

Research on the Afghan Refugees in Pakistan

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Abstract: Pakistan has been host Afghans since its independence. In the nearly past 40 years, Afghan came into Pakistan through the border for various reasons and now Pakistan is the country that host the world's largest refugee population. Those refugees have impacted on Pakistan in different field after them arriving, so in order to save its own interest, Pakistan used different policy to Afghan refugees in different ages.

1. Introduction

Afghan refugees is one of the biggest problems in the world, which constitute the second largest refugee population in the globe. Although Afghan refugees are scattered all the world, Pakistan is home to the largest refugee population in the world, and most of them hail from Afghanistan. Pakistan unconditionally hosted millions of refugees and at least 1.45 million of them still live in Pakistan. Afghan refugees has impact on the political, ethnic, economic, and social ramifications of Pakistan as well as Afghanistan, so it is necessary to deepen research Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

2. The Phases of Afghan Refugees moved into Pakistan

Pakistan has hosted Afghan refugees since Pakistan independence, and Afghan refugees have lived in Pakistan for nearly 40 years. In the past decades, Pakistan hosted Afghan refugees has underwent three distinct phases.

The first and most important phase began with the Soviet invasion of 1979 and the ensuing decade-long occupation of Afghanistan (1979–1989). The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) came to the power with the support of the Soviet Union, Afghans started fleeing their home. Pakistan has received 109,000 Afghans in June 1979 and then more Afghan arrived in Pakistan for receiving asylum. With the Soviet Union invade Afghanistan in 1979, the exodus reach its peak. Between January and December 1980, an estimated 80,000 to 90,000 refugees crossed the border every month. According to UNHCR statistics, the total number peaked at 3,270,000 in 1989, more than 3% of Pakistan's total population at the time.

The second phase start 1990s, which various Mujahideen factions began to fight for power. When Soviet Union left Afghanistan in 1989, Najibullah governed the country and a major number refugees had been return to Afghan. However, Najibullah government had been overthrew and built a joint government by various mujahiddin leaders agreement. This government can not provide peace for the country, and civil war break out again. The tendency of repatriation was suspended. With the Taliban militia emerged as an important power in Afghanistan and established their government in Kabul, Afghani left their home to Pakistan again.

With the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001 and along with the instances of drought, a new massive refugees fled into Pakistan. According to the UNHCR, some 6 million Afghans lived abroad by 2002, most as refugee or asylum-seeker, for which about half live in Pakistan.

Although Pakistan advocated Afghan refugees going back home, the number of the refugees are large. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there were two million Afghan refugees still in Pakistan, 1,389,754 are registered by the Government of Pakistan, and 600,00 are undocumented. However, some people think the number of unregistered refugees is far greater than that, because it is impossible to give an accurate number of unregistered refugees since Afghan movement across the Pak-Afghan border has traditionally taken place under an

unregulated and unmonitored system.

3. The effects of Afghan refugees on Pakistan

Afghan refugees have lived in Pakistan over the past nearly four decades, and the status of refugees has been controversial in recent years as the refugees introduced ethno-demographic imbalances within Pakistan as well as substantively contributed toward security problems.

3.1 Afghan Refugees have impact on Pakistan Political

Many domestic political problems derived from the presence of large number of Afghan refugees in Pakistan. The refugees were being made an instrument to create dissension and disorder in academic institutions to serve the political objectives of a particular section. Indeed, those were very serious charges. Some political parties also disagreed with Government's approach towards the Afghan crisis and insisted that direct talks with the Kabul regime should be initiated. So the Afghan refugees and whether their eventual return made the political parties divided into different petty factions. For example, when one party created goodwill among the cultivated refugees, which in turn, generated apprehensions among the other political parties and they began to wonder what would happen if the refugees did not leave and formed a large vote-bank for the privileged political party.

3.2 Afghan Refugees have impact on Pakistan Economic

A popular opinion about the relations between with Afghan refugees and the Pakistan economic is that the refugees had impacted on the macroeconomic level as well as as the microeconomic level.

At the macroeconomic level, the refugee presence undoubtedly resulted in some clearly defined changes in income distribution, leading to occasional friction with local Pakistanis, even if it did not necessarily affect the overall economy. Moreover, Pakistan government would spent financial budget on refugees. According to various sources, the average cost of maintaining the registered refugees was little over a million dollars a day in the mid 80s. Of course, Afghan labor migration could prove beneficial to Pakistan in the form of labor, and to Afghanistan in the form of remittances. Besides, increasing refugees created a larger demand for goods and consequently generated inflation in some parts of the country.

At the microeconomic level, the influence mainly on the personage. Since the early 1980s, the assertion that the refugees are taking jobs from local Pakistanis, because Afghans were willing to work for lower wages than Pakistanis and also can work in poorer environment. In addition, the Afghans are forcing up rents and foods prices, because a lot of refugees had to pay higher rent than local people, which in turn pushed the rent ceiling beyond the capacity of the local lower middle and lower classes. So that many Pakistan complain that the house-rents had soared by the refugees pushed.

3.3 Afghan Refugees have impact on Pakistan Social

Being host Afghan refugees, Pakistan paid an environmental price. Along with the refugees coming is a huge number of animals (cattle, goats, sheep, camels etc), Pakistan need provide place for these flocks, which leading to the degradation of local ecosystems. The Afghan refugees were accompanied by more than 3 million heads of livestock, whose indiscriminate and uncontrolled grazing ruined the sparse grazing grounds and caused extensive damage to the ecology of the surrounding areas. The other side is that the refugees presence did put additional pressure on Pakistan's infrastructure (notably schools and hospitals).

The Afghan refugees also result in Pakistan civil strife is growing. In some areas the refugees settlement has upset the existing balance among tribes and sects. The refugees settlements in Kurram Agency not only altered the existing sectarian balance and increased tensions between the

two sects but it also totally altered the existing demographic structure.

3.4 Afghan Refugees have impact on Pakistan Security

Afghans is conceived to have has a distinct impact on the Pakistanis domestic security. They are mostly held responsible for the exacerbating insecurity in the country. The ramifications of the Afghan war in Pakistan include the growth of various Islamic groups that have been implicated in the running feuds between Sunni and Shi'i organisations, ethnic strife, the talibanisation of Pakistani society, the drug Mafia operating in Pakistan and the smuggling network of small arms and ammunitions which poses a threat to state security in the long run. In addition, local people consider that the Afghan refugees are responsible for drug addicts increasing in Pakistan. Afghan refugees camps are blamed by world people for providing recruiting grounds for Afghan Mujahideen. After the Army Public School incident carried out, not only Pakistan authority but normal people believe the Afghans living in Pakistan involved in, who help the Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan.

4. Pakistan Attitude for Afghan refugee

Pakistan is not a party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees/ 1967 Protocol and has also not enacted any national legislation for the protection of refugees nor established procedures to determine the refugee status of persons who are seeking international protection within its territory. Although overall Pakistan has been a generous host to Afghan refugees in the absence of a national refugee legal framework, its policy for refugees has been ambivalent and on behalf of the Government of Pakistan.

4.1 Pakistan be friendly to Afghan refugees

During the early days of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan's policy towards Afghan refugees has been notably liberal. The Pakistan government was relatively tolerant in its treatment of Afghan refugees. Refugees were allowed to have the general rights of freedom of the movement. Pakistan government did not impose restrictions on the movement of registered Afghans as well as on assistance to those who living outside camps. Afghans also have been allowed to travel throughout Pakistan.

Besides, Pakistan does in fact allow the refugees have the basic rights. Pakistan set up several dozen camps beginning in 1979 in order to host the increasing number refugees and most of the camps in the Northwest Frontier Province and a few in Balochistan. Then , Pakistan did permit Afghan to work within the country, although the Pakistan government did not allow the Afghans to have their own land and nor the primarily rural Afghans to work in the land.

Pakistan government provided food rations for registered Afghans every day, along with basic health and educational services. The Pakistani Chief Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees(CCAR) contracted with a number of international and local NGOs to provide health, education, water, and sanitation services in the camps. In the time, the reasons why Pakistan was so friendly to Afghans is that Pakistan needs fought against the Soviet Union as well as international society all donate to help Afghans, especially American and Saudi Arabia donated a large number foods and other goods. As a result, the Afghan refugees in Pakistan not only enjoyed the basic rights, but also they did not suffer the problems that often plague large displaced populations, such as epidemics or malnutrition.

But, this does not mean that Afghan refugees do not encounter problems in exercising their rights. For example, refugees do not always have access to courts, are harassed by the intelligence agencies, or are asked by police to pay bribes. And the the fate of most Afghan refugees is significantly different from the fate of ordinary Pakistani citizens.

4.2 Pakistan began to be hard on Afghan after the Soviet Union withdrawn from Afghanistan

Pakistan changed its policy for refugees after the Soviet Union's withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 and then Western decreased donors' interest in Afghan refugees in Pakistan, which transformed from friendly and tolerance to indifference and harden. Pakistan stopped delivering food to refugees. With the cessation of food aid, more Afghans were driven into cities to look for work. Moreover, all Afghans were advocated once again to return Afghanistan. A repatriation of Afghan refugees in Pakistan tripartite agreement was signed between the Government of Pakistan, the Government of Afghanistan, and the UNHCR. Pakistan started to carry out repatriation policy for Afghan refugees. within six months, 1.2 million Afghans were repatriated in 1992.

Things became worse since 2005, the Government of Pakistan began closing down camps to drive out Afghan refugees by force. Pakistan closed three refugees camps in North Waziristan, Bajaur, and Kurram agencies first, then shut another two refugee camps in South Waziristan in Autumn 2005. During the process, some 200,000 refugees were displaced and homeless, and majority of them had to go back Afghanistan and their county.

4.3 Driving Out Afghan Refugees by Coercive Factors

Pakistan drastically changed its attitude for Afghans after the so-called Pakistani Taliban, Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan attacked on Peshawar's Army Public School on December 2014, which killed 145 people, including 132 children, Pakistani authorities have mounted a concerted campaign to drive Afghans out of the country. Under the policy, there were 58,211 registered Afghan refugees had returned to Afghanistan by the end of the 2015, up from 12,991 in 2014. In 2016, the Afghan refugees' living situation became deteriorating. More Afghans had returned to their country and their home by the force. According to UNHCR, In the second half of 2016, a toxic combination of deportation threats and police abuses pushed out nearly 365,000 of the country's 1.5 million registered Afghan refugees, as well as just over 200,000 of the country's estimated 1 million undocumented Afghans. This is the world's largest unlawful mass forced return of refugees in recent times. Moreover, Pakistani authorities have made clear in public statements they want to see similar numbers return to Afghanistan in 2017.

In order to let Afghans give up their Pakistani living home and return to Afghanistan, Pakistani police driving out Afghan refugees by coercive factors to some extent, including: increasingly insecure legal status; government announcements that all Afghans should leave, and the resulting ever-present threat of deportation; daily police extortion that intimidated and stripped them of their limited income and ability to make ends meet in Pakistan; arbitrary detention; police raids on their homes; exclusion of their children from Pakistani schools and shutting down Afghan refugee schools; and, to a lesser extent, police theft and unlawful use of force.

5. Conclusion

Although refugees continue to return under the great thrust caused by all parties, it is becoming more difficult to hearten refugees to return and the pace of return will be slow down. Afghan refugees will continue to made affect on Pakistan, Afghanistan and the world, is also a difficult problem, it need all people cooperate with each other to solve it.

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