



**State Terrorism and Human Rights Violations in Afghanistan:  
Post US Withdrawal Analysis**

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**Abstract:**

This article is built on the argument that the human right violations through state terrorism are harbinger of civil war, with an objective of emphasizing to shift the focus of academia on state terrorism in general, and particularly in Afghanistan. The massive human rights violations carried out through state terrorism during previous Afghan governments are contested but wildly accepted, suggests the correlation between state terrorism, human rights abuse and civil war. The methods of state terrorism including the mass killings, forced removal of opponents and ethnic-religious minorities, displacement, forced disappearance, ban on freedom of speech, and suspension of women's rights, under current Afghan regime; combining with the feeble economy and return of Afghan refugees is turning security situation of Afghanistan into a catastrophe, which civil war can aggravate to the extreme and irreversible lengths. The lacking focus of academia on state terrorism is affecting the international community's response to state based human rights abuses. Without classifying state terrorism as a heinous crime, it is impossible to force the international community to take action against this practice, safeguard fundamental rights and ensure peace.

**Keywords:** Afghanistan, Taliban regime, US withdrawal, security, state oppression, human rights

**INTRODUCTION**

The state terrorism by violating fundamental human rights erodes violent internal conflicts, poses a serious challenge to the international peace and security. State terrorism is a serious threat to the establishment of human rights and to peace and security of Afghanistan and international world. as well as, fundamental freedoms, democracy, the establishment of political independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and, finally, socio-economic development. State terrorism in post US withdrawal Afghanistan is harbinger of civil war in Afghanistan. It will further bring overwhelming social, psychological and economic consequences for those in affect. This study has analyzed substantial gaps and inconsistencies in studies of state terrorism, political dynamics behind and consequences of these practices of Taliban in US withdrawal Afghanistan.

This work critically explores and analyses the state terrorism activities in post US withdrawal Afghanistan and develops a link between state terrorism and the probability of civil war in Afghanistan. Considering the topic, qualitative method is used to conduct the research, applying

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primary and secondary data as the empirical foundation. The material used is from academic books and journal articles, as well as the United Nations, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch reports and newspapers. For decades, Afghanistan has been a fascinating subject for international authors and analysts. Volumes have been documented and published about its multi-faceted aspects in varied forms like manuscripts, rare books and images which are available in a number of institutions, libraries and museums worldwide.

The study attempts to fulfil multi purposes; to add to the existing knowledge regarding Afghanistan; to examine the reality and extent of state terrorism being carried by Taliban, and to predict the latent consequences for country, region and world, if state terrorism is not stopped. It attempts to highlight that state terrorism is a serious threat to Afghanistan and international peace and security, as well as to the establishment of human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy, the establishment of political independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and, finally, socio-economic development. State terrorism in post US withdrawal Afghanistan is harbinger of civil war in Afghanistan. It will further bring overwhelming social, psychological and economic consequences for those in affect. The proposed study is original and innovative which interacts the interest of a local, regional or international audience. It also attempts to presents the local Afghan narrative in the international academia, which is really needed. The violations of human rights often go unnoticed or do not cause noticeable protest in society. Human rights violations everywhere in the world are required to be looked into broader perspective as warning signs to regional and international security. After Doha Agreement and US Withdrawal from Afghanistan, Afghan people are left to dark alleys, ready to convert into human rights catastrophe.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Research on terrorism has a rich tradition of studying non-state terrorism, as Schuurman observes that research on terrorism is too event-driven and too strongly tied to states' interests in developing more effective policies to counter the threat (Schuurman 2019, 446). Major studies suggest, that prominent datasets like RAND (Research and Development), ITERATE (International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist events and GTD (Global Terrorism Database) all focus on terrorist acts committed by non-state actors. These do not include terrorist acts of states. Other datasets, such as TWEED (Terrorism in Western Europe: Events Data) include state terrorism as terrorism (Sheehan 2012, 29). Since 1960, abundant literature is available on terrorism, but less focus was given to state terrorism.

There are different theories including coercion theory, strategic theory, greed theory, radicalization theory, punishment puzzle theory and radicalization theory discuss the general link between state terrorism and civil war, while punishment puzzle theory, radicalization theory, grievance theory and escalation theory proposed that state terrorism leads to the outbreak of civil war. These theories also agree upon the consequences of state terrorism as state terrorism can have long term consequences for the stability of a state. Coercion theory, strategic theory and Hoefler's greed theory suggest that states use violence to oppress opposition and to gain political power, greed theory also enlist economic incentives of state behind use of violence. Coercion theory say that the possible victims of state terrorism can ethno-religious minorities, anyone who is perceived as a threat to their power besides opposition groups. Radicalization theory, escalation theory and grievance theory highlight the consequences of state terrorism that it can aggravate opposition

groups and lead to further violence, “create a cycle of violence, where opposition groups feel justified in using violence to retaliate against state violence.” While punishment puzzle theory explains why state actors engage in acts of terrorism against their own citizens? It proposes that states opt terrorism as a strategy to punish or deter certain ideas and actions that they consider as threats to their power or legitimacy or stability.

Study of different theories and approaches on state terrorism and its relation with civil war suggest that under the new security environment in post US withdrawal Afghanistan, work of Fearon and Laitin, the punishment puzzle theory fits on the case. The punishment puzzle theory of state terrorism is a theoretical framework, explains why state use violence against its own citizens. According to this theory, states opt for terror activities as a tool to punish or deter specific ideas and actions, which it perceives as threats to its legitimacy or power. It also proposes that when state does not find other forms of punishment, such as detention and fines, effective enough to oppress civilians, it practices brutal violence to suppress the voices of oppositions. It also suggests that such create climate of fear is created by states to serve different purposes, including to discourage opposition, to discourage others from opposition, to control civilians, to maintain legitimacy. For example, in the case of Taliban in post US withdrawal Afghanistan, they have been accused of using violence and intimidation tactics against civilians and targeting certain groups, such as women and ethno-religious minorities, to establish their authority and to maintain power. The punishment puzzle theory also discusses the latent consequences of state terrorism, civil war is most likely to emerge when structural conditions are “right”—i.e., when “small, lightly armed bands practicing guerilla warfare from rural base areas” can survive government efforts at counterinsurgency and protest policing. When is this most likely? Fearon and Laitin (2003, 79-82) argue that state repressive capability is undermined when the economy is poor, the population is high, there is mountainous terrain, there is noncontiguous territory, and political life is fragile. Under these circumstances, and only under these circumstances, can rural-based insurgency resist state repressive efforts, become a successful military strategy, and produce civil war.

### **Understanding State Terrorism**

State terrorism, as a domestic political phenomenon, is defined as violent actions of state through law enforcement agencies (police, counterintelligence, etc.) against their own people in order to suppress and intimidate the opposition and to gain and maintain power or legitimacy. State terrorism practices include illegal detentions, torture, kidnappings and killings of civilians. The first-time state terrorism was explained by Edmond Burke, a British political philosopher in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He used the word "terrorism" to describe the use of violence by the French Revolutionary Government against the citizens. He termed the violence as the “*de la Terreur*” meaning "reign of terror" in which the government killed the French nobility and their families who were suspected anti-revolution (White 2001, 67). During the Regime *de la Terreur* (1792-1794), anyone who opposed the revolution was arrested, imprisoned and guillotined. However, the history of state terrorism is as old as of war. The Greek historian Xenophon (430-349 BC) wrote about the effectiveness of psychological warfare against an enemy population. Roman emperors such as Tiberius (14-37 AD) used banishment, dispossession and execution as methods to discourage opponents of their rule. The assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 BC was an act of terrorism similar to the assassinations of President Kennedy and Yitzhak Rabin (Simonsen & Spindlove, 2000, 24).

Modern history of state terrorism is not complete without the studying the Russian approach to terrorism. The founding father of Russian Revolution 1917, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin believed that terrorism should be used firstly as a means of overthrowing the bourgeoisie, secondly as a means of subduing internal enemies, and thirdly as a method of waging international wars (Lane, 2020). With that Lenin sowed the use of political terror which later nourished by and Trotsky as well. The Red Terror was regarded by the Bolsheviks in Russia as a legitimate method of achieving victory. In turn, the anti-revolutionaries launched a campaign of terror that led to the death of several leading Bolsheviks and the wounding of Lenin in 1918 (Carey, 2021). The campaign provoked countermeasures from the regime and state terrorism became an important part of Russian politics to suppress political opposition and to resist. During the Great Purge of the Soviet Union (1935-1939), hundreds of thousands of prominent Bolsheviks were liquidated and millions of civilians deported and exiled to labor camps, the terror was described as a purge of the Communist Party of its public enemies (Gurin, 2023). Acts of terror were also committed against political enemies abroad: Trotsky was assassinated in Mexico, Generals Miller and Kutepov in Spain and France. The tradition of state terrorism in the Soviet Union was continued after World War II under the banner of 'support for national liberation movements'. This included support for the PLO and well-known terrorists such as Carlos (alias the Jackal) and Abu Nidal. Other impressive examples of state terror, such as the Holocaust, mass murders, ethnic cleansing, the extermination of other 'races' and others known during the regime of Hitler and Mussolini will long be part of the collective memory.

The phenomenon of terrorism has continued to persist, particularly after 9/11, it has intensified even more. With the development of terrorism as socio-political context, it has become a matter of concern for governments, international organisation, media and academia as well, hence the development in the studies of terrorism has been made accordingly. The significance of studying terrorism is highlighted by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as "Notwithstanding the absence of a globally agreed, legal definition of terrorism, an effective and prevention-focused international response to terrorism is highly desirable, particularly one guided by a normative legal framework and embedded in the core principles of the rule of law, due process and respect for human rights" (2018, 2).

Earlier, the focus of studies on terrorism initially remained on non-state terrorism, such as militant groups, militant activities and insurgencies. Since the late 20th century, the focus of scholars and researchers started to shift towards state terrorism. Ruth Blakeley mentions that some scholars argue that political violence by states should not be classified as 'terrorism' (Blakeley 2009, 12). On the contrary a number of scholars emphasise the significance of studying state terrorism as well. Schmid (2004, 376), Crenshaw (1981, 380), Rapoport 1984, 662) and Richardson (2006, 272) argue that it is significant for promoting human rights, democracy, rule of law, international peace, and to develop prevention policies and response efforts. It can help to shed light on abuses of power, hold perpetrators accountable, and contribute to a more just and peaceful world. The shift in academic debates from non-terrorism to state terrorism can be credited to a number of factors, which include the human rights concerns, democracy and international security.

## History of State Terrorism in Afghanistan

The history of state terrorism in Afghanistan is complicated and characterised by a number of conflicts, the use of violence, oppression and abuses exercised by different regimes and factions to hold onto power and control over the people. Following are the most notable examples:

- **The Soviet Invasion:** In 1979, the Soviet invaded Afghanistan in support of a Communist regime that had been installed in power by a coup. The Soviet military employed ruthless tactics on civilians, including mass executions and indiscriminate bombing. They also established underground jails to torture and kill suspected people who were against communist rule. According to an estimate more than two million Afghans were executed from 1979 to 1992 (“Afghanistan: Women in Afghanistan,” 1999).
- **Coalition Government:** Following the collapse of the Kabul government of Najeebullah in 1992, various factions of Mujahedeen formed coalition government until 1996, including the government of Burhanuddin Rabbani. During this time period, government was charged with violating human rights engaging in the different acts of state terrorism including extrajudicial killings, illegal detainment, torture and execution of political opponents. However, it should be noted that these claims have been contested and remain controversial (“Afghanistan: Women in Afghanistan,” 1999).
- **The Taliban Regime:** Taliban government under Mullah Omer took over Afghanistan in 1996 and remained in power until 2001. During their regime, the Taliban used various strategies to suppress opposition and impose their rule according to their interpretation of Islamic law. This included stoning, public executions, eviction, and stoning. Women and girls were specifically targeted, and were denied access to basic freedom rights like education and jobs. During 1996-2001, religious tolerance was non-existent, and Hazara community was particularly paid the price (Jackson 2009, 11-12).
- **The Afghan Government:** After 9/11 attacks in 2001, Taliban government was removed and democratic government in Afghanistan was installed with the help of USA, and claims were made of establishing equality. However, Hazara community continued to face discrimination. The national security forces have also been accused of war crimes during the insurgency against Taliban and other insurgent groups.
- **The US invasion of Afghanistan:** The international analysts have also accused the US for human rights abuses in Afghanistan under war crimes, including killing thousands of Afghans, torture, illegal detentions and illegal surveillance (Xin, 2021). Where Taliban are being investigated by the ICJ for carrying out human right violations, in the same way, American and Afghan National Forces are being investigated for conducting war crimes since the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 (Maizland, 2023).

## STATE TERRORISM IN AFGHANISTAN: POST US WITHDRAWAL SCENARIO

There are several tools of state terrorism that Taliban are using such as surveillance to monitor the activities of civilians and opposition, covert operations and propaganda to suppress opposition, executions, target killings, extra judicial killings, forced eviction, intimidation and threats, kidnappings or forced disappearances, economic degradation policies, legal measures to ban freedom of speech and civil liberties.

## **Executions**

The Taliban have reportedly executed individuals accused of crimes, including government officials, security personnel, and individuals from ethnic and religious minorities. The Taliban have been accused of carrying out targeted killings of journalists, activists, and other civilians perceived as a threat to their rule. According to International Amnesty, extrajudicial executions have been recorded of former government officials, former Afghan National Army members, commanders of armed groups such as the National Resistance Front (NRF), Islamic State of Khorasan Province (IS-KP) and those who are anti-Taliban ideology and government. UNAMA recorded at least 306 extrajudicial executions during 2021-2022 after Taliban takeover. At Ghor on 26 June, Taliban killed six Shia Hazaras including four men, a woman and a girl in search operation against a man associated with the former government. On 6 September the Special Rapporteur of UN in Afghanistan reported more executions of arrested soldiers in Balkhab district of Sar'i'Pul. Between 12-14 September, 48 NRF members were killed in Panjshir province ("Human Rights in Afghanistan," 2022).

According to BBC nine former ANA soldiers belonging to Hazara ethnic community were found dead who willingly surrendered to the Taliban ("Afghanistan: Taliban Unlawfully," 2021). Human Rights Watch reported the summary of execution or enforced disappearance, according to which, despite the claims of amnesty for rivals, 47 former ANSF members were killed by Taliban (Gossman 2023). Then in December, 20 extrajudicial killing of NRF members were recorded. Videos and pictures of tortured and mutilated bodies of members of NRF circulated on social media. The Taliban Ministry of Defense announced the inquiry of events, but no information was shared with public. Media reported that civilians were forced to leave their homes in Panjshir province, where later Taliban installed police and military personnel. Taliban extra-judicially killed three more civilians who were members of the former anti-Taliban groups known as the People's Uprising and declared them rebels ("Human Rights in Afghanistan," 2022).

## **Intimidation, Flogging, Forced Eviction**

There have been reports of Taliban fighters intimidating and using violence against civilians who speak out against their rule or refuse to comply with their orders. The Taliban has resumed the practices of public executions for murder and flogging over the crimes like stealing, out of wedlock relationship, violations of social norms. BBC reported that four men, who were alleged kidnappers, shot dead by Taliban on 9 September ("Afghanistan: Taliban hang bodies," 2021). According to UN human rights authorities, reportedly "more than 100 civilians were publicly flogged in stadiums at different province, from 18 November to 16 December," then on 7 December, 2022, first public execution was held by government, which was attended by senior Taliban officials: the deputy prime minister, ministers and the chief justice at Farah province ("Human Rights in Afghanistan," 2022). On 27 July, 2022, the Human Rights Watch quoted that "since the Taliban took power in August 2021, residents of Nangahar and Kunar provinces east of Kabul have discovered the bodies of more than 100 men dumped in canals and other locations" ("Afghanistan: Taliban execute," 2022). In November 2022, Taliban Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice, has enforced bans on activities that believed to be non-religious (Maizland 2023).

The Council on Foreign Relations states that since the departure of US forces from Afghanistan, Taliban has threatened 'civil and political rights of Afghans' in every possible way that were protected in the constitution shaped by the US- backed Afghan government. The UN commission in Afghanistan has reported countless human rights violations, including intimidation, restrictions, arbitrary arrests, illegal detentions of journalists and worst media censorship, due to which many journalists left the country and approximately shut down two hundred news agencies. Taliban authorities also are suppressing public protests, by arresting, detaining and forced disappearing the protesters and social-civil right activists (Maizland, 2023). The Taliban have reportedly forced individuals and families from their homes, particularly those who worked with the former government or foreign forces.

### **Suppression of Women's Rights**

The Taliban have imposed strict restrictions on women's rights, including education, jobs, and even leaving their homes without a mahram (male guardian). Taliban has suspended school and university education for girls; girl schools above grade 6 are closed since last 656 days, while universities are closed for women since last 196 days, according to the statistics of July 8, 2023. The Times Higher Education mentioned that "70,000 female students out of private universities" (Lem, 2023). Taliban has prevented women from doing any kind of jobs. In December 2022, women were barred from working at domestic and international non-profit organizations. However, this order has extended to UN now, as on 4 April 2023, Taliban government has ordered to ban women from working with United Nations ("Taliban Ban on Women," 2023). To which António Guterres responded as "This is a violation of the inalienable fundamental rights of women. It is also a violation of Afghanistan's obligations under international human rights law and a violation of the principle of non-discrimination, which is at the heart of the Charter of the United Nations" ("Secretary-General strongly condemns," 2023).

### **Surveillance & Search Operations**

There are claims and accusation that Taliban government is using tools such as surveillance and search operations to hunt down anti-Taliban-civilians, journalists, human rights activists and opponents since they took control of Afghanistan in 2021. Additionally, they are using checkpoints to control the movement within the country ("Taliban Increases Checkpoints," 2022). Reportedly, government also have informants to gather information about potential threats and opposition.

### **Economic Degradation Policies**

Generally, states impose economic sanctions to cause artificial food shortage, economic instability to punish or coerce civilians, but these have impacts on both the civilians and the state. However, in the case of Afghanistan, Taliban has not imposed any sanctions but in atmosphere of fear they have created "the sharp decline has been seen in public spending, lower household incomes, and reduced consumption caused aggregate demand to fall, while disruptions in the payment system and supply constraints further hampered private sector activities, initially forcing many businesses to close or scale down their operations" ("Afghanistan's Economy Faces," 2022). Narayan has observed that more socio-economic decline than this, will further aggravate the situation, which likely to cause internal and cross-border displacement and beyond (Narayan, 2022).

### **Propaganda and Ban on Civil Rights Liberties Through Legal Means**

Taliban practice propaganda tool to justify the acts of state terrorism and demonise suspected opponents through their controlled-media channels and official statements. They have been accused of using media platforms to spread their ideology and justify their actions, including violent crackdown on dissent and opposition. For example, Taliban has declared opponents such as ISKP as 'Khawarji' (International Crises Group, 2022). They are using religion card to demonise their opponents and to control the narrative and sway public opinion in their favor. Legal measures, such as emergency laws, anti-terrorism legislation, ban on social media and protests are used by states to curtail civil liberties and to justify acts of state terrorism. Under Taliban, there have been significant restrictions on civil liberties in Afghanistan through the enactment of legislation. In November 2022, Taliban Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice, has enforced bans on activities that believed to be non-religious (Maizland, 2023). The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) along with several other independent local human rights organisations have also been closed. The Taliban government has prohibited any gathering and protests. Government is using tactics like intimidation, threat, forced disappearance, arrest, detention and extreme and unnecessary force by police against civil right activists and protesters. The fear of such tortured-trial is discouraging civilians from seeking their legit rights. The government also arresting and jailing those who speak against the Taliban, governmental policies on social media, particularly on Facebook and Twitter ("Human Rights in Afghanistan", 2022). International community also has expressed its concern over the state terrorism in Afghanistan and fearing civil war, as former High Commissioner for Human Rights of UN, Michelle Bachelet said that Taliban are "increasing violence against protesters and journalists" (Thomas, 2021)."

### **Taliban Government's Response to the Allegations of Human Rights Violations**

Contradictory to the accusations of human rights violations under Taliban's use of state of terrorism by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, United Nations, international and Afghan activists and journalists, the Taliban government claims that human rights are protected in Afghanistan which are in line with its interpretation of Islamic law". Taliban leadership states that "their policies are aligned with Afghan culture and Islamic law" ("Taliban marks two years," 2023). Zabiullah further stated that "Islam is the greatest guardian of human rights, and there is no violation of human rights in Afghanistan," he asserted. "Our judicial system provides justice to the people in the light of the Quran and Sunnah. All minorities are fully protected, while criminals are not given any kind of exemptions" (Mehmood, 2023-b). UNAMA presented report (May-June 2023) on human rights violations to which Afghan Taliban government rejected, stating that "such reports are based on interpretations from people who fled Afghanistan and are now fighting a propaganda war against the country" (Mehmood, 2023-a).

Matt Mahmoudi, investigator and advisor at Amnesty International accused the Taliban government for installing 62,000 surveillance cameras "rendering the right of privacy and freedom of expression." The spokesman for Foreign Minister has called it baseless accusation and clarified that cameras have been installed for security purpose. Mufti Abdul Mateen Qani also said that "when the US and NATO were carrying out surveillance operations by placing balloons in all zones of the country, including Kabul, for their own purposes and intelligence information, then why



didn't the defenders of human rights and privacy raise their voice?" He also ratified that the government is "committed to maintaining security, protecting all the rights of the people, and taking into account all Sharia principles" (Sajid, 2023).

Richard Bennett in his report presented at February 9, 2023 said that "The serious violation of women's and girls' rights, the retaliatory crackdown on opponents and critics, and the Taliban's ban on freedom of expression demonstrate an authoritarian regime." The Taliban leadership has repeatedly rejected all international and domestic reports on human rights abuses. The Islamic Emirate's officials also responded and criticised US and NATO backed previous government for carrying out atrocities such as surveillance against opponents and citizens (Bennett, 2023). While addressing allegations regarding women rights, the supreme leader of the Taliban Haibatullah Akhunzada issued a statement that "important steps according to Islamic Sharia for comfortable and prosperous life of women has been taken." He claimed that "marriage, inheritance and other rights of women has been restored", which are not accepted by most women activists, countries and human rights organisations. He also warned "other countries to stop interfering in Afghanistan's internal affairs" ("Afghan Women Being," 2023).

In December 2023, the US declared fresh sanctions on two Afghan officials for committing human rights violations at the occasion of International Human Rights Day to which Zabiullah reacted as "we condemn the restrictions imposed by the U.S. Department of the Treasury on IEA's two officials". He further said that "imposing pressure and restrictions" will increase problems". He also levied human rights allegations at US, "America itself is among the biggest violators of human rights due to its support for Israel, it is unjustified and illogical to accuse other people of violating human rights and then ban them" (Gul, 2023).

Overall, Taliban government is dealing with the allegations of human rights abuses by rejecting reports and accusations, cultural and religious relativism, blaming previous governments and external factors, and promises of improvement. These justifications are not satisfactory to international and domestic observers, particularly who are critical of the Taliban's power in Afghanistan. The effectiveness of Taliban's statements and efforts depend on factors such as international legitimacy and domestic opposition within Afghanistan.

### **Analysis of State Terrorism and its Consequences for Afghanistan**

Data gathered from the official statements of UN, research articles, news, newspaper articles, reports of International Amnesty and Human Rights reveal the evidence of state terrorism in Afghanistan and suggest that the Afghanistan is on the verge of civil war. Academic debate on state terrorism also hints the strong link between state terrorism and civil war. Three factors; the scholarly and international debates on state terrorism, the history of state terrorism in Afghanistan, the contemporary socio-political situation and human rights violations in Afghanistan suggest the strong possibility of civil war outbreak in Post US Withdrawal Afghanistan.

- Scholarly debates on state terrorism suggest that when governments use violent tactics to oppress dissent and opposition, it leads to increased tensions and violence, and in some cases, can escalate into a full-scale civil war or rebellion. History has witnessed more examples other than Afghanistan, which broke into civil war due to state terrorism or state oppression. The Syria, Sri Lanka, Yugoslavia are exemplary states that have experienced civil war, due to state terrorism. The Syrian Civil War started in 2011, was sparked by a

government crackdown on peaceful protests against the regime of Bashar al-Assad. The governmental use of extreme force, followed by international intervention and the rise of extremist groups, caused the outbreak of a full-scale civil war. During 1983-2009, Sri Lanka faced civil war. It was caused by tensions between the government and the Tamil minority. The government used violence to crush rebellion caused by Tamil Tigers, a militant group fighting for independence. Instead of getting diminished, it escalated and resulted into a prolonged civil war. Another example is breakup of Yugoslavia. During 1990s, state terrorism and repression coupled with series of civil wars, disintegrated the country.

- Historically, in Afghanistan, state terrorism was a major contributing factor to the outbreak of civil war during 1990s. The Soviet-backed and later the Taliban governments were alleged of committing countless war crimes and human rights abuses against their political opponents, which fuelled resentment and ultimately contributed to the rise of armed opposition groups. Similarly, in other cases, state terrorism has been used to suppress minority groups or movements seeking greater autonomy or independence, led to increased violence and civil conflict. However, it is important to note that not all civil wars are caused by state terrorism and there can be a range of factors that contribute to the outbreak of civil war.
- Contemporary Afghanistan's socio-political, economic situation and massive human rights violations against vulnerable of society, are beating drums of civil war. The NRF leader Ahmad Massoud and other resistance groups in Afghanistan have warned of the potential for civil war in the wake of the Taliban's old practices of state terrorism. There are several factors that suggest this warning should be taken seriously;

### **The Taliban's History of Violence and Repression**

The Taliban have a history of using violence and repression to maintain control. There are already reports of human rights violations and reprisals against those who opposed their takeover.

### **Resistance from Other Armed Groups**

There are other armed groups in Afghanistan, such as the National Resistance Front (NRF), which are in opposition to the Taliban's rule. These groups have already engaged in armed conflict with the Taliban in some areas, particularly in Panjshir.

### **Political fragmentation**

Afghanistan is a highly diverse society with many different ethnic and political groups. The Taliban's rule is likely to exacerbate these divisions and could lead to increased conflict between these groups.

### **Economic instability**

Afghanistan is also facing a severe economic crisis, with many people struggling to meet basic needs such as food and shelter. This economic instability could harbingering to civil war.

All of these factors suggest that there is a significant risk of civil war in Afghanistan in the coming months and years. The Taliban's exclusive rule and heavy-handed approach to dissent could create greater opposition throughout the country. At the same time, this approach could also solidify their position, which won't be long lasting. It is important for the international community to support efforts to promote peace, stability, and reconciliation in the country to prevent further violence and suffering.

## CONCLUSION

Since Taliban takeover in 2021, Amnesty International, United Nations, Human Rights Watch and regional-international experts are repeatedly pointing out cases of gross violations of human rights in Afghanistan, including reprisal killings and attacks on ethnic and religious minorities, women and girls, human rights defenders, members of civil society, judges, lawyers, former government officials, journalists and others, which the leadership of Taliban government have rejected unanimously. The Afghan nation has remained the most unfortunate as the legacy of human right violations under state terrorism is left by previous governments as well, however after all these years and world's efforts, this issue still haunts Afghanistan. The Afghanistan has not yet break into civil war, but it may likely to break into civil war due to state terrorism in Afghanistan as the situation is volatile and rapidly evolving. However, without counting on history and analysing current social, economic and political situation of Afghanistan, predicting civil war is not wise. The history of state terrorism and repression in Afghanistan, combined with the recent Taliban takeover of the government, suggests that the country is at a high risk of further violence and instability. The Taliban have a history of using violence and repression to maintain control, and there are already reports of human rights abuses and reprisals against those who opposed their takeover. In addition, there are other ethnic, religious, armed groups and political factions in Afghanistan that may resist Taliban rule, potentially leading to civil war. The fragile economy, unemployment, refugee's settlement, and lack of legitimacy to Taliban government also beat the drums of civil war. In this regard, modern and solid methods are required to improve the situation.

- There is need to establish and improve relations between government and people through continuous dialogues. Taliban also need to show flexibility and to understand the urges of Afghans to blend in the modern world. Complexity of Afghan society in terms of ethnicity, socio-cultural values and same religion but with different school of thoughts, is needed to be understood by both conflicting parties, as these are the primary hurdles between reaching an understanding.
- The international community should play an active role to prevent the escalation of state violence. This may involve supporting human rights, providing humanitarian aid, and promoting political dialogue and reconciliation. However, the situation in Afghanistan is complex, and it will require continued effort and cooperation from all sides to achieve the long-lasting peace and stability.
- There is also need to engage with moderate factions within the Taliban who may be more willing to address human rights concerns. Encouraging dialogue and negotiations with these factions can help push for reforms and better protection of human rights.
- Addressing state terrorism and human rights violations requires a sustained, long-term commitment. The international community should remain engaged in Afghanistan, providing ongoing support and monitoring to ensure progress and prevent regression.
- Non-state terrorism and state terrorism both present severe challenges to human rights; hence, international scholars, academia and human rights organizations should equally study both dimensions of terrorism.

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