

TIMELINE:
AFGHANISTAN
 A CHRONOLOGY
 OF KEY EVENTS

BBC NEWS

1919 - **Afghanistan** regains independence after third war against **British** forces trying to bring country under their sphere of influence.

1926 - Amanullah proclaims himself king and attempts to introduce social reforms leading to opposition from conservative forces.

1929 - Amanullah flees after civil unrest over his reforms.

1933 - Zahir Shah becomes king and **Afghanistan** remains a monarchy for next four decades.

1953 - General Mohammed Daud becomes prime minister. Turns to **Soviet Union** for economic and military assistance. Introduces a number of social reforms, such as abolition of purdah (practice of secluding women from public view).

1963 - Mohammed Daud forced to resign as prime minister.

1964 - Constitutional monarchy introduced - but leads to political polarisation and power struggles.

1973 - Mohammed Daud seizes power in a coup and declares a republic. Tries to play off **USSR** against Western powers. His style alienates left-wing factions who join forces against him.

1978 - General Daud is overthrown and killed in a coup by leftist People's Democratic Party. But party's Khalq and Parcham factions fall out, leading to purging or exile of most Parcham leaders. At the same time, conservative Islamic and ethnic leaders who objected to social changes begin armed revolt in countryside.

1979 - Power struggle between leftist leaders Hafizullah Amin and Nur Mohammed Taraki in Kabul won by Amin. Revolts in countryside continue and Afghan army faces collapse.

Soviet Union finally sends in troops to help remove Amin, who is executed. Soviet intervention

1980 - Babrak Karmal, leader of the People's Democratic Party Parcham faction, is installed as ruler, backed by **Soviet troops**. But anti-regime resistance intensifies with various mujahedin groups fighting **Soviet forces**. **US, Pakistan, China, Iran** and **Saudi Arabia** supply money and arms.

1985 - Mujahedin come together in Pakistan to form alliance against Soviet forces. Half of Afghan population now estimated to be displaced by war, with many fleeing to neighbouring **Iran** or **Pakistan**. New **Soviet leader** Mikhail Gorbachev says he will withdraw troops from Afghanistan.

1986 - **US** begins supplying mujahedin with Stinger missiles, enabling them to shoot down **Soviet helicopter gunships**. Babrak Karmal replaced by Najibullah as head of Soviet-backed regime.

1988 - **Afghanistan, USSR**, the **US** and **Pakistan** sign peace accords and **Soviet Union** begins pulling out troops.

1989 - Last **Soviet** troops leave, but civil war continues as mujahedin push to overthrow Najibullah.

1991 - **US** and **USSR** agree to end military aid to both sides. Mujahedin triumph

1992 - Resistance closes in on Kabul and Najibullah falls from power. Rival militias vie for influence.

1993 - Mujahideen factions agree on formation of a government with ethnic Tajik, Burhanuddin Rabbani, proclaimed president.

1994 - Factional contests continue and the Pashtun-dominated Taliban emerge as major challenge to the Rabbani government.

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1996 - Taliban seize control of Kabul and introduce hardline version of Islam, banning women from work, and introducing Islamic punishments, which include stoning to death and amputations. Rabbani flees to join anti-Taliban northern alliance. Taliban under pressure

1997 - Taliban recognized as legitimate rulers by **Pakistan** and **Saudi Arabia**. Most other countries continue to regard Rabbani as head of state. Taliban now control about two-thirds of country.

1998 - Earthquakes kill thousands of people. **US** launches missile strikes at suspected bases of militant Osama bin Laden, accused of bombing **US** embassies in **Africa**.

1999 - **UN** imposes an air embargo and financial sanctions to force Afghanistan to hand over Osama bin Laden for trial.

2001 -

January - **UN** imposes further sanctions on Taliban to force them to hand over Osama bin Laden.

March - Taliban blow up giant Buddha statues in defiance of international efforts to save them.

April - Mullah Mohammad Rabbani, the second most powerful Taliban leader after the supreme commander Mullah Mohammad Omar, dies of liver cancer.

May - Taliban order religious minorities to wear tags identifying themselves as non-Muslims, and Hindu women to veil themselves like other Afghan women.

September - Eight foreign aid workers on trial in the Supreme Court for promoting Christianity. This follows months of tension between Taliban and aid agencies.

September 9 - Ahmad Shah Masood, legendary guerrilla and leader of the main opposition to the Taliban, is killed, apparently by assassins posing as journalists.

October - **US, Britain** launch air strikes against Afghanistan after Taliban refuse to hand over Osama bin Laden, held responsible for the September 11 attacks on America.

November - Opposition forces seize Mazar-e Sharif and within days march into Kabul and other key cities. Taliban falls.

December 5 - Afghan groups agree deal in Bonn for interim government.

December 7 - Taliban finally give up last stronghold of Kandahar, but Mullah Omar remains at large.

December 22 - Pashtun royalist Hamid Karzai is sworn in as head of a 30-member interim power-sharing government.

2002 -

January - First contingent of foreign peacekeepers in place.

April - Former king Zahir Shah returns, but says he makes no claim to the throne.

May - **UN Security Council** extends mandate of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) until December 2002.

Allied forces continue their military campaign to find remnants of al-Qaeda and Taliban forces in the south-east.

June - Loya Jirga, or grand council, elects Hamid Karzai as interim head of state. Karzai picks members of his administration which is to serve until 2004.

July - Vice-President Haji Abdul Qadir is assassinated by gunmen in Kabul.

September - Karzai narrowly escapes an assassination attempt in Kandahar, his home town.

December - President Karzai and Pakistani, Turkmen leaders sign deal to build gas pipeline through Afghanistan, carrying Turkmen gas to Pakistan.

2003 -

August - **NATO** takes control of security in Kabul, its first-ever operational commitment outside Europe. New constitution

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2004 -

January - Grand assembly - or Loya Jirga - adopts new constitution which provides for strong presidency.

March - Afghanistan secures \$8.2bn (£4.5bn) in aid over three years.

September - Rocket fired at helicopter carrying President Karzai misses its target; it is the most serious attempt on his life since September 2002.

October-November - Presidential elections: Hamid Karzai is declared the winner, with 55% of the vote. He is sworn in, amid tight security, in December.

2005 -

February - Several hundred people are killed in the harshest winter weather in a decade.

May - Details emerge of alleged prisoner abuse by **US** forces at detention centres. New parliament

September - First parliamentary and provincial elections in more than 30 years.

December - New parliament holds its inaugural session.

2006 -

February - International donors meeting in London pledge more than \$10bn (£5.7bn) in reconstruction aid over five years.

May - Violent **anti-US** protests in Kabul, the worst since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, erupt after a **US military vehicle** crashes and kills several people.

May-June - Scores of people are killed in battles between Taliban fighters and Afghan and coalition forces in the south during an offensive known as Operation Mountain Thrust. NATO takes over

July onwards - **NATO** troops take over the leadership of military operations in the south. Fierce fighting ensues as the forces try to extend government control in areas where Taliban influence is strong.

October - **NATO** assumes responsibility for security across the whole of Afghanistan, taking command in the east from a **US-led coalition force**.

2007 -

March - **Pakistan** says it has arrested Mullah Obaidullah Akhund, the third most senior member of the Taliban's leadership council. **NATO** and Afghan forces launch Operation Achilles, said to be their largest offensive to date against the Taliban in the south. There is heavy fighting in Helmand province. Controversy over Italian deal with Taliban, which secures the release of five rebels in exchange for kidnapped reporter Daniele Mastrogiacomo. His Afghan driver and translator are beheaded.

May - Taliban's most senior military commander, Mullah Dadullah, is killed during **fighting with US**, Afghan forces. Afghan and **Pakistani** troops clash on the border in the worst violence in decades in a simmering border dispute.

July - Former King Zahir Shah dies in Kabul

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