... discrimination and the wishes and hopes for being in a single administration is not only the wish of a single group or individual but also of all Pashtuns. These are also represented by the decision of the Muslim League ... to amalgamate the Pashtun States, Agencies and Frontier Province in a single administration" (Ghano, 2004).

Abdul Samad Khan desired a single and uniform administration for the Pashtuns of Pakistan. The wished name of the unified administration was inspired by the name given to other provinces of Pakistan. For example, the Baloch dominated area was named as Balochistan, the Punjabi dominated area was named as Punjab and the Sindhi dominated province was called as Sindh. Abdul Samad Khan was a keen observer, who noticed that in South Asia the clash remains always among the groups on linguistic basis. Thus he wanted a province for the Pashtuns to avoid the clash with other ethnicities and create an environment for the peaceful progress.

Some people misunderstood the word Pashtun, Pathan and Afghan. They believe that the Pashtuns of Pakistan who had started the Pashtoonistan Movement they have some political relation with Afghanistan or this movement will bring Pashtuns territory under the control of Afghanistan government. They also believe that Pashtoonistan means the establishment of an independent state comprising the Pashtuns

inhabited areas of Pakistan. Interestingly these perceptions are also present among in some circles of Pashtun also.

Abdul Samad Khan asserted that Pashtuns are the name of an ethnic group who lives in different parts of the world. The main concentrations of the Pashtuns are in Pakistan followed by Afghanistan and India. He further elaborated his idea that Pashtuns living in Pakistan are Pakistani and that of Afghanistan are Afghanistani and of India are Indians. Once he stated that “I would like to declared with honesty and clout that this is wrong perception even Pashtuns did not ask about such ideology but rather it is fact that Pashtuns are not agree and satisfied with recent geographical condition and they should not be agreed because Pashtun have complaints” (Ghano, 2007). Apart from this explanation Abdul Samad Khan also recorded his complains about this misperception of the authorities and noticed the following problems (Ghano, 2007).

- ❖ After the declaration of Islamic Republic of Pakistan 75 percent of Pashtuns representatives are deprived from vote in their particular areas which is one of the most valuable blessings of the independence.
- ❖ The administrative division of Pashtuns with in Pakistan deprived them from impartial benefits of legislation regarding the constitution making.
- ❖ Though the Pashtun Jirga whose representative’s members are still the same, who were selected by British. They were used by the British to increase the control and strengthen the authority of the central government regardless of the local people of their jurisdiction. The members of the Shahi Jirga were used by British against the real representors and can be used against the locally elected member by the federal government.
- ❖ The members of Shahi Jirga are the privileged class; they can act above the law of the state, due to their status and power given by the federation.
- ❖ The extreme distinctive behavior (Political imposition of Sardars and Nawabs) adopted by British are considered legitimate by our constitution, but our government nationally and internationally is fighting against discriminatory laws. There will also be no discrimination epically for Pashtun in the administration or any other institution of the government.
- ❖ Pashtun majority is victimized by English dictator system; they ruled the Pashtun through Jirga system and Frontier Core which is against democratic and judicial system of the country.
- ❖ In important matter of the country such as one unit Pashtuns are treated as second category citizens and gypsies. The Pashtuns are deviated from the accurate use of vote. Some representatives are given bribery and these representatives are presented as the genuine representors of Pashtuns as such kind of deviation were done by British as well.
- ❖ The Pashtuns are considered to be citizens of Pakistan equal rights and representation be given to them. The Pashtuns

are dealt in the newly established state with discriminatory values.

Abdul Samad Khan was well aware of the consequences of the Pashtun division in different administrations. He believes that the administrative setup will change them in minority, which was also the concern of All India Muslim League, on the basis of which they demanded the partition of India. Abdul Samad Khan asserted that in these administrations the Pashtuns cannot choose a leader or member of their own choice, who can participate in the process of central legislation in Pakistan. Samad Khan was of the view that Pashtun being as a separate ethnicity had their own challenges and they have unique culture to respond these challenges.

Abdul Samad Khan was against the British oriented system of Sardars and Nawabs. He believed that in the presence of the Sardari system the graveness of the common masses could not be addressed. The presence of the Sardari system will deprive the public from their rights, which will produce anger against the government. The sardars were given power in the British administration and they never struggle for the rights and independence of the local people. These powers and privileges marked them above the law. The continuation of Sardari system will produce anarchy and the roll and law of the state cannot be enforced. Thus Abdul Samad Khan rejected the British established system of Sardars and demanded the enforcement of the democratic values in the political culture of the Pashtuns.

Abdul Samad Khan believed that the outcome of the Jirga and Sardari System is in the form of representations that were not aware of the problems and demands of the public. These pack representors produced miss-perceptions among the state and public. They also deprived the real leaders of the society to flee the public case in the court of the state. This not only results in the increase of discrimination among the governed and government but will also results in producing trust deficit between regions and federation. In past the British used force against the Pashtuns and they were not given their rights. Pakistan is just like a home in which brothers is enjoying the joint family system. In Pakistan too, Punjab and Sindh were to be considered as big brothers. It is the value of the society and federation that the younger brothers are supported. But here it goes against the ethos of the political culture of federation. Punjab and Sindh are not supporting the backward Pashtuns. Instead of support they are further aggravating their rights (Ibid, p. 340). Abdul Samad Khan stressed on the central government and Punjab for their support for the political and economic development of the Pashtun dominated areas.

### **Conclusion:**

Pak-Afghan relations remain deteriorated most of the time. Their relation is mostly coasted under the shadow of Durand Line and the support and claims of Afghanistan for separatist movements. Durand Line agreement

was made by the king of Afghanistan at the time when political culture was dominated by monarchy and state was considered as king's property. Thus these political values of the nineteenth century handed Pashtun inhabited areas of Pakistan to British India. The Pashtuns of current days Pakistan were treated from both sides as second degree citizens as Amir of Afghanistan never consulted the tribal heads or common people of this area while concluding agreement with British. The British also deprived the Pashtun people from the political rights of that time enjoyed by other citizens of British India.

These conditions of the Pashtun required for the emergence of ethno-nationalist leadership among them. Two of such well known leaders of that time were Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Abdul Samad Khan. Abdul Samad Khan was from current days Balochistan. The difference between these two leaders was not only geographical but also ideological. Referring to the idea of Pashtoonistan; Abdul Samad Khan perceived it as unified province of the Pashtuns of Pakistan, which was quite different from that of the idea of Bacha Khan or his followers.

The history of Pakistan is evident of the fact that not only foreign policy of Pakistan toward Afghanistan is reflected by the issue of Pashtoonistan or Durand Line but it also guided the Pashtun treatment by the federation of Pakistan. Abdul Samad Khan's political idea of Pashtoonistan reflects his realist approach of thinking. He was well aware of the fact that the unification of the Pashtuns of Afghanistan and Pakistan would not present the solution of the miseries of Pashtuns but it will further increase troubles for them. He also realised the political needs of the time and perceived that the fate of the people of any nation would not be decided by Kings or single person but by the people and their democratically elected representative. That is why he asserted the idea of unified Pashtun province within Pakistan. Abdul Samad Khan wished a progressive Pakistan in which all the ethnicities and citizens enjoy the constitutional rights. Initially struggling against the British but after the establishment of Pakistan he focuses the rights of the Pashtuns. Abdul Samad Khan opposed the British imposed system of Nawabs and Sardars. He demanded the abolition of Sardari and Nawabi system in Pakistan, as for that instead of minimizing the gap will further widen the gap among the state and citizens.

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