

THE EMERGENCE OF TALIBAN AND ITS IMPACT ON IRAN, AFGHAN AND PAKISTAN RELATIONS

History

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ABSTRACT:

Afghanistan, a country with its alarming and tragic history has most of the time remained in very difficult time, mainly due to the involvement of regional and global powers in shaping the affairs of the Country suitable for securing their own interests. The post Afghan Sour revolution period experienced such external involvement in a large extent which further increased the internal conflicts among different communities living in Afghanistan.

There had been great hopes when the Soviet troops withdrew and Dr. Najeeb resigned in April 1992, that a broad based Afghan Government would be established and that there would be at least peace after years of conflicts. But period after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, and after resignation of Dr. Najeebullah, can be considered the most unfortunate one because of the rigid attitudes of the Mujahedin who characterized themselves by a total inability to agree between themselves on any lasting political settlement and their readiness to neighboring countries, especially Pakistan and Iran to fight each other at the slightest provocation underlying their persistent divisions were not only clashes of personal ambition, but also ethnic, tribal and religious antipathies..

INTRODUCTION:

Afghanistan and Iran, the two neighboring countries played important role in the regional politics. Most of the time in the course of the history, the relations between the two countries remained fluctuated. The two countries

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being regional powers either confronted directly or used other to combat against each other. The Afghans who ruled Indian subcontinent for centuries were defeated by Mughal in 1526 in the battle of Pani pat. However the support of Iranian to Mughals was evident, later on when the second Moghals Emperor Hamayun was defeated by Afghan King Sher Shah Suri, so, Hamayun was given shelter in Iran and was supported to take back Delhi from Afghans. The arrival of British in India changed the administrative structure and the British had India in their control, however was afraid from the strength of Afghan, so, British instigated Iran to rise against Afghans in the border areas of Afghanistan. In the post world wars periods the relations between both the countries remained cool, however, in the end of 1970s, Iran and Afghanistan witnessed revaluations. The post revolutionary period was fully influenced by global powers. Iran stood against the Afghan revolution and participated in the war against Afghanistan. The Afghan war ended with collapse of Afghan revolution and with the establishment of Afghan Mujahedin Government which was failed and could not coup with the circumstances. The emergence and ruling period of Taliban in Afghanistan was a phenomenon for whole the World. However, Iran was in very complex position and her relations with Afghanistan during this period remained very tense and unfriendly. In this paper, I will try to find out the reasons for such tense relations between Iran and Afghanistan.

ORIGIN OF TALIBAN:

As far as the origin of Taliban is concerned that whether it was an indigenous movement or foreign backed, the circumstances were made fully ready for such movement to be emerged in Afghanistan. Taliban spokesman Mullah Wakil Ahmad in October 1996 gave the following reasons for the emergence of Taliban. That after the resignation of Najeebullah the Afghan Mujahedin came to power in 1992, the Afghan people thought that peace would prevail in the country; however, the leaders began to fight over power in Kabul, some local leaders, in al over Afghanistan, particularly in Qandahar, formed armed groups that fought each other. There was wide spread corruption and theft and there were road blocks everywhere, women were being attacked, rapes became common killings were often. Therefore, after these incidents, a group of students from religious schools decided to rise against these leaders in order to alleviate the sufferings of the residents of Qandahar Province. **(Peter Marsden, 1998:66)**

However, the failure of Mujahedin Government, and their division and intensive fighting with each other could be traced with divergent interests of the external factors who wanted to secure and enhance their interests in

Afghanistan. By early 1994, it became evident that Burhanuddin Rabbani regime was not very friendly to Pakistan, so Pakistan, therefore, looking for alternatives in Afghanistan. **(Samay Ram, 2004:113)** Pakistan's such initiatives was not liked by Iran as she considered Pakistan's motives in Afghanistan a threat for sabotaging Iran's interest in Afghanistan, including the welfare of its Shiite population. This was clearly expressed during Benazir Bhutto visit to Iran in November 1995. The Iranian President Rafsanjani warned her that if Islamabad were to pursue its policy of installing a client Government in Kabul, Tehran might go to force and to exercise a military option to resolve the issue **(Angelo Rasanayagam, 2007:147)**, but Pakistani Government ignored the Iranian threat, probably Pakistan did not want to waste its everlasting efforts played as frontline State in the Afghan war. The Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan had enough links in Afghan Mujahedeen, who could replace the Rabbani regime. A prime mover in it was the then Pakistani Interior Minister, General (Retd.) Nasserullah Babar, who seems to have decided that irrespective of any views that the Rabbani regime might have, he should open up an overland trade route to Central Asia, which following the Soviet departure, had become a major objective of Pakistan policy.

General Nasserullah Babar's Southern route project required the cooperation of the Herati administration of Governor Ismail Khan. Babar visited Herat in September 1994 with some six ambassadors of Western countries; to secure Ismail Khan's assistance in return for economic and political gains he could obtain through the opening of the Southern route. This was followed by Benazir Bhutto, the Prime Minister of Pakistan's visit to Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, where she met with General Rasheed Dostum and Ismail Khan, and secured their cooperation. **(Rashid:2001:46)** On 29th October 1994, Nasserullah Babar led a Convoy of thirty trucks of National Logistic Cell (NLC) from Quetta to Afghanistan guarded by Taliban fighters across the borders towards Qandahar. The convoy was accompanied by 80 military personnel, Colonel Imam, an ISI Field Officer in South Afghanistan, who is considered to be the real founder of Taliban was with the convoy along with Taliban Commander Mullah Borjan and Mullah Turabi. When their way was blocked by Afghan commanders Amir Lallay, Mansoor Achakzai and Ustad Haleem, the Taliban commander proceeded to deal with the Militia responsible for blocking the convoy and went on immediately to seize Qandahar and subsequent conquest of Helmand, which to their own surprise and of that everyone else, they took in a matter of days and in minor casualties. **(Martin :2001:183)**

Thus the ruling period of Taliban started in Afghanistan who in very short period of time fulfilled occupation of major cities of Afghanistan including Kabul. A Pakistani back was therefore evident at the outset of the Taliban's emergence, and despite their denial, their complicity in Taliban's subsequent success is also beyond any reasonable doubt. However, the most common and reported story made public by Taliban or by their supporters regarding the emergence of Taliban is that Taliban emerged from amongst the disgruntled young Afghan refugees studying in Deeni Madrassas around Quetta and Peshawar. The Taliban first came as a force under the leadership of Mullah Omar, when in spring of 1994, war lord commanders abducted teenage girls and were raped repeatedly, and 30 Taliban freed the girls and hanged the commander from the Tank. Following this incident, two war lords' commanders killed civilians while fighting for the right to take the young boy to marry him. The Taliban freed the boy and punished the war lords. Later on the people of the area requested to Mullah Omar to free them from the atrocities of local war lords and commanders. **(Rashid:2001:33)**

Behind the scene, somewhat passive US acquiescence in an eventual Taliban's takeover, experienced by its Pakistani and Saudi allies, laid the UNOCAL game plan. UNOCAL was a consortium of US oil companies formed to explore the hydrocarbon reserves of Central Asia. UNOCAL staff acted for a time as an unofficial lobby for the Taliban and was regularly briefed by the CIA and Pakistani ISI. In the US eyes the most important function of the Taliban would have been to provide security for the roads and potentially for the Gas and Oil pipelines that would link the Central Asian states to the international market through Afghanistan rather than Iran, **(Richard Mackenzie: 2007)**, even the US Secretary of State for South Asian affairs, Robin Raphael, went so far as to state that, the Taliban capture of Kabul was a positive step but later on US policy took a fresh direction with the appointment of Madeleine Albright as Secretary of State in early 1997, clarified that the Washington objective in Afghanistan was an Afghan Government that is multi-ethnic broad based and that observes International norms of behaviour. **(Richard Mackenzie: 2007)**

The heavy Pakistani involvement in arming, training and even providing logistical support to Taliban field operations was no secret to informed observers as early as 1995. The generous Saudi funding was also well known. The chief influence on the ideological make up of the Taliban was by both the factions of Jamiat-Ulema-Islam (JUI) of Maulana Fazlur Rahman and Molvi Sami-ul-Haq, which run the network of Madrassas in Pakistan. Maulana Fazlur Rrahman established close links with the Army, the ISI, and his party was to become the most vocal advocate for Taliban in

Pakistan after this appearance on the Afghan scene and mobilizing financial and other assistance to Taliban. The religious Madrassas were and still basically the recruitment centres for the Taliban. Thousands of the students in Pakistani Madrassas used to be sent there in Afghanistan for participating in war for Taliban.

The Taliban movement begun and largely remained a military organization, initially composed of students' volunteers and defectors from the Mujahedin and war lords' Militias and later enlarged by conscription. The Taliban standing army had never numbered more than 25,000 to 30,000 fighters, although this would have been increased before new offensives, such as those that led to the capture of Kabul in 1996 and Mazar-i-Sharif in 1998. Madrassa students from Pakistan, who by 1999 had made up some 30 percent of the Taliban military men power. **(Angelo Rasanayagam, 2007:139)**

The Taliban thus had social and ideological links to institutional elements within Pakistani society that provided much support during their rise to power. They also had sources of support in Pakistan that lay outside the official structure of the Government and the military and from agencies such as ISI and unlike the Mujahedin of the Afghan resistance during the 1990s, whose links with Pakistan were exclusively with the ISI and Peshawar based Afghan parties. For Taliban links were developed with Madrassas, who had an extensive campaign not only for increasing the strength of Taliban but also for collecting funds for Taliban.

The important sources for financing the Taliban movement were the private commercial truckers and transporters in the two border provinces who had developed a thriving business after the departure of Soviet troops, moving food and other commodities to needy Afghan cities and smuggling contraband on their return trips. The Taliban would receive fee of \$ 150 (6,000 rupees) on a single truck. These levies become one of the financial sources of revenue for Taliban. They become more important when the Taliban imposed taxes both on poppy production and on the transport of opium and heroin. **(Rashid: 2001:191)** The production of the poppy as well as the production of its derivatives had been outlawed by Afghan Government before 1978. But situation changed after the Afghan Saur revolution, the poppy cultivation increased in the areas close to Pakistani borders. In the ensuing of civil war, after the withdrawal of Soviet troops, the drug trade serves to finance the war lords and during the reign of Taliban it became a major activity when the Taliban extended their control over the country. It gave a clear boost to the agricultural economy based on poppy cultivation. Opium production in Pakistan reached 4,600 tones in 1999, 97

percent crop was produced in Taliban controlled areas. In 1999 opium harvest had an estimated value of some \$ 183 million. Farmers paid usher an Islamic agricultural tax of 10 percent to local Taliban commanders and Mullahs. Taliban also imposed a separate tax of 20 percent on drug dealers, transporters and refining laboratories in the name of Zakat but this went directly in to the Taliban war chest. These taxes were an essential source of income for the Taliban. The business had grown to Rs. 150 billion (Pakistani Currency) in 1996-97. Poppy growing becomes the favourable crop. **(Rashid: 2001:191)**

The Taliban help provided a golden opportunity to international drug peddlers for enhancing heroin smuggling. The mafia kept the Taliban happy by giving them huge amount for looking after their administrative affairs,¹² (Ahmad Rashid, 2001) however, Taliban did not seem to be interested in assuming the responsibilities of Government for providing day to day facilities to the masses, they were remarkably effective in exercising the monopoly on the use of force. When the Taliban captured Kabul in September 1996, the Governmental infrastructure of institutions and municipalities functioning chiefly at the lower administrative levels collapsed, their subsequent replacement of senior bureaucrats with inexperienced one resulted in ceasing the different departments from effectively functions. Their exclusion of teachers especially women from employment also meant that schools ceased to operate. Their genders policies likewise surely affected the health services as the Taliban barred all women from attending general hospitals, schools and in other such departments of government or non government. The Taliban way of ruling in Afghanistan was not only unique but was difficult to understand and not easy to handle. Their implacable rule was based on old traditional values. Their rigid policies became the cause of their isolation from the rest of the world; even the only three states namely Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emeritus, who recognized Taliban Government, could not convince the rest of the states to recognize Taliban Government.

The isolation of Taliban Government from the rest of the world and its de-reorganization from states other than three, and UN and OIC refused to accept Taliban as the legitimate Governing body of Afghanistan. This situation paved the way for all such Islamic fundamentalist organizations to take shelter in Afghanistan and to make it their base camp for launching and continuing their activities in their concerned countries or any where they wish to do. Afghanistan during the regime of Taliban became a safe heaven for banned and terrorist organizations, for instance, anti Government Islamic Movement in Central Asia received ready sanctuary on Taliban territory. In

may 1999, Tahir Yuldashev, the leader of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) who was wanted on charges in connection with an assassination attempt on President Karimov in Tashkent on February 16, 1999 that killed 16 people and injured 128 others, was authorized to set up military training camp near Mazar-i-Sharif. Yaldashev trained Islamic militants from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan even the Chinese Islamic fundamentalist from Xing jiang. The Taliban also maintained close links with Shamil Basavey, the leader of the independence movement and in February 2000 Taliban recognized the Chechen rebel Government and authorized the opening of mission in Kabul. **(Peter Marsden, 1998:71)**

The Wahabi movement in Saudi Arabia has also possibly influenced the Taliban. Its founder Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab (1703-87), was concerned at the superstition prevalent in Arabian society and the observance of Islamic rites and practices. His followers armed themselves and launched a Jihad against those they deemed guilty of idolatry, injustice, corruption and adultery, regarding themselves to be the true believers. They also imposed an unprecedented degree of Puritanism on the community banning music, dancing, poetry and the use of silk, gold, ornaments, jewelry. **(Peter Marsden, 1998:73)**

One can see many similarities between the Taliban and the Wahabi movement. Both mobilized men to martyr themselves with the aim of conquering a Country, overthrowing a Government regarded as un-Islamic and establishing a so called Islamic state. Both also insisted that their interpretation (Ijtehad) of Islam was the only correct one. In their rejection of criticism leveled by the Islamic Government of Iran and many others, that their belief system is not consistent with Islam. Taliban have insisted that their interpretation of Islam has a greater validity and purify than that of the Iranian concept.

Osama Bin Laden, who was born in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, is the son of Muhammad Bin Laden, who had a number of marriages and had more than two dozen children. Osama is the only son from his mother. Following the Soviet invasion, Osama bin Laden participated in war against Afghan Revolution and established camps for Arab and other Mujahedeen in Afghanistan in 1986. He established a base in the area of Paktia, and in 1989, he formed the Al-Qaeda Organization but shortly thereafter in the Wake of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, he returned to Saudi Arabia. After leaving Saudi Arabia, he revisited Afghanistan and Pakistan before making his way to Sudan. In April 1994 he was deprived of Saudi citizenship. In May 1996, he left Sudan for Afghanistan. Taliban provided shelter to him and to his companions, so he decided to live permanently in Afghanistan and to run

his activities all around the world. **(Rashid: 2001:63)** The arrival of Osama bin Laden and his presence in Afghanistan at a time when Taliban regime was not recognized by any western state including UNO, was of course a sign of danger not only for Afghanistan but for other neighbouring countries, in a broader sense for the whole globe. The United States and her allies shared key responsibilities for what happened to Afghanistan after the withdrawal of Soviet troops. In the unthinking zeal of cold war, USA and her allies fully supported the Afghan Mujahedeen for years in their struggle to evict the Soviet Union from the Afghanistan; the USA then withdrew from the scene leaving the Afghan factions in the hands of neighbouring countries and Saudi Arabia to fight among themselves.

It was then, during the gulf war and the deployment of US forces in Saudi Arabia as a part of operations “ Desert Shield” and “Desert Storm” that a raged scenes to have tripped him. The western deployment seems to have struck him as the vary violation; he called upon to resist. Osama bin Laden and members of his net work - Al Qaeda, had been implicated in the simultaneous bombing of US embassies in Dares Salaam- Tanzania and Nairobi, Kenya, on 7th August 1998, killing 235 people including 13 Americans. **(Rashid: 2001:63)** The US asked Taliban to hand over Osama Bin Laden to them and to destroy the Al-Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan. The refusal of Taliban to compel Osama Bin Laden to leave Afghanistan irked Washington, Laden had called upon the US and other countries to pull their armies from Arab lands without any further delay.

In reply, the UN’s Security Council imposed economic sanctions including a ban on international flights to and from Afghanistan. The sanctions were to be effective in thirty days if the Taliban did not extradite Osama Bin Laden, for trial in the US court. The US retaliated on August 28th 1998 by firing Cruise Missiles from ships in the Arabian Sea and Missiles from Aircrafts on Afghanistan at Bin Laden’s alleged terrorist bases. A year later, Bin Laden was again implicated in the suicide bombing attack on the US harbour in Aden, Yemen in September 1999. On 19th December 2000, the UN Security Council imposed new sanctions on Afghanistan, expanding the list to include the closure of terrorist camps, the freezing of Taliban assets abroad and an embargo on the import of arms and chemicals required for the production of heroin.**(Angelo Rasanayagam,2007:183)** However, these various pronouncements had no effect on the Taliban, as Taliban Government and Mullah Omar who was probably more interested in Osama and his team and had shown less interest to pull out the Afghan territory from the saver crisis. He stated unequivocally that “We will never hand Osama over to any

one and will protect him with our blood at any cost". (**Barnett R. Robin, 1998**)

CONCERNS OF IRAN:

The experience of Taliban and its subsequent occupation of Afghanistan's more than 90 percent area created great concerns for Iranian government for a number of reasons. Firstly, the Rabbani regime in Afghanistan was more friendly to Iran, secondly the protection of fellow shia and their share in any future set up of Afghanistan, Thirdly, Iran also stood to gain economic benefits and to convene the newly established Central Asian states to have trade route through Iran, which would be more secure than Afghanistan.

Iran even offered port facilities at Bandar Abbas and transit facilities by road and her soil for exporting Iranian goods and services to central Asian Republics. Indo-Iranian joint venture has created apprehension in Pakistan and in other western countries. To counter this move, Pakistan sent in 1994, a convoy of goods by road to Central Asia via Afghanistan under the leadership of Nasserullah Babar, when the convoy was stopped, so it was secured by Taliban, thus Taliban emerged. To be more realistic, the war in Afghanistan was for the advancement of economic interest. Practically Iranian policy towards Afghanistan underwent a sea-change at the end of the cold war. Lastly, ideological considerations during the Khomeini period gave way to the pursuit of State and Persian national interests. Iran became very active in Afghanistan cultivating contact with the parties and different groups in Afghanistan to counter the anti-Iran elements. The coalition and the broad based Government that took powers from Dr. Najeebullah in April 1992, preempting a scheduled transfer of power to a UN selected neutral team of Afghans, represented a major diplomatic triumph for Iran. (**Peter Marsden, 1998:130**)

Actually Iran was vociferous in its criticism of the Taliban, on 7th October 1996, Ayatollah Ali Khomeini, in a Friday sermon said, "In the neighborhood of Iran, something is taking place in the name of Islam and a group whose knowledge of Islam is unknown has embarked on action having nothing to do with Islam. He regarded the actions being taken in Afghanistan were what be described as clear examples of reactionary and fanatical moves and of an ignorance of human rights. Iran also accused the Taliban of receiving support from the USA; on the contrary it has been supporting the Taliban in its suppression of its rivals.

In fact, Iran which had tense relations with USA and other western states, did not want any such development in its neighbouring country

especially in Afghanistan which may jeopardize its political, ideological and economical interest. Following Taliban takeover of Kabul, Iran's foreign Minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, toured Central Asian states and also to India to stress the need for a ceasefire and for the establishment of a broad based Government in Afghanistan, in which all the nationalities and different religious groups should have opportunities to serve the Country because the military operations between the warring Afghan factions would destabilize the situation in the region.

During the Taliban drive to power, Iranian strategy towards Afghanistan took a new shape. Iran wanted Taliban to be engaged in the areas away from Iranian border but the fall of Herat to the Taliban in 1995 was perceived by Iran as a direct threat to her national security because the Taliban Government had reached near the boarder of Iran. Moreover, majority of the population of Herat are Shia and Persian speaking, Ismail Khan along with his commanders took shelter in Iran, and both Ismail Khan and Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani, blamed Pakistan's ISI and its military for helping Taliban. **(Rashid: 2001:63)** Iran in reply, developed an airlift from Mashed in its Khurasan Province to the Bagram airbase, where it flew in arms supplies for Ahmad Shah Masood forces and Iran also established a number of training camps near Mashed led by exiled Governor of Herat, Ismail Khan. Iran high profile involvement continued after the fall of Kabul to the Taliban, in her consistent support to the anti-Taliban forces. The equally consistent support to the Taliban regime by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia was seen by Iran as a conspiracy to isolate Iran in the region. Taliban on the other side, made displeasure towards Iran by accusing Tehran of supplying arms to the forces of Rabbani in Kabul and allowing them to use airbases inside Iran to strike at Taliban controlled areas of Afghanistan, in this connection Taliban presented Iranian made weapons to Tehran consulate in Herat, claiming that these were the proof of support to Tajik dominated "Persian speaking Government in Kabul" however, Iran denied the charges and explained "that these were supplied at the time of Afghan war with Russia. **(Angelo Rasanayagam, 2007:163)**

One of the major setbacks for the Shia population in Afghanistan and for Iran was the killing of Abdul Ali Mazari, a known political leader of Hezb-i- Wahad, a Shia (Hazara) political Party that was formed from a coalition of several political Parties after the Soviet withdrawal. The government of Iran is believed to have played a key role on its formation. Abdul Ali Mazari of Mazar-i-sharif wished a stable, prosperous Afghanistan with a kind of Federation, where every ethnic group should have equal constitutional rights. In the course of the civil war in Afghanistan after the

fall of Najeeb's Government, Abdul Ali Mazari played key role in securing the rights of Hazara and was ready to form an alliance with any such group, who may be beneficial for Hazara's interest. Mazari had formed an alliance with Gul Badin Hikmatyar and Dostum and began to negotiate with Taliban as soon as Hikmatyar retreated from Kabul; he did not want to have confrontation with Taliban and hoped that the war between Taliban and Rabbani Government would provide him an opportunity for survival. Mazari invited Taliban to occupy the frontline in west of the Kabul held by his fighters but things suddenly turned and Taliban started to disarm Mazari's men, which resulted in clashes between the Taliban and followers of Mazari while Mazari was captured by Taliban on March, 12, 1995 and on March 13th, 1995 along with his nine other leaders of Wahdat were tortured and murdered by Taliban. Mazari was threw out of helicopter, and on the death of Mazari, there came a strong reaction from Shia population in Afghanistan, specially Iran's reaction was so harsh that Foreign Ministers of Iran Ali Akber Velayati condemned the Mazari's murder and blamed the Taliban for the continuation of bloodshed in Afghanistan. **(Rashid: 2001:55-57)**

The Iranians have also been concerned at the Taliban's rapid successes, as in September 1996 when Taliban entered Kabul and captured it by killing large number of people. The fall of Kabul coincided with the brutal execution of Dr. Najeebullah along with his brothers Ahmadzai at the sprawling UN compound, where he had taken a shelter, in the wake of his resignation under UN sponsored peace plan. On the peaceful down of 26 September 1996, Dr. Najeebullah along with his brother was killed in brutal way and their bodies were hanged on electric pole at the Aryana Square which sent shock waves across the whole world, **(The Frontier Post, 27th September, 1996)** but execution of the Dr. Najeebullah proved to be a great strategic blunder on their part as it greatly undermined, their standing among war affected masses, who had pinned high hopes from them. Most importantly, Dr. Najeebullah's brutal killing sent shock waves among the common people in Afghanistan, and particularly in Iran who had tense relations since their emergence. The period from 1996 to the fall of Taliban in October 2001, had left the country in a very critical situation as their started a severe civil war between the Taliban and the forces of Ahmad Shah Masood, Abdur Rasheed Dostum, Ismail khan, Abdul Malik Pehlawan and with the forces of Hazara community. Taliban in order to occupy Northern provinces of Afghanistan had to face a very strong opposition; both the opponent groups did not hesitate to massacre those who they defined as enemies.

Iran relations with the Taliban deteriorated further after 1997, when Taliban occupied Mazar-i-Sharif, a strong hold of Abdur Rasheed Dostum who left Afghanistan for Turkey after his commander Abdul Malik Pehlawan had joined hands with Taliban. The joint forces of Uzbek Commander Abdul Malik Pehlawan and Taliban defeated the forces of Dostum. The fall of Mazar-i- Sharif at the hands of Taliban on 8th August 1998 resulted in three days massacre which can be described as genocidal in its ferocity. Taliban even did not hesitate to fight against the forces of Abdul Malik Pehlawan who were their ally against Dostum forces. Pakistan soon after the occupation of Mazar announced its formal reorganization of Taliban Government and Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates also followed Pakistan by officially recognizing the Taliban as the legitimate Government of Afghanistan. **(Kamal Matinuddin, 1998:141)** The occupation of the Mazar-i-Sharif by the Taliban was considered as a big victory by Pakistan and demanded from the world to recognize Taliban Government and the political and military leadership insisted that the victory of Taliban is actually the victory of Pakistan by the occupation of the Mazar-i-Sharif. In such a way the influence of Iran over Afghanistan will be ended and the Central Asian States will have trade with Taliban through Pakistan rather Iran.

Iran, who had never been happy with Taliban and had usually blamed Pakistan for supporting Taliban, now was on peak of diplomatic displeasure with Pakistan's decision of formally recognizing Taliban Government. Iran objected Pakistan of her decision regarding the reorganization of Taliban Government, and Iran Government even asked Central Asian States and India to do everything possible to stem the crisis in Afghanistan and to replace the Taliban Government by Broad based Afghan Government. Taliban in reaction to these statements, close the Iranian embassy in Kabul and asked the diplomats to leave the country. **(Kamal Matinuddin, 1998:141)**

During the course of Taliban occupation of Mazar-i-Sharif, a very tragic event occurred, the succeeded Taliban forces entered the Iran consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif and they captured the Iranian diplomats along with other officials who were serving there, and all these diplomats were killed. Iran had showed a severe reaction to this event, and asked the International Community to put pressure on Taliban. Taliban fully ignored the Iranian reaction and also did not pay any weight age to the concerns of international community, so they attacked the historical city of Bamyan, mostly populated of Shia Hazara Community in September 1998, and killed hundreds of people. During this course of time, Taliban also destroyed the historical statues of Buddha, which were made 2000 years before and which were declared by UNESCO as International archeological heritage.

Following the murders of Iranian diplomats and the occupation of Bamyan by Taliban, tension between Taliban and Iran rapidly rose to the extent that the supreme leader of Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei warned that a very big war shall be started which will engulf the whole region, Iranians again blamed Pakistan for her consistent support in the course of occupation of Mazar-i-Sharif and Bamyan. Some 70,000 Iranian revolutionary guards were moved to the Frontier and large scale exercises were held. A war like situation was created as in response to the brutal murder of Iranian diplomats, Iran military forces gathered on Afghan borders. Taliban immediately began gathering and recruiting large number of men along the border with Iran. Iran gathered two lakh regular army at the border of Afghanistan, (**Martin Ewans,1998**) however, the Security Council of UNO realized the severity of an attack of Iranian military on Afghanistan, so UNO diplomat Lakhdar Ibrahimi was sent to Iran and Afghanistan as a special representative of Secretary General of UNO, he met Mullah Omar on 14th October 1998 and helped minimizing the tension between both the countries. (**Rashid: 2001:111**) Intervention by the UN Security Council, prevented an imminent Iranian invasion. Although later on relations with Taliban remained tense but Iran in order to avoid direct clash, followed a strategy to put pressure through International Community on Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and UAE, as these three states have not only recognized the Taliban Government but were considered to be the real forces beyond the Taliban.

Tension between Iran and Afghanistan in particular with Pashtoon speaking Community has deep historical roots, and it would be surprising if it were now to be disappearing. Apart from the religious divide and ancient legacy of invasion and counter invasion, the problem of Helmand waters has been also a longstanding bone of contention. The cultural affinities between two countries have also been more of a hindrance than an aid to a closer relationship.

The drug trafficking and the expansion of terrorism in whole the world through Taliban ruled area, were the key points for Iran, who accused Taliban for its production and its transferring to the rest of the world. The mafia in drug trafficking along the Pak-Afghan border flourished in a very huge quantity, illicit business grown to Rs. 150 billion Pakistani in 1996 to 1997. (**Samay Ram: 2004:115**) Poppy growing became the favourite crop, the Taliban help provide a golden opportunity to international drug peddlers for enhancing heroin smuggling, although Islam has strongly prohibited the cultivation and the use of drug in any shape but Taliban did not stop the cultivation of poppy with the reason that the income from the poppy and other crops cultivation is beneficial and a major source for Taliban

Government and for the people. It was estimated that approximately one million people are involved in cultivating the drugs, which used to get one billion dollars annually. (**Samay Ram, 2004:115**) while Taliban used to get reasonable amount annually as tax. The route for drug smuggling was through Iran; however, Iranian Government has always remained very much against the drug and its use or trafficking. Since 1980, about 2500 personnel from security forces died in the campaign against the drug trafficking. In September 1998, due to clashed and war like situation with Taliban, Iran closed its border with Afghanistan, so Iranian security forces captured about 5 tones heroin in few weeks, later on airways was used for trafficking. (**Rashid: 2001:164**)

The cultivation of poppy and other kind of drugs in such a large quantity and its trafficking to the rest of the countries through the route of Iran was a matter of great concern for Iran. However Pakistan was not as rigid as Iran against the use of heroin but despite of these actions it was estimated that till 1998 approximately, Three million people, were the addict of Heroin in Iran while the number of drug user in Pakistan is much higher than Iran. The drug trafficking remained one of the main reasons for ill relations between Iran and Taliban Government. Although Mullah Omar and Osama bin Laden's public statement indicated, to oppose the use of Drug but in real they even tried to recruit chemists to develop a super heroin, with a high quality to export to the West, there was stronger evidence that Bin laden served as a middle man between the Taliban and Arabs drug smugglers from the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, using kickbacks to fund his terrorist camps. (**Gretchen Peter, 2009:87**) Private jets were constantly used by rich Saudi and UAE sheikhs apparently for the purpose to hunt the housbara bustard, an endangered species of migratory desert bird but US and British intelligence officials came to believe that at least some of these flights transported weapons and material to the Taliban and Al-Qaeda and flew heroin out, even with Mullah Omar's approval, Bin Laden hijacked the State run Ariayana Airlines, turning it into a macro terror charter service carrying Islamic militants timber weapons, cash and heroin to the Emirates and Pakistan. (**Gretchen Peter, 2009:87**)

CONCLUSION:

In this modern Era with its sophisticated atmosphere, each and every State has to find friends and create good relations with the rest of the states. Political relations among nations cover a range of activities which include diplomacy, war, trade, relations, alliances, cultural exchanges, participation in International organizations and so forth, however, conflict and

international conflict will always exist in such conflict bargaining plays an important role to develop capabilities that give them leverage to obtain more favourable outcome than they could obtain without such leverage, and in international politics, the ultimate outcome of the bargaining process is a settlement of the particular conflict. So, any state or government who lack such capability finds difficulty to survive.

Taliban who catapulted to power in 1996 through a spectacular victory in Afghanistan over their opponent were defeated in an equally spectacular way, the reason for their failure could be summarized by some of these points. Their ideology of Islam gave a different meaning to the Islam. No proper leadership and overdependence on the Jehadi groups and on Islamic political parties of Pakistan. The Taliban leadership who had less political vision and administrative experience, the main part of the problem in this context was the Taliban leadership in general and mullah Omar in particular, who were mostly inaccessible, used to conduct their offices in an atmosphere of exceptional secrecy.

The Taliban hallmark to say total refusal to compromise, not merely with the International community, especially with neighboring country of Iran, but also with the Mujahedin parties and other elements, ethnic, political, religious or intellectual, which exist within Afghan society, its rejection of liberal political and social concept including notably the electoral process.

The emancipation of women who were never recognized as human beings by Taliban, was also one of the key point in isolating from the rest of the world, almost every right was snatched from them. Women were not allowed to work. Schools for girls were closed, widows turned to begging to feed their children, and the veil (burqa) was made compulsory for Afghan women.

The stricter dress code for men, ban on music, Television and photography styled Afghanistan more or less a prison for the people, where no such activity could be found which can energize the life of the masses. However, the presence of Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan with his entire network of Al-Qaeda along with such other groups from different states, providing a secure base from where they could carry out terrorist activities across the world become the key cause of their failure and ending of their government in Afghanistan, in this connection the most historical and tragic event of the 11th September 2001, the day when the two towers (Twin Towers) of the world Trade centre in New York USA and the building of pentagon, Washington were attacked by Airplanes hijacked by some suicide attackers, killing thousands of the people and demolishing the world trade

centre brought a very rapid changes in the world particularly in Afghanistan and Let the Taliban's days numbered. So, the external and foreign policy of Taliban Government could not achieve success. Thus relations with the rest of the world, especially with Iran remained never cordial. Taliban were not able to find friends even Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates left Taliban after the incident of 9/11.

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