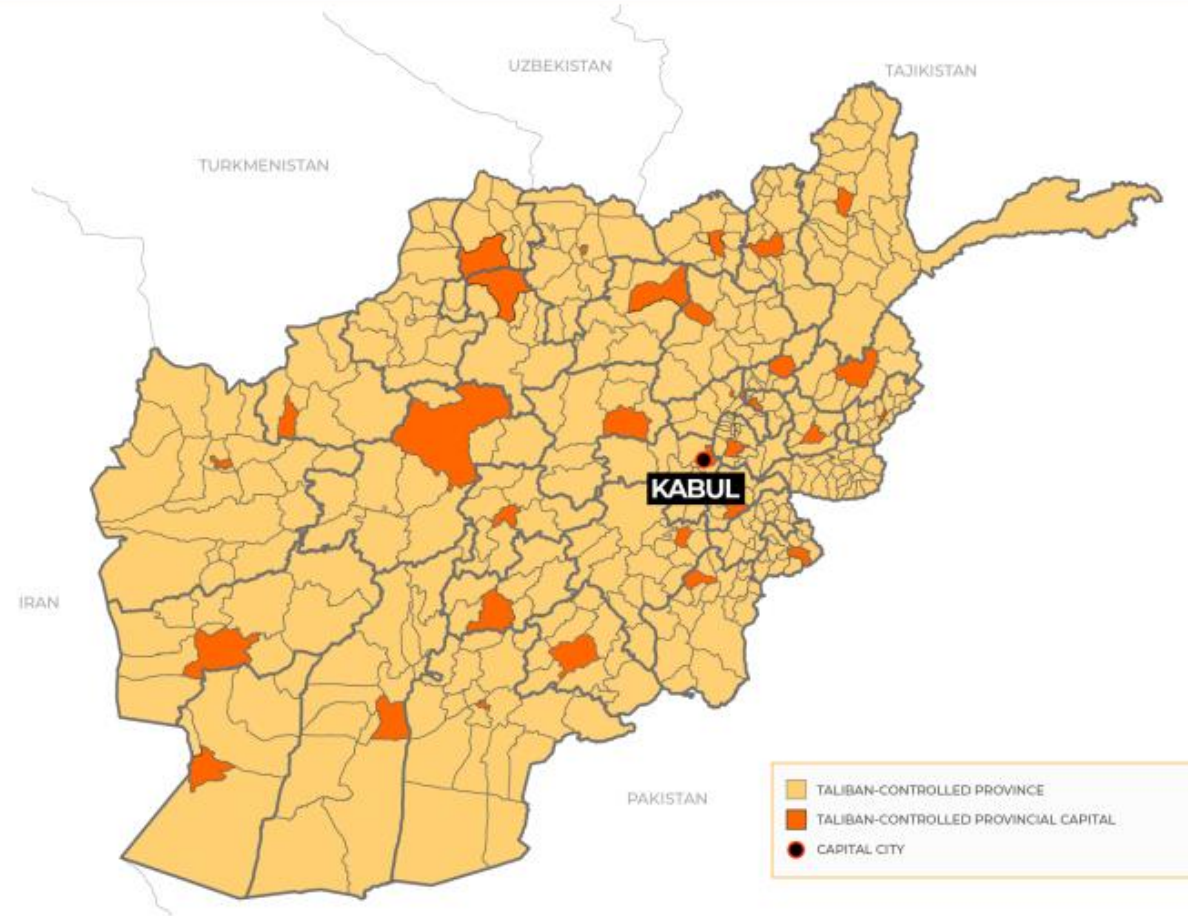


Kabul falls

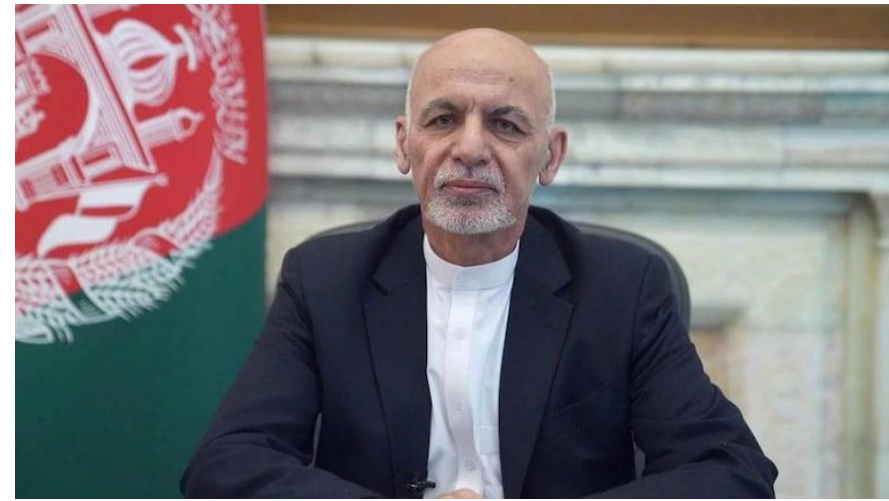
Taliban takes over Afghanistan



Narrative - Background

- The **longest war** fought by US and its Western allies - in Afghanistan in 2001, post '9/11' incident, when the ruling Taliban was ousted from power
- During the **two-decade war**, Afghan Security forces (ANA and Afghan Air Force) **built up & trained** by US and NATO for nearly two decades, after spending 01Tn USD
- With the killing of Osama bin Laden, US Prez Obama promised **withdrawal**. In Feb 20, President Trump signed a deal with Taliban to **limit direct military action against insurgents** and to **withdraw US and allied forces** by 01 May 21
- With President Biden **ratifying** his predecessor's decision to vacate the nation by Sep 21, Taliban forces grew in strength and started to advance from North -Herat to Kandahar onto Jalalabad without any stiff resistance from ASF
- **Closed-door negotiations** between Govt (by Hamid Karzai, Gulbudin Hekmatyar and Abdullah Abdullah) and Taliban leadership in Doha for a peaceful transition

Narrative - Background



- Former President Ashraf Ghani, accompanied by his wife and his NSA Mohib, **fled the country** on 15 Aug, to Tajikistan, where he was denied landing and therefore landed in **UAE**.
- He is likely to head to **US** for asylum. Through social media, he highlighted that he left to **avoid bloodshed** in the country
- Afghanistan was **seized** in just over a week, with almost '**nil**' resistance in Kabul - much ahead than the predicted 'one month' for the capital to be under Taliban pressure
- Af Defence Minister tweeted, "**they tied our hands and sold the country. Curse Ghani and his gang**"

Narrative – Present Status



- Talibans took over all important police check posts and are standing guards to the functional embassies of Russia and China
- Taliban aiming at forming an '**open, inclusive Islamic government**' and may announce creation of '**Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan**'. Taliban says the nation would not be allowed for any **foreign invasion** as seen in '79 by USSR and in '01 by USA
- Taliban leader Anas Haqqani, Former Prez Hamid Karzai and Abdullah Abdullah met in Kabul to discuss **government formation**, while Taliban co-founder Baradar is the likely presidential candidate
- Af VP Amrullah Saleh said, "In absence of President, the VP is the **legitimate caretaker President**"

thus spake.. UN Secy General Antonio Guterres

- “**Cannot and Must not abandon Afghans** and urged all countries to be **willing to receive** Afghan refugees and refrain from any deportations”
- “ Now is the time to stand as one – **international community must be united** and use ‘**all available instruments**’ to ensure that **human rights are upheld** and Af is never used as a **platform or safe haven** for terrorist organisations” - in an UNSC emergency meeting



thus spake.. US President on 16 Aug 21

- “I **stand squarely** behind my **decision**. After 20 years, I’ve learned the hard way that there was **never a good time** to withdraw U.S. forces.
- “American troops **cannot and should not be fighting in a war** and **dying in a war** that Afghan forces **are not willing** to fight for themselves. We spent over a **trillion dollars**, **trained and equipped** an Afghan military force. We gave them **every chance to determine their own future**. What we could not provide them was the **will to fight** for that future”.
- “And here’s what I believe to my core: It is wrong to order **American troops to step up when Afghanistan’s own armed forces would not**. If the political leaders of Afghanistan were unable to come together for the good of their people, unable to negotiate for the future of their country when the chips were down, **they would never have done so while U.S. troops remained in Afghanistan bearing the brunt of the fighting for them**”.
- “We will **continue to support** the Afghan people. We will lead with our **diplomacy, our international influence, and our humanitarian aid** and continue to push regional engagement to prevent violence and instability. We’ll continue to speak out for the basic rights of the Afghan people — of women and girls.”

thus spake.. US

- “Given the deteriorating security situation, Afghans and international citizens who wish to depart must be allowed to do so; roads, airports and border crossing must remain open, and calm must be maintained. The Afghan people deserve to live in safety, security and dignity. We in the international community stand ready to assist them.” Joint Statement by US and ---- other countries on 17 Aug



thus spake.. Taliban 2.0 : press conf on 17 Aug

- “**Amnesty for all, Women rights, Press freedom** : official policies of Taliban and it seeks no ‘**revenge**’ and everyone will be ‘**forgiven**’” – Zabihullah Mujahid, Taliban spokesman
- “We promise a **peaceful rule** and would respect the **human rights within the** framework of **Sharia law**. Current situation, a **test for Taliban**”
- “Slowly the world will **see all our leaders**, there will be **no shadow of secrecy**” – a senior Taliban official, who declined to be identified
- “**India** is welcome to complete its **re-construction and infrastructure projects** in Af, but no country can use Af soil for own **military objectives**” – Taliban on 16 Aug



thus spake.. India

- “India would **stand by** Afghans who have been its **partners** and would **facilitate** their travel out of the war-torn country” – EAM on 16 Aug
- “We hope that the situation “**stabilises soon**” and there is an **inclusive dispensation** which represents all sections of Afghan society. Voices of **Afghan women**, aspirations of **Afghan children** and the rights of **minorities** must be respected. A **broader representation** would help the arrangement gain more **acceptability** and **legitimacy**”. – India in UNSC on 16 Aug



thus spake.. UK PM Boris Johnson

- “We will **judge** the regime based on the **choices it makes** and by its **actions rather than** by its **words**, on its **attitude** to terrorism, to crime & narcotics as well as **humanitarian access** and the **rights of girls** to receive education” - in British Parliament on 18 Aug
- “Any **recognition** of the **new government** in Af should happen on an ‘**international, not unilateral**’ basis” Boris to Pak PM on phone on 18 Aug



thus spake.. Russia & China

- “We will **observe** the action of the new authorities closely, only then we will **make the decision**” – Russian Foreign Min
- “Hope Taliban will **ensure peaceful transition** and **stop terrorism**. **Support** Taliban’s intentions of establishing an **open, inclusive Islamic govt**. Ready to form **friendly relations** with the Taliban regime” – China Foreign Minister on 16 Aug



thus spake.. Pakistan & EU

- Pakistan says “US decision to **remain committed to 100% troop withdrawal** is a ‘**logical conclusion**’. It is now time for **international community** to work together for **long term peace, security & development of Af and the region**”
- PM Imran Khan said, “Right now in Af, Taliban has broken the **chains of slavery**”
- EU – “no payments of **development assistance** until we **clarify the situation with Taliban**. Taliban must respect **UNSC resolutions and Human rights** to earn access to the funds”

