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Weekly Analysis is one of CSRS' publications, which significantly analyses weekly economic and political events in Afghanistan and the region. The prime motive behind this is to provide strategic insights and policy solutions to decision-making institutions and individuals in order to help them to design best policies. Weekly Analysis is published in local languages (Pashto and Dari) and international languages (English and Arabic).

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## Preface

Several days ago, reports from Ghazni suggested that unknown helicopters have landed in Waez district under the Taliban control. Before this, local officials in Jawzjan had said that in ISIL-controlled Qushtapa and Darzab districts of this province, an aircraft had dropped some boxes. Days before this incident, officials in Sar-e-Pul province had stated that unknown helicopters have landed in Taliban-controlled Sayad district during the night. Moreover, there are reports from Badakhshan province that Russian jet fighters have violated Afghan airspace and have flown over Afghan territory.

In 2009, the former president Hamid Karzai had also talked about helicopters carrying armed individuals to the Northern Afghanistan. Overall, despite tens of billions of dollars international community's aids to the Afghan government, the Afghan government still did not grow the capacity to control its air traffic and still the country's airspace is controlled by foreigners. In this regard, you would read in the first part of the Weekly Analysis of the Center for Strategic and Regional Studies (CSRS).

In the second part of the Analysis, you would read about the challenges emerged because of simultaneous management of both the Afghan government and the Taliban over schools. Although in the past one and half decades, Afghanistan had landmark achievements in areas of education, this sector is still encountered with serious challenges. Recently in areas under Taliban controlled, problems have emerged which have put schools at risk of closing in these regions. The situations of education under Taliban-controlled areas along with other issues are analyzed in the second part of the analysis.

## The Afghan airspace and the existing challenges



Several days ago, violating the Afghan airspace, Russian airplanes entered Badakhshan province in Northern Afghanistan. Moreover, some media outlets have released reports which suggested that in some of the Northern provinces, unknown helicopters had landed and distributed arms to unknown armed groups. Despite billions of dollars of international community's aid, Afghanistan is still encountering serious challenges in areas of controlling its airspace.

While bloody explosions could be carried out within the Afghan green zone, controlling the airspace is a major challenge for the Afghan government. In the most recent blast in the diplomatic area of Kabul city last week more than 80 civilians were killed, and around 350 others were injured.

Whose responsibility is to control the Afghan airspace? How is the Afghan airspace being controlled? Is our airspace safe? In this regard, what are the main challenges? These issues are discussed here.

## **Airspace control in Afghanistan**

The Afghan airspace management is carried out into two parts; first, the Afghan civil aviation and second, the Afghan military aviation- the three-decades-long war in the country has exhausted both.

After 2001, as same as other sectors, the US and NATO forces took control of the Afghan airspace as well and then by signing a contract, they handed over the Afghan air traffic control to an international company<sup>1</sup>. Besides that, the military aviation management was also in their hands.

The Afghan parliament passed the “Afghan national aviation law” on 18 September 2012 which was approved by the former Afghan President Hamid Karzai on 29 October 2012. Based on this law, the Afghan Civil Aviation Authority (ACAA) was established. The safety of the Afghan airspaces is officially the responsibility of the Afghan Ministry of Defense.

According to ACAA, besides the prevention of the violation of its airspace, 400 planes cross the Afghan airspace on a daily basis, and Afghanistan adds \$500 for each flight to its Avenue which becomes a total of \$50m every year which indicated the importance of airspace control.<sup>2</sup>

## **The Afghan Civil and Military Aviation**

ACAA was established at a time that based on the policies of the US and the Afghan government, after 2009, the responsibility of the affairs must have been gradually handed over to Afghans. Based on this policy, the Afghan Aviation control must have also been transited to Afghans by the end of 2014. However, according to the reports of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan’s Reconstruction (SIGAR) and the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (IJACMEC), between 2002 and 2014, the US

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<sup>1</sup> Read the joint report of fight against corruption and monitoring and evaluation committee in the following link:

[http://www.mec.af/files/2016\\_06\\_14\\_ACAA\\_Paper\\_\(Pashto\).pdf](http://www.mec.af/files/2016_06_14_ACAA_Paper_(Pashto).pdf)

<sup>2</sup> read more in this report:

<http://www.ufuqnews.com/archives/12434>

foundations have spent approximately a total of \$562.2m in activities relevant to Afghan civil aviation<sup>3</sup>; yet the US has failed to train the Afghan civil aviation staff particularly the air traffic controllers, as promised, by the end of 2014<sup>4</sup>. Even more interesting is the ACAA's acceptance of SIGAR's report in this regard<sup>5</sup>.

On the other hand, the control of the Afghan Military Aviation is at the hand of the Americans as an Afghan Parliament Member said last week that the Afghan airspace control is at the hands of the Americans<sup>6</sup>. In the meanwhile, the Afghan deputy Chief of Army Staff in airspace affairs had said last year that, in this regard, no practical measures were undertaken. The Afghan government only controls the landing and flying of the planes<sup>7</sup>.

### Is our airspace safe?

Although, in 1392 [solar year], the Afghan government had said that it would take over the full control of the Afghan airspace within two years<sup>8</sup>, however the Afghan government is yet to succeed in this. The Afghan National Unity Government (NUG) also discussed controlling airspace in the National Security Council and, in this regard, the formation of a Commission was also requested<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Read the SIGAR and IJACMEC's report here:

<https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/audits/SIGAR-15-58-AR.pdf>  
[http://www.mec.af/files/2016\\_06\\_14\\_ACAA\\_Paper\\_\(Pashto\).pdf](http://www.mec.af/files/2016_06_14_ACAA_Paper_(Pashto).pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Read Radio Azadi's this report in Pashto for further information:

<https://pa.azadiradio.com/a/27019515.html>

<sup>5</sup> آزادي راډيو، «اداره مستقل هوانوردی افغانستان گزارش سيگار را تاييد کرد»، ۱۳۹۴ ثور ۲۶مه:

<https://da.azadiradio.com/a/27020275.html>

<sup>6</sup> ويسا ورځپاڼه، «افغان حکومت دې مخالفينو ته د الوتکو بنکنه کېدو په اړه وضاحت ورکړي»، ۱۳۹۶ جوزا ۹مه:

<http://www.dailyweesa.com/?p=14305>

<sup>7</sup> آريانا نيوز، «کنترول حریم فضایی افغانستان در دست حکومت نیست»، ۲۰۱۵ دسامبر ۶مه:

<http://ariananews.af/%DA%A9%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%B1%D9%88%D9%84-%D8%AD%D8%B1%DB%8C%D9%85-%D9%81%D8%B6%D8%A7%DB%8C%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%BA%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%AD%DA%A9%D9%88/?lang=fa>

<sup>8</sup> افغانستان ورځپاڼه، «نجفی: کنترول کامل حریم هوایی افغانستان را تا کمتر از دو سال در اختیار می‌گیریم»، ۱۳۹۲ اسد ۲۶مه:

[http://www.dailyafghanistan.com/national\\_detail.php?post\\_id=128421](http://www.dailyafghanistan.com/national_detail.php?post_id=128421)

<sup>9</sup> تلویزیون چکاد، «غنی: باید حریم هوایی ما کنترول شود»، ۱۳۹۵ میزان ۷مه:

<http://chekad.tv/%D8%BA%D9%86%DB%8C-%D8%AD%D8%B1%DB%8C%D9%85-%D9%81%D8%B6%D8%A7%DB%8C%DB%8C-%DA%A9%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%B1%D9%84-%D8%B4%D9%88%D8%AF/>

According to the Afghan Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation, in 1394 [Solar Year] 70 experts were needed to control the Afghan airspace while Afghanistan had only 7<sup>10</sup>, and the Afghan government does not have such cadres and technical capacity to monitor its airspace without the assistance of a foreign company. According to the Afghan Minister, in order to take full control of the Afghan airspace, without the help of an international company, Afghanistan needs three to five years' time.

Although in 1394, the control of the Afghan airspace was officially submitted to ACAA, but they were not able to take control without the assistance of the foreigners<sup>11</sup>. Therefore, since the past several years, Afghanistan has encountered many challenges in areas of managing its air traffic. These challenges are; technical issues, lack of equipment, lack of coordination with other organs and corruption<sup>12</sup>.

Aside from human resources, some technical challenges and lack of tools have resulted in the failure in securing the safety of the Afghan airspace. From a military point of view, the fundamental step to ensure the safety of the Afghan airspace is identifying different unknown aircraft and then preventing their transportation. In order to do that, the country needs advanced radar systems. Therefore, the authorities in ACAA traveled to Germany last month to discuss the activation of the radar system in the country.

The former chief of Afghan Air Forces General Abdul Wahab Wardak believes that after 16 years, Afghanistan still does not have air defense system (However, he says that, in this regard, a policy was made, but it is yet to be implemented)<sup>13</sup>. The Afghan Deputy Chief of Army Staff General Murad Ali Murad also recognizes

<sup>10</sup> هشت صبح ورځپاڼه، «ناتوانی افغانستان در کنترل حریم فضایی»، ۱۳۹۴ جوزا ۲۳مه:

<http://8am.af/1394/03/23/inability-to-control-the-airspace-of-afghanistan/>

<sup>11</sup> آزادی رادیو، «د هوایی حریم د کنترول چارې د ملکي هوایی چلند ادارې ته وسپارل شوې»، ۱۳۹۴ د تلې لومړۍ نېټه:

<https://pa.azadiradio.com/a/27263891.html>

<sup>12</sup> د ملکي هوایی چلند ادارې وېبپاڼه، «سفر یک هیات عالی رتبه اداره مستقل هوانوردی ملکی به جرمنی به منظور بحث روی فعال کردن سیستم رادار در کشور»،

۲۰۱۷ د مې دریمه:

<http://aca.gov.af/fa/news/415003>

<sup>13</sup> رادیو آزادی، «مراد: افغانستان در خصوص کنترل حریم هوایی با مشکلات مواجه است»، ۱۳۹۶ ثور ۲۳مه:

<https://da.azadiradio.com/a/28486209.html>

the problem and says that they are facing challenges in controlling the Afghan airspace and, in this regard, most of their information comes from Resolute Support Mission (NATO)<sup>14</sup>.

The second step toward controlling the airspace is detecting the unknown aircraft, which mostly relies on the air forces and “ground-to-air” missiles-Afghanistan is far behind in both. For the same reason, the Afghan President Ashraf Ghani called on the new US President Donald Trump to strengthen the Afghan air force.

Afghanistan has signed Bilateral Security Agreement with the US and while the US has the most robust system of controlling airspace in the world and provides the Afghan government with information in this regard. The question is why, in this respect, the Afghan government is far behind? Why in this regard, has the US not cooperated with the Afghan government? Does the US do not want the Afghan government to take control of its airspace?

Since the past several years, reports have repeatedly been released about anonymous aircraft supplying weapons to the armed oppositions of the Afghan government. Unless the Afghans take control of their airspace, the war in Afghanistan will endure.

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<sup>14</sup> تېر ماخذ.



## Afghan Education and the Contention between the Government and the Taliban



Education is one of the most fundamental and vital part of human life and plays a prime role in the development of the human society. In the past one and half decade, the Afghan education has certainly had remarkable progress, however; still, there exist many problems and challenges in its way, the most important of which are: insecurity, low quality, corruption and other challenges.

Another challenging factor is the simultaneous reign of both the Taliban and the Afghan government on schools and educational administrations in areas controlled by the Taliban. Center for Strategic and Regional Studies (CSRS) have information in hand that suggests that due to restrictions imposed on the system of getting salaries through banking system on behalf of the Taliban, in some of the insecure province of the country, teachers and other school staff have not received their salaries in the past six months and thus a significant number of schools are about to be closed.



Here, you would read about the educational situation in Afghanistan in the post-2001 years, during the National Unity Government (NUG), and in the regions under the Taliban control and as well as the new challenges faced by the education staff in a number of insecure provinces in the country.

### Education in Afghanistan in the post-2001 years

After the collapse of the Taliban regime following the US attack on Afghanistan in 2001 and with the formation of the new government in Afghanistan, education was one of the sectors which have had remarkable developments.

In 1380 [solar year, all the following dates are solar year], 3389 schools were open in Afghanistan. However, this number increased to 6000 in the next year. In 1384, 1394 and 1395, there were respectively 8397<sup>15</sup>, 15645<sup>16</sup> and 16049 schools in the country<sup>17</sup>. The number of students in Afghan schools in 1395 was 8868122 which means four million students are added to the 4.9 million students in 1386.

In the past years, thousands of school buildings were constructed where hundreds of thousands of students is receiving education. However, this trend was affected by the increasing insecurity in the country. Besides insecurity, widespread corruption is another factor that has lowered the school quality in the country. In the past years, the quantity has been stressed upon in the Afghan schools, while quality has been neglected, which in turn has been challenging. Based on a survey, conducted by CSRS in the main cities of the country, 62.59% of the interviewees had said that education had a bad quality in the past one and a half decade<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> «افغانستان په تېره يوه نيمه لسيزه کې»، گزارش تحقیقی و تحلیلی مرکز مطالعات استراتژیک و منطقوی در مورد وضعیت یک و نیم دهه گذشته، صفحه: ۳۴۰، سال چاپ: ۱۳۹۵ هـ. ش.

<sup>16</sup> سالنامه احصائیوی ۱۳۹۴ هـ. ش، نشر شده توسط اداره مرکزی احصائییه.

<sup>17</sup> سالنامه احصائیوی ۱۳۹۵ هـ. ش، نشر شده توسط اداره مرکزی احصائییه.

<sup>18</sup> «افغانستان په تېره يوه نيمه لسيزه کې»، گزارش تحقیقی و تحلیلی مرکز مطالعات استراتژیک و منطقوی در مورد وضعیت یک و نیم دهه گذشته، صفحه: ۳۶۱، سال چاپ: ۱۳۹۵ هـ. ش.

## The NUG and the Afghan education

After the establishment of the NUG, in his first days in office, President Ghani said that the educational situation back then was not acceptable for him. He vowed to work to augment the quality of education, de-politicize the educational sector, improve the situation of teachers, and bolster women's participation in the strategic aspects of education in the county. After one and a half year, however, he apologized for failing to deliver his promises and, renewing his pledges, committed to fulfilling them<sup>19</sup>.

However, after 1395 and with the beginning of 1396, another year passed, and besides former challenges, the Afghan education sector faced new challenges such as insecurity, corruption, lack of equipment, lack of professional teachers, etc.

Moreover, hundreds of schools were closed in many regions in the country. Recently, the Independent Human Rights Commission has also announced that since the past eight months, only 7 out of 318 schools in the center and districts of Uruzgan province were open and the remaining 311 are closed for security reasons<sup>20</sup>. According to officials in the Afghan Ministry of Education, one thousand other schools are closed in Ghazni, Kunduz, Zabel, Paktia, Helmand, Nimroz, Farah, Badghis, and Nangarhar provinces<sup>21</sup>.

In the meanwhile, the open schools are facing serious challenges as well, which are; lack of professional teachers, teaching materials, school building and the existence of corruption. In many cases, there have been reports of religious scholars teaching scientific subjects as well as students being deprived of teaching tools such as books, notebooks, laboratories, etc.

In the commencing ceremony of 1396 educational year, the Second Vice President Sarwar Danesh said that despite the infusion of billions of dollars in

<sup>19</sup> بی بی سی فارسی، «شروع مکاتب در افغانستان؛ غنی برای 'وعده‌های عملی نشده' پوزش خواست» ۲۲ مارچ ۲۰۱۶م، لینک گزارش:

[http://www.bbc.com/persian/afghanistan/2016/03/160322\\_k04\\_first\\_school\\_day\\_president\\_admits\\_failure](http://www.bbc.com/persian/afghanistan/2016/03/160322_k04_first_school_day_president_admits_failure)

<sup>20</sup> رادیو آزادی، «حقوق بشر: ولایت ارزگان تنها ۷ مکتب فعال دارد» ۱۱ ثور ۱۳۹۶ هـ ش، لینک نشر:

<https://da.azadiradio.com/a/28461823.html>

<sup>21</sup> رادیو آزادی، «بیش از ۱۰۰۰ مکتب در اثر نا امنی‌ها در افغانستان مسدود شدند»، ۶ عقرب ۱۳۹۵ هـ ش، آنالین:

<https://da.azadiradio.com/a/28078204.html>

Afghanistan, yet 50% of Afghanistan's schools did not have standard buildings which, he says, was a shame for Afghanistan.<sup>22</sup>

### **The situation of education in the Taliban-controlled areas**

Based on SIGAR's most recent report, the Afghan government has control only on 65.6% of its territory, and the remaining areas are under Taliban control. Although the Taliban have closed girls' schools, boys' schools are open but under the supervision of the Taliban.

Several years ago, officials in Kapisa province had said that in insecure districts of this province a commission is formed by the Taliban to monitor schools and that the Taliban seriously observe the progress of education. As part of their supervision, the Taliban have also brought some changes in the curriculum, and in order to keep these schools open, authorities have accepted it. At that time even some teachers were happy from this initiative on behalf of the Taliban, but after some time, the problem revealed itself and the simultaneous management of schools by the Afghan government and the Taliban in insecure provinces of the country proved to be challenging.

CSRS has some information in its possession that suggests the Taliban monitors and manages schools in areas under its control in some of the provinces (including Maidan Warda, Ghazni, Kunduz, Kapisa, Nangarhar, Kuna, etc.). In some cases, Taliban's monitoring, management, and decisions were against those of the Afghan government, which means more schools are at the risk of getting closed.

One of these problems is the issue delivering teachers' salaries through banks. Since last year, the Afghan government has changed the salary delivery system for teachers and delivers it through banks. Before this, the salaries were delivered by a certified individual from every school. Although banking mechanism is an effective effort to prevent corruption, it creates challenges as well. There are no branches of banks in districts, and every teachers spend a portion of their salaries to travel to the centers of the provinces.

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<sup>22</sup> خبرگزاری آوا، «زنگ آغاز سال تعلیمی ۹۶ توسط معاون رییس جمهور نواخته شد»، ۳ حمل ۱۳۹۶ هـ ش، به لینک ذیل مراجعه نمایید:

<http://www.avapress.com/vdcdxn0fkyt0s96.2a2y.html>

The banking mechanism of salary delivery, however, has also caused serious problems for instance in some Taliban-controlled areas, the Taliban have prevented teachers from taking their salaries through banks and, therefore, since the past six months, these teachers have not received their salaries. While most of the schools are at risk of getting closed and tribal elders from the area have come to government organs to solve the problem, in this regard, the government has undertaken no measures. Based on the information in hand, these teachers have decided to close the schools and do something else for a living, if the problem was not resolved soon.

According to the information that CSRS has received, the Taliban regularly monitor the teaching process, teachers' presence and curriculum in areas under its control. According to the teachers in these regions, the salary of every teacher who is absent is deducted by the Taliban's monitoring representatives. Regarding curriculum, for instance, the Taliban have removed a subject called "*Farhang* (culture)" from the curriculum. This subject was taught in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades. Besides other issues, *Farhang* included topics such as music, instruments, musicians and atan [an Afghan traditional dance]. The Taliban has supplanted the subject with another subject called 'Islamic Educations' and have appointed teachers for it as well.

The end

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**Note:** Please let us know your feedback and suggestions for the improvement of Weekly analysis.

