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● Farid Ahmad Farhang, Director of Govt. Dailies
Mob. 0704008080

● Editor-in-Chief, Hamidullah Arefi
Mob. 0700163568, 020-250.1766

● E-mail, Hamidullah_arefi@yahoo.com

● Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Fathulbari Akhgar
Mob. 0707005865

● Graphic designers, Edris Akbari, Bakhtash Shaihani and Ali Ahmad

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Editorial

Taliban and systematic violation of human rights

With the signing of peace agreement between US and Taliban and beginning of intra-Afghan talks, many overseas media, a number of domestic and foreign experts and even certain authorities and representatives of the countries involved in peace process, including the US Special Representative for Afghan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad and Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi had emphasized that today's Taliban are not Taliban of 20 years before, adding that they have changed and respect values of human rights, women rights and freedom of speech.

In recent years, Taliban spread an efforts to show people and the world that they have changed and try to a large extent to hidden their brutal acts and blame Afghan government for bloodshed. Taliban were promoted from a terrorist group to a political movement and international prestige and reputation was granted to this faction. Taliban leaders were given the opportunity to go out of their hideout and gained respect.

Certain regional countries laid red carpet to them and gave them enough respects, in such a way that they were the only center of the country. They have been hosted and negotiated by different countries, which brought nothing, but legitimacy to the terror acts of the group.

Even in that time too, those who had acquaintance with Taliban interpretation from politics, religion, governance and human rights values as well as their external roots, didn't believe to polishing of certain domestic and foreign media. Now that Taliban have gained more strength than before and have extended their area under control to an extent, they have recovered their original nature and identity.

Taliban actions and behavior with people under their domination in the last one and two months proved that yes the Taliban have changed, but they became worse than before. As in his address to the national assembly, the president said that Taliban have become more violent, more cruel and more oppressive.

The actions that were practiced by ISIS terrorist groups in recent years in Syria and Iraq, now Taliban repeat them in Afghanistan. Murder and killing of innocent people, conducting Kingpin courts, merciless killing of government employees, reporters, journalists, cultural professionals, compulsory relocation of local people from their villages, compulsory wedding of young girls and women, destroying of public utility installations and so on are included the Taliban inhuman crimes committed in area under their domination. In the last month, Taliban have taken out hundreds of civilians from their homes with no reason and executed them. Mass murder of civilians in Spin Boldak is a testimony to our claims.

Photos and videos of Taliban inhuman actions available in media and social networks are disgusting and shocking to everybody. Fearing from no prosecution, Taliban systematically violate human rights frankly with killing of innocent people.

What is further disgusting and painful to the Afghan people is that Taliban leaders are not asked or prosecuted by no country or organization while they are the number one responsible for actions and crimes of their armed men. They have been living in Qatar business hotels with peace of mind, hold meetings with representatives of different countries and struggling to grab power while they must be accountable for crimes perpetrated by their subordinate militants.

The Afghan people want the international community particularly the UNSC to exert heavy pressures on Taliban leaders and supporters to give up crimes against humanity. Human rights is an accepted international principle and the world community must not acknowledge discrimination on this issue.

Crime is crime and doesn't matter where it is committed either in Afghanistan or in a developed country. Indiscriminately and fair approach should take place with human rights violations.

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Is Afghanistan paying for Zalmay Khalilzad's oversights?



As the Taliban makes advances across Afghanistan, opening villages and key cities and the US prepares to complete its withdrawal from the country before the end of the month, the focus has landed on Zalmay Khalilzad. The Afghan-born US special representative for Afghanistan reconciliation, and earlier this week the Afghan government is two weeks to win a negotiated settlement without a new military strategy.

"The situation is very concerning, and our expectation is that both the government and the Taliban would focus on a political settlement," Khalilzad said at the Aspen Security Forum on Tuesday.

Khalilzad, known as the architect of the US-Taliban deal for an American troop pullout finished in February 2020, said that it's now necessary for the government to hold "military hearings" with the Taliban regarding the situation of women and the independent media, he said. Local media reported earlier this week the Taliban damaged a 21-year-old woman as out of a car while she was on her way to the Balkh district center and she has died for not wearing a veil.

According to several reports, Islamic fundamentalists have issued edicts forcing women to cover themselves from head to toe, ordering them not to leave home without a male relative. The group has even banned shops in occupied areas from selling goods to women not accompanied by a male relative.

Khalilzad, who was appointed as the special envoy three years ago, and the then US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said at that time that he would assist in the reconciliation effort.

Khalilzad was seen by many as someone who understood the nuances of Afghan culture and spoke both Pashto and Persian fluently. However, many Afghans have been and again pointed out his advocacy for and business dealings with the Taliban before the September 2001 attacks.

In the past, Khalilzad has insisted that the Taliban had changed and said that they were the same group who deceived the Clinton administration in pre-9/11 diplomacy.

But now the veteran US diplomat has painted a bleak picture of the peace process and said that "at this point, they are demanding that they take the lion's share of power in the next government given the military situation as they see it."

Michael Rubin, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, has said in an opinion piece in the Washington Examiner that it's time the US recalled Khalilzad home. "His judgment proved wrong, and he has lost control of the process. Rather than insist on the Taliban to live up to the intelligence failures, poor assumptions, and misjudgments that hampered the peace process from day one," Rubin wrote on Friday.

Khalilzad should spend his days at Senate hearings answering questions about what went wrong and why," he added.

Retired General David Petraeus warned of "increasingly dire security situation" inside Afghanistan. Gen Petraeus, who oversaw US forces in Afghanistan until 2011 and later headed the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), called the outlook "very, very grim indeed."

The congressional mandate of Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction was on Tuesday that the US was leaving behind a country which "remains poor, ill-governed, and conflict-afflicted, with any potential economic growth in the short term further limited by the lingering effects of the Covid-19 pandemic."

Monitoring Desk

