

Mullah Abdul Ghani, Islamic Cleric

You are the local Taliban leader. You have been sent to the region to pave the way for the general return of the Taliban to power and to ensure that the locals do not slip into obedience to the infidel supported usurpers in Kabul. You have a small cadre of four committed and ideologically pure talibs. They are all armed with AKs and there are two RPGs with an assortment of warheads. If necessary you can draw on more men and heavier weapons from across the border, although it will take about three months to get them here.

Although you are not local you are of the Durrani branch of the Pashtun tribe, like many of the people around here. Your men are all from other districts but you are sure of their loyalty, and they are all Pashtun too.

Your land is a war-zone. You want this to end at the earliest possible time, ideally without any loss to your people. However peace will only come once the foreigners have gone home, and you need to make sure that you speed that up as much as possible. God is on your side though, and you can afford some of your men to become martyrs, provided that there is ultimately a Taliban victory.

Objectives (in order of importance)

- be pious and well respected in the community
- Be seen to enforce law and order (to Taliban values)
- Establish the Taliban as the leaders of the community
- Avoid unnecessary bloodshed of muslims

Piety	Honour	Family	Government	Lawful
5	4	2	1	1

Who are the Taliban?

The Taliban emerged in the early 1990s in northern Pakistan following the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. A predominantly Pashtun movement, the Taliban came to prominence in Afghanistan in the autumn of 1994.

The Taliban's promise - in Pashtun areas straddling Pakistan and Afghanistan - was to restore peace and security and enforce their own austere version of Sharia, or Islamic law, once in power. In both countries they introduced or supported Islamic punishments - such as public executions of convicted murderers and adulterers and amputations of those found guilty of theft.

Men were required to grow beards and women had to wear the all-covering burka. The Taliban showed a similar disdain for television, music and cinema and disapproved of girls aged 10 and over from going to school.

The Taliban in Afghanistan are still believed to be led by Mullah Omar, a village clergyman who lost his right eye fighting the occupying forces of the Soviet Union in the 1980s. Afghans, weary of the mujahideen's excesses and infighting after the Soviets were driven out, generally welcomed the Taliban when they first appeared on the scene.

Their early popularity was largely due to their success in stamping out corruption, curbing lawlessness and making the roads and the areas under their control safe for commerce to flourish.

Despite ever higher numbers of foreign troops, the Taliban have steadily extended their influence, rendering vast tracts of Afghanistan insecure, and violence in the country has returned to levels not seen since 2001. Their retreat earlier this decade enabled them to limit their human and material losses and return with a vengeance.