

Revisiting Afghanistan – a year after American withdrawal

انخلا

Dr Moonis Ahmar: August 22, 2022

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On 15th August 2022, the deputy Prime Minister and **co-founder** بانی شریک of the Taliban movement, Abdul Ghani Baradar said, “this great victory came after countless sacrifices and hardships. On this day... the Islamic Emirate **brought** the world superpower and its **allies** اتحادی **to their knees** and Afghans gained their independence.”

Last year, on 15th August 2021, the Biden administration **ventured on** قدم اٹھایا its **haphazard** بے ترتیب military withdrawal from Afghanistan and President Ashraf Ghani **subsequently** بعد اس کے **escaped** from his **palace** محل. In the **aftermath** بعد کے, images of **chaos** افراتفری at Kabul airport and in the city **surfaced** آئے یا منظر عام پہ آئے in the news and social media. The Taliban who were **overthrown** الٹ دیا by the US-led forces after 9/11 re-entered Kabul and established their **writ** قانون over the city and the rest of Afghanistan. The Taliban celebrated their victory on 15th August in front of the **defunct** غیر فعال US **embassy** سفارتخانہ in Kabul claiming that the people of Afghanistan gained real independence by **liberating** آزاد کر کے themselves from the **clutches** چنگل of foreign forces. It is yet to be seen how the occupation of Afghanistan by the Taliban has led to the **emancipation** آزادی of the Afghan

people and whether they are **better off** خوشحال، بہتر، today.

A year after the fall of Kabul and **unceremonial** غیر رسمی طور، US withdrawal, Afghanistan is **back to square one**. The US and its **allies** اتحادی invested more than \$2 trillion to transform Afghanistan into a modern, democratic, and **enlightened** روشن خیال state but their efforts failed **miserably** بری طرح. The Taliban re-established the old order that **prevailed** during their rule from 1996-2001 with meagre resistance. They violated the terms and conditions of the **Doha accord** of February 2020 by **depriving** محروم رکھنا women of their fundamental rights and providing **sanctuary**، to Ayman al- Zawahiri, the former head of Al-Qaeda who was recently killed in Kabul in a drone attack.

Revisiting Afghanistan a year after US withdrawal and the Taliban's hold on office would require an **in-depth** گہرائی سے **critical analysis** تنقیدی جائزہ of how and why things in Afghanistan are still **complicated** پیچیدہ and unsettled. **Severe** economic crisis, international isolation, and emerging **resistance** مزاحمت against what is called a **ruthless** بے رحم mode of governance are shaping another phase of crisis and conflict in Afghanistan.

According to the **Agence France-Presse** news agency, on 13th August upon the completion of one year of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, a group of Afghan women protested in front of the education ministry in Kabul and **chanted** نعرے لگانا،

اپنا "break, work and freedom" but the Taliban forcibly dispersed them by firing guns into the air. بوائے فائرنگ منتشر کر دیا۔ Taliban fighters beat up female protestors who refused to leave with their rifle butts. Zholia Parsi, a women's organisation that had arranged the anti-Taliban demonstration lamented that "they dispersed girls, tore out banners and confiscated the mobile phones of many girls." She further said that "if the Taliban want to silence this voice, it is not possible. We will protest from our homes."

Like the previous Taliban rule, the current regime has imposed a travel ban on women. Women cannot travel long distances without a male companion; education for girls beyond the primary level is still not allowed and strict segregation of males and females is imposed in public gardens and parks. Women make up almost 50% of the total Afghan population, yet they have not been given their due rights. Instead, they have been excluded from public offices and are regularly persecuted. سٹائے جانا، تکلیف دینا. In May this year, the Taliban's supreme leader Hibatullah Alhundzada ordered women to fully cover themselves in public including their faces according to his interpretation of Shariah.

Afghanistan was not an ideal country when the US backed Afghan regime was in power from December 2001 till August 2021, but the country didn't undergo Taliban-type backwardness and suffocation. گھٹن پس ماندگی. The flawed political process brought the legitimacy of the regimes of Hamid Karzai and Ashraf Ghani into question,

but the Taliban neither believe in political pluralism, constitution or equality of all Afghans nor do they feel accountable جوابدہ to the people. They just captured power by taking advantage of the US military withdrawal and Ashraf Ghani's crumbling لڑکھڑاتی regime.

A year has passed, and the Taliban government is struggling to seek legitimacy جواز قانونی for its rule and wants to run Afghanistan as a medieval-type قرون وسطی جیسی، قدیم، مراد state detached جدا from the realities of the contemporary عصر حاضر world. Revisiting Afghanistan a year after the US withdrawal and the subsequent اس کے نتیجے میں occupation by the Taliban would require a critical analysis of the situation from three angles. First, non-conformist غیر موافق Afghans are running out of patience and tolerance for the suffocating والی Taliban regime حکومت. Will the Taliban continue to use force to disperse منتشر کرنا women's demonstrations مظاہرے and other popular protests, or will they turn Afghanistan into a big prison قیدخانہ? Thousands of Afghans who were threatened by the Taliban regime have already left their country. However, the remaining 40 million cannot leave Afghanistan and will not tolerate unabated بلا روک coercion جبر and oppression ظلم.

The Taliban after getting another chance to rule Afghanistan could have made a difference between the previous and present regimes حکومتیں. They could have adopted a more moderate اعتدال پسند, tolerant, and amenable عمل قابل approach

to prevailing conditions موجودہ حالات and adhered پابند to the main tenets اصولوں of the Doha accord like respecting human rights, and the rights of women, and not providing sanctuary پناہ to foreign terrorist groups. But, it seems, that the Taliban have not learned lessons from past debacles شکستیں and still believe that they can suppress دبانا non-conformist غیر موافق segments طبقات of the population and deny women their fundamental rights. Resultantly, Afghanistan is drifting بڑھنا into another phase of violence and civil war خانہ جنگی.

Second, the prevailing غالب ostensible نمایاں silence in Afghanistan during Taliban rule is misleading گمراہ کن because the youth who experienced relative freedom in the last 20 years are unwilling to accept massive curbs رکاوٹیں, پابندیاں on education, female employment, entertainment, and other progressive ترقی پسند things. Despite being in power for a year, the Taliban have not been granted دی international legitimacy شدت. This has deepened isolation and intensified شدت the economic crisis due to the sanctions پابندیاں imposed عائد in the past year.

Finally, given that no substantial خاطرخواہ changes have taken place in Afghanistan during the one year of the Taliban's rule, the country will continue to degenerate تنزلی کا شکار in the years to come. In the past year, there has been little socio-economic development, quality of life has deteriorated مزید بگڑ گئی, human security has worsened, and educational opportunities remain

absent.

With **marginal** معمولی space for groups and parties **advocating** حمایت وکالت، for democracy, political pluralism, and gender **emancipation** آزادی, it seems Afghanistan under the Taliban will be no different from its past rule. However, if the **people** of Afghanistan rise against the Taliban regime to **mitigate** کم کرنا violence, armed conflicts, corruption, and disorder, one can hope for a better future for the country.

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Political Apartheid تعصب in Kashmir

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The history of Kashmir is riddled بھری پڑی with blatant صریح betrayal غداری، دھوکہ، bloody barbarianism بربریت، and heartless brutality درندگی. Unfortunately, since 1947, the month of August has been a symbol of an ill omen نھوست کی علامت for the people of Kashmir, ringing alarm bells خطرے کی گھنٹیاں for fears, tears, tribulations فتنوں، and tyranny جبر، ظلم. It was back in August 1947 that India and Pakistan got their independence and failed to reach an agreement on the sovereign خودمختار status of Jammu and Kashmir, most of which continues to remain with India. Kashmiris were never consulted مشاورت nor made a party فریق in this gory بھیانک drama of perpetual دائمی pain. They were rendered بنایا گیا irrelevant غیر متعلقہ and made invisible پوشیدہ. The most recent and severe setback دھچکا came three years ago on August 5, 2019. The Indian government revoked منسوخ کیا Kashmir's special status by abrogating منسوخ یا مسترد Article 370 and 35A by doing away with whatever limited autonomy خودمختاری they enjoyed, though much on paper. Article 370 allowed Indian-administered Kashmir to retain برقرار رکھنا control over all areas except defense, communication, and foreign policy. Likewise, Article 35A ensured that only Kashmir's "permanent residents" could own property. The revocation منسوخی was yet another step towards completely annexing الحاق کرنا Kashmir, a move that used to garner حاصل کرنا popular support in India at the

expense of Kashmiris. The will of the governed, which is essential in a democratic **dispensation** نظام, is not at all a **priority** ترجیحی issue for the Hindu nationalist government of India when it comes to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, which also includes the Kashmir valley.

Kashmir had already been under a **crippling** اپاہج lockdown long before COVID-19. For weeks in 2019, all phone lines and internet services were cut off by the Indian government. Basic mobile-phone connectivity took months to be **restored** بحال ہونا and a ban on high-speed 4G internet continues to this day. The **autocratic** آمرانہ Indian government has fully **capitalized** فائدہ on coronavirus lockdowns by passing the domicile rule, which has caused **alarm** خطرہ because of its **potential** صلاحیت to change the **demography** آبادی of the Muslim-majority state of Jammu and Kashmir. The measure **grants** دیتا ہے a right to **residency** رہائش and government jobs to anyone from India who has lived in the state for 15 years or more, studied there for seven years and taken certain exams, or served in its state government for 10 years or more. During just more than a month in 2020, around 400,000 people had **reportedly** مبینہ طور پر acquired domicile certificates. This **malicious** بد نیت move is all set to **alter** تبدیل کرنا the results of any **referendum** استصواب رائے seeking peoples' opinion for the resolution of the larger, international dispute over control of the **territory** علاقہ. Adding salt to the injury, later the same year came the first attempt to change the demography of Jammu and Kashmir: the Muslim-majority district of Poonch in Jammu faced a **siege** محاصرہ,

which resulted in a **massacre** عام قتل of Muslims across Jammu. It is not exactly known how many actually died, but conservative **estimates** محتاط اندازے put the **casualty** ہلاکتیں count between 20,000 to even more than 200,000 with half a million **compelled** مجبور to migrate to Pakistan.

In August 1953, Sheikh Abdullah who became Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir in 1948-was arrested and jailed. Dozens of people were killed in protests following his **incarceration** قید، بندش. Likewise, in August 2008, Kashmiris protested the **blockade** بندش of a key highway in the state by Hindu nationalists. As tens of thousands of protesters marched towards the city of Muzaffarabad-the capital of the Pakistan-administered Kashmir on the other side of the Line of Control-Indian security forces fired upon them. Since 1990, more than 70,000 people have been killed, at least 8,000 have disappeared, hundreds have been tortured and thousands **detained** قید کیے گئے by Indian authorities. The official Indian figures put the death **toll** تعداد much lower. Almost all elections have been shamelessly **rigged** دھاندلی and **draconian** سخت **laws** have been imposed by **twisting the local government's arm**. Those who chose to oppose the Indian government's **writ** حکم نامہ were either jailed or heartlessly killed. There has been absolute **lawlessness** لاقانونیت with the **shady** مشکوک structures of **accountability** احتساب that have been **rendered** بنادیا گیا **dysfunctional** غیر فعال. Not one person from the Indian armed forces has ever been **prosecuted** مقدمہ چلایا in civilian courts for their involvement in human rights violations. The political promises of a free and fair **plebiscite**

رائے allowing Kashmiris to decide the territory's fate, made by then Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in 1947, have been cast to the **four winds** and replaced by a new stance موقف that "Kashmir is an **integral** لازمی part of India." The Indian stand on Kashmir has grown more **rigid** سخت and the violence against the people of Jammu and Kashmir has become more brutal with every passing day.

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came into power in 2014, his **aggressive** جارحانہ regime became even **cruder** بدتر. The **deceptive** فریبی demeanor برتاؤ of the **secular** Congress government was replaced by the **brazeness** ڈھٹائی of the Hindu-majoritarian BJP. However, his re-election in 2019 **worsened** مزید خراب کیا the situation for all **minorities** اقلیتیوں including Muslims. **Emboldened** حوصلہ افزائی by his **grip** گرفت over power corridors, Modi-led regime turned totally **fascist** in days. On 5th August, 2019 the Kashmiris lost the symbolic **autonomy** خودمختاری they had under the constitution. As expected, the international community has looked the other way and expressed only **mild** ہلکے **concerns** خدشات about the **deplorable** افسوسناک situation of human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir. The trade and strategic relationships with India have **gagged** دبا کے، لپیٹ میں لے رکھا ہے the developed world. Material **gains** فوائد have taken **precedence** فوقیت over the **moral dilemma** اخلاقی الجھاؤ. The international agreements must be words **intended** مقصد to make the leaders who sign them find them on high moral ground. The **unilateral** یکطرفہ and undemocratic changes

governing Jammu and Kashmir, **incessant** مسلسل human rights violations, denial of basic facilities, and **land-grabbing** زمینوں پر قبضہ due to **militarization** عسکریت پسندی are all in violation of international law, UN resolutions, India's own constitutional framework, and India's commitment to Kashmiris. India feels encouraged to continue with its **barbaric** وحشیانہ policy because of the lack of any meaningful **intervention** مداخلت by the international leadership. It is a sad story of criminal **complacency** لاپرواہی. Cut a word; it will bleed.

When India and Pakistan gained their independence, New Delhi wasted no time and **initiated** آغاز کیا a campaign to change the **demography** آبادیات of IIOJK. Therefore, in IIOJK, the constant fear of demographic change has existed for decades and this **apprehension** خدشہ is further **intensified** ہونا شدید by Hindu **right-wing** groups openly calling for a change in the demography of Kashmir and **integrationist** انضمام، حامی مساوات politics. India has initiated a planned strategy to **replicate** نقل کرنا the West Bank pattern of **colonization** like the Israeli model in Kashmir, towards the **displacement** نقل مکانی of local citizens, particularly Kashmiri Muslims through new settlers by **exerting** ڈالنا **hegemonic** **influence** اثرورسوخ بالادستی یا بادشاہت کے **influence** ڈالنا. When attending a conference with the Kashmiri Hindus, a serving Indian **diplomat** سفارتکار in America claimed that "Kashmiri culture is Indian culture; it is Hindu culture" and he **lauded** تعریف کی Israel's inhuman strategy of dealing with the West Bank settlements. Kashmiris have been living in terror of an **ambiguous** مبہم status given by the Indian

Government for well over 70 years and always feared the expected change in the demography and status of IIOJK. Building further on its sinister مذموم designs, Modi-led regime plans to add about 2 million non-local voters to facilitate the imposition کرنے a puppet پتلی CM in IIOJK. These anxieties have now become harsh realities تلخ حقائق and get further compounded بڑھنا with every passing day. These fears were perceived تھے سمجھے جاتے to be ridiculous خیز and unwarranted غیر ضروری at one point in time by the international community. Given the recent security situation in IIOJK, the international community has turned its deaf ears to the bemoaning شکار آہ و پکار کرتے innocent civilians being subjected شکار to atrocities مظالم of all shades and grades کے by the Indian armed forces.

In the final analysis, it can safely بخوبی be inferred اندازہ لگانا that the world community stands thoroughly exposed بے نقاب because of its commercial interests and strategic security ties with India. In its flagrant صریح، کھلم کھلا violation of International Laws and UN resolutions, India's unilateral یکطرفہ, unconstitutional, and undemocratic changes in the demography of IIOJK are not only a serious breach خلاف ورزی of human rights but also a constant threat to regional peace and stability استحکام. The sooner جتنی جلدی the developed world rises to its shared responsibility of ensuring a just solution to the persistent مستقل political apartheid تعصب in Kashmir, the better اتنا ہی بہتر ہے.

The writer is a civil servant by profession,

bring someone to knee

to completely defeat or overwhelm (someone)

The general vowed he would bring the enemy to their knees

back to square one

Idiom

back to where one started, with no progress having been made.

If you are back to square one, you have to start working on a plan from

the beginning because your previous attempt failed completely:

If this doesn't work we're back to square one

The Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan, commonly known as the US–Taliban deal or the **Doha Agreement**, was a peace agreement signed by the United States and the Taliban on February 29, 2020 in Doha, Qatar, to bring an end to the 2001–2021 war in Afghanistan. Negotiated by Zalmay Khalilzad, the agreement did not involve the then Afghan government. The deal, which also had secret annexes, was one of the critical events that caused the collapse of the Afghan National Security Forces. Following the deal, the US dramatically reduced the number of air attacks and deprived the ANSF of a critical edge in fighting the Taliban insurgency, leading to the Taliban takeover of Kabul on 15 August 2021

Agence France-Presse is a French private international news agency headquartered in Paris, France. Founded in 1835 as

Havas, it is the world's oldest news agency. AFP has regional headquarters in Nicosia, Montevideo, Hong Kong and Washington, D.C., and news bureaus in 151 countries in 201 locations

Pluralism is a theory of the distribution of political power that holds that power is widely and evenly dispersed in society, rather than concentrated in the hands of an elite or ruling class. In particular, pluralists have a positive view of pressure-group politics, believing that groups promote healthy debate and discussion and that they strengthen the democratic process.

In political ideologies, pluralism is particularly promoted by liberals, who argue that tolerance of moral, cultural and political diversity is essential for freedom, and only a democracy in which diverse groups of individuals are able to compete, with the state acting as a 'neutral' arbiter between those groups, is a truly liberal democracy.

twist someone's arm

2 informal : to try to force someone to do something

My wife really had to twist my arm to get me to apologize to my boss

The "**four winds**" refers to the winds from the north, south, east and west. As an idiom, to be "cast to the four winds" means to be thrown in all directions

Secularism is most commonly defined as the separation of

religion from civic affairs and the state, and may be broadened to a similar position seeking to remove or to minimize the role of religion in any public sphere

Fascism is a system of government led by a dictator who typically rules by forcefully and often violently suppressing opposition and criticism, controlling all industry and commerce, and promoting nationalism and often racism.

term right-wing can generally refer to the section of a political party or system that advocates free enterprise and private ownership, and typically favours socially traditional ideas. The Right includes social conservatives and fiscal conservatives, while a minority of right-wing movements, such as fascists, harbor anti-capitalist sentiments. The Right also includes certain groups who are culturally liberal but fiscally conservative, such as right-wing libertarians.

colonization

noun

the action or process of settling among and establishing control over the indigenous people of an area.

the action of appropriating a place or domain for one's own use

turn a deaf ear

idiom

to ignore someone when they complain or ask for something:

In the past they've tended to turn a deaf ear to such requests.