

Pakistan's Servitude to American Interests is to Blame for the Protracted Afghan Refugee Crisis

News:

The United States wants Pakistan to keep its borders with Afghanistan open for Afghan refugees. A senior State Department official while briefing journalists on the new US refugee admission programme for Afghan nationals said, "So, in a place like Pakistan, it'll be important that their borders remain open." [Dawn]

Comment:

Protesting about the latest US demands, National Security Adviser Moeed Yusuf said, "Why make them dar-ba-dar (homeless)? Make arrangements for them inside their country. Pakistan does not have the capacity to take more refugees." [Dawn] Despite Yusuf's objections, the stark reality is that Pakistan for the past 40 years has always accommodated Afghan refugees spurred by American foreign policy ventures in Afghanistan.

In the 1980s, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan followed by America's overt support for the Afghan mujahedeen resulted in the first wave of Afghan refugees arriving to Pakistan. The Soviets fearing the spread of the Islamic revolution in Iran invaded Afghanistan to prevent the spread of Islam to Central Asian states. America reacted by using Pakistan as a conduit to train and equip Afghan mujahedeen in the tribal areas to fight the Soviets. The bloody war—the brainchild of Brzezinski's green flag plan to use Islam to defeat the red army—resulted in Afghans escaping to both Pakistan and Iran.

The second and third wave of Afghan refugees came after the defeat of the Soviets in 1989. The ensuing civil war from 1992 to 1996 between Afghan warlords, proceeded by the Taliban takeover of Kabul resulted in more Afghan refugee crossing over to Pakistan and Iran. The rise of the Taliban was driven by America's quest for a stable Afghanistan to facilitate an 1800-kilometre-long oil pipeline from Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistani-India (TAPI). The project was initiated by UNOCAL Corporation and underwritten by Washington.

The greatest upheaval for Pakistan occurred when America launched its global war on terror (GWOT) against the Taliban in October 2001. This represented the fourth wave of Afghan refugees fleeing to Pakistan. Currently there are 2.8 million Afghan refugees residing in Pakistan. This, after Pakistan has repatriated 3.8 million Afghans since 2002 according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. [Anadolu Agency]

However, this period also witnessed the Pakistan army displace millions of Pakistani citizens in the tribal and northern areas to appease America. In 2009, the Pakistani army executed Operation Black Thunderstorm at the behest of the Americans to cut off support to the Afghan resistance. This caused the displacement of 2.3 million Pakistani citizens. [Times of India] Furthermore, the West and India encouraged Baloch nationalists to clash with the Pakistani arm, which witnessed even more internally displaced Pakistanis.

Today, after being defeated by the Taliban and Afghan tribes, Biden wants to open up the Pakistani border to admit more "Afghan refugees"—many of whom in reality are American collaborators running from the advancing Taliban. So continues the arrival of Afghan refugees to Pakistan—a direct consequence of Pakistan assistance to American policy in Afghanistan.

Anyone who has a modicum of common sense can see that Islamabad's support to American policy actions and U-turns in Afghanistan has produced dire consequence for Pakistan in Afghanistan as well as at home. Pakistan in Afghanistan is perceived as America's surrogate and at home the Pakistani civil and military leadership is despised for their subservience to American interests.

The only solution to the Afghan refugee problem and to the internally displaced Afghans and Pakistanis is for people in both countries to work together to re-establish the second Khilafah Rashidah (rightly guided Caliphate State upon the method of the Prophethood). Only Islam can overcome enmity and disunity sown by the West between Afghan and Pakistani brothers. Allah (swt) commands: **﴿وَاَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ﴾**
"And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided. And remember the favor of Allah upon you - when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favor, brothers. And you were on the edge of a pit of the Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus does Allah make clear to you His verses that you may be guided." [Aali-Imran:103].

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
Abdul Majeed Bhatti