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Afghan Local Police Exacerbates Security Conditions

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An undeterred, well-trained and equipped security institution plays immensely significant role in the maintenance of law and order in the state debar foreign intervention. Generally, there are two institutions operational; police keeps a check in internal security with inclusion to streamlining law and order; army safeguards the state from external aggression and threats. However, in this piece of land there are three tiers of security institutions; the first tier includes Afghan National Army (ANA); second consists of Afghan National Police (ANP) and third consists of Afghan Local Police (ALP). The former two tiers grew precisely, endeavoring to earn sophistication and military technique to offend and defend the country from both internal and external aggression. Nonetheless, the later force receiving least consideration could not turn into minimally trained security force, plagued by misuse of power, soaring insecurity and growing bloodshed.

It was July 2010 the Afghan government passed legislation to establish the Local Police followed its formal establishment under a presidential decree of 16 August that year. The US and UK had assured to fund about, 45,000 members –initially 10,000 personnel's were targeted by the Afghan government and planned to operate the scheme between two and five years. The ALP was meant to provide an armed defense force at village-level and does not own police powers. ALP officers do not have powers of arrest but can detain individuals for a limited amount of time before turning them over to the Afghan National Police (ANP).

Following recruitment at village level employees of ALP are subjected to primary trainings that consists military skills such as marksmanship and IED detection. The formation of this force despite presence of ANP was meant to free Afghan security forces from the defensive role and

allow them to focus on offensive operations in ahead of the withdrawal of foreign military units from Afghanistan.

It is uttered truth the ALP are the sole authority in many remotest part of the country. They boldly participate in decision making of tribal elders and maliciously weird authority to the party already enjoying the position of strength. This is daylight breach of rule of law and justice. In addition to aforesaid concerns the ALP is reported to have raised their own militia to subjugate ordinary, poverty stricken ill-fated civilians. Human Rights Watch has too raised concerns about the undertakings of ALP officials who provides arms and training to another militia and has led to abuses of power by its members. At least 77 ALP officers had been investigated for criminal activity by February 2013; this included serious allegations of murder and rape. The Local Police have been involved in several green on blue attacks against ISAF security forces or their Afghan colleagues. This is for sure many incidents of human right violation must have gone unnoticed.

On the other hand being technically not trained the personnel of ALP suffer more casualties. In the entire casualty rate in the ALP runs at 6.2%, more than double that of the rest of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). The Afghan Local Police have been targeted by insurgents on numerous occasions. There are multiples incidents of attacks on ALP that bore casualties reported.

More or less similar concerns are highlighted by the former report of a credible International organization, the International Crisis Group (ICG) is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization committed to preventing and resolving deadly conflict. Earlier, the International Crisis Group (ICG) released a report raising concerns about Afghan Local Police (ALP) and warned that the move to use these unregulated units has not improved security in many places and has even exacerbated the conflict in some districts. According to the ICG these local militia groups “are cheap but dangerous”. Too often, the ALP preys on those it is meant to guard and “some members are outright bandits, exacerbating conflict”, said ICG. As such, they urge Kabul to resist calls for their expansion.

The organization states that instead reforms are needed to strengthen oversight dismiss ALP in many locations where they worsen security and incorporate the remaining units into the ANSF. The ICG states in its report that the US and Afghan security officials continue to experiment with other irregular groups.

The ICG states that the ALP program has not improved security in many places and even exacerbated the conflict in a number of districts. “A minority of villagers describes it as an indispensable source of protection, without which their districts would become battlegrounds or insurgent havens, but it is more common to hear complaints that ALP prey upon the people they are supposed to guard.”

The report went on to state that: “Such behavior often provokes violence: in 2014, an ALP officer was three to six times more likely to be killed on duty than his ANSF counterpart. At times, this reflected the way ALP units have become a central part of the war, singled out by Taliban as important targets. In other places, the high rate resulted from abuses – extortion, kidnapping, extrajudicial killings – that instigated armed responses.”

The report is concerning and equally demanding a complete overhaul in ALP. The government must investigate given an official of ALP found in immoral conduct should be levied both punishment and charged heavy fine. Seeing at the growing number of attacks and deteriorating security state the government is recommended to either formalize ALP as a regular security institution, supplied with professional training, moral ethics or it should be merged in Afghan National Police.