

Taliban Governance in Afghanistan Concerns of Bangladesh

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Afghanistan has a long history of conflict, brutality, invasion, Al-Qaeda, and, most recently, the Taliban. Afghanistan's strategic location makes geopolitics essential for the world's superpowers. This is why it was invaded by the British, followed by the Soviet Union. Following the invasion, the Taliban assumed control in 1996 and governed Afghanistan until 2001, when the United States attacked the nation in response to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. During the Taliban's leadership in 1996, women and girls suffered the most since they were forbidden from pursuing school and could only leave the house if accompanied by a male member of their family. The Taliban's policies were never appreciated by Western leaders. And we are witnessing the same scenario after the United States force has been removed from Afghanistan after two decades.

After the Taliban acquired complete control of Afghanistan, it generated concerns in most nations, and the United States' two-decade presence made little sense either. This is a crucial occurrence for the countries of South Asia. India plays a vital role in this dangerous circumstance since it has no intention of recognizing the Taliban administration, notwithstanding China's ability to influence the new government's internal affairs. Bangladesh, on the other hand, is in a different situation. Bangladesh is not a large nation like India, but the new Afghan administration will have an impact on it in a multitude of ways. The word "terrorism" crops up frequently in this context. There is a clear presence of Islamic extremist groups in Bangladesh. Groups such as Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh (HuJi-B) and Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) exist in Bangladesh and conduct their recruiting processes using social media platforms such

as Facebook and Twitter to persuade the youth of Bangladesh to join the struggle to establish Islamic doctrine. The whole world already witnessed the gruesome incident in Holey Artisan Bakery in 2016, which was carried out by the Neo-JMB members and killed 22 people, including 18 foreigners. It is unclear if the growth of the Taliban will have an impact on our country's extremist groups. However, the message of "Islamic triumph" has already been delivered. With inspiration from the Taliban, extreme organizations in Bangladesh may begin a strategy to destroy the government, which favors "secular" ideology in its policies.

The Rohingya refugee problem is currently the most pressing issue in Bangladesh. The role of the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) is intensifying day by day. Gaining support from the Taliban as a persecuted minority Muslim group is not difficult for ARSA members. As a result, Bangladesh's prime concern must be security. Smuggling of weaponry and narcotics is becoming more widespread along the Myanmar-Bangladesh border, and camp refugees are also implicated in these illicit activities.

Bangladesh, being a South Asian country, is a non-player in the Afghanistan crisis. Bangladesh, according to Foreign Minister Dr. AK Abdul Momen, would choose its strategy toward Afghanistan. He also stated that Bangladesh's stance toward Afghanistan will be determined after assessing Afghanistan's governance and policy formations. Even though Bangladesh's State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Md Shahriar Alam, has declared that Bangladesh is willing to help Afghanistan with humanitarian assistance by giving food and medication, the issue of recognizing the Taliban administration remains on the table.

Afghanistan, which is located in South Asia, has economic and business ties with other nations in the region, including India. As a result, India will incur penalties as a result of the highway, dam, and infrastructure developments in Afghanistan. However,

the situation is different in Bangladesh since import, export, and trade with Afghanistan are low, and no economic links have been developed. Because bilateral commerce between the two countries is less than \$20 million, it is primarily ceremonial. But we must not overlook the development efforts of BRAC, a Bangladeshi NGO. Aside from that, if Bangladesh so desires, it may engage Afghanistan not just bilaterally but also multilaterally, such as through SAARC.

SAARC can play an integral role in monitoring Afghanistan's status and exerting pressure on its surrounding nations to change their policies. Yes,



SAARC is modest, with nations such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal clashing with India on a variety of issues, and has reasons not to vigorously enforce SAARC policy, but it has shown success in combating terrorism in South Asia. As a result, the situation in Afghanistan should be considered regionally first, then internationally, because the outcome will be better than negative if a bottom-up strategy is used.

Till now, Afghanistan's approach is mellow towards the world. Bangladesh as small county should be ready to gear up and from strategies to protect itself from any other extremist incidents as recently wounds of communal violence is still fresh.

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