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[World In Discourse]

# A REPORT ON : INDO- AFGHANISTAN RELATION

*BY: LEGAL WIND*





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## Preface

"यदन्तरं तद् बाह्यं, यद् बाह्यं तदन्तरम्।"

"Let what is inward turn outside, let what is outward be within."

**Welcome to Legal WIND (World in Discourse).**

Expanding dimensions of excellence, a step towards the unseen future with the influence of elbow grease. Yes! It's us, determined, dedicated and directed.

Now, here we are at the horizon of a new journey. We are not trees yet, but we are seedlings and growing towards the sky without an end. Baby steps take time but lead to grown-up success.

**"Commitment, creativity and compromise", we are determined. No words for this 50+ membered family, who worked day and night, with best efforts.**

**We dream together, we work together. We sink together, we fly together.**

The moment I gave up, they did not. The moment they give up, I did not. This is the way we grew and we did. This bond is strong, trustworthy and unbreakable. I am not worried, I never fear because I know "It's us, not me".

What else to write?

Instead of the conflicting and painful situation in Afghanistan, they worked. It's because they wanted to, and they did it.

Moreover, everyone is just fighting, trying to survive with their issues, own fate and own goals. "Survival of the fittest" is so true, isn't it?

And we?? Yes, we too. But being "fittest" is not impossible.

Plan, prepare and proceed to perfection. It is possible with great action. The journey ahead is long but we will tread it step by step.

Nothing Much. Let's be positive, passionate and productive.

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**Show some love and support to us, we are with you and you are with us. I am grateful to my Team and Team leaders for their hard work and efforts to make this Report successful. I hope you will like it for sure. If any suggestions or recommendations, please let us know and we will be happy to make ourselves rectified. Your feedback is crucial to us.**

Till next time, see you and Take Care.

Stay Home, Stay Safe!

**Regards,**

**Aryakumari Sailendraja**

**Co-Founder and COO, Legal WIND (World in Discourse)**

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## **Editorial Opinion**

Despite the shift in the government of Afghanistan, India and Afghanistan's relationship remains of its previous importance. Changes in the government does not necessarily change the whole values both the governments had for the betterment of their own communities.

In fact, the relationships vary in categories from movie and arts to the government agreements Exchanged between them.

History has shown that it is the people who shape a significant amount of the tie among India and Afghanistan. In another words, the relationship have a long history that tightens the bonds between the two nations.

The combination of contributions of individuals made the relationship stronger which needs to be continued in the critical juncture of the 21st century both by Afghanistan and India. This will help continue the path built hundreds of years ago between the two nations. The report at hand, Shades light on the very important issue responding to the question "why the past and present relationships do matter" and explains what lessons can be learned to protect these bonds in future.

However, there might be challenges due to the new government in Afghanistan, but incentives need to be considered for the goodness of the relationships. It is the time to look at new opportunities raising from the changes happened after the month of August in which the Taliban took control over Afghanistan. This opens doors to new ways of relationships and cooperation, simultaneously, Thinking about the possible solutions will lead both countries to success their relations like trade or simple costumes.

**Regards,**

**Rosita Sekandari**

**Ferdaws Karimi**

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## **Introduction**

Contact between the peoples of modern-day India and Afghanistan has existed since the days of the Indus Valley Civilization. Therefore, India and Afghanistan have a long history of friendship and cultural affinity based on historical and cultural links. Bilateral relations have attained a new level of intensity and cooperation. For that reason, they agreed to promote the expansion of trade and ensure the harmonious development of economic relations by providing fair conditions of competition for trade and the removal of barriers to trade for the development and expansion of world trade. India, as a neighboring country to Afghanistan, is trying to continue its close and friendly relationship with Afghanistan and wants to remain in Afghanistan and help in different sectors like the economy, culture, education, sports, health, etc. Although, the current government of Taliban in Afghanistan has to make changes in its policy regarding the international accepted principles and values, to be recognized by the world's nations including India, we are optimistic about future relationship of these two countries.

This Report focuses and aims at assessing the structure of comparative advantage in Afghanistan and India's trade linkages, collaboration, cultural links, and future prospects. **India-Afghanistan ties and cultures (Chapter I), economical and commercial relationship of Afghanistan and India (Chapter II), and engagement in mutual organizations and agreements between two countries (Chapter III).** The change in the scene post 1950s, especially post 2000 after the withdrawal of the Taliban from Afghanistan will be also discussed.

## **Chapter I**

### **India and Afghanistan Ties and their Cultures**

**The link between India and Afghanistan needs to be studied in a historical and timing context (I), exploring the role of language and linguistics (II).**

#### **I. History of Afghanistan and Its Connection with India;**

*Aditya Malhotra*

In the mid-1960s a progression of revelations in Afghanistan put the attention on the nation; uncovering it as a secret stash of archaeological finds. The discoveries uncovered the significance of the nation, and transformed it into a fundamental part in the investigation of the recorded and social advancement of focal and south Asia, Iran, China, and India. Beginning from the pre-notable time the locale is currently focal in comprehension the social, strict, and political collaborations inside the whole previously mentioned topographical region.<sup>1</sup> This article will investigate the fascinating parts with regards to the set of experiences (pre-memorable, proto-notable, and noteworthy periods).

On this very long length relationship we will shed light on earlier century's link (A), British India- Afghanistan relationship (B) and India- Afghanistan relationship post 1947(C).

#### **A. Shading light on earlier centuries;**

**India- Afghanistan relationship in the earlier centuries should be studied under the umbrella of some specific time classifications. Pre-Historic Period (1), Proto-Historic Period (2), and Historical Period (3).**

##### **1. Pre-Historic Period**

In 1974, Louis Dupree and his group found different Lower and Middle Palaeolithic apparatuses from a site in the Ghazni area. The Lower Palaeolithic apparatuses involved rock instruments, choppers, hacking devices, hand tomahawks, and so on, and as indicated by the researchers the way of life

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<sup>1</sup> Monidipa Dey, THE DAILY GUARDIAN (2021).

showed wonderful likenesses with the Soanian culture of India (archaeological culture of the Lower Palaeolithic in the Sivalik Hills).

As V.C. Srivastava (1982) in his book "The Prehistoric Afghanistan" recommended, all things considered, there existed a typical social zone extending from southern Afghanistan to India during the Lower Palaeolithic period.<sup>2</sup> Likewise Middle Palaeolithic curios found at the Dasht-I Newur site again proposes closeness to the Indian social zone. In 1976 the Soviet unearthing group headed by A.V. Vinogradov unearthed numerous epi-Palaeolithic or Mesolithic destinations (Samangan and Turkestan) close to the sandy deserts, and the alluvium stores by the streams slipping from the Hindu Kush Mountains. Here once more, as Srivastava brought up, there were numerous normal social characteristics among the epi-Paleolithic or Mesolithic locales of Afghanistan (Dasht-I Newur and Turkestan destinations) and the Ganga valley locales in India (Mesolithic Lake societies).

## 2. Proto-Historic Period

Shortugai, arranged on the eastern bank of the waterway Amu or Oxus has been the main site in Afghanistan, which was exhumed in 1975 by a French archaeological group headed by H.P. Frankfort, where the remaining parts of four Bronze Age locales were found. The social periods found at Shortugai will be Shortugai I, II, III, and IV; and of these, the period I concurs with the Harappan time culture, while II and III match with the post or late Harappan culture (Jhukar region, as displayed in the guide).

The Shortugai I coordinates well with the Harappan culture, as obvious from the Harappan time earthenware found at the site. Moreover, huge finds of lapis lazuli and gold, alongside a Harappan seal with a rhinoceros and engraving engraved on it propose that the site would have been an exchanging province filling in as an exchange station. As Kenoyer (1998) tells us, "One more wellspring of gold was along the Oxus stream valley in northern Afghanistan where an exchanging state of the Indus urban communities has been found at Shortughai. Arranged a long way from the Indus Valley itself,

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<sup>2</sup> V.c Srivastava, Prehistoric Afghanistan (1982).

this settlement might have been set up to acquire gold, copper, tin and lapis lazuli, just as other extraordinary merchandise from Central Asia.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. Historical Period

The Tillya Tepe site in northern Afghanistan, which was prior viewed as a cultivating settlement from 1000 BCE to 500 CE, later uncovered Iron Age antiques in the 1969, 1971, and 1978 unearthing by the Soviet group. Notwithstanding, what is fascinating is the huge measure of gold found based on what is said to have been the cemetery for individuals living in the close by antiquated city of Emchi. The site yielded 15000 bits of gold relics, which included studs, crown, nose-rings, bangles, finger-rings, belts, plates, figures of gods, and so forth, all of which have a place with the Kushana time frame.

Ai-Khanum, another site, which was a metropolitan place with consistent home from fourth c. BCE to second c. CE, has yielded a coin of Agathocles (mid second c. BCE), which shows the commonness of Vasudeva Samkarsana love around them. Different destinations have uncovered Kushana time Shiva-Parvati iconographic presence. Buddhist stupas, alongside numerous different antiques, all of which can assist with making a decent investigation of the financial, strict, and political history of Afghanistan under the Kushanas, with a similar examination of the Indian situation under a similar tradition (one should note here that during old occasions the current geo-political limits didn't exist). While a few speculations hypothesize that after the Kushana time frame metropolitan culture appeared to have broken down in India, the confirmations from the Afghanistan exhumed locales anyway talk in any case and don't uphold this hypothesis.

A further gander at Afghanistan's recorded period shows different Kushana time coins that address both Hindu and Buddhist divinities. Truth be told the vast majority of the Kushana-Sasanian and Kidara-Kushana coins show Shiva with Nandi. The Chinese explorers have recorded in their books the presence of many 'deva' sanctuaries in Afghanistan, and one such excess deva-sthal is the Surya sanctuary in the Khairkhana pass of Kabul. The late Kushana and Hephthalite lords additionally showed love for Shiva and Nrshimha, while models showing unmistakable impacts of the Gupta time

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<sup>3</sup> Ancient Cities of the Indus Valley Civilization, OUP, p.96

frame, and the Kanauj school of Gupta customs of workmanship (seventh - eighth c. century) have been additionally been found.

The Kanauj school of Gupta forms probably entered Afghanistan through the incredible yet brief guideline of lord Lalityaditya of Kashmir, a realm which he had acquired from his archetypes. The Karkota line had effectively extended their realm by seventh c. CE, and under their lord Candrapida (Rai Ratbil of the Arab writers) the tradition governed whole Punjab, and had the Hindu Shahis of Afghanistan as their vassals. The Hindu presence proceeded in Afghanistan as late as ninth tenth hundreds of years when the Hindu Shahi line that began as lead representatives under the Kashmir lords yet later announced their autonomy, assumed responsibility for the Afghanistan Mountains as the decision family.

Radical belief systems and illegal intimidation spreading in this locale are a security danger for India Afghanistan has been seeing conflicts and rough conflicts in the post current time, beginning from the Cold War time frame to the new second time takeover by the Taliban fear based oppressors, which has left next to no expect further investigates into its pre-Islamic past. The renegade Taliban fear monger system is an open and clear danger to the Kabul historical centre, which stores a portion of the invaluable antiquities from old Afghanistan (like the wonderful head of Mahisauramardini). While by the late nineteenth century, Afghanistan had transformed into a focal point available to be purchased of its old ancient rarities (exchange relics) with purchasers basically from the US and Europe, and which came about in a large portion of its resources moving out of the nation; nonetheless, one can in any case trust that the excess antiquities in the exhibition hall don't confront similar destiny as the Bamiyan Buddha's.

### **B. British India - Afghanistan (pre-1919 - 1947);**

Relations between individuals of Afghanistan and India can be followed back to the Indus Valley Civilization. Following Alexander the Great's short occupation, the replacement condition of the Seleucid Empire controlled the district referred to now as Afghanistan. In 305 BCE, they surrendered a lot of it to the Indian Maurya Empire as a feature of a union settlement. The Maryann's brought Buddhism from India and controlled the region south of the Hindu Kush.

From the tenth century to the mid eighteenth century, northern India has been attacked by various intruders situated in what today is Afghanistan. Some of them were Ghaznavids, Khaljis, Mughals, and Durranis and so on during these times, numerous Afghanistan people started moving to India because of political agitation in their areas.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan of Afghanistan was a conspicuous head of the Indian autonomy development and dynamic ally of the Indian National Congress. Strategic interests If we pass by Mandal Sidhanth, Afghanistan is India's regular partner. India is keen on holding Afghanistan as an amicable state from which it has the ability to screen Pakistan and develop resources for impact exercises in Pakistan. While India is definitely keen on developing a critical organization with Afghanistan, Pakistan is attempting to deny India these very chances. India's advantage in Afghanistan is more than simple Pakistan-moderate and mirrors its goal to be and to be viewed as a local force. Islamic fundamentalism in Pakistan and Afghanistan has injurious impacts in the home-grown social texture of India, as Hindu fundamentalism in India is set off by these outside advancements. Afghanistan is additionally a focal point of 'incredible games'. In Medieval occasions it was among Persian and Mughal Empire. During pioneer times it was among Russia and Britain.

India-Afghanistan: Economic interests;

- Afghanistan has a mineral abundance of about \$1-3 trillion of Iron metal, Lithium, Chromium, Natural Gas, Petroleum and so on.
- Safeguarding Indian ventures and faculty in Afghanistan is most extreme imperative to India as Indian interest in Afghanistan adds up to about \$3bn. <sup>4</sup>

India-Afghanistan: Security interests;

- India confronted numerous security challenges from the Taliban in Afghanistan during the 1990s.
- Pakistan has raised and upheld a few assailant gatherings, for example, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen/Harkat-ul-Ansar, and Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami among others, which work in India.
- All of these gatherings have prepared in Afghanistan, with changing vicinity to the Taliban and likewise al-Qaeda.

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<sup>4</sup> Sethu Krishnan M, the Hindu (2019).

Thus, India is totally resolved that Afghanistan ought not again to become a fear-based oppressor place of refuge.

With Pakistan expanding its essential profundity in Afghanistan, it can switch the addition of India in Afghanistan brought through much expense. Pakistan can brood and move around different enemies of India bunches in Afghan particularly in Loya Pa.

The brilliant sickle including Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan is a concern for India, particularly as for the issue of substance addiction in Punjab. Islamic State is utilizing Afghanistan as a station in Asia as it goes under pressure in Iraq and Syria.

### **C. India - Afghanistan relationship - post 1947;**

India has tried to build up its essence in Afghanistan from the beginning of its autonomy in 1947.

- In 1950, Afghanistan and India signed a "Companionship Treaty."
- India had hearty binds with Afghanistan King Zahir Shah's system.
- Prior to the Soviet attack in 1979, New Delhi had formalized arrangements and conventions with different supportive of Soviet systems in Kabul.
- While India's job in Afghanistan was obliged during the counter Soviet jihad, somewhere in the range of 1979 and 1989, India extended its improvement exercises in Afghanistan, centring upon modern, water system, and hydroelectric ventures.
- After the Taliban solidified their hang on Afghanistan during the 1990s, India attempted to keep up with its quality and to help hostile to Taliban powers.
- However, Indian destinations in Afghanistan stayed humble given the obliged climate. India planned to sabotage the capacity of the Taliban to unite its control over Afghanistan, basically by supporting the Northern Alliance couple with other territorial entertainers.
- Working with Iran, Russia, and Tajikistan, India gave significant assets toward the Northern Alliance, the main significant test to the Taliban in Afghanistan.
- Since 2001, India has depended upon advancement projects and different types of helpful help.

There is a discussion among key part in Afghanistan on the ideal job for India in Afghanistan's remaking considering the suffering security rivalry among India and Pakistan. Expanding India's quality in Afghanistan through expanded Indian

preparing of Afghanistan regular citizen and military work force, advancement projects, and extended financial ties.

Caution against India's contribution exists. India and Afghanistan have a solid relationship dependent on chronicled and social connections. The relationship isn't restricted to the state run administrations in New Delhi and Kabul, however has its establishments in the authentic contacts and trades between individuals. In late past, India-Afghanistan relations have been additionally reinforced by the Strategic Partnership Agreement, which was endorsed between the two nations in October 2011. The Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) between the different sides, bury alia, accommodates help to assist with remaking Afghanistan's framework and establishments, instruction and specialized help to re-form native Afghan limit in various regions, empowering interest in Afghanistan's normal assets, giving obligation free admittance to the Indian market for Afghanistan's commodities support for an Afghanistan-drove, Afghanistan-claimed, expansive based and comprehensive course of harmony and compromise, and pushing the requirement for a maintained and long haul obligation to Afghanistan by the worldwide local area.

India-Afghanistan relationship is described by customary significant level trades. Our chiefs have met each other during reciprocal visits just as uninvolved of global occasions.<sup>5</sup> On 25<sup>th</sup> December 2016, Prime Minister alongside a general designation visited Afghanistan. During his visit he approached President Ashraf Ghani; he met Chief Executive, Dr Abdullah and Former President Hamid Karzai. During his visit he initiated the recently fabricated Afghan Parliament; declared 500 grants for the offspring of the saints of Afghanistan Security Forces and talented four Mi-25 Attack helicopters to the Afghanistan Air Force. During the visit, it was likewise settled to direct the second Strategic Partnership Council meeting headed by the Foreign Ministers of the two nations in the primary quarter of 2016 alongside four joint working gathering gatherings.

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<sup>5</sup> 2017, 2018 Government of India Ministry of External Affairs, Jan 01, 2017.



## II. Exploring the role of language and linguistics;

*Sailesh Khiuju*

India and Afghanistan have long prosperous relationships continuing since the ancient era to date. Their geographical location, trade and commerce, cultural similarities, and many other factors have helped to develop the Afghan-Indo relationship richly. They have many similarities from the cultural point of view too. Culture can be defined as “the way of living” in the broader sense, which also includes their beliefs, values, rituals, customs, way of speaking, movies and music, and so on. Afghanistan and India extraordinarily possess common things in the field of art, music, architecture, language, and cuisine.<sup>6</sup> This has indeed helped to maintain close relationship between Afghanistan and India.

This question might arise that music and movie, how it has nailed their relationship. Movies and music are the major sources of entertainment, and also a good source to become familiar with the culture, beliefs, and traditions of a distant land. Music and Movies can depict several things about the material and non-material social facts of a nation. Through those movies and music, a person from one country can understand a person from another nation. India and Afghanistan share movies and music with each other to a very larger extent.

India produces Bollywood movies and TV serials that are watched joyfully in Afghanistan. Those movies and TV shows have spread the Hindi Language in Afghanistan (which is, of course, the official language of India). Hindi TV Serials like “Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi”, “Kasauti Jindagi Ki”, “Kum Kum and Kahani Ghar Ghar Ki”, “Saare-ga-ma-pa”, “Pratigya”, “UT ran” have been dubbed in Dari language for the entertainment of Afghans.<sup>7</sup> Surprisingly, they have the highest viewership, both on the national as well as private TV Channels of Afghanistan, which is a very good indicator of familiarization of the Afghans with Indian cultural and societal system.

Many of the musicians of Afghanistan were trained in the Patalia Gharana of India in the old days. In the last few years, nations saw the exchanges of artists and music groups between India and Afghanistan. An "India-Afghanistan Culture Week"

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<sup>6</sup> India-Afghan Culture Relations, Embassy of India, (2013), available at <https://eoi.gov.in/kabul/?0363?000> accessed on 4 November 2021.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

was conducted in New Delhi in November 2017 in partnership with the India-Afghanistan Foundation (IAF) and the International Centre for Cultural Relations (ICCR).

Smt. Kumud Diwan's visit to Kabul in September 2017; 'Awayee Band-e-Amir' - a folk musical troupe from Bamiyan Province of Afghanistan (for the 5th International Folk Music and Dance Festival organized by ICCR) in New Delhi in December 2018; and a three-member Instrumental 'Sarod' group led by Shri Avijit Ghosh's visit to Kabul in October 2019 are just a few of the many visits.

Rabindra Nath Tagore had once written a story called, "Kabuliwala". It was the story of an Afghani man who lived in Kolkata. Over the past century, this interpretation has given shape to a romantic age of Afghans in Bengal and other parts of India. Afghans are welcomed generously in India even today from long time back. The Bollywood movies like Khuda Gawah, Kabul Express, and Torbaz were largely shot in Afghanistan.<sup>8</sup>

### **Do they understand each other's language?**

The Iranian branch of the Indo-Aryan language family includes the Persian language, which is also known as Farsi. Farsi is the official language of Iran, and Dari and Tajik, which are the two dialects of Persian, are the official languages of Afghanistan and Tajikistan, respectively.

The Persian language was a very powerful language in the medieval period. Persian language prevailed not only over Iran, Afghanistan but also in different parts of India. Interestingly, Well-known Indian Linguist, Prof. Indushekher wrote that nearly 35% of the Persian words can still be examined by Vedic and Classical Sanskrit words.<sup>9</sup> However, the Persian language came into formal contact with India, with the foundation of Ghaznavid's power in Punjab in the 11th century.<sup>10</sup> As a fact, Punjab was the first place on the Indian subcontinent to witness the emergence and flourishing of the high Persian literary tradition.

<sup>8</sup> Robin Roy, India and Afghanistan: From freedom struggle to literature to movies, the bond between the countries is centuries-old, 2021, available at <http://surl.li/aplmm> accessed on 4 November 2021.

<sup>9</sup> Farzaneh Azam Lotfi, Comparative study of common words of Sanskrit and Persian language, Journal of Foreign Language Research, (2020).

<sup>10</sup> Suleiman Tk, LITERATURE IN PERSIAN, SANSKRIT, AND REGIONAL LANGUAGES.

Many of Afghanistan's provinces' names are clearly Sanskrit in origin, hinting at the region's ancient past. For example, Balkh comes from the Sanskrit Bhalika, Nangarhar from Nagarahara, and the capital city Kabul itself, from Kubha.<sup>11</sup>

In history, Delhi had come into the influence of the Persian language extensively. The sultans of Delhi accepted the Persian language from the 11th century to the 14th century. Muzaffar Alam explains the spread and extraordinary rise of Persian during the Mughal Empire in his article "The Pursuit of Persian: Language in Mughal Politics". Mughal King Akbar had declared the Persian language as the language of the government at all levels for the first time among the Indo-Islamic kings of north India.

Also, Akbar created a good relationship with Iran, and gradually, many Persian writers and poets had come to India after the declaration of the Persian language as an official language. The Persian language came into widespread use in the court and the palace of the Mughal Emperor. Interestingly even after the collapse of the Mughal Empire Persian language continued to retain its glory in India.

The city of Lahore became the first centre for the flourish of Persian. Although the works of only a few of these early Persian writers in India have survived, we can see a sense of strong devotion and attachment for Lahore in the writings of some of them, such as Masood sad Salman. Amir khusra u, the most famous Persian writer of the age, who was born in 1252 in Patiali, Uttar Pradesh, and took pride in being an Indian. He was a prolific poet who published a variety of works, including historical romances. He developed a new Persian style known as Sabaq-i-Hindi, or Indian style. Khusrau has appreciated Hindi and other Indian languages (which he calls Hindavi).

Most importantly, Zia nakashabi converted Sanskrit stories to Persian for the first time in history. He translated the Koka shastra, an ancient Indian treatise on sexology, into Persian. Sanskrit medical and musical texts were translated into Persian during the reign of Firuz Shah. The famous historical work Rajatarangini and the Mahabharata were both translated into Persian by Sultan Zain-ul-abidin of Kashmir. Therefore, there were lots of interconnections between Persian and Sanskrit languages that helped to build the relationship between two giant nations in the future.

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<sup>11</sup> Syama Allard, Hinduism beyond India: Afghanistan, (2021), available at <http://surl.li/apmen> accessed on 07 November (2021).

Religion can be a shared story too. Today, the total population of Afghanistan is near 38 million. The majority of Afghan follows Islam as their major religion. However, during the war, Afghanistan was conquered by several groups and tribes turn by turn in history. This created follow of several religions like Hinduism, Buddhism by Afghans throughout the parts of Afghanistan. During the rule of Great Emperor Ashoka, the grandson of Chandra Gupta Maurya in Gandharva (which included present Afghanistan and Pakistan) in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE, Buddhism became the dominant religion in Afghanistan.

Soon after the mid-third century CE, with the conquest of the Gupta Emperor in Afghanistan, Vaishnavism, the branch of Hinduism came into wider practice in Afghanistan. Buddhism and Hinduism are the major religion of India.

Interestingly, India was itself a great follower of Islamic religion during the rule of the Maghad Emperor in the medieval era. Common religions between Afghanistan and India are a very powerful story to interconnect people from two different nations.

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## **Chapter II**

### **Economical and commercial relationship of Afghanistan and India**

*Ferdaws Karimi & Nishu K.C.*

**India has a significant volume of investment in Afghanistan and has been building a flourishing trade relationship with Afghanistan not only in the recent decades, but from a remote past. Firstly. We want to put a light on history of trade and commerce in these two countries (I) and then, we will elaborate on the bilateral relationship of India and Afghanistan in the different periods of time (II).**

#### **I. Economic and commercial relations;**

##### **A. History of trade and commerce;**

Afghanistan is governmentally divided among 34 provinces, and these provinces are more commonly recognized as administrative divisions. Kabul is the largest and most populated city in Afghanistan with a population of nearly five million people.<sup>12</sup> Kabul is a central city of economic importance to Afghanistan, and the city's origins date back more than 4,000 years. The city is tactically located between the Asmai and Sherdawaza mountain ranges of Hindu Kush and also strategically positioned alongside the Kabul River. For as long as there have been war in Afghanistan, civilizations have fought to gain control of Kabul because of its strategic location along the trade routes to Central Asia.<sup>13</sup>

From an economic perspective, Afghanistan is considered one of the poor and least developed countries in the world and, Categorized as a Third World Country. Since Afghanistan is a landlocked country and thereby does not have direct access to seaports, the country must rely on economic partnerships with such countries as Pakistan, the United States, and India for imports and exports.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.world-gazetteer.com>

The 2005 Revision, <http://esa.un.org/unup>.

<sup>13</sup> Meredith L. Runion, THE HISTORY OF AFGHANISTAN Greenwood histories of the modern nations, ISSN 1096-2905, ISBN-13: 978-0-313-33798-7, ISSN: 1096-2905, P. 9, and 2007.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.un.org/special-rep/ohrlls/ldc/list.htm>.

India is a country which is located in south Asia. It is the 7<sup>th</sup> largest country by area that is 3-287-590 sq.km, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> most populous country that is almost about 1-300-000-000, and the most populous democracy in the world. India is bounded by the Indian ocean in the south, the Arabian sea on the south-west, and the bay of Bengal on the south-east, it shares land borders with Pakistan to the west; china, Nepal, and Bhutan to the north-east; and Burma (Myanmar) and Bangladesh to the east. In the Indian Ocean, India is in the vicinity of Sri Lanka and the Maldives; in addition, India's Andaman and Nicobar islands share a maritime border with Thailand and Indonesia. India has the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest GDP after USA among the world that is 7375.9MM\$.

Contact between the people of modern-day India and Afghanistan has existed since the days of the Indus Valley Civilisation. One of Alexander the Great's Diadochi (Greek for successors), Seleucus Nicator, controlled most of Afghanistan before ceding much of it to the Mauryan Empire in 305 BC as part of an alliance treaty.

The northern regions of India were invaded at 10th century to the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century by a number of invaders based in what today is Afghanistan. Among them were the Ghaznavids, Ghurids, Khaljis, Suris, Mughals and Durranis. During these eras, especially during the Mughal period (1526–1858), many Afghans began immigrating to India due to political unrest in their regions.

India was the only South Asian country to recognize the Soviet-backed Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in the 1980s, though relations were diminished during the 1990s Afghan civil war and the Taliban government. India aided the overthrow of the Taliban and became the largest regional provider of humanitarian and reconstruction aid to the present day Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Indians are working in various construction projects, as part of India's rebuilding efforts in Afghanistan.

During Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, India provided intelligence and logistic support for the Allied forces. After the fall of the Taliban, India established diplomatic relations with the newly established civilian government and participated in relief and reconstruction efforts. India has provided about \$650–750 million worth of humanitarian and economic aid, making it the largest regional provider of aid for Afghanistan. India's support and collaboration

extends to rebuilding of air links, power plants and investing in health and education sectors as well as helping to train Afghan civil servants, diplomats and police.

In 2005, India proposed Afghanistan's membership in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Three memorandums of understanding were signed (MOUs) between the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and Afghan National Standardisation Authority for strengthening cooperation in the fields of rural development, education and standardisation. During Hamid Karzai's visit to India in April 2006, an agreement providing \$50 million to promote bilateral businesses between Afghanistan and India was signed during the visit of the Afghan Foreign Minister Dr. Spanta 'between' 29 June – 1 July 2006. During the same year, India raised its aid package to Afghanistan by \$150 million, to \$750 million. In 2007, Afghanistan finally became the eighth member of SAARC.

In December 2015, India donated three Mi-25 attack helicopters, with the option to send more in the future to Afghanistan as part of the bilateral strategic partnership to counter the Taliban insurgency. Indian PM Narendra Modi visited Kabul on December 25 to open the newly constructed Afghan parliament which had been built by India for \$90 million.

India seeks to expand its economic presence in Afghanistan as the international coalition fighting the Taliban have begun their withdrawal process. Especially, it wants to improve transport connectivity and economic collaboration with countries in Central and South Asia. India has already invested \$10.8 billion in Afghanistan as of 2012. More such projects are likely to come once NATO withdraws completely from Afghanistan. This includes setting up Iron ore mines, a 6 MTPA steel plant (by SAIL—Steel Authority of India Limited), an 800 MW power plant, Hydro-electric power projects, transmission lines and roads.

India helped in the reconstruction of Salma Dam in the Herat province. Besides producing 42 MW power, this Indo-Afghan friendship dam provides irrigation for 75,000 hectares of farmland in the Chisti Sharif district. Salma Dam, officially the Afghan-India Friendship Dam, is a hydroelectric and irrigation dam project located on the Hari River in Chishti Sharif District of Herat Province in western Afghanistan. The Afghan cabinet renamed the Salma Dam to the Afghan India Friendship Dam in a move to strengthen relations between the two countries. The hydroelectric plant produces 42 MW of power in addition to providing irrigation

for 75,000 hectares of farmland (stabilising the existing irrigation of 35,000 hectares and development of irrigation facilities to an additional 40,000 hectares of land).

In conclusion, India's relationship with Afghanistan is multi-layered; there is clearly a military and security angle, under which India aspires for stability within Afghanistan and hanging over which is the shadow of its relationship with Pakistan. While growing, the military relationship with Afghanistan remains relatively low-key, though it has the potential to be significantly ramped up dependent both upon developments in Afghanistan and on the actions taken by Pakistan. More positively, there is a social and economic engagement, including investment by Indian firms and development projects undertaken by the Indian government. And finally there are softer cultural links. Thousands of Afghan students study in India, and Afghanistan is the largest recipient of scholarships provided by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

## **B. Bilateral trade and commerce: post 1947, trends and patterns;**

India and Afghanistan have a strong relationship based on historical and cultural links. The relationship is not limited to the governments in New Delhi and Kabul, but has its foundations in the historical contacts and exchanges between the people. India-Afghanistan relationship is characterized by regular high-level exchanges. The leaders have met each other during bilateral visits as well as on the side-lines of international events.

For this purpose, this report will have a review of the bilateral relationship between the two countries from post 1947, in two categories; relationship between 1950-2000 years, relationship after the year 2000.

### **1. Bilateral relationship of Afghanistan and India between the years 1950-2000;**

India and Afghanistan have long history of friendship and cultural affinity. Bilateral relations have attained a new level of intensity and cooperation. Therefore, they agreed to promote the expansion of trade and harmonious development of the economic relations, to provide fair conditions of competition for trade and removal of barriers to trade, for development and expansion of world trade. The agreements which have taken between Afghanistan and India are as follows:

#### **a. Treaty of friendship 1950;**



Treaty of friendship between India and Afghanistan which was signed on January 1950 at New Delhi. The instruments of ratification in respect of the Treaty of Friendship between India and Afghanistan, were exchanged at New Delhi in Sep 30, 1950, and the Treaty came into force from that date.<sup>15</sup>

**b. Wireless telegraph agreement 1950;**

A direct wireless telegraph agreement between India and Afghanistan was signed at Kabul in Dec 14, 1949, and the service was inaugurated at Bombay in 12<sup>th</sup> January, 1950.<sup>16</sup>

**c. Treaty of Trade and Commerce April, 1950;**

A Treaty of Trade and Commerce was signed at Kabul on the 4th April, 1950, and ratified in New Delhi on 24th January 1952. The Treaty came into force 24<sup>th</sup> March, 1952.<sup>17</sup>

**d. Air Agreement January, 1952;**

An Air Agreement between India and Afghanistan was signed at Kabul on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1952.<sup>18</sup>

**e. Centre for the fumigations of grapes 1954;**

With a view to promoting the fruit trade between India and Afghanistan, a centre for the fumigations of grapes was opened in Amritsar in 1954. The Government of India provided facilities for the training of two Afghan nationals in fumigation work. A fumigation plant presented by the Government of India to the Government of Afghanistan to set up Afghans fumigation.<sup>19</sup>

**f. Fresh Trade Agreement 1959;**

Moreover, a fresh Trade Agreement was signed with Afghanistan on 11 August 1959 which provided for steps to increase Indo-Afghan trade.<sup>20</sup>

**g. Radio Tele-Communication Agreement 1958;**

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<sup>15</sup> 1949-1950, Government of India Ministry of External Affairs, P. 4-5, Jan 01, 1949.

<sup>16</sup> 1950-1951, Ibid, P. 3, Jan 01, 1950.

<sup>17</sup> 1952-1953, Ibid, P. 5-10, Jan 01, 1952.

<sup>18</sup> 1951-1952, Ibid, P. 5-10, Jan 01, 1951.

<sup>19</sup> 1954-1955, Ibid, P. 14, Jan 01, 1954.

<sup>20</sup> 1958-1959, Ibid, P. 14-15, Jan 01, 1958.

In like manner, A Radio Tele-communication Agreement was signed between the Governments of India and Afghanistan at Kabul on 12 May 1958.<sup>21</sup>

**h. Trade agreement 1960;**

In addition, An Indian Trade Delegation led by Shri K. R. F. Khilnani, joint Secretary in the Ministry of Commerce & Industry visited Afghanistan in September-October 1960 and concluded a trade agreement with the Government of Afghanistan.<sup>22</sup>

**i. Cultural agreement 1963;**

To strengthen the existing friendly relations and promote further understanding and closer co-operation between the Governments, and people of India and Afghanistan, a cultural agreement was signed by Shri Humayun Kabir, Minister of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs, on 4 October 1963. Instruments of Ratification of the Indo Afghan Cultural Agreement were exchanged in Feb 18, 1965 to Feb 20, 1965 in New Delhi.<sup>23</sup>

**j. Trade Arrangement 1972;**

A delegation from Afghanistan led by H.E. Mr. M. Aref Ghaussi, Minister of Commerce, Royal Afghan Government, and a delegation from India led by Shri L. N. Mishra, Minister of Foreign Trade, Government of India, held trade talks in New Delhi from 18 to 20 February 1972. As a result of talks, a Trade Arrangement was signed in 20 February, 1972, which came into force 1 March 1972.<sup>24</sup>

**k. Agreement in the field of archaeology collaboration October 1973;**

The Ambassador of India and Minister for Information and Culture of the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan signed an agreement in the field of archaeology collaboration on October 1973. India will carry out excavation and exploration in Bagram and the Afghan Sistan area and also train Afghanistan students and scholars in archaeology. The Minister hoped that the traditional friendship between India and Afghanistan would

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> 1960-1961, Ibid, P. 16-17, Jan 01, 1960.

<sup>23</sup> 1965-1966, Ibid, P. 35-36-37, Jan 01, 1965.

<sup>24</sup> 1971-1972, Ibid, P. 6, Jan 01, 1971.

grow stronger with the signing of this agreement. Ambassador K. L. Mehta reciprocated the very warm sentiments expressed by the Minister. He said that it was significant that the first ever agreement signed between the new Government of Afghanistan and India should have been in the field of culture and added that it would always be India's endeavour to widen the scope of co-operation between the two countries.<sup>25</sup>

**l. Trade talks conclusion May 28, 1977;**

Likewise, Trade talks between India and Afghanistan concluded in New Delhi on May 28, 1977. The Indian delegation to talks was led by Shri A. N. Verma, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and the Afghan delegation by Mr G. H. Bayat, President, Foreign Trade, and Ministry of Commerce. India's trade with Afghanistan is unique in that it is based on a modified system of barter. Successive trade arrangements between the two countries have provided for a system of counterbalancing trade where imports of fresh fruits, dry fruits, asafoetida, etc. from Afghanistan have to be counter-balanced by export made to that country. India's exports to Afghanistan include tea, coffee, sugar and other non-traditional goods.<sup>26</sup>

**m. Establishing close links between the banks of two countries 1984;**

A banking delegation led by Mr Khalil Siddiq, Deputy Governor, Da Afghanistan Bank of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan visited India in January, 1984 at the invitation of the Ministry of Finance (Banking Division), Government of India. They held discussions with the Indian delegation led by Shri A. Ghosh, Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of India. The delegations undertook a comprehensive review of banking relations between the two countries and agreed to establish closer links between the banks of the two countries in order to promote a closer and higher level of commercial exchanges between India and Afghanistan.<sup>27</sup>

**n. Strengthening International telecommunication links and services between India and Afghanistan 1991;**

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<sup>25</sup> 1973-1974, Ibid, P. 333, Jan 01, 1973.

<sup>26</sup> 1977-1978, Ibid, P. 76, Jan 01, 1977.

<sup>27</sup> 1984-1985, Ibid, P. 1, Jan 01, 1984.

International telecommunication links and services between India and Afghanistan have been strengthened with the direct telegraph and telex circuits via satellite having become operational since 15 March, 1991. Two direct telex circuits have been commissioned by the Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd. providing automatic access for Indian subscribers. The Nigam has also commissioned the equipment (SDX) it had supplied free of charge to Afghanistan Telecom which has enabled transfer of the public telegram circuit from the HF radio systems between Delhi and Kabul to the satellite link available on 24 hours a day basis. This follows the initiative taken in the wake of the visit of the Commerce Minister, Dr. Subramanian Swamy, to Afghanistan earlier this year when it was agreed that telecommunication links between India and Afghanistan would be improved to support the developing trade and commercial relations between the two countries.<sup>28</sup>

In particular, The resolution No. 1267, which passed by Security Council on 15.10.99 on the situation Afghanistan, that calls upon all States to deny permission to any Taliban owned or leased aircraft to take off from or land in their territory and also freeze funds and other financial resources of the Taliban.<sup>29</sup> India played an active role in the formulation of the resolution, which was the first time that elements of sanctions are included in a Security Council resolution.

Although contact has always existed between the populations of Afghanistan since the days of the Indus Valley Civilisations, diplomatic relations between the two nations were officially developed post the 1950's. The study aimed at assessing the structure of comparative advantage in Afghanistan and India and the change in the scene over a period from 1950-2000. Afghanistan and India has a good trade relationship since past centuries, this relation has become stronger when Afghanistan join SAARC and other trade agreements which this report is going to describe the most important ones in the next topic.

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<sup>28</sup> 1991-1992, Ibid, P. 49, Jan 01, 1991.

<sup>29</sup> S.C. Res. 1267, (15.10.99).

## 2. Bilateral relationship of Afghanistan and India after the year 2000;

India and Afghanistan's bilateral engagements fall into three broad areas; Economic, political and security area.<sup>30</sup> In the economic sphere, India's pledge of \$2 billion makes it Afghanistan's largest regional donor and Afghanistan the second largest recipient of Indian aid.<sup>31</sup> Over the years, India has made significant investments in Afghanistan's infrastructure and reconstruction projects, and has provided generous humanitarian assistance, that this report will name some important ones in the following,<sup>32</sup>

In the first place, A Preferential Trade Agreement between Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan and Republic of India was signed on 6.3.2003, and was operationalized with issuance of Customs Notification No 76/2003 dated 13.5.2003.<sup>33</sup>

In addition, Meeting of President Karzai with Prime Minister of India in New York on the side-lines of UN General Assembly, underlined India's commitment to further strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries, and also reiterated India's support for the economic reconstruction effort in Afghanistan. India's commitments add up to US \$ 550 million over the period 2002-10. Some of the major commitments made by India in Afghanistan in 2004 and 2005 are included;<sup>34</sup>

- Funding and execution of the construction of 220KV double circuit transmission line from pul-e-Khumri to Kabul and a 220/110/20kv substation at Kabul, at an estimated cost of us \$ 111 million, to bring power from Uzbekistan to Kabul.
- Construction of Afghanistan's new parliament building by the central public works department at an estimated expenditure of US \$ 67 million.

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<sup>30</sup> Sumit Ganguly, INDIA'S ROLE IN AFGHANISTAN, January 2012.

<sup>31</sup> [http://www.orfonline.org/wpcontent/uploads/2016/03/GP-ORF\\_Indias-Neighbourhood1.pdf](http://www.orfonline.org/wpcontent/uploads/2016/03/GP-ORF_Indias-Neighbourhood1.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> Observer research foundation, the way ahead for India Afghanistan relations, Issue no. 153, July 2016.

<sup>33</sup> Preferential Trade Agreement between the Republic of India and the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan, May, 2003. [http://commerce.gov.in/trade/international\\_ta\\_indafg.asp](http://commerce.gov.in/trade/international_ta_indafg.asp).

<sup>34</sup> 2005-2006, Government of India Ministry of External Affairs, P. 1-2, Jan 01, 2005.

- Institution of 500 scholarships for afghan students for university education in India, and 500 scholarships for short term training program for afghan trainees from 2006 onward.
- Reconstruction of ZARANJ-DELARAM road in Afghanistan with cost of US \$ 84 million.
- Reconstruction and completion of Salma dam power project in Herat province in Afghanistan at cost of US \$ 77 million by water and power consultancy service India ltd.
- Reconstruction of basic telecommunication network in 11 provincial capitals.
- Supply of 300 vehicles to the afghan national army.

Furthermore, President Karzai visited India again in November 2006, and inaugurated the Second Regional Economic Cooperation Conference (RECC) at Vigyan Bhawan at New Delhi.<sup>35</sup>

Notably, India's bilateral commitment to rebuilding and reconstruction of Afghanistan is US\$ 750 million. Several thousand Indians are engaged in development work in Afghanistan. Funds have been committed to projects spread over a whole range of sectors ranging from education, health, power, telecommunications, and infrastructure to institutional capacity building, and food assistance.

In recent past, India-Afghanistan relations have been further strengthened by the Strategic Partnership Agreement, which was signed between the two countries in October 2011. The Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) between the two sides, inter alia, provides for assistance to help rebuild Afghanistan's infrastructure and institutions, education and technical assistance to re-build indigenous Afghan capacity in different areas, such as natural resources, Indian market for Afghanistan's exports support for an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned, broad-based and inclusive process of peace and reconciliation, and advocating the need for a sustained and long-term commitment to Afghanistan by the international community.

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<sup>35</sup> 2006-2007, Ibid, P. 1-2, Jan 01, 2006.

In other words, India-Afghanistan relationship is characterized by regular high-level exchanges. Leaders of both countries have met each other during bilateral visits as well as on the side-lines of international events. On 25<sup>th</sup> December 2016, Prime Minister of India along with a high level delegation paid a visit to Afghanistan. During his visit he inaugurated the newly built Afghan Parliament; announced 500 scholarships for the children of the martyrs of Afghan Security Forces and gifted four Mi-25 Attack helicopters to the Afghan Air Force. During the visit, it was also decided to conduct the second Strategic Partnership Council meeting headed by the Foreign Ministers of the both countries in the first quarter of 2016 along with four joint working group meetings.

Moreover, on 4 June 2016, Prime Minister of India visited Herat in western Afghanistan and he along with President Ghani jointly inaugurated the Afghan-India Friendship Dam, earlier known as Salma Dam. The completion of the dam project represents culmination of years of hard work by about 1,500 Indian and Afghan engineers and other professionals in very difficult conditions. It also highlights India's continued commitment to Afghanistan's reconstruction and development.

In the same way, President Ghani paid a working visit to India in September 2016. The visit provided an opportunity to continue the close and frequent consultations between the two friendly neighbours. During the visit, Extradition Treaty, the Agreement on cooperation in civil and commercial matters and the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Peaceful Uses of Outer Space were signed. It was also stressed that expeditious implementation of the trilateral agreement involving Iran, signed in May 2016, which would use Chahbahar port to augment connectivity in the region.<sup>36</sup>

By all means, making use of the fresh US\$ 1Billion announced by Prime Minister, India and Afghanistan launched a New Development Partnership. Government of India worked with the Government of

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<sup>36</sup> 2016-2017, Ibid, P. 4-5, Jan 01, 2016.

Afghanistan to identify priorities and projects where Afghanistan needed the Indian assistance to be directed. India agreed to implement some important new projects such as the Shah toot Dam and some other important projects.

In addition, India will also take up 116 High Impact Community Development Projects in 31 provinces of Afghanistan. These important investments will be in the areas of education, health, agriculture, irrigation, drinking water, renewable energy, flood control, micro-hydro power, sports and administrative infrastructure.<sup>37</sup> India also announced that on-going programmes will continue for a further period of five years from 2017 to 2022.

In conclusion, the study aimed at assessing the structure of comparative advantage in Afghanistan and India and the change in the scene since 2000. Notwithstanding that, Afghanistan and India has a good trade relationship since past centuries, this relation has become stronger when Afghanistan join SAARC. It is obvious that Afghanistan accelerates its exports and trade relations and meets better opportunities after joining SAARC.<sup>38</sup>

Afghanistan exports in total 9 products to India, from which Afghanistan has comparative advantage only in one commodity with product code (29) namely tanning, dyeing extracts, tannins, derives, pigments. Moreover, India exports 57 products to Afghanistan from which India has good competitive advantage in three product categories namely Medicinal and pharmaceutical products (68), Non-ferrous metals and two other products with codes of (65), Textile yarn, fabrics, and made-up articles (84). It is quite clear that India gain more advantage in exporting these products to Afghanistan.

The paper has also evaluated the trade intensity index for both countries to examine their intensity in trade. Both the economies are having intense level of trade latency with each other. The trade

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<sup>37</sup> Shashank Joshi, "let India help Afghanistan" *The Guardian*, December 25, 2009.

<sup>38</sup> Wani, Dr. Nassir Ul Haq, Trade compatibility between Afghanistan and India: An empirical evaluation, 31 January 2018.



intensity of India is better than Afghanistan, as India rules the export market. The export health of the Afghanistan is not that good, even it is worse. Afghanistan exports only 9 products to India. It gives a policy implication that Afghanistan needs to take the advantage of the geographical location to expand and diversify its export base and India should effort to capture Afghan market and replace the countries with whom Afghanistan import from like Pakistan, China, Iran etc.

LEGAL WIND

### **Chapter III**

#### **Engagement in mutual organizations and agreements between two countries**

The agreements these two countries have signed (I) and engagement in regional organizations and institutions of global governance (II) are important political issues this chapter will cover. As it is the last chapter we have included the opportunities and challenges (III) section as well as policy recommendations (IV) to ensure usefulness and beneficiary of the present paper.

#### **I. Agreements between the two countries and the relationship different governments shared with each other;**

*Shriya Subhadra*

This research aims to list out the agreements made by the Government of India and the Government of Afghanistan in the span of year's post-independence of India and the Treaty of Friendship signed on 4<sup>th</sup> January 1950. The prime objective of the article is to cover the agreements and memorandum of understanding between the two nations. India and Afghanistan have always maintained cordial relations which have been culminated in the form of these agreements. Indians and Afghans have made many strategic partnerships of great importance which have benefited the interests of both. There has been extensive amount of exchange in terms of politics, administration, culture, education and stand on international concerns. India and Afghanistan's friendship has been tested through times because of the interference of the Taliban regime, primary reason being rejection of Taliban regime by India. India has been active supporter and partner in the developmental activities of Afghanistan. The Agreements were made in Hindi, Dari and English. In case of any ambiguity, English text shall be considered.

#### **1. Visa Exemption for diplomatic Passport holders;**

It is the latest agreement furthering Indo-Afghanistan relations on a new level, it was signed on 1st February 2016 following the visit of Afghanistan's' Chief Executive Abdullah to Prime Minister Modi. The key objective of the pact is travel of

diplomats of two countries sans visa. It intensified the mutual trust and friendship of the both countries which they have shared over the years.

The agreement was according to the obligations set out by the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 18th April 1961 and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 24th April 1963. The diplomats are obligated to carry necessary documents like specimens of passports.<sup>39</sup>

## **2. Text of Agreement on Strategic partnership between the Republic of Afghanistan and India-October 2011;**

The Agreement was signed on 4th October 2011. The agreement was an acknowledgement of the friendly relations, bilateral ties, genuine help and support that India has provided Afghanistan over the decades. The affirmations were mutual.

### **a. Visa Exemption for Diplomatic Passport Holders, 2016**

Commitment to develop in the fields of politics, economy, science, technology, culture and trade. The significance of Treaty of Friendship between India and Afghanistan (Signed in 4th January 1950) was underlined followed by agreements and statements made thereafter.

The basic principles of the agreement are based on the long-standing trust between the both countries. It aims to elevate their friendship in the international platform. The fundamental ideology of the agreement is based on principles of sovereignty, equality and territorial integrity of States, no interference policy in internal affairs, mutual respect and benefit. The partnership between both the countries is not directed against any other nation or group of nations.

This agreement is of great importance because of its fundamental nature as it is comprehensive account of all the cooperation both the nations ever had;

- Inclusion of India as a permanent member in the UN Security Council.
- Outlining a framework to create foundation of Strategic Dialogue for national security, targeting terrorism, organized crime, trafficking, and money crimes and so on.

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<sup>39</sup> Visa Exemption for Diplomatic Passport Holders, (2016).

- India will assist in training Afghan National Security Forces.
- Liberalize customs and non-tariffs and tariff barriers
- Creation of Air-cargo for enhancing commercial exchanges.
- Create conducive environment credit and insurance, banking and finance.
- Make Afghanistan a transport, trade and energy centre to enable linkage between Central and South Asia
- Build up cooperation on the SAARC front of which both are members.
- In order to stabilize Afghanistan, India will continue its help in health, mining and agricultural sectors. India will also be supporting in expansion of Small Development Projects (SDPs) for development in backward areas.
- India has offered its administrative, political and economic setup as case study for Afghanistan so to get reality checks and cater its developmental needs. There is availability of technical programs which suits the need of Afghanistan state.
- India will continue its venture in providing scholarship programs to promote higher education in Afghanistan.
- Steps are made to boost people to people relations like exchanges between parliament, media, women, youth, sports, academic, cultural and religious dignitaries and groups.
- Both share similar views on media. Both believe that independent and free media is essential.
- Resolve legal disputes involving citizen of one country in another by mutual help in criminal and civil cases.<sup>40</sup>

### **3. Cooperation in the field of textiles, clothing, investment, compliance and skill development- January 2015;**

On 7th January 2015 India and Afghanistan signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a robust foundation for trade and business in textile, clothing and hand-loom sector.

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<sup>40</sup> Agreement on Strategic Partnership between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Republic of India, (2016).

The MoU is a sign of agreement to nurture close economic ties and bilateral coordination in textile, clothing, cotton, man-made fiber and handloom sphere. India unequivocally consented to provide quality assistance to Afghan Clothing Industry in skill-set enhancement, research in technical arenas like testing, organization, manufacturing and certification. There will be elaborate organization of joint trade ventures as well. India believes that Afghanistan has great future prospects awaiting it since it is house to fine quality of silk, cashmere and cotton. The textile industry of Afghanistan can also provide employment opportunities.<sup>41</sup>

#### **4. Mutual Cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute of Ministry of External Affairs of India and The Institute of Diplomacy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan February 2016;**

Both the institutes of the respective countries share the same goal that is to foster friendly relations, and signed a MoU on 1st September 2004. The main objective of this cooperation is to expand research and development by academic exchange.

Both will encourage academic activities like joint seminars, exchange of students, professors and experts. There will be also sharing of publications and academic papers based on subject of importance and also research on subject of common interest.<sup>42</sup>

- Agreement on Strategic Partnership between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Republic of India, 2016
- Cooperation in the field of Textiles, Clothing, Investment, Compliance and Skill Development, 2015
- MoU on Mutual Cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute of MEA and The Institute of Diplomacy of the MoFA of Afghanistan, 2004

#### **5. Cooperation in the field of civil aviation;**

This MoU can be seen as a facilitation of technical alliance between India and Afghanistan with special reference to civil aviation and air traffic services.

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<sup>41</sup> Cooperation in the field of Textiles, Clothing, Investment, Compliance and Skill Development, (2015)

<sup>42</sup> MoU on Mutual Cooperation between the Foreign Service Institute of MEA and The Institute of Diplomacy of the MoFA of Afghanistan, (2004).

The agreement signed on 24th February 2005, elucidates the enormous assistance India will be granting to Afghan government in terms of training and expertise for Airport Management, Air traffic control, Air Navigational Aids, Pilot and Cabin Crew. India will be lending its knowledge and expert knowledge resource to Afghan's expert manpower trainees deputed by the Government.<sup>43</sup>

#### **6. Cooperation in the field of Media and Information;**

The purpose of the MoU is to highlight the purpose of media in the relation between the two countries, how it uplifts the dynamics between both countries, how the information is disseminated about each other promoting greater interaction and understanding. The agreement was finalized and signed on 24th February 2005.

Both the countries have agreed to allow free flow of information, newspapers, periodicals, books and publications, encourage teamwork between news agencies of both the countries. Regular seminars and discussions will be held comprising editors and journalist. There will facilities for training of Afghan media personals in India.

India will also be reviewing the establishment of an Afghan Academy of Cinema, they will be rendering long and short-term training to Afghan in script-writing, direction, and cinematography and editing.<sup>44</sup>

#### **7. India Grant Assistance for implementation of small development projects in Afghanistan;**

MoU was signed between Government of India and Afghanistan on 28th August 2005, where India will be granting financial assistance to Afghanistan for expansion and implementation of small developmental projects on different levels- local bodies, non-Governmental organizations (NGOs), Charitable Trusts and educational and vocational institutions. India will be incurring the capital cost of projects which shall have focus on socio-economic upliftment, there will be particular focus on building of mechanism for education, health and community sector. The essence and theme will be livelihood, environment conservation, cultural preservation, women empowerment and child welfare.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> MoU on Cooperation in the field of Civil Aviation, (2005)

<sup>44</sup> MoU on Cooperation in the field of Media and Information, (2005)

<sup>45</sup> MoU on India Grant Assistance for implementation of small development projects in Afghanistan, (2005)

- MoU on Cooperation in the field of Civil Aviation, 2005
- MoU on Cooperation in the field of Media and Information, 2005
- MoU on India Grant Assistance for implementation of small development projects in Afghanistan, 2005

#### **8. Cooperation in the field of agricultural research and education;**

Agriculture can be a very undermining factor in terms of technical collaboration between the two countries. The spheres covered by the Department of Agricultural Research and Education of India and Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Were-Horticulture, Crop Science, Fisheries, Animal Science, Agricultural related streams, resource management. The collaboration is panned out as follows-exchange experts and scientists, trainers, then exchange of breeding material and germplasm along with exchange scientific literature, research methodology and related data. However, the expenditure of the exchange programs will be handled by Government of India.<sup>46</sup>

#### **9. Cooperation in the field of Healthcare and Medical Science;**

Constant interference of the Taliban has led collapse of many developmental projects. However, healthcare which is a very fundamental sector has also suffered significant loss. Given that India has landed a helping hand in the improvement of healthcare system, for that to happen both have come onto the same page by signing the Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Healthcare and Medical Science. The key virtues of this agreement are equality, reciprocity and mutual benefits. The primal areas covered will be-General Welfare, Research, Indigenous Medical System, Management, Pharmacy and Nursing. There will be exchange of information related to medicine, health experts, deputation of experts to attend meetings held in either country.<sup>47</sup>

#### **10. Cooperation in the field of tourism;**

Both the countries agreed to have simple proceedings for travel keeping in mind the internal rules and regulations of both. In order to ensure hassle free tourist exchange both have decided to station a representative in each other's country. Each party is obligated to synchronize tourism activities and incentivize inventory of

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<sup>46</sup> MoU on Cooperation in the field of agricultural research and education, (2005)

<sup>47</sup> Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Healthcare and Medical Sciences, (2005).

tourism resources and supply. Ensure preservation of natural resources and cultural heritage and at the same enhance sustainable development of both the sides, persuade each other for exchange of expertise on tourism business ideas, resource management and organization. Both countries should fulfill the requirement of exchanging tourism studies comprehensive curriculum, methods and genuine research. Lastly, expedite import and export of cultural items which is inclusive of promotion and tourism information, sans customs duty according to prescribed law.<sup>48</sup>

- MoU on Cooperation in the field of agricultural research and education, 2005
- Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Healthcare and Medical Sciences, 2005
- Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Tourism, 2005

### **11. Cooperation in the field of rural development;**

Both the countries have decided to cooperate to accelerate on rural development in Afghanistan. The areas of concern include-water supply, connectivity, sanitation, irrigation facilities, encouragement of rural enterprises and small-scale industries: use of renewable energy, scaling up of village finances, housing development, setting up foundation of administrative institutes. Lastly, another main objective was job creation in the rural areas in order generate genuine livelihood and wages including self-employment opportunities, human resource development.

A list of elaborate joint actions between the two countries was panned out which included-

- Technical assistance through consultancy, exchange studies and fellowships by rural development experts
- Sharing of technological equipment such as Satellite Imagery.
- Training in Afghanistan and India in subject related institutes providing short- or long-term courses.
- Establishment of institutes in Afghanistan.<sup>49</sup>

### **12. Cooperation in the field of education;**

It was established that both countries will mutually benefit from this agreement, this was agreement was seen as act of strengthening relations between the two countries as education is a prioritized matter for both the nations.

<sup>48</sup> Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Tourism, (2005).

<sup>49</sup> MoU between The Government of the Republic of India and The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on Cooperation in the field of Rural Development, (2006).



The areas of co operations are-

- Exchange of research, publications and literature.
  - Exchange of academic experts like professors, scholars and students
  - Twinning arrangement between premium institutes of both countries
  - Arranging academic discussions on contemporary studies.
  - Allocation of scholarship for Afghan students for their studies in India
  - Implementation of programs for technical and higher education.<sup>50</sup>
- a. MoU between The Government of the Republic of India and The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on Cooperation in the field of Rural Development, 2006.
  - b. MoU between The Ministry of Human Resources Development of The Republic of India and The Ministry of Higher Education of The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on Cooperation in the field of Education, 2006

### **13. Agreement on Investment in Afghanistan by India;**

The two institutes involved in this investment venture are Afghanistan Investment Support Agency and Confederation of Indian Industry.

CII and AISA have agreed to exchange investment related data on a regular basis and consult each other heighten investment potential on Afghan soil by India. The data exchange will involve discerning areas with potential and address investment Associated issues. Both the institutes will create facilities for business development missions.

Other primary business and investment related activities will include seminars, road shows and conferences to promote business events and earn publicity, there will be also promotion of Trade Fairs and Exhibitions as well.<sup>51</sup>

### **14. United Nations Development Programme in the field of capacity development in public administration;**

MoU was signed on 23rd January 2007, both the governments agreed upon developing cooperation in capacity development in public administration as per the appropriate internal laws of both countries.

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<sup>50</sup> MoU between The Ministry of Human Resources Development of The Republic of India and The Ministry of Higher Education of The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan on Cooperation in the field of Education, (2006).

<sup>51</sup> MoU between CII and Afghanistan Investment Support Agency, (2006), [eoi.gov.in](https://eoi.gov.in/), <https://eoi.gov.in/kabul/>, 7th Nov 2021.

The main context of this joint project is-Capacity building in public administration in Afghanistan for which India will be providing guidance by coaching and imparting expertise in the chosen ministries. The UNDP and Government of India will incur the expenditure of the expenses for coaching, travelling and other relevant resources. This joint act of Afghanistan and India will facilitate a UNDP South-South Cooperation project and lastly benefit the interests of Afghanistan.<sup>52</sup>

- a. MoU between CII and Afghanistan Investment Support Agency, 2006
- b. MoU Between the Government of The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and The Government of The Republic of India and The United Nations Development Programme, 2007

### **15. MoU for setting up India-Afghanistan Foundation;**

The MoU between Government of India and Government of Afghanistan was signed on 3rd April 2007. The agreement establishes that both the countries will strive to achieve tight educational, cultural and technical cooperation. The trust will be funded by the trust fund which will be functioning based on the grants made by both the countries, however it can also accept donations from other private and public entities.

The funded activities will include,

- Higher education, research and Afghan nationals receiving training in India.
- Exchange programs of India and Afghanistan of scholars, poets, writers, artists and journalists, teachers, artists and other professionals.
- Academic activities like seminars, conferences and workshops.
- providing financial assistance to NGOs in both the countries who are trying to achieve the aims and objectives of the setup foundation
- Providing a platform for publication of Afghanistan and Indian literary works.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> MoU Between the Government of The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and The Government of The Republic of India and The United Nations Development Programme, (2007), [eoi.gov.in, https://eoi.gov.in/kabul/](https://eoi.gov.in/kabul/), 7th Nov 2021.

<sup>53</sup> MoU between the Government of the Republic of India and The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan for setting up of the India-Afghanistan Foundation, (2007), [eoi.gov.in, https://eoi.gov.in/kabul/](https://eoi.gov.in/kabul/), 7th Nov 2021.

## **II. Engagement in regional organizations and institutions of global governance;**

*Vikash Kumar*

India remains an integral part of Afghanistan's steady progress in institutionalizing peace, pluralism, and prosperity. Ties between Afghanistan and India go beyond the traditionally strong relations at the government level. Since time immemorial, the peoples of Afghanistan and India have interacted with each other through trade and commerce, peacefully coexisting on the basis of their shared cultural values and commonalities. This history has become the foundation of deep mutual trust. Public opinion polls in Afghanistan confirm this, as well as the sentiment Afghans share about feeling at home whenever they visit India.

About the Beginning of relations between India and Afghanistan it can be said that against this background of real friendship, it's appropriate to take stock and see how far Afghanistan has gone in its journey to become a full-fledged, contributing member of the international community. It is a journey being undertaken with continued support of India, which itself is striving to become an anchor of regional stability and prosperity. Afghanistan has been the focus of Indian regional policy because to its geostrategic location, proximity to Iran, Pakistan, and Central Asia, and the breakup of the Soviet Union. Since 1947<sup>54</sup>, India has had friendly relations with Afghanistan, which were bolstered by the signing of the "Friendship Treaty" in 1950.<sup>55</sup> To encourage cooperation and increase Indian influence in Afghanistan, India signed a number of agreements and protocols with pro-Soviet regimes.

By collaborating on industrial, irrigation, and hydro-electric projects in Afghanistan, India boosted its investments in developmental operations. With the advent of the Taliban in Afghanistan and the overthrow of the Rabbani administration in September 1996, Indian influence in Afghanistan was once again diminished. Because of its ties to Pakistan, India refused to recognise the Taliban regime and

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<sup>54</sup> Foreign Policy 2010, Foreign Policy Initiative.

<sup>55</sup> Fahmida Ashraf, INDIA-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS: POST-9/11, 90, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad 2007.

shuttered its embassy in September 1996.<sup>56</sup> When the Taliban rule were in Afghanistan. The Indian initiatives were intended at reducing the Taliban's power and encouraging organisations having ties to India. India also took advantage of Russia's and Iran's anti-Taliban stances to strengthen ties with those countries and expand its ties with Central Asian states.

According to Mr J. N. Dixit's book, "India, in collaboration with all like-minded countries, should oppose any forcible propagation of religious, social, or ethnic extremism that threatens Afghanistan's Asian neighbours. A quick resolution to the Afghanistan conflict is vital to realising the region's vast energy and economic cooperation potential "India was able to pursue its foreign policy aims of achieving hegemony in the region and rising as a global power as a result of the US campaign for international terrorism and "Operation Enduring Freedom" begun by the US in Afghanistan against the Taliban regime in November 2001. As a result, after 9/11, India stepped up its efforts to reclaim its influence in Afghanistan, which had been neglected since the Taliban-led government took power in 1996. The main goal of this research is to look at how Indo-Afghan relations have changed since 9/11, as well as to discuss India's growing influence in Afghanistan.

This question might appear that how Afghanistan is important to India. In fact, India is a key donor to Afghanistan's reconstruction efforts, assisting in a variety of areas such as infrastructure, communications, education, healthcare, social welfare, diplomat and police training, economic growth, and institution-building. In Afghanistan, between 3500 and 4000 Indian nationals are employed in various corporate and public sector restoration projects. Since 2001<sup>57</sup>, overall Indian development assistance has climbed to \$750 million<sup>58</sup>, which has been invested in a variety of sectors, including hydropower projects, road building, agriculture, industry, telecommunications, education, and health. With its abundant energy resources (oil and gas), huge mineral resources and large consumer markets, the region of Central Asia is of geopolitical importance to India.

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<sup>56</sup> AARISH ULLAH KHAN, *the Terrorist Threat and the Policy Response in Pakistan*, September 2005.

<sup>57</sup> RANI D. MULLEN, *50 Years of Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation*, Indian Development Cooperation Research Report January 2015.

<sup>58</sup> Fahmida Ashraf, *INDIA-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS: POST-9/11*, 90, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, 2007, [Reuters](#), **23 January 2007**, *op. cit.*

Indian analyst Mina Singh Roy said in one of her articles: Future prospects for cooperation between Central Asia and India in the energy sector. Safety seems to be very important. The CARs and the peace and stability of Afghanistan appear to be the most decisive factors for Indian security”<sup>59</sup> India needed a communication channel with Afghanistan to maintain contact with Central Asian countries. The rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan and the marginalization of India's influence have made it difficult for India to maintain its influence in Central Asia. However, due to the ties with the North Alliance, it maintained some ties with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. In addition to the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) gas pipeline, India is also participating in the development of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline.

In May 2006, the Indian Cabinet approved India's participation in the 1,300km TAP gas pipeline project funded by the Asian Development Bank. Also in March 2007, India completed the reconstruction of the Ayni military base in Tajikistan. The course began in 2002 and was completed at a cost of USD 10 million. India ranks fourth behind Russia, the United States and Germany. Countries based in Central Asia<sup>60</sup>. In the field of regional cooperation, Afghanistan joined SAARC at the 14th SAARC Summit in Delhi in April 2007, opening the door to transforming Afghanistan into a regional trade, transport and energy hub from Central Asia to South Asia. India is also encouraging Afghanistan's efforts to capitalize on its unique geographic location in the heart of the Asian continent by supporting regional initiatives such as the Istanbul Process and RECCA, which aim to promote Afghanistan's development through cooperation in various sectors of the economy. India is working to expand its economic influence in Afghanistan as the international coalition fighting the Taliban begins the withdrawal process.

In particular, he wants to improve transport links and economic cooperation with countries in Central and South Asia. As of 2012, India has already invested \$10.8 billion in Afghanistan. After NATO's full withdrawal from Afghanistan, more such projects will appear.<sup>61</sup> According to the Indian Express report, India will host the Heart of Asia conference on Afghanistan in 2013. The previous meeting was held in

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<sup>59</sup> Meena Singh Roy, "India's Interests in Central Asia", Strategic Analyze, Vol. XXIV, No. 2, March 2001.

<sup>60</sup> "India makes a soft landing in Tajikistan, Asia Times Online, 3 March 2007, [www.Atimes.Com/a/times/SouthAsia/I C03DJ0](http://www.Atimes.Com/a/times/SouthAsia/I C03DJ0).

<sup>61</sup> Afghanistan-Relations\_-Notes-for-UPSC.pdf.

Pakistan last December. At the meeting, India and Pakistan tried to resolve strategic issues with Afghanistan. In particular, Pakistan opposes India's expansion of influence and believes that Afghanistan is necessary to achieve strategic depth.

Although India has requested direct ground access to Afghanistan, Pakistan has refused to provide such facilities because of its strategic interest. Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj said the following alternative routes could be used to access Afghanistan in a situation where India does not have direct land access. Participating in the development of Chahbahar will expand our relationship with Afghanistan and beyond." "India has played a constructive role within Afghanistan over the past several years," State Department spokeswoman John Kirby said in August 2013 of India-Afghanistan's relationship. Kirby's announcement came when he urged other countries like China to do the same. To date, India has provided more than \$2 billion in financial aid to Afghanistan and is participating in large-scale development efforts in this war-torn country.<sup>62</sup>

In May 2014, Narendra Modi was elected with a bold vision for India's neighbourhood diplomacy. While economic and cultural interactions between Kabul and New Delhi continued, Afghanistan lost interest in acquiring Indian arms. After all, any serious attempt at engagement with Pakistan would necessitate a freeze in strategic and military rapprochement with India. For Pakistan, Afghanistan is a zero-sum game with India.<sup>63</sup>

Afghanistan's Minister of Energy and Water and Minister of Rural Rehabilitation and Development visited Delhi in August to participate in the Afghanistan-India Renewable Energy Summit, hosted by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). Also, appreciating India's efforts to expand regional connectivity, Ghani invited India to join the PATTA (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan Trade and Transit Agreement), an invitation currently under review. If agreement is reached, it would go a long way to enabling Afghanistan to play its natural role as a land-bridge connecting south and Central Asia.<sup>64</sup> Abdullah Abdullah, then chief executive of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (COE), has visited India

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<sup>62</sup> [business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/5-things-to-know-about-the-india-afghanistan-relationship](http://business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/5-things-to-know-about-the-india-afghanistan-relationship) January 4, 2016.

<sup>63</sup> The diplomat, why-afghanistan-and-india-are-about-to-transform-their-relationship, 2015.

<sup>64</sup> thediplomat.com, India-and-Afghanistan-a-growing-partnership, 2015.

since September 2017. He visited Venerable President and met the Prime Minister and EAM.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Police Training and Development Technology Cooperation was signed and formally exchanged at a meeting between the Chief Executive Officer and the Prime Minister. This, along with India's continued support of the Afghan Defence and Security Forces, has paved the way for training and capacity building for Afghan police in various fields. Afghanistan was also invited to participate in the International Solar Alliance Summit in India in December 2017 and the World Food Fair in India in November 2017.<sup>65</sup> After the US released new Afghanistan strategy in 2019, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman visited the US. India put forward its Afghan strategy:

There will be no Indian shoes in Afghanistan. India will provide economic support and capacity building. India will sign a memorandum of understanding with Afghanistan for police training. India will help Afghanistan the way the US wants it, not in its own way, but in its own way. India opposes Pakistan's prime minister's claim that it has no political or military role in Afghanistan. But President Donald Trump now appears to have acknowledged Pakistan's role in the region. He announced plans to unilaterally withdraw US troops from Afghanistan. A "framework" agreement between the US and the Afghan Taliban was signed in Doha. Washington's hasty 18-month schedule to escape from the Afghan swamp narrowed America's options. This puts India in a strategic blind spot in Afghanistan.<sup>66</sup>

There are many peace conferences and processes to solve the crisis. Bonn Agreement 2001 was the first international pact on Afghanistan for peace and reconciliation. Let us look at some of the important among them, their consequences and India's role or stand in them. There are two major international peace efforts that are currently underway – the American push for peace led by Zalmay Khalilzad (Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, Khalilzad) and the Moscow led consultations. In peace conferences, India's stand is that it should be Afghan led, Afghan owned and Afghan controlled and with the participation of the government of Afghanistan. India is also wary of talks with the Taliban and the distinction of 'good Taliban bad Taliban'.

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<sup>65</sup> [eoi.gov.in/Kabul](http://eoi.gov.in/Kabul), By Pandey November 24, 2015.

<sup>66</sup> [clearias.com/India-Afghanistan-relations/](http://clearias.com/India-Afghanistan-relations/), MARCH 4, 2019 BY CLEARIAS TEAM.

In recent situation, much to India's chagrin, U.S. and Russia have accepted the idea that peace in Afghanistan is not possible without major concessions to the Taliban. Taliban has become the centre stage in all the peace conferences. This is evident in the talks facilitated by Russia in Moscow in February 2019, with mainstream Afghan politicians sitting around the table with Taliban leaders and recent U.S Taliban talks in Qatar. The U.S. and Russia have, in their respective peace processes, agreed to sidestep the Ashraf Ghani regime in Kabul, and accepted the Taliban's condition that it will not negotiate with the elected Afghan government at this stage. And both the Russian and U.S. processes are dependent on cooperation from Pakistan, which retains its influence over the Taliban leadership. Current talks with the Taliban are not Afghan led, owned or controlled, and the Taliban has not abjured violence, or sworn allegiance to the Afghan constitution before joining talks.<sup>67</sup> For India, which has built centuries-old ties with Afghanistan with \$3 billion in development aid over the past decade, the Specter of a Pakistani puppet ruling in Kabul is now even more serious.

Without a trump card in the game, India is currently engaged with a number of Afghan players, including former President Hamid Karzai, who is known to play a key role in China, Iran and the US Taliban process. While supporting the government's negotiating position in Kabul, India seeks to secure its strategic and economic interests in Afghanistan. According to foreign policy experts, India may have to at least consider contacting independent organizations in the near future.

There are lots of bodies and organizations in the world where both India and Afghanistan are members, starting from Food and Agricultural Organization to other important organizations and further groups.

**The groups and bodies are as follows:**

**1. Food And Agriculture Organization Of United Nation;**

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to hunger and improve nutrition and food security. FAO has 194 Member Nations plus one Member Organization, the European Union and two Associate Members, its'

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<sup>67</sup> [thehindu.com/profile/contributor/Vivek-Katju-135829](https://thehindu.com/profile/contributor/Vivek-Katju-135829), MAY 18, 2020.



headquarter is in Rome Italy.<sup>68</sup> There is a very long history regarding the formation of the organization, but concisely, the first conference was held on 16 October – 1 November 1945, in Chateau Frontenac Quebec City, Canada.<sup>69</sup> India has come a long way since 1945 when it got to be one of the establishing individuals of FAO as a low Income food deficient nation, but Afghanistan became a member of FAO in 1949,<sup>70</sup> and since that time, FAO has been working in Afghanistan nearly continuously.

In 2003 a gift of 61,000 metric tons of wheat from India to Afghanistan in Food programme. India has delivered more than 1 million tons of wheat to Afghanistan in the last ten years and supported Afghanistan with 75,000 tons of wheat last year alone. India had also partnered with World Food Program for the distribution of high protein biscuits for several years. The wheat cargo was shipped from India to Afghanistan through the Iranian port of Chabahar.

## **2. Non-Aligned Movement (NAM);**

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was founded and established during the collapse of the colonial system and the struggles for the independence of the peoples of Africa, Asia, Latin America and other regions of the world and at the height of the Cold War. It was formed in 1950. In the early 21st century the Non-Aligned Movement counted 120 member states.<sup>71</sup> The Conference of Heads of State and Government of Non-Aligned Countries, often referred to as the Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, is the most important meeting within the movement and takes place every few years. The non-aligned movement had its origins in the 1947 Asian Relations Meeting in New Delhi and the 1955 Asian-African Conference in Bandung, Indonesia. India also participated in the 1961 Belgrade Conference which officially established the Non-Aligned Movement. Afghanistan became a member of NAM in 1961.

In 1980, India supported to Afghanistan because the ally of the superpower USSR decided to move the lock, the lever, the tank and the helicopter to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>68</sup> [FAO.org, home en](https://www.fao.org/), 2020.

<sup>69</sup> United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt, <https://www.fao.org/3/p4228e/p4228e04.htm,2020>.

<sup>70</sup> [globalhand.org/en/organisations,26001](https://www.globalhand.org/en/organisations,26001), 1945.

<sup>71</sup> [André Munro, britannica.com, Non-Aligned-Movement](https://www.britannica.com/Non-Aligned-Movement), 2021.

<sup>72</sup> [André Munro, britannica.com/event/Soviet-invasion-of-Afghanistan](https://www.britannica.com/event/Soviet-invasion-of-Afghanistan), 2020.

On May 4, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended a virtual summit of the Non-Aligned Contact Group chaired by Azerbaijani President İlham Aliyev.

### **3. International Organization for Migration (IOM);**

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is an intergovernmental organization that works closely with governmental, non-governmental and intergovernmental partners in the field of migration to support orderly and humane migration for the benefit of humanity. It is formed in 6 December 1951 headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, and has a global presence with more than one hundred offices.<sup>73</sup> India was granted an observer's status to IOM in the year 1991 and became a member state in 2008 as of 2021, and IOM's mission in Afghanistan was established in 1992 and has maintained an uninterrupted presence in the country.<sup>74</sup> IOM has 174 member states. Also, there are 8 states that hold observer status. Migrants and refugees are two different terminologies and, as a result, they have been exposed to the same extent by society. According to a UN refugee agency, there are nearly 1,000 refugees and asylum seekers from Afghanistan who have fled the war-torn country in search of safety and a better life in India.

### **4. G77 (Group of 77);**

The G77 (Group of 77) was founded on June 15, 1964 by 77 developing countries. It is the largest intergovernmental organization for developing countries in the United Nations. India and Afghanistan both are founding member of this group<sup>75</sup>. Guyana assumed the presidency of the G77 in 2020, succeeding Palestine, which held the presidency in 2019.

### **5. The South Asian Cooperative Environment Program (SACEP);**

The South Asian Cooperative Environment Program (SACEP) is an intergovernmental organization. It was established in 1982 by the governments of South Asia to promote and support the protection, management and improvement of the environment in the region. It's Headquarter based in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

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<sup>73</sup> [iom.int, who-we-are](https://iom.int/who-we-are), 2021 International Organization for Migration.

<sup>74</sup> [byjus.com/free-ias-prep, international-organization-for-migration/](https://byjus.com/free-ias-prep/international-organization-for-migration/), 2021.

<sup>75</sup> [g77.org/doc/](https://g77.org/doc/), 15 June 1964.

There are 8 members of this groups, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka<sup>76</sup>.

#### **6. SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation);**

SAARC stands for South Asian Association for Regional cooperation; it is an intergovernmental organization for the development of economic and regional integration. The organization has the support of several countries known as member states. SAARC Established in 1985 December 8, Dhaka (Bangladesh). SAARC Headquarters are in Kathmandu, Nepal the Heads of State of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka formally adopted the charter.<sup>77</sup>

Relations with India after 2001 improved as India took an active role in the reconstruction so the purpose of attaining its goal of re-integrating Afghanistan into SAARC and helping its rebuilding, India has adopted a soft power approach in 2005, Afghanistan requested its accession to SAARC and formally applied for membership in the same year and became member in 2007 during 14<sup>th</sup> summit. The last SAARC summit was held in Kathmandu in 2014. The 2016 SAARC summit supposed to be held in Islamabad. India expressed its inability to attend the summit due to "prevailing circumstances" and Afghanistan and other members as well stepped back from the summit due to fears of regional insecurity caused by Pakistan.<sup>78</sup> The situation in Afghanistan is constantly changing due to Taliban imposed their rule. In this scenario its urgent neighbours and SAARC can help provide support because their stability and peace are affected by changing dynamics as well.

#### **7. Financial Action Task Force (FATF);**

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an intergovernmental organisation whose mission is to set standards and promote the effective implementation of legal, regulatory, and operational measures to combat money laundering, terrorist financing, and other threats to the international financial system's integrity. The G7 Summit, which took place in Paris in 1989, gave birth to it. The FATF is a policy-making organisation that collaborates with governments to implement

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<sup>76</sup> [SACEP.sacep.org/](http://SACEP.sacep.org/) 2021.

<sup>77</sup> [hmfasia.org/mfa-programs/advocacy/south-Asian-association-for-regional-cooperation](http://hmfasia.org/mfa-programs/advocacy/south-Asian-association-for-regional-cooperation), 2021.

<sup>78</sup> [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South\\_Asian\\_Association\\_for\\_Regional\\_Cooperate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Asian_Association_for_Regional_Cooperate), oct, 2021.

national law and regulatory reforms in these areas. India became an Observer at FATF in 2006. Since then, it had been working towards full-fledged membership. On June 25, 2010 India was taken in as the 34<sup>th</sup> country member of FATF. And the last Mutual Evaluation Report relating to the implementation of anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing standards in Afghanistan was undertaken by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in 2011. It is held in every year. Approximately, every time India and Afghanistan help each other during this meeting, last FATF meeting held on 19-21 October 2021, while during this meeting the leaders of the FATF approached about Afghanistan that Recent UN Security Council Resolutions on the situation in Afghanistan are backed up by the FATF.<sup>79</sup> UNSCR 2593 (2021) specifically states that Afghan land must not be used to threaten or attack other countries, to house or train terrorists, or to organise or finance terrorist operations and India support it.<sup>80</sup>

Another scenario is that when the Pakistan grey listed in June 2018 at FATF meeting after discovered significant strategic anti-money laundering (AML)/counter-terrorist financing (CFT) flaws on its side, this time also Afghanistan supported India when India had the concern that Pakistan finances and gives shelter to terrorist and puts in the grey list.<sup>81</sup>

#### **8. Shanghai cooperation organisation (SCO);**

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is an international intergovernmental organisation that exists indefinitely. The formation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was announced on June 15, 2001 in Shanghai (China). The Shanghai Cooperation Organization Charter was signed in June 2002 during the SCO Heads of State summit in St. Petersburg, and it went into effect on September 19, 2003.

Prior to the establishment of the Shanghai Five in 2001, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan were members of the Shanghai Five. When then-Afghan President Hamid Karzai visited China in 2012, Afghanistan became an observer in the SCO, and India and Pakistan joined in 2017. The SCO Council of Heads of State held its 21<sup>st</sup> meeting in Dushanbe on September 17, 2021, in a

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<sup>79</sup> [byjus.com, free-ias-prep/fatf/](https://byjus.com/free-ias-prep/fatf/), oct, 2021.

<sup>80</sup> [un.org/pressm](https://un.org/pressm), 2021.

<sup>81</sup> [Rezaul H Laskar](https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/FATF-retains-PAK-on-its-grey-list), New Delhi, [hindustantimes.com/india-news/FATF-retains-PAK-on-its-grey-list](https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/FATF-retains-PAK-on-its-grey-list), Oct 22, 2021.

hybrid format.<sup>82</sup> In his speech, Prime Minister Netanyahu emphasised the issues that recent events in Afghanistan may intensify this trend toward extremism. The SCO may draught a code of conduct in the region that emphasises 'zero tolerance' for terrorism, as well as the dangers of drugs, weaponry, and human trafficking coming from Afghanistan. He expressed India's support with the Afghan people, citing the humanitarian disaster there. At the 20th SCO meeting, the Prime Minister highlighted India's strong cultural and historical ties with the SCO region and reaffirmed India's strong commitment to strengthening connectivity in the region with initiatives such as the SCO Corridor.<sup>83</sup> North-South International Transport, the Port of Chahbahar and Ashgabat Agreement.

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<sup>82</sup> Drishtias.com important-international-institutions-shanghai-cooperation-organisation-sco, 20 Nov 2018.

<sup>83</sup> oydeep Bose | Edited by Meenakshi Ray, Hindustan Times, New Delhi, hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-to-join-sco-summit-in-dushanbe-today-afghanistan-affairs-high-on-agenda, Sep 17, 2021.

### III. Opportunities and challenges;

#### *Khujestah Niazai*

India and Afghanistan continued their close and friendly relationship from 2001 and, brought their friendship as an engaging in the task of reconstruction and development of Afghanistan. Therefore, started the economic and social developmental activities, India's bilateral assistance to Afghanistan crossed US\$ 1.3 billion. while this assistance covered the 35% at the begging but after a while increased to (657) exactly, it's the number of scholarships which India obtained for Afghan students, and in the same step there was increment of training slots of Afghan nationals from 500 to 675) from India between 2009-2010.

Apart from maintaining friendly and close bilateral relations with its neighbors, India has also worked for the evolution of SAARC into a result-oriented organization that effectively promotes regional integration.

Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) continued to develop as a think-tank and an important platform for discussions on foreign affairs in India. ICWA signed 6 MoUs for bilateral cooperation, viz, with Centre for Strategic Studies (CSS) of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, New Zealand Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) Wellington, Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) Melbourne, The Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR) Abu Dhabi, Asia Centre; Bangalore, Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development (CRRID) Chandigarh. Council sponsored a Joint Study between India-Central Asia Foundation (ICAF), ICWA and Department of International Relations, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan on "Contemporary Process of Political Modernizing: Experience of Central Asian States and India". The Council organized 7 lectures, 9 Seminars/Conferences, 6 bilateral dialogues & 14 background briefings, book release/panel discussions. ICWA Library continues to be used by a large no of scholars and students.<sup>84</sup> **Thus, we prefer to elaborate on issue of identify the opportunities and areas of convergences between India and Afghanistan (A), and highlight the challenges between the bilateral relationships of the two countries (B).**

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<sup>84</sup> 2008-2009, Government of India Ministry of External Affairs, P. 4-5, Jan 01, 2008.

## **A. Identify the opportunities and areas of convergences between India and Afghanistan;**

### **1. Foreign Service Institute of India with Afghanistan;**

Close and friendly relations were maintained with the Government of Afghanistan. India's developmental and reconstruction assistance programme in Afghanistan is widely appreciated by all sections of the Afghan people. Notwithstanding serious deterioration in the security situation, India has remained at the forefront of the international effort to assist the Government and people of Afghanistan in building a stable, democratic, and pluralist society.

The Foreign Service Institute conducted training programmes for the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Probationers, officers and staff of the Ministry of External Affairs, officers from Cabinet Secretariat and other Ministries/Departments as well as for foreign diplomats. The first and second mandatory mid-career training programmes for JS-level officers and email-based mid-career training programmes for Director-level officers were carried out during the year. A media training programme and a one-day Right to Information Course for officers of the Ministry were also held. Three Special Courses for diplomats from Maldives, Afghanistan and ASEAN, and two Professional Courses for Foreign Diplomats (PCFDs) were also organized. Despite daunting logistical and security challenges, the construction of a 220 KV Transmission Line from Pul-e-Khumri to Kabul together with substation in Chimtala was completed, a project of importance for the provision of electricity to the residents of Kabul.

Construction of Afghanistan's new Parliament building, seen as a symbol of the common commitment of both our countries to pluralism and democracy, is also progressing. Other Indian projects in a range of areas such as agriculture, rural development, education, health, vocational training, capacity building and humanitarian assistance are all progressing satisfactorily.

India's support to the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan has been widely appreciated by the people all across Afghanistan, and which is built on the historical and cultural ties that link the two countries. This was underlined by a recent Gallup survey of Afghan attitudes released recently. When asked what role different groups or countries were playing in resolving the situation in Afghanistan, a majority of

respondents in the survey mentioned India's role in reconstruction. Spanning almost the entire gamut of economic and social developmental activities, India's bilateral assistance to Afghanistan crossed US\$ 1.3 billion (as against a pledge of US\$ 1.2 billion). This assistance has been substantially enhanced by a 35% increase (to 675) in the number of annual scholarships for Afghan students attending Indian colleges, and a similar increase (from 500 to 675) in the training slots for Afghan nationals in India.<sup>85</sup>

## **2. Embassy of India, Kabul [Development Cooperation Wing];**

India has played a significant role in the reconstruction and rehabilitation process in Afghanistan. India's extensive developmental assistance programme, which now stands at around US 2 billion, is a strong signal of its abiding commitment to peace, stability and prosperity in Afghanistan. This makes India one of the leading donor nations to Afghanistan and by far the largest donor in the region. Government of India has taken on a number of medium and large infrastructure projects in its assistance programme in Afghanistan.

Some of these include: construction of a 218 km road from Zaranj to Delaram for facilitating movement of goods and services to the Iranian border; construction of 220kV DC transmission line from Pul-e-Khumri to Kabul and a 220/110/20 kV sub-station at Chintala; upgrading of telephone exchanges in 11 provinces; expansion of national TV network by providing an uplink from Kabul and downlinks in all 34 provincial capitals for greater integration of the country.

India believes that sustainable development of Afghanistan requires long-term investment in Afghanistan to help it exploit its natural resource wealth. India is, thus, at the forefront in promoting investment in Afghanistan. A consortium of public and private Indian companies has been formed to make one of the biggest investments in the country's mining sector in the Hajigak iron ore reserves. In an effort towards capacity building in mining area, a Mines Institute is proposed to be established in Kabul with GOI technical & financial support.

Some of the ongoing/completed Indian projects in Afghanistan include new Afghan Parliament building (inaugurated on 25 December 2015 jointly by H.E. Dr. Ashraf Ghani, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and H.E. Mr. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India); in addition GOI has also committed

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<sup>85</sup> 2009-2010, Government of India Ministry of External Affairs, Jan 01, 2009.



assistance for construction of Executive Block for the new Afghan Parliament building; Afghan-India Friendship Dam (Salma Dam); Doshi & Charikar substations (both completed); Restoration of Store Place; establishment of new Diagnostic Centre (completed) & construction of Decentralized Waste Water Treatment System at (IGICH); establishment of Afghan National Agriculture Science & Technology University, Kandahar; commitment to supply 1.1 million MT of wheat to Afghanistan (711,882 MT of wheat or equivalent in cash already delivered at a cost of Rs. 989.45 crore); commitment to contribute US\$ 1 million annually over next five years to Afghan Red Crescent Society for treatment of Afghan children with congenital heart disease (214 children have already been treated under this aid till mid-March 2016); grant-in-aid of US\$ 1 million to Habibia High School over next 10 years; and grant-in-aid of US\$ 1 million to IGICH over next 5 years. India has also committed to contribute substantially in improving transportation system in Kabul and has decided to donate 1000 buses to Afghanistan along with up gradation related infrastructure.

A significant addition to India's development portfolio in Afghanistan is the (SDP) scheme, in the fields of agriculture, rural development, education, health, vocational training, etc. The Small Development Projects are implemented in three Phases- under I & II phase (total commitment of US\$ 20 million) 132 projects at a cost of approx. US\$ 19.5 million were approved (94 projects completed). MOU for implementation of the Third Phase of the SDP scheme was signed during President Karzai's visit to India in November 2012 with an additional outlay of US\$ 100 million. A total of 287 projects at approx. US\$ 52.5 million have been approved under Phase-III and are at various stages of implementation. 87 additional projects are under GOI's active consideration.

In the area of skill development, GOI offers training to Afghan officials/nationals in diverse fields through 500 ITEC slots and 25 slots under TCS Colombo plan are allocated annually to Afghanistan, Specialized ITEC courses are held for Afghan Government Officials on specific demand, 614 ICAR scholarships<sup>86</sup> under India-Afghanistan Fellowship Programme commenced in 2012-13 lasting up to 2020-21(208 fellowships have been utilized so far), training via tele-education at ANASTU, Kandahar and Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health, Kabul. GOI also

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<sup>86</sup> Dr. Ghulam Mustafa, Muhammad Asif, Muhammad Arslan, Politics and International Studies (July–December 2018).

grants ICCR scholarships to 1000 Afghans every year to pursue under graduate courses in various Indian universities in major cities across India.<sup>87</sup>

### **3. India brought many opportunities in different sectors;**

Foreign Minister of Afghanistan Mr Rangin Dad far Spanta visited India from 26-27 July, 2009. He called on the Prime Minister Dr. Man Mohan Singh and met External Affairs Minister Shri S. M. Krishna and NSA Shri M. K. Narayanan. It was decided during the visit to establish an India-Afghanistan Partnership Council composed of separate groups on political consultation, capacity development and education, power and water culture, trade and industry, health, and agriculture, to harness greater institutional support for the implementation of ongoing programmes and enlarge development cooperation between the two countries. External Affairs Minister attended President Karzai's Inauguration Ceremony in Kabul on 19 November, 2009 for a fresh term in office as President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. In his inaugural address, President Karzai mentioned that Afghanistan enjoys a strategic relationship with India and also referred to our bilateral assistance and the large number of Afghan students studying in India. India reiterated its determination to fulfil its commitments to the Afghan people and government as they build a peaceful, democratic and pluralistic Afghanistan.<sup>88</sup>

The implementation of the scheme of ICCR Scholarships and ITEC training programmes for Afghan nationals and the execution of community based, small development projects in the fields of agriculture, rural development, sanitation, vocational training, etc. is also progressing satisfactorily and plays a significant role in demonstrating, at a popular level, the close and friendly relations between the two countries. India continued to contribute for the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund and pledged a sum of US \$ 1 million to the UNDP election fund. India has also pledged an additional US \$ 450 million (over the US\$ 750 million earlier committed) to effectively meet the requirements of our ongoing and future projects. President Karzai visited India in August 2008 and again in January, 2009.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> <https://eoi.gov.in/kabul/?0707?000>.

<sup>88</sup> 2009-2010, Government of India Ministry of External Affairs, Jan 01, 2009.

<sup>89</sup> 2008-2009, Government of India Ministry of External Affairs, Jan 01, 2008.

#### **4. Sports Cooperation**

India and Afghanistan have robust relations in the field of sports. Since 2011, Afghanistan Under-14 & Under-17 Boys' and Under-17 Girls' football teams have been participating in the Subroto Cup International Tournament organized every year by the India Air Force. Cricket has been a major factor in promoting people-to-people ties between the two countries. Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) has been allotted three cricket home grounds in India (Noida, Dehradun and Luck now).

India is also involved in construction cricket stadiums and grounds in various provinces of Afghanistan under the aegis of HICDP. The first India- Afghanistan test match was held in Bangalore in 2018. A bilateral test series, Afghanistan versus West Indies was held in India, with Afghanistan as the host country from 06 November 19 to 01 December 2019. The series comprised of 3x One Day Matches, 3 x T-20s and one test match at the Ekana Stadium in Luck now. Indian FMCG, Amul was the sponsor for Afghan National Cricket Team for the ICC Cricket World Cup in 2019.<sup>90</sup>

#### **5. High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP);**

Since 2005, India and Afghanistan have partnered in the area of community development through the HICDP program. Under this scheme, US\$ 120 million has been committed till date to various small to medium scale projects in areas such as education, health, water management, government buildings, sport facilities, agriculture and irrigation, etc. Around 433 High Impact Community Development Projects have been completed with Indian financial support in all 34 provinces of Afghanistan so far and around 110 projects are ongoing in various provinces of Afghanistan. On 05 July 2020, India signed five (05) agreements for construction of schools and roads worth US\$ 2.6 million. During FY 2019-20, 37 projects were completed in various provinces of Afghanistan under the (HICDP) scheme of Government of India. An MOU for financial commitment of US\$ 80 million towards HICDP Phase- IV is currently under negotiation by both sides. This would take total commitment of Indian Government to HICDP to US\$ 200 million.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> <http://eoi.gov.in/kabul/>

<sup>91</sup> <http://eoi.gov.in/kabul/>

## **6. Human Resource Development and Capacity Building;**

Human resource development and capacity building initiatives constitute an important segment of India's assistance in Afghanistan. On an average, more than 3,500 Afghan nationals undergo training/education in India every year. More than 15,000 Afghan students pursue education in India on self-financing basis. India's assistance in human resource development has helped to create a large pool of trained manpower that has been an asset to both the public and private sectors in Afghanistan. India's initiatives in this field include:

- Following the reconstruction and renovation of Habibia School in Kabul, India extended assistance for training and maintenance of the school.
- A Special Scholarship Scheme of 1,000 scholarships per annum to Afghan nationals (administered by ICCR) with 100% utilization in most years.
- India offers over 1,000 Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) slots to Afghanistan annually in the areas of. The ITEC training is expected to address Afghanistan's need to strengthen its administration and governance at national, provincial and district levels, including through sharing experiences and technical assistance in building capacities of civil administration and project implementation.
- The Afghanistan National Agricultural Sciences and Technology University (ANASTU) established with India's assistance is contributing to capacity building in agricultural sciences. The Indian Agriculture Research Institute (IARI) is involved in training, equipping and establishing the University.
- Under India-Afghanistan Agricultural Fellowship Programme, Afghan students and scholars pursue graduation and research courses at various agricultural universities and institutes in India.

- Nearly 50 Afghans are completing graduation in the Indian school of Mines Dhanbad with a view to strengthen technical man-power in mining sector in Afghanistan.<sup>92</sup>

## **7. Humanitarian Assistance**

Major humanitarian assistance by India to Afghanistan in recent years include the following:

- To combat the global pandemic of COVID-19 and related issues of food security, India is committed to deliver 75,000 MT of Wheat to Afghanistan in 2020. In addition, India has also undertaken supply of 5 lakh tablets of Hydroxy-chloroquine, 1 Lakh tablets of Paracetamol and 50,000 pairs of surgical gloves to Government of Afghanistan in 2020.
- Provision of food assistance of 11 lakh tons of wheat, both as grains and biscuits, was distributed to approximately 1.5 million school children.
- To promote food security, particularly children during the times of drought, India has distributed 2000 tons of pulses to Afghanistan in 2018.
- A Medical Diagnostic Centre in Kabul was set up in 2015. The Centre provides latest diagnostic facilities to children of Afghanistan thereby generating goodwill for India.<sup>93</sup>

## **B. Highlight the challenges between the bilateral relationships of the two countries;**

Afghanistan: The steady deterioration in the internal security situation spurred by increasing violence in Afghanistan and attacks on India's personnel, establishment and projects in Afghanistan continued to engage India's attention during the year. Following the bomb attack targeting the Indian Embassy in Kabul on 9 October, 2009, the Government of India expressed deep concern over the cowardly attack which was aimed against the people of India and people of Afghanistan and their abiding friendship.

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<sup>92</sup> <https://eoi.gov.in/kabul/?0354?000>.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

Foreign Secretary Smt. Nirupama Rao visited Kabul immediately after the attack and met President Karzai, Foreign Minister Spanta and other leaders. A terrorist attack in Kabul on 26 February, 2010 killed, among others, seven Indians and seriously injured several others. While deeply condoning the loss of life, Government stressed that India will continue to pursue its development partnership with Afghanistan, undeterred by such cowardly attacks of terrorism.

India has been at the forefront of the efforts to assist the government and people of Afghanistan in building a stable, democratic, and pluralistic society. Close political consultations with the Government of Afghanistan and regular high contacts with its leadership were maintained. India welcomed the successful holding of the Presidential and Provincial Council elections in Afghanistan on 20 August, 2009. The swearing-in ceremony of newly re-elected President Karzai which took place on 19 November, 2009 was attended by External Affairs Minister Shri S. M. Krishna. The then Afghan Foreign Minister Dr. Dadfar Rangin Spanta visited India from 26-27 July, 2009 to hold bilateral discussions.

He met Minister of External Affairs Shri S. M. Krishna and the then National Security Advisor Shri M. K. Narayanan and called on Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. India remains actively engaged in the task of reconstruction and development of Afghanistan. India's bilateral assistance to Afghanistan has crossed US\$ 1.3 billion (as against a pledge of US\$ 1.2 billion).<sup>94</sup>

### **1. Security in Afghanistan**

The report can consider the challenges between bilateral relations of Afghanistan and India as interference or the same interest of other countries and Taliban terrorist organization toward Afghanistan. It has been listed as follows;

The security part, Afghanistan's stability is important for India's own security but, since 9/11 India was side-lined from many Western-led discussions regarding the country. Following the announcement that 2014 would mark the end of large-scale Western troop deployment many Indian policy-makers have felt somewhat vindicated in their parallel bilateral engagement with Afghanistan various opinion polls suggest that India is well-regarded in Afghanistan, certainly arousing none of the resentment

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<sup>94</sup> 2009-2010, Government of India Ministry of External Affairs, Jan 01, 2009.

attached to Pakistan. While many of India's smaller neighbours feel threatened by it, in the case of Afghanistan it is helped by the fact that the two countries do not share a border (although this in turn creates tension with the United States since its trade is largely conducted through Iran). India has a long-standing enmity towards the Taliban, pre-dating 9/11.<sup>95</sup> Furthermore, India has alleged links between the Taliban and the Pakistan's military and Inter services (ISI) long before such claims became received wisdom in the West. Of particular concern for India was the hijacking of Indian Airlines flight 814 in 1999. The hijackers diverted the plane to Kandahar, and most Indians believe that the Taliban guarded the plane to prevent any Indian rescue attempt. In result of which Three Islamist militants were eventually released by the Indian government in exchange for the hostages.

Indian hostility towards the Taliban has created widespread doubt about the existence of any 'moderate' Taliban and scepticism of the extent to which the Taliban can be separated from AL Qaeda. This has led India to be dubious about Western suggestions of reconciliation or political settlement with the Taliban. While major doubts remain, some Indian opinion-formers have argued in favour of the decentralization of Afghanistan's system of government – were any process of reconciliation to be successful, it would be likely to involve some form of devolved government.<sup>96</sup>

India does not share a direct border with Afghanistan. This can be another reason for involvement for other neighbour countries in their bilateral relationship. For instance, India hosted an Investment Summit on Afghanistan in Delhi in June 2012, inviting other 'Heart of Asia' countries, which sought to highlight the opportunities for investing in Afghanistan. Which can clearly be considered as challenge between relations of two countries.

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<sup>95</sup> Marvin G Weinbaum, *Afghanistan and its neighbors*, (June 2006).

<sup>96</sup> Rudra Chaudhuri and Sheryas Shende, *Dealing with the Taliban: India's strategy in Afghanistan after U.S withdrawal*, (JUNE 2020).

Furthermore, Predatory neighbours have been a fact of life for the Afghan state throughout most of its history. In defence, Afghans have chosen both isolation and resistance. Today, openness and cooperation with regional powers offer the best prospects for security and economic progress for Afghanistan. Conversely, the region's political stability and economic potential are broadly influenced by the ability of post-conflict Afghanistan to succeed in its recovery.

The region's opportunistic states are liable to revive their interventions in Afghanistan in the event of a faltering Kabul government or an international community that reneges on its commitments to help secure and rebuild the country. Already there are some indications that the forbearance shown by neighbours in recent years may be flagging. Pakistan and Iran offer Afghanistan its most imposing and critical regional bilateral relationships. Whether they cooperate or create obstacles for Afghanistan's recovery is greatly influenced by American strategic policies in the region.

There is widespread belief among Afghans and others in the region that U.S. interest in the country will fade quickly once its major objectives in the region are realized. While an arguable expectation, perceptions alone are enough for many Afghans and regional power brokers to begin to hedge their bets in supporting the Karzai regime. Afghanistan's emergence as a regional crossroads for trade and resource sharing in a post-Taliban era remains a distant though hopeful prospect. Endemic economic and physical constraints and retrogressive political developments block progress toward the region forming a vital new economic entity.<sup>97</sup>

## **2. India suffered many bomb blasts in Afghanistan;**

Notwithstanding a significant deterioration in the security situation, impinging directly on India with the attack on the Indian Embassy in Kabul in July 2008, India remained at the forefront of international efforts to assist Afghanistan in building a stable democratic and pluralistic society. The Zaranj-Delaram road giving Afghanistan access to the sea

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<sup>97</sup> Gareth Price, India's policy towards Afghanistan, (August 2013).



was formally inaugurated by EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee and President Karzai on 22nd January, 2009.

On the other hand, there was a terrorist attack targeting the Indian Embassy in Kabul on 8 October, 2009 which killed at least seventeen Afghans. Two ITBP personnel suffered shrapnel injuries. Foreign Secretary Smt. Nirupama Rao visited Kabul immediately after the blast and met President Karzai, Foreign Minister Spanta and other leaders. She was told by the Afghan leaders that the attack was carried out by elements from outside Afghanistan seeking to damage the excellent relations that exist between India and Afghanistan.

Government of India is in constant touch with the Government of Afghanistan regarding the safety and security of Indian nationals in Afghanistan.

There was a terrorist attack on the morning of 26 February, 2010 in Kabul targeting residential facilities, used mainly by Indian nationals. Six Indians, including one officer each of Army Medical Corps and Army Education Corps (AEC), engaged in medical and humanitarian work, one employee each of the Indian Consulates General in Herat and Kandahar, a member of an ICCR-sponsored visiting cultural troupe and a senior official of Power Grid Corporation of Indian Limited fell victim the same day.

One more officer of AEC succumbed to his injuries later (3 March). The injured and mortal remains of the deceased were airlifted on 27 February by a special Indian Air Force flight. President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai conveyed telephonically his condolence to Prime Minister on 27 February and promised full investigation into the attack. PM requested President Karzai to ensure security for Indian nationals in Afghanistan. Foreign Minister of Afghanistan Mr Zalmay Rasoul called External Affairs Minister on 26 February condemned the terrorist attack and assured that increased security measures would be taken for the safety of Indian nationals in Afghanistan. EAM deeply condoled the loss of lives

in the attack and underlined that Government of India would not be deterred by such attacks.<sup>98</sup>

### **3. Pakistan is a big road barrier between Afghan-Indo relationship;**

Afghanistan has been victim of regional and international hegemonic designs of Super Powers. It has great importance to outreach the Central Asian Republic States. India is trying to increase its influence in Afghanistan which is very much disturbing for Pakistan as India's growing influence in Afghanistan is strategic loss for Pakistan. The prevalent security dilemma has increased the mistrust between India and Pakistan. The Peaceful Afghanistan is very much essential for the growth and peace of Pakistan. Both India and Pakistan want to forge enviable relations with Afghan Government. There are lot of ups and downs in the relationship of Pakistan and Afghanistan. India is arch rival of Pakistan and cannot tolerate Pakistan's prosperity which hinges upon peace in Afghanistan.

The recent actions that have been taken in Afghanistan and their association with other countries at the international level especially relationship between India and Afghanistan definitely effect its neighbouring countries. Pakistan also effects by their relations because it is a central country (among Afghanistan, Pakistan and India) on the basis of geographical boundaries. The interconnectedness of Afghanistan and India shape the future of the region in terms of peace and conflict. Also, India wants to make its outside relation in a peaceful strategy therefore, the present improvements and movements at worldwide request propose that the nation needs to work for making the outside environment helpful for her change and advancement. For this, India needs to mind and address the three arrangements of difficulties i.e., guaranteeing a tranquil neighbourhood, setting up and adjusting the relations with the significant powers, and tending to the issues of nourishment security, water, vitality and environment. It is in this setting India's remote strategy since mid-21<sup>st</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> 2009-2010, Government of India Ministry of External Affairs, P. 4-5, Jan 01, 2009.

century included an intermediating level between the districts and worldwide standpoint.<sup>99</sup>

India also blamed that many different terror groups and militant groups are being trained and funded by Pakistan. India forced to international community that they put pressure on Islamabad to destroy and control these activities seriously. The USA attacked through Drone technology in the tribal areas of Pakistan because intelligence reports showed that militant groups are conduct attacked on southern Afghanistan and come back to their shelter in tribal areas of Afghanistan.<sup>100</sup> Moreover, the intelligence reports of USA showed that Taliban are reuniting and gathering their strength in the border areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan.<sup>101</sup> In these days Pakistan and Afghanistan are at the point of attack by the militant activities of Al Qaeda and Taliban.<sup>102</sup>

In South Asia, Pakistan and India is the competitor of each other and New Delhi thinks that policy towards Afghanistan is the main prospective. Pakistan and India have totally different political and security interests in Afghanistan. The relations between Pakistan, Afghanistan and India showed that India wants to remain Pakistan back foot regarding interference in the Afghan matters.<sup>103</sup> Pakistan has concerns about the involvement of India in Afghanistan, such that conflicts between Pakistan and India grow strong.<sup>104</sup>

The relationships between India and Afghanistan are growing day by day and Pakistan showed great concerns by these growing interests and other side Iran has also grow her relationship with Afghanistan, this is also

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<sup>99</sup> Dr. Ghulam Mustafa, Muhammad Asif, Muhammad Arslan, *Politics and International Studies*, (July–December 2018).

<sup>100</sup> Subrahmanya, K, *Afghanistan: The long retreat of US*. Bengaluru: Deccan Herald, (2012).

<sup>101</sup> Choudhury, R, *Balancing US Interests in India and Pakistan*. Rome: The international Spector, (2011).

<sup>102</sup> Dr. Ghulam Mustafa, Muhammad Asif, Muhammad Arslan, *Politics and International Studies*, (July–December 2018).

<sup>103</sup> Chaudhary, D. R, *India's Foreign Policy Priorities: Economy Emerges as the Driving Force*, (2011).

<sup>104</sup> Gangly, S, *Conflict Unending: India-Pakistan Tensions since 1947*. New York: New York Time, (2001).

rejectable for Pakistan.<sup>105</sup> India foreign policy towards Afghanistan regarding gain her interests and end the Taliban regime has many critics, New Delhi think that, if Pakistan will interfere in the Afghanistan that will be harmful to her territory and interests.<sup>106</sup> Now, Kashmir issue, Sir Creek issue and Siachen issue are conflicts between Pakistan and India, moreover, other some issues are also a big reason to rise conflicts like regional supremacy, economic race, arm race, become the alliance member to peruse the interests, natural resources etc.

The effect of the Indian Government in Afghanistan and catch the resources of central Asia, is not acceptable for the Pakistan and in this regard, Pakistan struggles to minimize the influence of India in every level. To know the truth that, India uses Afghanistan as geographically and politically against the Pakistan, Islamabad does not want Afghanistan and India come close against the interests of Pakistan. Islamabad has also concerned that through the Afghanistan terror attacks are being conducted on the Pakistan by India. India may not be successful in this due to unity of religions.

The purpose, to involvement in Afghanistan, of India is to establish a network to watch over the Pakistan activities, diplomatic surveillances. Pakistan has faced many terror attacks and anti-government movements in last few years against the Pakistan. Indian involvement in Baluchistan and Waziristan showed the concerns of Pakistan, as Pakistan always blames India to support the anti-Pakistan unite to harm the Pakistani hegemony and create the violence in different areas of Pakistan.

After the 9/11 India is making efforts to remain in Afghanistan in every means like economic development, infrastructure building, capacity building etc. It also is said that after the 9/11 New Delhi involvement can be seen in every sector of Afghanistan. Indian involvement in Afghanistan is reason to enhance the concern for regional countries in respect of regional security. India is busy to enhance her military capacity to become dominate power in the region. In 1971, India played a vital role against

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<sup>105</sup> D'Souza, S. M, Securing India's Interests in Afghanistan. Chennai: The Hindu, (2009).

<sup>106</sup> Grare, F, Pakistan. Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, (2010).

Pakistan and disintegrates the Eastern Pakistan in Bangladesh; Pakistan has also worry about her western borders as India is become close friend of Afghanistan.<sup>107</sup>

LEGAL WIND

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<sup>107</sup> Q. B., & Niazi, A. K, Indian Encroachment in Afghanistan: A New Imperialism in the Making. Qurtuba University, Peshawar, Baloch, (2009).

#### **IV. What have we learnt from past, present, and future;**

##### ***Ferdaws Karimi and Shriya Subhadra***

India has played a significant role in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Afghanistan. This report indicates that democracy and development are the key instruments to ensure that Afghanistan becomes a source of regional stability. This has been reflected in the Strategic Partnership Agreement, signed between Afghanistan and India in October 2011, which reinforced the strong, vibrant and multi-faceted relations between the two countries and at the same time formalized a framework for cooperation in various areas between the two countries.

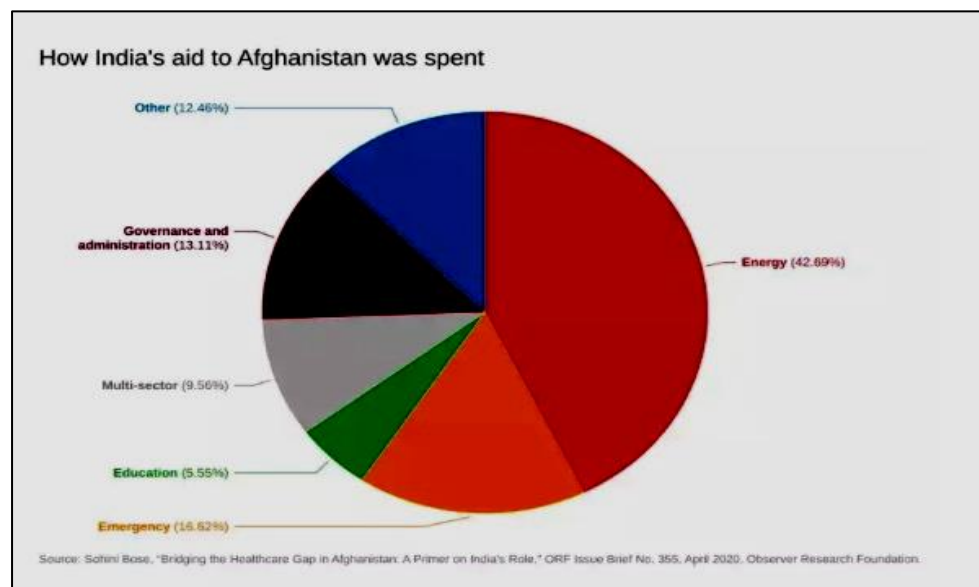
Although contact has always existed between the populations of Afghanistan since the days of the Indus Valley Civilizations India and Afghanistan Historically have shared very close political and cultural ties, diplomatic relations between the two nations were officially developed post the 1950's by signing a five-year Friendship treaty In January 1950. In addition, India's program in Afghanistan cover four broad areas; infrastructure projects, humanitarian assistance, small and community based development projects, and education and capacity development.

For a landlocked country such as Afghanistan, regional integration is exclusively superior, as it leads not only in trade promotional activities but increased trade and connectivity within the regions followed by the global economy. The regional integration between Afghanistan and India is thus not a necessary for unification with the rest of the world, rather it should be sustained with wider economic assimilation that makes the most of the region's proportional advantages.

In fact, Trade linkage between Afghanistan and India is very important because, it enables consumer of each country to access products from across the country. Secondly, it provides employment and finally, enhancing economic growth and relation between both countries.

In like manner, International trade is one of the ways that gives rise to world's economy. Basically, trading globally gives consumers and countries the opportunity to have access to new markets and products which is not available within the country. To trade at international level is a little complex process and have obstacles than domestic trade. Factors like the economy, government policies, markets, laws, currency and many other factors which impact on the result.

We should be remember that, Afghanistan for India is the gateway to the Central Asian Republics and to a large extent West Asia. In India's own vision of itself as an emerging major power, consolidating influence over its extended neighbourhood plays an absolutely important part, both economically and militarily. Central Asia, particularly, has become an extremely vital zone of operation in India's post-Cold war foreign policy scheme.



Source: The Times of India, 28<sup>th</sup> August 2021

India and Afghanistan share very robust and trust-able diplomatic ties, their relation is considered one of the strongest bi-lateral relation in the South-Asian subcontinent. The historical indentures and reports suggest mutual respect and trust between the two countries.

India has played a very indispensable role in the reconstruction of the conflict ridden country and has helped it back on its feet. The agreements made between the two countries are majorly beneficial to Afghanistan, in which India acts like a genuine friend who soothes the wound left by unstable political scenarios and exhausting power struggle.

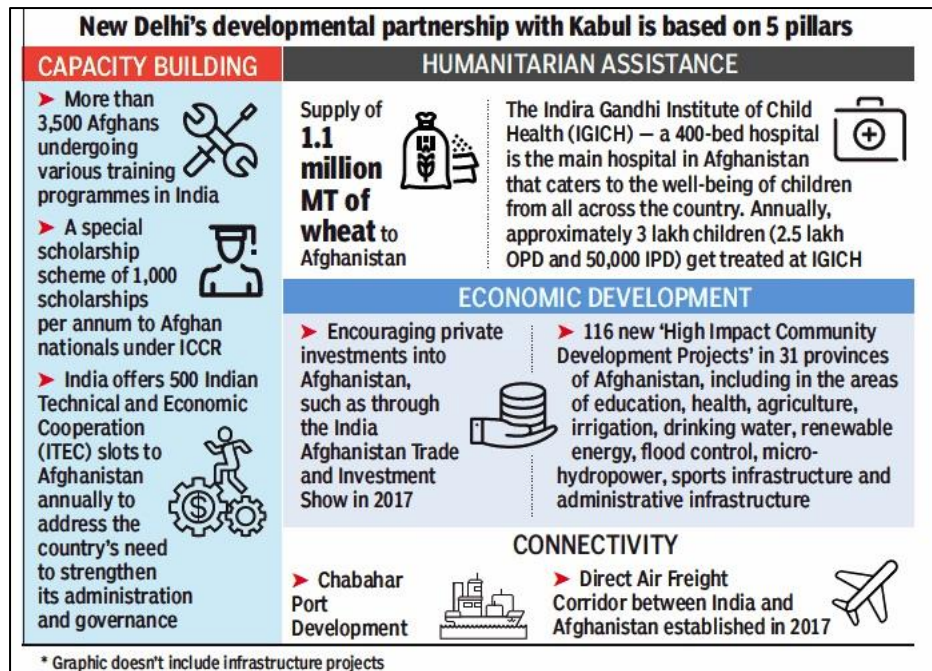
From Afghanistan's perspective India has always been constructive and generous approach towards their future and development in general. India has lend an helping hand in many humanitarian causes like construction of schools, hospitals and various other construction projects like dams and infrastructure. India has also aided in re-building the shattered economy, India has always been a much more involved

global partner of Afghanistan who aided it without conditions. Apart from the financial assistance and help in infrastructural development.

India and Afghanistan have enhanced their strategic partnership human resource development like training of Afghan nationals, the security forces and police, exchange of students, deputation academic experts, training in the field media, civil aviation, tourism and textile manufacturing and much more. India has been a role model for development, therefore, many institutional frameworks of India is used as a reference by Afghanistan such as providing of administrative, political and economic system as a case study. However India and Afghanistan do not share a one-sided relation but a mutually beneficial one. India views Afghanistan as strong partner in terms of Geo-politics and security, Afghanistan is a located a geographically strategic location for India. Therefore, a stable democratic and developed Afghanistan can be a blessing for the Indian political scenario. Not only has that Afghanistan been always a sincere supporter of India's international ventures. For instance, cooperation on the SAARC front of which both are members then Afghanistan supporting the inclusion of India as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. India and Afghanistan have strong relations in the period of 2001 to 2021. However India is showing support by refusing to accept the authority of the Taliban regime.

There five pillars of development which has been implemented by India towards Afghanistan- Human resource development, Infrastructural development, improvement of trade and investment, humanitarian works and community development.





Source: The Times of India, 4<sup>th</sup> January 2019

The current situation in Afghanistan is a recent example of momentous events on the ground compelling the reevaluation of a peace operation and leading to a technical rollover. In August 2021 Afghanistan's regime changed. In September 2021, the Taliban announced an interim government made up of rigid leaders. It is known as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, the government leads by a religious leader and draw its legitimacy from clerics. They have not mentioned holding elections. (Under the U.S.-backed government, Afghanistan was an Islamic republic that was led by a president and drew legitimacy from universal suffrage in accordance with international laws and norms.) No women or officials from the preceding government are included in the Taliban's cabinet.

The Taliban have sought to boost diplomacy with countries in the region, such as China, Pakistan, and Russia. They have encouraged countries to keep their embassies open and foreign businesses to continue work in Afghanistan. However, no country have yet recognized the Taliban as Afghanistan's government nor have they defined what kind of relationship they will have with the Taliban. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the United States will "judge [the Taliban's cabinet] by its actions." Chinese officials have said that China's support for Afghanistan will partly depend on the Taliban preventing terrorist activities in the region. The Taliban's new thirty-three-member caretaker cabinet includes men who

are considered terrorists by the United States and who are sanctioned by the United Nations.

Conflict has forced hundreds of thousands from their homes. The capital city has seen a huge influx of internally displaced persons from provinces around the country, where they felt insecure or fled during fighting. The international community must be united and utilize all available instruments to ensure and uphold human rights in Afghanistan

After changing Afghanistan's regime from Islamic republic of Afghanistan to Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, United Nations Security Council hold meetings on Afghanistan's humanitarian support and women and children's right protection. In meeting of 8834<sup>th</sup> on 16 August 2021 Security Council, the President issued that, United Nation will stay and deliver in support of the Afghan people in their hour of need and for an immediate end to violence, for the rights of all Afghans to be respected and for Afghanistan to comply with all international agreements to which it is a party.

Following with this resolution there are other resolutions on Afghanistan's situation, Resolution 2596 (2021) Adopted by the Security Council at its 8862<sup>nd</sup> meeting on 17 September 2021, United Nations states its strong commitment to play in promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan, sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan, as well as its continued support for the people of Afghanistan, and also for Emphasizing the importance of the establishment of an inclusive and representative government, equal and meaningful participation of women, and upholding human rights, including for women, children and minorities.

Security Council dynamics are continuing to evolve in the aftermath of the Taliban's takeover. China and Russia, which have kept their embassies in Kabul open, have both made public statements demonstrating a willingness to work with the Taliban and have also urged the international community to unfreeze Afghan assets. While the US and the UK are apparently resisting calls to release Afghan funds, there are also signs that they may be willing to engage with the Taliban to a certain extent. The US has met with the Taliban to discuss the provision of humanitarian assistance, while the UK has also met Taliban officials and is reportedly considering reopening its embassy

in Kabul. For certain Council members, including Ireland, Mexico, Norway and other like-minded states, the issues facing women and girls in Afghanistan are a particular concern. These members are likely to priorities keeping the situation of women and girls at the forefront of the Council's work in relation to Afghanistan. Council members are generally united regarding the importance of preventing Afghanistan from becoming a haven for terrorism.

- **Policy recommendations and proposals;**

Under these likely circumstances what policy options remain available to India? despite a small handful of members of India's strategic community who are enthusiastic about a future Indian military role in Afghanistan it is most unlikely that the present regime or one of its successors will undertake any such expeditionary venture. This report identifies two broad objectives in the way forward India-Afghanistan relations;

Bilaterally, there is a need to put down roots for the future. The current good will between Afghanistan and India is the result of the latter's development efforts over the years but most of India's big projects in Afghanistan have now ended. There is therefore a need to plan ahead.

Furthermore, India should continue making financial investments in Afghanistan, but should introduce a more systematic approach towards evaluating the purpose and scope of individual projects. With raising insecurity in Afghanistan, big infrastructure projects may be less feasible in the short term, but India should continue its help for Afghanistan's socioeconomic sector.

In other word, India should significantly step up military equipment transfers to Afghanistan specially to strengthen its air power. It should also expand its training and capacity-building support for the ANSF (Afghan National Security Forces). Towards this end, it should actively implement the relevant provisions of the agreement on strategic partnership. However, the public diplomacy around such measures should emphasize that they are a means to a civilian end: a stable, plural, and progressive Afghanistan.

By the same taken, India should continue to exercise patience and should not expect Afghanistan's national unity government to take any significant bilateral steps, as it's distracted by its challenges. India should also continue to respect Afghanistan's

wish to give Pakistan a chance to achieve peace, whether through the current moribund peace process as well as any future peace processes.

India should engage with afghan civil society and help build institutions to foster democratic youth leaders for Afghanistan's future.

Multilaterally, there should be a strategic regional approach towards shaping Afghanistan's decade of transformation guided by the holistic vision described earlier. The first step in this should be formulate a plan B as a matter of urgency. India's official establishment and Indian think tanks should promote a regional dialogue and champion the holistic vision described earlier. Efforts should be via this dialogue to evolve a plan B for Afghanistan.

Notably, India should use the platform of SAARC to pressure Pakistan into providing overland trade access, a step that will also help open Pakistani markets to India and Afghanistan should use their recently signed transit agreement with Iran as leverage, as the deal places the onus on Pakistan to participate in regional trade or be left out.

Keeping in mind that a war of ideas will form critical aspect of Afghanistan's future over the next decade, India should proactively engage in narrative-building. Several steps can be taken to achieve this. Highlighting the positive aspects of Afghanistan rather than simply its security challenges is important, and there is a need to more actively contest the Pakistani doctrine of strategic depth. India should also engage in public diplomacy to respond to allegation that it's using its consulates in Afghanistan to decibels Pakistan. This is necessary in view of advice from afghan analysts who say that such allegation are finding a willing audience among some circles in Afghanistan.

Moreover, India should act as a voice for afghan security interests for Washington, rather than leave this task to Pakistan. It should present these interests in the contest of a holistic view of the country, rather than reinforce the prevailing security-centric view.

Trilateral cooperation among India, Afghanistan and china should be explored. China has influence over the Pakistani military and has an interest in a stable Afghanistan, while India can take advantage of china's one belt one road project in promoting Afghanistan as a trade and transit hub. Multilateral cooperation with

Russia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Iran can also be explored. Promoting the TAPI gas pipeline should be prioritized.

India should continue to host afghan students, and can also approach other countries such as Germany to finance their education.

India has made a great deal of investments in Afghanistan because of the presence of U.S. however post departure of the US troops has made the country unstable risking the long term interests of India in Afghanistan. The presence of India amidst Taliban presence can see as dangerous, the danger can be-

Firstly, the acknowledgement of US-Taliban agreement is on ambiguous side, this agreement prevents the operation of terrorist outfits on Afghan soil. Secondly, the increasing presence of Pakistan and Inter-Services Intelligence which has been linked with Taliban on a regular basis. Therefore, keeping these points in mind India can make these mitigation strategies to safeguard their interests in Afghanistan

- A more broad diplomatic approach like appointment of a special envoy especially for Afghan reconciliation, the envoy primary purpose is to actively engage with Afghan officials and convey India's point of view. They should also reach out to other political figures and Taliban representatives.
- India should continue its training and schooling of military of Afghan security forces any kind of future crisis. Support National Directorate of Security by sharing intelligence.
- Given the desolation of rights and economy in the face of Taliban occupation and corona virus, India needs to expand its prospects of assistance it is currently providing.
- India should find similar ground with other foreign power who are helpers of Afghanistan like Russia, Iran and specially US to enhance cooperation and diplomatic associations carving out areas of consensus.

India and Afghanistan used to have very firm partnership pre-Taliban times in SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation). However, the SAARC meeting was slated to be held in New York hosted by Nepal has been canceled. The reason being all the members failed to reach a mutual ground of conducting the meeting. Pakistan is hell bent on having a Taliban representative on the behalf of

Afghanistan however India and the international community in general is yet to legitimize the Taliban rule in Afghanistan and on the top of that many cabinet ministers of Taliban ruled Afghanistan are blacklisted by UN. Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated in SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization) that Taliban should not be recognized and be included as a government. He also pointed out the lack of representation of women and minorities in government in Kabul. It is believed that all the SAARC members agreed to hold the meet without Afghanistan but Pakistan did not agree and the meet was called off. India and Afghanistan were always supportive of each other on SAARC front but for now India should take careful steps in involving Afghanistan in the organization again sans or little involvement of Taliban officials.

Taliban's involvement in Afghanistan has given Pakistan a strategic edge over India in Afghanistan since it shares close relations with Taliban and porous border with Afghanistan. This geopolitical realignment can change the political dynamics in South Asia.

The former Afghanistan had strong ties with the west and other democracies like India, but the now it seems that the main players in Afghan politics can be Pakistan, Russia and China. Pakistan has always felt inferior since they were unhappy with growing ties between US and India or former Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's mediocre relations with Islamabad but now Pakistan is confident with China having its back. China also harbors deep interest in economic prospects it holds in Afghanistan, as China's foreign minister Wang Yi's meetings with Taliban leaders shows their apparent interest. It seems like Russia and Iran are following the same path as they did not bother to evacuate its embassy and diplomats of both countries are still functioning in Kabul.

The biggest dilemma India is facing now recognizing the Taliban government. However, the best option at this moment it to keep the channel of communication open with the Taliban. However, it will be an unsteady and rocky relation as the memory of 1999 hijack is still fresh for India plus India has maintained close relations with Northern Alliance, the group of war-loads that fought the Taliban in late 90s. Countries like China are using the advantage of geographical location and therefore plans to play an important role. It plans on making long term plans which has nothing to do with the current regime. On the other Russia has made a practical approach by

not making long term plans. They are making short term goals which are more flexible as they may change once the temporary rule of Taliban fades away to something more stable and strong.

Keeping in mind these, it is very essential for India to approach the changed situation in Afghanistan in a manner which is both thoughtful of the short live of the Taliban regime and at the same time not dismissive as something unremarkable. In that case, India should engage in dialogue and discussions to avoid further violence and tyranny within Afghan soil and preserving Afghan society's ideology and sanity.

The most prioritized issue right now in Afghanistan is humanitarian crisis, which desperate to be acknowledged by the international community. India as the well-wisher of Afghanistan can initiate help and assistance. India can approach organizations like United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) to help the displaced get basic requirement food and shelter. India can also ask for assistance from regional partners like the Shanghai Cooperation (SCO) and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) of which Afghanistan is also a member. India can summon these organization on compassionate grounds like eradicating problems like terrorism and radicalism.

Immediately after taking over Afghanistan Taliban leader Sher Mohammed Abbas Stanekzai expressed his wish to continue the good relations Afghanistan shares with India. Since, India is the largest country in South Asia and exerts great influence which makes it an important strategic partner and is indispensable and of great eminence. In this continued statement Stanekzai, mentioned TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) gas pipeline project and said the Taliban would address the issues which is hindering this project. However India is still ambiguous whether Taliban's message to be taken seriously or not plus there are major security concerns as well. However, as far as the India is concerned they should not take the statements lightly rather than being aloof of the regime they should form not hostile but lukewarm relations limited to talks of strategic importance and preserve the Indian investments in Afghanistan but at the same not form very friendly relations as it may give validation and legitimacy to the new regime.

Therefore, it is advisable that India should not repeat its past mistake that is not interacting with regime led by Mullah Omar in 2001, but should to be open

discussion, deliberation and cooperation at necessary levels because India may not want to form relations with Taliban but at the same time it does not want to ruin long standing friendship with innocent Afghan public. India should continue with its development ventures and financial assistance in Afghanistan.

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## **Conclusion**

India - Afghanistan relations have always been a genuine approach towards soft power. Since Afghanistan is a war-torn country, it is still taking time to get up and rise from shackles of poverty and conflicts. However, India has given its best in being its development partner by providing the necessary financial and administrative assistance. The Indian government has lots of projects underway in Afghanistan. India has not only helped in developmental and infrastructure related projects but also build a strong bond on cultural and civilization exchange.

The modern relation of India and Afghanistan started in 1950 by signing a treaty of friendship between two countries on January 1950.<sup>108</sup> In other word, India has played a significant role in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Afghanistan. We believe that democracy and development are the key instruments to ensure that Afghanistan becomes a source of regional stability. This has been reflected in the Strategic Partnership Agreement, signed between Afghanistan and India in October 2011, which reinforced the strong, vibrant and multi-faceted relations between the two countries and at the same time formalized a framework for cooperation in various areas between the two countries: political & security cooperation; trade & economic cooperation; capacity development and education; and social, cultural, civil society & people-to-people relations. This agreement is a strong signal of two countries abiding commitment to peace, stability and prosperity in Afghanistan during this critical period of security and governance transition. The commitment is also reflected in extensive developmental assistance programme, which now stands at around US \$2 billion, making India the 5<sup>th</sup> largest bilateral donor in Afghanistan after the US, UK, Japan and Germany. This, by any reckoning, is a substantial amount for a non-traditional donor like India.

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<sup>108</sup> 1949-1950, Government of India Ministry of External Affairs, P. 4-5, Jan 01, 1949.

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