



GOMAL UNIVERSITY JOURNAL OF RESEARCH



Gomal University, Dera Ismail Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

ISSN:1019- 8180 (Print)

ISSN: 2708- 1737 (Online)

Website

www.gujr.com.pk

HEC Recognized

Social Sciences

CrossRef

DOI:10.51380

A STUDY ON AFGHANISTAN INTRICACIES: IMPACT AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR PAKISTAN

Shahid Nawaz Malik

M.Phil. Scholar, Department of International Relations, University of Balochistan, Pakistan

KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Afghanistan Intricacies, Impact, Considerations, Pakistan	Afghanistan's unique geopolitical location at crossroads of Central, East, and South Asia, along with its historical significance, has made it a focal point for global powers. Post-Soviet era, it served as a buffer against Russian influence. The abrupt U.S. withdrawal in August 2021 disrupted regional stability, allowing the terrorist groups like Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) to thrive. Taliban, now in control, faces internal challenges with ISIS targeting both civilians and Taliban leadership. The Taliban's reluctance to confront other terrorist factions jeopardizes not only Afghan peace but also regional stability, impacting projects like OBOR & CPEC. The Afghanistan's instability directly affects neighboring Pakistan, emphasizing the interconnectedness of the internal Afghan security and Pakistan's peace. For enduring peace, concerted efforts from regional and international actors are imperative to address Afghanistan's internal security and stabilize the region. The current study is qualitative in nature and discusses the leading issues related to the Afghanistan intricacies and its allied impact and considerations for Pakistan. This study addressed these challenging issues and its implications for Pakistan in prevailing situations in order to reach conclusion and offer recommendations.
Article History Date of Submission: 22-11-2023 Date of Acceptance: 25-12-2023 Date of Publication: 31-12-2023	 2023 Gomal University Journal of Research
Corresponding Author	Shahid Nawaz Malik: khushnoodsahi588@gmail.com
DOI	https://doi.org/10.51380/gujr-39-04-08

INTRODUCTION

Against the backdrop of the rapidly changing geopolitical landscape, Afghanistan has become a crucible of complexity, marked by political transitions, security challenges, and socio-economic transformations. Withdrawal of international forces, coupled with rise of new power dynamics, has left a void that Afghan stakeholders are grappling to fill (Sopko, 2021). Internal intricacies of Afghanistan's political landscape, including delicate balance of power among various ethnic and tribal factions, further compound the challenges faced by the nation (Khan, 2021). Thus, for Pakistan, its western neighbor's internal dynamics carry the significant implications. The porous border shared between the two nations poses security concerns, mainly in light of the potential spillover of violence and resurgence of extremist elements. The historical context of Afghan-

Pakistani relations, with periods of cooperation and tension, adds a layer of complexity to the current situation (Ali & Zafar, 2017). Beyond security considerations, economic ties between Afghanistan and Pakistan are substantial. Trade routes, such as Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA), connect two nations, making economic stability in one directly linked to the other. Thus, a multidimensional study incorporating these aspects would provide a more inclusive understanding of the intricacies surrounding Afghanistan and the considerations for Pakistan.

The evolving situation in Afghanistan has the potential to impact regional economic dynamics, affecting not only Pakistan but also neighboring countries (APTTA, 2010). Besides, diplomatic relations are crucial in navigating the complexities of the region. Its historical ties, geopolitical considerations, and the pursuit of a stable and friendly neighbor influence, Pakistan's approach to the Afghan situation (Weinbaum, 2006). Balancing these factors requires astute diplomatic maneuvering to safeguard Pakistan interests while contributing to regional stability. In essence, the intricacies of Afghanistan reverberate across borders, and a comprehensive understanding of these complexities is essential for the Pakistan to formulate an effective and adaptive strategy (Threlkeld & Easterly, 2021). As the Afghan narrative unfolds, the implications for the Pakistan extend beyond immediate security concerns, encompassing economic, diplomatic, and regional stability considerations. Thus, it is within this intricate web of factors that Pakistan's strategic outlook is forged and continually re-evaluated. A comprehensive study on the intricacies of the Afghanistan, its impact, and considerations for the Pakistan involves examining the historical, geopolitical, cultural, economic & security dimensions. Therefore, considering potential future scenarios in Afghanistan, such as the political developments, peace processes, and the role of external actors, is essential for predicting how the situation may evolve and how it could impact Pakistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A Country: Hard to Hold on to

Afghanistan, the land of conflicts and beauty is known as the graveyard of great empires. It has distinctive Geopolitical location; acting like an energy bridge, connecting Central Asia to South Asia and further the Arabian Sea through Pakistan. To Western nations, it is more like a barrier to contain and obstruct Russian influence to the South and create a buffer zone (Savranskaya & Blanton 2019). It is because of its unique ranking and in global political sphere that it has lured in great nations into its rugged but beautiful lands and caused them attrition and collapse. Four ecological, cultural, and strategic regions converge in Afghanistan: Middle East, Central Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, and Far East. The Northern and Southern regions of the country are split by the Hindu Kush Mountains, which are further divided based on topographic, historical, and ethno linguistic settlement patterns (Akram, 2015). Afghanistan is in turmoil not only due to terrorism, but also ethnic rivalries which is bedrock instability in Afghanistan with windfall effects on its neighbors, especially Pakistan; key stakeholder in Afghanistan strategic & political discourse.

Diverse Ethnicity

The ethnic landscape of Afghanistan has also been significantly shaped by history, geography, & topography. Ethnicity and its division in Afghanistan are primarily based on tribes, language and culture and to some extent on traditions as well. However, exact origin of particular ethnic group in Afghanistan is more like a mystery. Some like Pashtuns and Hazaras are native to the

land of Afghanistan; however, even these two don't share any cultural or traditional similarity (Batool, 2021). Division among these ethnic groups is very clear; it is either based on language, tribe, race or sect. Assessing humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, including access to basic services and human rights, is crucial for understanding challenges faced by Afghan population. The major Afghan ethnic groups, which are dominating other groups, are Pashtun and Hazara, followed by Tajik and Uzbek. One of the main causes for such a diverse ethnicity of Afghanistan lies in its history of invaders. It's been invaded by almost all great powers of the past who tried to touch continent including Mangols, Mughals, Persians, Turks & Aryans. All these intruders have left people behind, which kept changing the demography and ethnic matrix of the country (the Cultural and Geographic Research, "Pashtun Tribal Dynamics", the Tribal Analysis Centre, 2009).

Thus, understanding the cultural and ethnic diversity within Afghanistan is crucial. The Pashtun ethnic group, which spans the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, has cultural and familial ties that influence relations between two countries. The majority of Pashtuns are Sunni Muslims who adhere to the Hanafi School of Islam in its moderate form. However, typical Pashtun tribesman follows kind of Islam that is strongly affected by and as and how their mullahs (Schetter, 2003) interpret it to them as per their wins and wishes in the different circumstances. When there is conflict or social unrest, power of mullah begins to grow because a skilled orator can convince those who are visiting his mosque that the tribe is under the attack. He emphasizes how much more of threat Islam is than the tribe. In other cases, if the mullah is successful in taking over tribe's government, he will need to find means to maintain unrest that propelled him to power as the tribesmen will often turn away from mullah and turn towards secular authority. Still, in times of unrest and impending danger, mullah has weighty advantage as rural Pashtuns have tendency to rapidly turn to religion for assistance. Thus mullahs played substantial role during USSR invasion and jihad against them till its collapse. After fall of Soviet Union, US along with its allies invaded country with an aim to fight elements of terrorism, likely harbored by regime of Taliban.

The War on Terror

The U.S lodged a full fledged war against Taliban and Al-Qaida along with its allies after holding them allegedly responsible for attack on world trade center in New York on 11 September 2001. After fighting a war in name of terrorism for over two decades, the U.S administration decided to withdraw its troops from the war-weary country in April 2021. This decision was made after realizing that despite vigorous fight between allies along with ANDSF and Taliban, gains were none. Hence, withdrawal was commenced and it was finally concluded by end of August 2021 by President Joe Biden. In this way, U.S ended its longest war by departing its last flight from Kabul Airport on 31 August 2021. Pakistan & Gulf States particularly Qatar played formidable role in bringing the US and Taliban representatives to the table for negotiations of terms. The hasty withdrawal of US and the desertion of Ghani's administration created a power vacuum which was not only just filled by Afghan Taliban but also left the country and region exposed to a number of catastrophes including terrorism, economic and humanitarian calamities. During withdrawal of US and its allies, extensive quantity of modern military weapons and equipment worth billions of dollars were left behind and has now gone into the hands of Afghan Taliban. Thus, the beneficiary of this latest gadgetry was not just the Afghan Taliban as a considerable quantity of this cache has also fallen into the hands of Afghan based Tehreek Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

Post US Withdrawal Era

After the withdrawal of US, Afghanistan saw a surge in numerous governance issues including the economic shock, humanitarian crises, surge in militancy, international recognition and an inefficient administration. Foreign aid and financial assistance from the West and US was the core source of revenue pumping economy of Afghanistan. With Taliban taking control of Kabul, not only financial assistance stopped coming but the US and the West imposed strict financial sanctions. Moreover, the recovery and rehabilitation of war torn country is adversely affected by the active presence of various terrorist organizations including the ISIS and Daesh, posing a serious challenge to Taliban administration. Current Afghan Administration relies on foreign financial aid as the economy of the country is facing the hardest times. Moreover, militancy of various groups for regional supremacy remnant to cold war era has restarted. In this scenario, Afghan peace process is not meeting any success since US withdrawal. Involvement of various regional and international actors can contribute a very positive role in stabilizing Afghanistan's economy and peace process if serious efforts are made and their individual strategic gains are put aside.

A Nest to Terrorists Groups

Present situation in Afghanistan is not at all optimistic and the country keeps witnessing many terrorist incidents in the major cities of Afghanistan. A weak law and order and resurgence of terrorism is on the rise in the Afghanistan and effects of its spill over is evident from the current security situation in Pakistan. The active status of ISIS-K poses unavoidable threats to Afghan peace. It has claimed responsibility for most of terrorist incidents happening in Afghanistan since the US withdrawal. The day the US troops started their withdrawal, a suicide attack later claimed by ISIS-K killed 13 US troops along with 170 civilian and leaving over 200 injured. The organization continued its deadly attacks, successfully targeting & eliminating Afghan Taliban leadership. Hence, ISIS-K poses a lead threat to current Taliban administration, unless they are dealt with, thus, the administration may not be able to cope with other economic and social challenges. Fragile security situation of Afghanistan has the tendency to take entire region in its fold. The role of China and Russia is also very important in entire peace process as ISIS presence has emerged as collateral threat. The surge began on the departure of the first US armed forces contingent departing from Kabul airport ISIS-K has its presence in small numbers in various districts and been able to establish strong foothold in Nangarhar & Kunar provinces neighboring Pakistan.

These factors make this peace process very complicated where many regional active players are competing for personal interests often in direct conflict with each other. Pakistan will be major beneficiary of peace in Afghanistan but it will need tireless and well thought efforts to achieve the durable peace. East Turkestan Islamic Movement, now known as The Turkestan Islamic Party (TIP), is a group of Uyghur people that Beijing says is responsible for the unrest in its province Xinjiang. The party enjoys close ties with Afghan Taliban as they allowed TIP to operate from Afghanistan since 1990s (during Taliban's first Government) and later during US invasion, it has supported Taliban against US troops ([Rehman, 11 August 2022](#)). The China demands from Afghanistan that all ties must be cut with TIP as she has long been concerned about the Uyghur militants using Afghanistan as a base in their decades-long fight for an independent Xinjiang, which they refer to as Eastern Turkestan. In this connection, the instability and military warfare have long been linked to Iran's Sistan and Baluchistan Province. Thus, the two million Baluch Muslims who live in the region, who are primarily Sunni Muslims, have endured ongoing racial

prejudice and persecution in Iran, which is primarily Shia as well as Persian-speaking. Iranian Baluch terrorists from two main rebel groups, Jundullah and Jaish-ul Adl, have been escalating Iran's internal security issue (Gahremanpour, "Iran Looking West: Rationality and Foreign Policy).

Iran is concerned about potential return of Al-Qaeda activities in the area. Iranian government opposes Afghanistan being a hub for the export of extremism. In the event that Taliban decide to coordinate with other local rebel organizations, they worry that their Baloch minority groups may become more motivated. In fact, these Baloch rebels have continued to be decisive to the Taliban's existence along Iran-Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Uzbeks formed Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan in 1992 during civil war of Tajikistan for the purpose of fight with Islamist forces in Tajikistan. WE designated group, later in 2000 as terrorist organization as it has close links and enjoys good relations with Al-Qaida. Economic ties amid Afghanistan & Pakistan, including trade and transit, are vital considerations. The stability of Afghanistan can impact the regional economic integration and progress with weighty internal displacement and refugee outflows due to conflict and instability. IMU joined forces with Taliban during US invasion of Afghanistan, committed assaults against US & Central Asian nations. Group concentrated on the Afghanistan and Pakistan when U.S. military activities started in 2001. Reportedly, several Uzbeks affiliated to group have been killed during their attacks on Pakistani security check posts in Tribal belt of the country.

According to U.N. sanctions monitors, IMU & other Central Asian terrorist organizations have "more freedom of movement" in Afghanistan under Taliban administration. Since the entire region is vulnerable to security threats from IMU and Taliban would face difficulties in banning or forcing them to leave the soil of Afghanistan. Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a byproduct of US invasion, at the time started providing refuge to terrorist allies escaping the battle in the Afghanistan, including Afghan Taliban, al-Qaeda, and other groups. By joining the US in the fight against terrorism, Pakistan experienced deadly backlash that finally led these Pakistani jihadists to unite and form TTP. At first, it only asserted that it was a continuation of Afghan Taliban and proclaimed Mullah Mohammad Omar, the Afghan Taliban's former commander, as its spiritual leader and offered to aid them in their fight against United States and its allies. Yet, meanwhile its foundation, India has been funding the organization to support the militancy and terrorism in Pakistan in an effort to undermine the writ of the government. The terrorist incidents by TTP have already cost billions of dollars and tens of thousands of lives to Pakistan. These incidents have increased by 51% within one year since Taliban take over. The summary as under:

Table 1
Details of Attacks

Duration	Deaths	Injuries	Attacks
15 August 2021 - 14 August 2022a	433	719	250
August 2020 - 14 August 2021a	294	598	165

Note: Data is from Khan.I.A, 2022a.

The TTP continues to receive strong backing from Afghan Taliban, who offers them welcoming sanctuary. In Afghanistan, where both Taliban and non-Taliban communities support the TTP because of animosity towards Pakistan, TTP has great deal of popular support. Certain Taliban

leaders, most notably Taliban Interior Minister Siraj Haqqani, have seldomly held back TTP in response to Pakistani demands. Yet, majority of Taliban members devotedly supports TTP and its campaign. Thus, Taliban Amir Hibatullah Akhundzada, in particular, concurs with TTP that Pakistan's system is "un-Islamic". So as to avoid any global and regional isolation and build a sustainable economy, Taliban has to meet demands and concerns of other nations particularly its neighboring states. Though Afghanistan agrees to relocate militant groups its safe heavens from Afghanistan, however this remains challenge for Taliban to implement in its true letter and spirit.

Challenges to Pakistan

Current Afghan Administration relies on foreign financial aid as the economy of the country is facing hardest times. Moreover, militancy of various groups for regional supremacy remnant to cold war era has restarted. In this scenario, Afghan peace process is not meeting any success since US withdrawal. Involvement of various regional and international actors can contribute a very positive role in stabilizing Afghanistan's economy and its peace process if serious efforts are made and their individual strategic gains are put aside. Conflicts and unrest in Afghanistan have caused the most harm to Pakistan. War on terror that America initiated has cost Pakistan billions of dollars and tens of thousands of deaths. Pakistan is inspiring all parties to partake in the peace negotiations and work towards stabilizing Afghanistan. Pakistan took the initiative in working with Qatar to get Taliban to negotiate with United States. US-Taliban conflict would not have been resolved without Pakistan's efforts. Stable Afghanistan is vital to bringing about regional peace. Prolonged Afghan war has had greatest negative impact on Pakistan. Pakistan is not benefited by war in the Afghanistan. Pakistan is the first and main benefactor of peace in Afghanistan.

The transit commerce across Central Asia will be welcomed & supported by stable Afghanistan. Pakistan now has the chance to grow its economy thanks to Chinese projects in the region such the One Belt, One Road (OBOR) & China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). For Pakistan and region, CPEC is regarded as Game Changer. Only if Afghanistan has peace, Beijing, Islamabad, Kabul, and Central Asian Republics of these transit commerce will profit from these projects. Still US has withdrawn its forces from Afghanistan and two-decade long war has been ended through negotiations and political resolutions however peace is yet to be achieved in country. Unless peace is achieved, besides terrorism Pakistan will have various challenges to coup d'état with:

- ✓ With US invasion of Afghanistan, chaos, turmoil, and unrest once more forced a sizable portion of the Afghan populace to flee across borders and seek safety in Pakistan. By the end of 2001, there were reportedly close to five million Afghan refugees, which presented new difficulties for Pakistani administration. In 2002, UNHCR & Pakistani government undertook census of Afghans living in Pakistan. According to that, 3,049,268 Afghans reside in Pakistan.
- ✓ Soon after Afghan migrants arrived in Pakistan, a rivalry for resources like water, land, food, and property was launched between the refugees and locals. As a result, there was a gulf between the residents of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, two areas that were hosting huge numbers of refugees. The demand for jobs, resources, education, electricity, transportation, and work by immigrants rose over the years, further inflaming residents in the two provinces. Both Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan are impoverished and

have complained of rights violations. The Afghan diaspora has significantly harmed the locals' economic interests in these two regions.

- ✓ Economic issues include the fact that majority of Afghan traders operate their businesses in various Pakistani cities without paying taxes. For instance, these dealers amassed billions of dollars in Peshawar alone while evading taxes. These issues increased burden on local taxpayers and company owners, and they negatively impacted growth of revenue collection.
- ✓ When migrants come from diverse ethnic & linguistic groups, there will be many issues as a result of competing interests. In the case of Baluchistan, the local Baloch community views refugees as a threat to population's balance because many of them have obtained CNICs and acquired Pakistani identities, which they feel will undermine their status as the majority group. Thus, they believe that refugees could contribute to a demographic shift that would reduce the native Baloch population to a minority.
- ✓ Refugees from Afghanistan brought about security concerns, terrorism, high crime rates, killings for ransom, and other social challenges such as child labour, prostitution, drug trafficking, and alcoholism. According to estimate, children who start working between the ages of 5 and 7 make up one-quarter of Pakistan's labour force. The majority of these kids come from Afghan immigrant families. Afghan children serve as the laborers, boot polishers, vehicle washers, and other jobs in hotels. Children who live in substandard settings often work more than 16 hours every day. Moreover, terrorist groups in the area exploit young kids by employing them as facilitators or brainwashing them to carry out suicide bombings.
- ✓ An additional social issue was the rise in criminality and interethnic conflict brought on by Afghan refugees. Kalashnikov culture was already introduced to Pakistan through the Afghan War. Refugees began importing illegal firearms from Afghanistan to Pakistan in order maximize achieve their economic goals; this contributed to ethnic & tribal conflicts as well as a rise in criminality.
- ✓ The recent expansion of the narco trade has prompted concerns about the presence of refugees. According to a study conducted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in 2013 on Afghan migrants present in KPK and Baluchistan, the two provinces of Pakistan are primarily engaged in the drug trade and are causing a number of societal issues for the country.
- ✓ Terrorists are frequently exploiting Afghan refugees as they live in areas that are closer to Afghanistan. There camps are sometimes used as launching pad for their notorious deeds and operations. These refugees provide assistance to elements of the terrorism in carrying out their operations.
- ✓ Pakistan is passing through testing times and its economy has shrunk over past decades. After facing protracted violence for decades, Pakistan's overall security environment has improved significantly and steadily over the past few years. This was accomplished in large part because of a comprehensive counterterrorism operation that culminated in the Zarb-e-Azb and Khyber-I-IV operations, counterterrorism measures implemented by the government within the framework of the National Action Plan (NAP), and the sacrifices made by the security forces. As a result, both number of terrorist attacks and the number of casualties have significantly decreased. Nonetheless, as of 2018 according to Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Interior and Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Pakistan has paid US\$ 126.79 billion in direct and indirect costs as a result of terrorist attacks. Year

wise losses to state are as (Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Interior and Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, 2018):-

Table 2
Year Wise Losses

Year	Losses in \$Bn	Year	Losses in \$Bn
2001-02	2.67	2010-11	23.77
2002-03	2.75	2011-12	11.98
2003-04	2.93	2012-13	9.97
2004-05	3.41	2013-14	7.7
2005-06	3.99	2014-15	9.24
2006-07	4.67	2015-16	6.49
2007-08	6.94	2016-17	5.47
2008-09	9.18	2017-18	2.7
2009-10	13.56		

- ✓ For the economy of Pakistan and region, CPEC is regarded as a game-changer. Peace in Afghanistan is a direct and indirect result of CPEC's efficient operation (Bloomberg, 9 February 2023). Three key routes for CPEC penetrate Pakistan, with Western route's tributaries passing closer to Afghanistan. The infrastructure development has received significant financial support. Majority of large projects are finished or nearly finished, and those that are in the pipeline will be finished in following few years. Pakistan will become one of the region's infrastructural most advanced nations after these projects are completed. But, CPEC's benefits cannot be fully realized until and unless peace in Afghanistan is secured. Infrastructure projects require significant upfront investment and have a lengthy payback time, but they are essential for other industries to develop quickly. If Central Asia and Russia use Pakistan for trade through Gwadar, the true potential of Pakistan's infrastructure can be fulfilled. Yet, Afghanistan's instability has been the largest challenge.
- ✓ Trade is a vital component of country's economy. Given that it links Central Asia, Iran, China, and Russia with Pakistan, which leads to either the Arabian Sea or the Indian Ocean, Afghanistan's geopolitical location is crucial for entire region. All nations, who are suffering from the unstable situation, want Afghanistan to experience enduring peace. Access to Central Asian Republics through CPEC and a peaceful Afghanistan will bear rich dividends for Pakistan. With turbulent Afghanistan, the CPEC will not be materialized to its fullest.
- ✓ Peace in Afghanistan means peace throughout region. Afghanistan's progress benefits the entire region. A stable Afghanistan will benefit all the nations in the region and will also aid in success of the BRI and CPEC, enabling for optimal use of Pakistan's recently built infrastructure and a quicker return on investment. It will result in the win-win situation for Afghanistan as well as the entire region.
- ✓ Pakistan is the country most adversely impacted by Afghan issue. Enormous number of refugees, including demographic change, political unrest, & security concerns, brought about many complications. Notwithstanding these challenges, Pakistani government has supported Afghan refugees for more than 30 years and has used all available tools and techniques to find a long-term solution. The upkeep costs for Afghan refugees were split equally between Pakistani government and donors. As a result, the government

has already made significant investments in provision of facilities for Afghan refugees. The state's current economic situation forbids any additional investments in Afghan refugees, and Pakistan's future stability and development are dependent on the exodus of Afghan refugees because the nation's economy is already fragile and disorder and instability have already affected all areas of nation. There is now time for the refugees to return to their own nation after US withdrew. Peace process is the only danger and impediment for refugees, even after withdrawal. Pakistan will profit much if Afghan refugees are allowed to return home with dignity.

- ✓ The two provinces of Pakistan, KPK and Balochistan, are most impacted by terrorist attacks. These organizations are fully operating, and according to reports, Afghanistan is home to their upper management. Only if current Afghan government takes tough action against militant and terrorist groups will these groups be eradicated. Without peace in Afghanistan, these organizations would stay to thrive and commit more acts of terrorism, which will have negative impact on the nation's economy, internal security, and all other sectors of growth, including the CPEC.

Myopic Afghan Policy Regarding TTP

Pakistan, being the immediate neighbor of Afghanistan, has always faced direct and serious implications from whatever is going on in Afghanistan. Current statistics shows that since the withdrawal of US and rise of Islamic Emirates of Afghanistan, terrorism incidents inside the Pakistan have increased. One of core reasons behind the resurgence of terrorism in Pakistan is Biased Afghan policy of supporting elements of TTP, tactically enabling them to regroup and carve its way back to power. According to United Nations Security Council report, TTP is one of the main beneficiaries of Afghan Taliban's retaking of Kabul. It helped TTP to grow in lines and swell its structural network. On other hand, Pakistan has always backed Afghan Taliban against foreign invaders during their occupation both covertly and diplomatically. However, the Afghan Taliban after getting back into power has left a regenerating effect on TTP. As Afghan Taliban and TTP share a history of enduring battlefields, social, political, ethnic and ideological links, thus Taliban regime now are supporting TTP instead of helping Pakistan. Afghanistan has lately termed issue of TTP as Pakistan's internal concern and has offered that they will only facilitate talks amid two provided both parties are willing to negotiate & resolve their clash. This stance is a clear indication of Taliban's administration that no discreet actions will be taken against TTP.

Negotiations of Peace Talk with TTP

Another important reason for the resurgence of terrorism in Pakistan was the Peace Talks with Taliban announced by Government of Pakistan. Though the intents of Pakistani Government were constructive and enthusiastic, however history shows that talks with terrorists never go into favor of governments and nations. It was indeed a hasty and unwise decision on our part to hope that talks with TTP could possibly bring peace to us. Instead, it only favored the elements of TTP in regrouping, getting back their spaces and strengthened their validity. During the time span of Peace Talks and post US withdrawal, more than 20 militant segments have merged themselves with TTP under the wardenship of Nur Wali Mehsud. This is an alarming time for Pakistan as enhanced and reborn TTP is bigger challenge for Pakistan's weak counterterrorism infrastructure. Things will further escalate if the TTP gains access and extends its elements to various areas of Pakistan. The rise in recent incidents of terrorism in KPK is primarily because of weak counterterrorism infrastructure in the province. Since the takeover of Taliban in the

Afghanistan, KPK Police has faced the thrust of TTP attacks, more than 120 police men have died in 83 terrorist incidents. The state and capacity of Counterterrorism Department (CTD) can be assumed by the fact that despite being the more disturbed province by terrorism, its budget including salaries and allowances is \$0.948 Bn, which is less than half of the budget of CTD Punjab (\$2.08). The inadequate budgeting doesn't give us a well-equipped, highly-trained, resourceful and motivated force rather it drastically reduces the efficiency as well as fighting capability.

US-India Proxy

The motive behind India's involvement in the Afghanistan has always remained the same; to destabilize Pakistan by supporting TTP and BSN through its various consulates in Afghanistan. A perturbed and escalated Afghanistan is always in the favor of India, as India knows that a peaceful and de-escalated Afghanistan will reduce ideological and political motivations of the TTP.

CONCLUSION

Pakistan's economic stability, internal security, future prospects of international and regional trade, all is directly dependent on a peaceful Afghanistan. Pakistan's role to put an end to the longest US war in Afghanistan was commendable and has been acknowledged internationally. Peace in Afghanistan will not just bring positive insinuations for Pakistan but it will flourish the entire region with global projects like OBOR and CPEC. Taliban needs to take serious steps to eradicate presence of all terrorist groups in general and TTP in particular. Besides affecting the peace and perseverance of the host country, such entities if not curtailed, may have potential damaging effect on the neighboring states as well through spillover of militancy (as already experienced by Pakistan). The peace in Afghanistan is achievable, if only all the regional and international players converge their interest on a common ground, i.e. a stabilized and peaceful Afghanistan.

REFERENCES

- Abraham, R. 2013, "The politics of Ethnicity in Afghanistan: Understanding the Pushtuns and Minor Ethnic Groups", *Defence and Diplomacy Journal*, 2 (2): 69.
- Afghanistan Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement. (2010). Agreement between the governments the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.
- Ahmed, S. A. (2022). Qatar, Kuwait Commit to Afghanistan Aid. The Article retrieved from Arab.news/ju3p4.
- Akram, M. (2015). "War in the Shadows," The Dawn, January 4, 2015, www.dawn.com/news/1154894.
- Ali, S., & Zafar, Z. (2017). Ethnicity in Afghanistan: Pakistani Factor. *Journal of Indian Studies*, 3(2), 183-191.
- Annual Threat Assessment of U.S. Intelligence Community, Office of the Director of National Intelligence. (2021). Munoz, A. G. 2010. Pashtun Tribalism & Ethnic Nationalism, Tribal Analysis Centre, March 2010. Austin, L, CENTCOM, June 1, 2021.
- Austin, L. (2021). Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General. Milley Press Briefing, U.S. Department of Defense, July 21, 2021. Barry, Y., & Shaista, W. (2007). A Brief History of Afghanistan, New York.
- Batool, F. (2021). Sealing the Durand Line Undercuts Pakistan's Support for Democracy in Afghanistan. *South Asian Voices*. July 20, 2021

- Biden J. (2021). "Drawdown of U.S. Forces in Afghanistan", The White House. Clark, K., and Ali, O. 2 July 2021. Afghanistan Analysts Network.
- Coll, S. (2018). Directorate S: The CIA and America's Secret Wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Penguin Press, pp. 69
- Cultural & Geographic Research. (2009). Pashtun Tribal Dynamics The Tribal Analysis Centre (2009).
- Dubow, B. (2009). "Ethnicity, Space and Politics in Afghanistan", University of Pennsylvania, Urban Studies Program, 2009. Dubow, B. (2009). "Ethnicity, Space and Politics in Afghanistan", University of Pennsylvania, Urban Studies Program.
- Farukh, A. (2022). Article fetched from Efile.fara.gov. Gilles, D. (2005). Revolution Unending, trans. John King (London: Hurst & Co Ltd).
- Greg, M. (2009). Stones into Schools: Promoting Peace with Books, not Bomb, in Afghanistan and Pakistan (NY, Vikinks).
- Gul, A. (27 February 2023). article on <https://www.voanews.com/amp/6981441.html>. Hassan, R. 2022. Article retrieved from www.arannews/cyfk.
- Heidi, M. P. (2020). CRS Report R44116, Department of Defense Contractor and Troop Levels in Afghanistan and Iraq: 2007-2020.
- Jew, R. (October 2021). Article fetched from www.thecrusadernews.com
- Khan, I. A. (2022). Terror attacks surge after Afghan Taliban Victory, Article retrieved from www.dawn.com/news/1715927.
- Khan, M. F. (2021). The Ethnic Conflict and the Political Instability in Afghanistan. *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs*, 4(2):419-434.
- King, L. (2011). "Afghan Fearful of Push to Negotiate with Taliban", Los Angeles Times. Long War Journal. 2019. Foundation for Defence of Democracies.
- Louis, D. (2010). The Afghanistan (London: Oxford University Press, 2010).
- Masood, A. (2015). The Afghan Statistics: Impact of 20 years' War, Article retrieved from; <https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2021/afghanistan-visualising-impact-of-war/index>.
- Mazhar, M. S. (2012). Samee Ozair Khan & Naheed S. Goraya, "Ethnic Factor in Afghanistan", *Journal of Political Studies* 19 (2), 97- 09.
- Military University. (November 21, 2010). Charleston West Virginia. Ministry of Defence UK, (2008). Tribal Dynamics in Afghanistan: A Resource for Analysts, Courage Services Inc, London (2008): 2.
- Ministry of Defence UK. (2008). Tribal Dynamics in Afghanistan: A Resource for Analysts. Courage Services Inc, London (2008): 2.
- Mortenson, G. (2009). The Stones into Schools: Promoting Peace with Books, not Bomb, in Afghanistan and Pakistan (NY, Vikinks, 2009)
- Nordland, R. (2012). New York Times, September 21, 2012.
- Pakistan Refugees statistics (1979-2023). The Article retrieved from www.macrotrends.net/countries/pakistan/refugee-statistics
- Pervez, I. (2015). The Afghan Ethnic Patchwork: A Bridge or Barrier for Governance. The ISSRA Papers.
- Rais, R. B. (2008). Recovering the Frontier State; The War, Ethnicity and State in Afghanistan (London: Lexinton Books, 2008).
- Rashid, A. (2002). "Pashtun Push", Far Eastern Economic Review, September 12, (2002). Rashid, A. 2010. Taliban: The Power of Militant Islam in Afghanistan and beyond (New York: I.B Tauris, 2010).

- Rehman, Z. (11 August 2022). The article published on Voice of America.
- Rhea, A. (2013). "The politics of Ethnicity in Afghanistan: Understanding the Pashtuns and Minor Ethnic Groups", *Defence and Diplomacy Journal*, 2 (2).
- Saikal, A. (2004). *The Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival*. Scott, S. Afghanistan's Troubled Transition (Colorado: Lyme Riemers Publishers, Inc, 2012).
- Savranskaya, S., & Blanton, T. (2019). The Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan 1989. Briefing Book 665 (Washington, DC: National Security Archive, February 26, 2019).
- Siddique, A. (2012). "Afghanistan's Ethnic Divide", CIDOB Project, Norwegian Peace Building Resource Centre, (January 2012): 7-9.
- Sopko, J. F. (2021). What we need to learn: lessons from twenty years of the afghanistan reconstruction: in *Insecurity*. Page 59.
- Stephanopoulos, G. (2021). interviews President Joe Biden, March 17, 2021.
- Threlkeld, E., & Easterly, G. (2021). The Afghanistan-Pakistan Ties and Future Stability in Afghanistan. *United States Institute of Peace*. 175. United States Institute of Peace; Decree about Women's Rights, 8 December 2021.
- Weinbaum, M. G. (2006). *Afghanistan and Its Neighbors An Ever Dangerous Neighborhood*. Special Report. 17th Street NW • Washington, DC 20036 •
- Wiebke, L. 2011. "Afghan Ethnic groups: A Brief Investigation", CFC, August 2011. William, B. 8 August 2022, United States Institute for Peace.