

## Afghanistan after the US withdrawal

- Basanta

On August 31, 2021, US president Joe Biden declared that the NATO forces deployed in Afghanistan are withdrawn. The NATO army that was stationed in Afghanistan since 2001 has left Afghanistan right after two decades. It is the longest war in the history of the US.

After the NATO forces took off from Kabul Airport, Joe Biden said in a statement, "I want to thank our commanders and the men and women serving under them for their execution of the dangerous retrograde from Afghanistan as scheduled – in the early morning hours of August 31, Kabul time – with no further loss of American lives. The past 17 days have seen our troops execute the largest airlift in US history, evacuating over 120,000 US citizens, citizens of our allies, and Afghan allies of the United States. They have done it with unmatched courage, professionalism, and resolve. Now, our 20-year military presence in Afghanistan has ended." In this way, Biden appreciated the 'heroic' retreat of the NATO Army led by the US.

There have been lots of repercussions from different angles after the NATO alliance withdrew its army from Afghanistan. If we talk of America, most American citizens with superpower arrogance have regarded this event as a humiliating defeat of the US. Not only leaders of the opposition Republican Party, but some leaders of the ruling Democratic Party also seem disappointed from this affair. A senator of the Republican Party, Benjamin Eric Sasse has accused Biden of humiliating the country by trusting the Taliban. In the statement, he says, "This national disgrace is the direct result of President Biden's cowardice and incompetence. The President made the decision to trust the Taliban." Many Americans agree with this comment.

There have been wide-ranging repercussions in China about this event. Global Times editorial has criticized that the incompetence of Biden is the result of the political system of America. The editorial writes, "In our view, the incompetence of the ruling figure is the result of a degenerating American system, which is unable to reform itself. American leaders lack experience in solving difficult problems, and the US society is unable to form a collective force." In this manner, China has ridiculed the American political system and the lack of a collective way of thinking among the American people.

An online paper associated with the Russian TV Network has satirised America regarding this event. The online paper writes that wise men in Washington had been claiming for years that the defeat in Afghanistan had caused the collapse of the Soviet Union. America has done even worse than this in Afghanistan; people from the world will see soon how much their theory contains water in it. The said paper has thus surmised that the US defeat in Afghanistan can disintegrate the USA.

After the terrorist attack upon the twin towers in America on September 11, 2001, by a hijacked plane, the NATO forces led by the USA invaded Afghanistan in the excuse that the Taliban government had provided shelter to Osama Bin Laden, the suspected planner of the very attack upon twin towers. The US had said that the objective of the invasion of Afghanistan was to arrest Osama Bin Laden and then weaken Al Qaeda. After ten years of invasion, the special army of the USA killed Osama bin Laden in Pakistan on May 2, 2011. However, NATO forces stayed in Afghanistan ten years more until they were withdrawn on August 31, 2021, by surrendering power to the Taliban, whom they had termed terrorists before.

There has been a huge loss of people and property during twenty years period of the Afghan war. Citing reference to the report prepared by Brown University, the news published on April 17, 2021, in an online paper, business insider, writes that a total of 241,000 people died in the Afghan war. This number includes US army 2,422; DoD officials 6; US contractors 3,963; other allies forces 1,144; Afghan army and police 69,000; Pakistan army and police 9,314; Afghan civilians about 47,000; Pakistani civilians about 24,000; opposition fighters in Afghanistan 51,000 and in Pakistan 33,000.

Apart from this, 136 journalists and 549 human rights activists died in the Afghan war. This number has increased in the four months period after April. The paper writes that more than 20,000 US soldiers are injured in this war.

Again, the paper writes that the USA has spent \$2.26 trillion in these twenty years of the Afghan war. This amount does not include the health expenditure of those injured officials who need medical support for their whole life. The expense of the past four months has further increased the total amount. According to the report prepared by the World Bank, the gross domestic product of Afghanistan in 2020 was \$19.81 billion. It shows that US imperialism has spent 114 times more than the yearly GDP of Afghanistan in the past 20 years in the Afghan war.

Now a serious question arises. What did the US gain after this much loss of people and property in the Afghan war? The answer is short: a photo of the terrorist Osama Bin Laden's dead body. In addition to the loss of people and property said above, the US has surrendered power to those Taliban fighters with whom they fought for twenty years. The US president has been obligated to helplessly pay high regard for the defeated NATO army with the tags like unmatched courage, professionalism, and resolve. On top of that the price the US has paid for this war is the question raised on its status as the world superpower. All these facts undoubtedly prove that the US has suffered a humiliating defeat in this twenty years long Afghan war that has surpassed the disaster that the US had faced in Vietnam War. Now, another question: who is more terrorist, Osama Bin Laden or the US imperialism that terrorized the innocent Afghan people all through 20 years, in the name of defeating terrorism? This question is intensely echoing in the just loving people's minds the world over. The oppressed people of Afghanistan and those in the world believe it is not the Taliban but US imperialism that is the number one terrorist.

Now, one more question comes up. Will the people in Afghanistan feel liberated after the NATO army leaves Afghanistan? It is not likely. There are reasons behind it. Firstly, Afghanistan is a semi-feudal and semi-colonial, multi-lingual, and multi-national country inhabited by Muslim communities with traces of tribal culture. The Sunny community is in the large majority there. Afghan constitution has provided national status to fourteen lingual or national communities. These communities and many others have sharp contradictions with the Sunny community and among themselves. The external powers have been taking benefits in Afghanistan for a long by utilizing these contradictions. The present volatile situation in Afghanistan is more favourable for the imperialist powers to take on. They will enter into Afghanistan in the name of reconstruction and make Afghanistan their playground. The likelihood of Afghanistan being trapped again in an even more formidable civil war exists in the days ahead. The symptoms are already on the horizon. Panjshir resistance is a proof to it.

On the other, the Taliban, which has attained power in Afghanistan, is a reactionary force with the medieval way of thinking and follows Sharia law to run the state power. It fought against America, okay, it is good. Nevertheless, it is not a genuine anti-imperialist force but an ultra-nationalist one with a feudal mind-set. One cannot deny that the Taliban leadership will not go again into the fold of US imperialism. The Doha negotiations have already shown its symptom. On the other, the US has already said that it will extend its diplomatic relations with the Taliban government from Doha and support the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Whatever it be, the Afghan people will not realise national independence, democracy, and respite to people's livelihood from the upcoming Taliban government in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan is a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country. Imperialism and domestic reaction (feudal, comprador, and bureaucratic bourgeoisie) are obstacles for Afghanistan to advance towards national independence, democracy, and people's livelihood. The main enemy of the Afghan people is the reactionary state power and the system, which is formed of the alliance between imperialism and domestic reaction. Under the joint dictatorship of entire exploited classes and oppressed communities, the new democratic revolution ideologically guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and led by the party of the proletariat is the only way that liberates Afghan people from the clutches of imperialism

and feudalism. No oppressed country can gain independence and emancipate the working masses by asking the imperialist powers to arbitrate and changing governments among the reactionary forces.

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