



Afghanistan Crisis, Taliban chief Dead, Baradar hostage?

- By Ankit Agrawal

Taliban leader Mullah Baradar held hostage, Haibatullah Akhundzada dead: Report

The vacuum at the top after clashes between factions led by Mullah Baradar and Khalil Haqqani earlier this month has allowed for arguments between the Taliban factions - something which was not seen during their earlier rule two decades ago, UK-based magazine The Spectator reported.



By hindustantimes.com | Written by Amit Chaturvedi, Hindustan Times, New Delhi

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Mysterious reports emerge on Taliban's Mullah Baradar and Haibatullah Akhundzada [READ]

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Gunfire heard in Kabul earlier this month was reportedly a power struggle between two senior Taliban leaders - group co-founder Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar and Anas Haqqani.

Representational Image. | Photo Credit: AP



Kabul: Even though the Taliban has managed to capture Afghanistan and form a government, an internal rift between the faction has started emerging, according to media reports.

Writing for The Spectator, David Loyn, said that Talian co-founder Mullah Baradar had expected to run the government but was instead given a deputy's role. He wanted

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WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

A power struggle within the Taliban has badly hurt two key players - deputy prime minister **Mullah Baradar** and the group's spiritual leader **Haibatullah Akhundzada** –

UK-based magazine **The Spectator** reported on Monday.

It cited the recent clash during the government formation talks between **Baradar faction** and the **Haqqani** network to say that the **former emerged as the "principal loser"**.

David Loyn

Punch-up at the palace: why the Taliban is tearing itself apart

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WHAT IS THE DISPUTE?

Writing for The Spectator, David Loyn, said that **Talian co-founder Mullah Baradar** had **expected to run the government** but was **instead given a deputy's role**.

He **wanted more roles for Afghanistan's many ethnic minorities** in the government and has also argued that the **green, red and black Afghan national flag should still be flown** alongside the white Taliban flag.

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Taliban's Akhund to be acting PM, Baradar his deputy

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"Tempers flared in a meeting in Presidential Palace in Kabul and spilled over into a fight between **Baradar's** supporters and those of **Khalil Haqqani**.

Some accounts said there was gunfire, although this has not been verified," Loyn said.

PANJSHIR STRUGGLE

Gunfire heard in Kabul earlier this month was actually a power struggle between two senior Taliban leaders - group co-founder Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar and Afghan Taliban leader, Anas Haqqani, according to some accounts.

The incident took place over an alleged disagreement among the Taliban leaders on how to **resolve the Panjshir situation.**



SO WHERE IS BARADAR?

The clashes in early September saw "furniture as well as large thermos flasks full of hot green **thrown around**", said The Spectator.

At one point during the meeting, Haqqani network leader Khalil-ul-Rahman Haqqani **rose from his chair and began punching Baradar**, The Spectator report said.

Baradar had pushed for an "inclusive" cabinet that included non-Taliban leaders and ethnic minorities, which would be **more acceptable to the rest of the world.**

He disappeared for a while after the clashes and resurfaced in Kandahar.

He held a meeting of tribal leaders who are supporting him, but was also forced to release a video message on the state-run TV network controlled by the Taliban.

The message "**looked like a hostage video**", The Spectator reported.

WHAT ABOUT AKHUNDZADA?

On Akhundzada, the publication reported that **his whereabouts are not known.**

"He has **not been seen or heard from for some time**, and there are **many rumours that he is dead**," reported The Spectator.

SIGNIFICANCE

This vacuum at the top has allowed for arguments between the Taliban factions - something which was not seen during their earlier rule two decades ago, the report further said.

The Taliban and Haqqani groups merged around 2016.

Baradar and those involved in Doha talks were trying to project a moderate image of the Taliban, but Haqqanis have praised suicide attacks.

Khalil Haqqani, Afghanistan's minister of refugees, is on the **United Nations sanctions list** and has been linked to its military operations.

The **Haqqanis** are deeply embedded into Pakistan's **security apparatus** and take their name from the Darul Uloom Haqqania madrassa near Islamabad.

The **chief of** Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (**ISI**) **also** **threw his weight behind the Haqqanis**, ensuring that all of the **key positions went to Pakistani loyalists**.

Mullah Hassan Akhund, who is the **prime minister** of Afghanistan, **appears to hold no power**.

Q. Who is the custodian of the implementation of the fundamental rights?

1. Supreme Court
2. High Court
3. District Court

- A) 1 only
- B) 1 & 2 only
- C) 2 only
- D) All of the above



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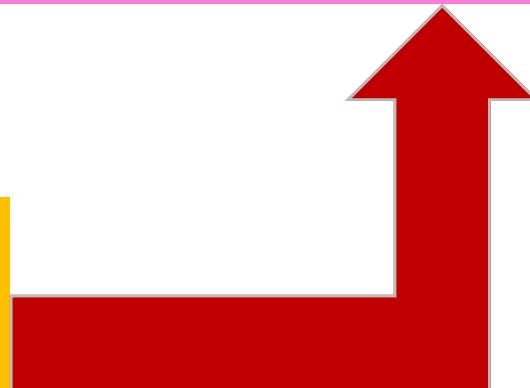
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