

**ANALYSIS OF INDIA- AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS:
IN THE CONTEXT OF INDIA'S EXTENDED
NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY (2001-2014)**

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Arts) of Jadavpur University**

**Submitted By
Joygopal Mondal**

**Supervisor
Dr. Bhagaban Behera**

**Department of International Relations
Jadavpur University, Kolkata
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Certified that the Thesis entitled

**ANALYSIS OF INDIA-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS: IN THE
CONTEXT OF INDIA'S EXTENDED NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY
(2001-2014)** submitted by me for the award of the Degree of Doctor of
Philosophy in Arts at Jadavpur University is based upon my work carried out
under the supervision of Dr. Bhagaban Behera and that neither this thesis nor any
part of it has been submitted before for any degree or diploma anywhere /
elsewhere.

Countersigned by the supervisor

Signature of the Candidate

Dr. Bhagaban Behera

Joygopal Mondal

Date:

Date:

Contents

	<i>Page Number</i>
	Acknowledgments i
	List of Tables and Figures ii
	Abbreviations iii-v
	Introduction 1-27
Chapter-1	India–Afghanistan Relations: The Historical Perspectives 28-57
Chapter- 2	Towards A Strategic Partnership 58-82
Chapter- 3	Economic Dimensions in India-Afghanistan relations 83-130
Chapter- 4	India’s Energy interest in Central Asia and Afghanistan’s Role 131-165
	Conclusion 166-173
	Bibliography 174-194

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List of Tables

Table No.	Table Name	Page
1	India's import-export towards south Asian countries	7
2	India's trade share percentage with the world (2007-2008)	8
3	India's trade business with South East Asian Countries.	9-10
3.2.1	lists the top destinations for Afghanistan's exports.	90
3.2.2	lists the top destinations for Afghanistan's imports.	91
3.3.3	Major export partner of Afghanistan	92
3.5.1	import-export data from 2001 to 2014 of these two nations.	95
3.5.2	Export intensity	95-96
3.5.3	Import intensity	96
3.7.1	Commodities wise Indian export to Afghanistan	102
3.8.2	Commodities wise Indian imports from Afghanistan	109
4.1.1	<i>India's Oil Scenario 2012-2014</i>	137
4.5.2	Commodity Composition of India's Imports from Central Asian Countries	152
4.5.3	India's Imports from Central Asia	153
4.5.4	India's Trade with Five Central Asian Countries.	157

Abbreviations

ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
APTTA	Afghanistan and Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement
AREU	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASSOCHAM	Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India
BIMSTEC	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi- Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
BJP	Bhartiya Janata Party
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CARs	Central Asian Republics
CBM	Confidence Building Measures
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EPAA	Export Promotion Agency of Afghanistan
EU	European Union
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Area
FICCI	Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
ICCR	Indian Council for Cultural Relations
IDSA	Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses
IIA	India's Importers Association
IITF	Indian International Trade Fair

IPHEX	Indian Pharmaceuticals and Healthcare Expo
ISI	Inter State Intelligence
ITBP	Indo-Tibetan Border Police
GDP	Gross Domestic Products
MOUs	Memoranda of Understandings
LEA	Look East Policy
LWP	Look West Asia Policy
MEA	Ministry of External Affairs
MoMP	Ministry of Mines and Petroleum
NA	Northern Alliance
NAM	Non-Align Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NSTO	North-South Transport Corridor
ONGC	Oil and Natural Gas Corporation
OVL	ONGC Videsh Limited
PSUs	public sector units
RAW	Research and Analysis Wing
RTI	Right to Information
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
TFBSO	Taskforce for Business and Stability Operations
SPA	Strategic Partnership Agreement
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

USD	United States of America
WTC	World Trade Centre
USD	US Dollar
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republic
WAR	West Asia Region
UNDF	United Nations Democracy Funds
UN	United Nations



flag Source: Shutterstock.com

Manmohan singh, Hamid Karzai image source: Economic Times of India.

Southern Asia



Source: Alamy.com

Introduction

Since 1997 the concept of the "extended neighbourhood" policy has been included in India's foreign policy, which is now complex and omnidirectional - a 360-degree view demanded by a continuously changing world. The historical shift in global power provides a compelling framework for India's gradually increasing emphasis on "extended neighbourhood" in its foreign policy practice and projection. Since India's independence, its foreign policy has been influenced by the country's surrounding region. Philosophically, the idea of an "extended neighbourhood" is closely tied to the idea of "Vasundhara Kutumbakam," or "the universe is one enormous family."

¹ The Look East strategy and the beginning of India's economic reforms in the early 1990s enabled a complex acceleration of economic and strategic ties with East and South-East Asia, which are home to some of the region's most dynamic economies and innovation hubs. India gradually drew nearer to the energy-rich countries of West Asia and Central Asia over the following 10 to 15 years as its demand for fossil fuels expanded quickly. Numerous geo-economic and geostrategic imperatives are driving India's expanding connection with its surrounding region. The geo-economic imperative calls for greater economic integration through trade, investment, knowledge transfer, and innovation. Additionally, it necessitates the establishment of a network of related free trade agreements across the region.

Since India's interests extend beyond its boundaries, its concern with the South Asia-centric idea of neighbourhood cannot be employed as a suitable analytical framework to evaluate India's regional diplomacy. India's larger neighbourhood is made up of South Asia, the Indo-Pacific, South-East Asia, West Asia, and Central Asia. Each of these neighbourhoods in India offers particular opportunities and challenges.²

India's recent political, economic, and cultural relations in the region (Asia) have changed a lot since the end of the Cold War. A power shift in the world order is underway. The bipolar world gave some way to a non-polar world with new powers. The Centre of gravity of powers shifts to the Asia Pacific. The simultaneous rise of India and China big meaning for the other powerful Countries. The traditional concept of national security is gradually expanded to

¹ *India's Extended Neighborhood and Implications for India's Act East Policy*. Available in, <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2022/12/06/indias-extended-neighborhood-and-implications-for-indias-act-east-policy/amp/> accessed on June 2021.

² *ibid*

include human security concerns. Issues such as climate change, energy security, scarcity of competition resources, food and water security, pandemics, migration, etc. are all increasing securitization. Technology-driven globalization has an unprecedented situation where national borders become irrelevant. At the same time, globalization has also promoted ethnicity and the enforcement of ethnic linguistic identity. This massive change is likely to continue speeding up over a few decades and will depend on India and its neighbourhood. Numerous new avenues for cooperation amongst nations of the vicinity are likely to open, sparking protection-demanding situations may even arise. Dominated through protection issues for the closing six decades, India's coverage in the direction of its neighbourhood would require a makeover within the mild of the amazing political, monetary, and social modifications which can be taking place. The idea of country-wide protection emerged in large part due to the arbitrary borders drawn by the British colonial masters. The option to the various protection problems going through India lies in resolving the cross-border problems like migrations, water sharing, transportation, trade, etc. Non-navy issues will want to be integrated inside a broader know-how of country-wide protection. The neighbourhood issues will want to be incorporated with India's normal protection and developmental rules.

This could be a prime task for India's overseas and protection policy in the coming decades. India's geographical length and attain make its prolonged neighbourhood very massive due to which its policymakers are faced with a bewildering variety of demanding situations nearly representing a microcosm of the demanding situations confronted via way of means of the worldwide network. Thus, India's overseas coverage regarding its prolonged neighbourhood, like that of every other country, must embody the goals of the pursuit of enhancement of possibilities for its residents to keep and improve the content material in their countrywide lifestyles because it continues evolving; these, naturally, additionally encompass efforts to offer secure and stable surroundings for them.

The diplomatic strategy to "isolate Pakistan," which translates to keep Pakistan out of its strategic interests in the area given the volatile past of the two nations, led India to choose BIMSTEC over the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). But this isn't the only reason India should be paying more attention to BIMSTEC. India's participation in the

sub-regional conferences for the Bay of Bengal is motivated by strategic considerations both internal and external.³

This was well expressed in 2006 by the Minister for External Affairs, Pranab Mukherjee, when he said, “India’s foreign policy today looks at India’s environment in expanding circles . . . starting with the immediate neighbourhood . . . moving on to . . . the extended neighbourhood.”

⁴This circles metaphor has become something of a mantra for Indian policymakers, Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon telling British audiences in 2007 assented that “as we move beyond Southern Asia to India’s extended neighbourhood . . . from the broader perspective, we regard our security as lying in a neighbourhood of widening concentric circles.”⁵ India’s extended neighbourhood policy concept can be distinguished from the earlier globalist rhetoric of Jawaharlal Nehru and from the subsequent South Asian focus of Indira Gandhi. The concept was pushed with some vigour under Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s administration of 1998–2004, which quickly announced that “our concerns and interactions go well beyond South Asia. They include other neighbours, and countries immediately adjoining this region – our ‘extended neighbourhood.’”⁶ Whereas the term “extended neighbourhood” was absent in the Ministry of External Affairs’ Annual Report of 1999–2000, it appeared in the Annual Report for 2000–2001 as something to be distinguished from India’s “immediate neighbourhood.”⁷ As the then Minister for External Affairs, Yashwant Sinha, explained in 2004; “this Government, over the last six years, has assiduously promoted the idea that India is a major power . . . We have articulated the concept of an extended neighbourhood for India.”⁸

³ *Beyond the South Asia-centric notion of neighbourhood*, Available in| ORF (orfonline.org) accessed on 18/10/2019

⁴ Pranab Mukherjee, “*Indian Foreign Policy: A Road Map for the Decade Ahead*,” November 15 2006. Accessible via www.mea.gov.in/speech.accessed on July25, 2021. Accessed on 5th January 2018.

⁵ Shiv Shankar Menon, “*India and International Security*,” May 4, 2007. Accessible via <http://meaindia.nic.in/speech>. also Pranab Mukherjee, ‘India’s Security Challenges and Foreign Policy Imperatives.’ November 3, 2008. Accessible via <http://meaindia.nic.in/speech>. Accessed on 8th July 2019.

⁶ “*India’s Foreign Relation*”, 1998–99, Embassy of India (Washington DC). Accessible via www.indianembassy.org/policy.

⁷ “*Annual Report 2000–2001*”, Ministry of External Affairs, Accessible via <http://meaindia.nic.in/annual report>, accessed on June 8, 2021

⁸ Yashwant Sinha, “*12th SAARC Summit and Beyond*,” February 3, 2004. Accessible via <http://meaindia.nic.in/speech>, accessed on January 31, 2018

Geo-economic considerations are an explicit element of India's concerns in its extended neighbourhood concept. There is a fact that in South Asia, India's immediate neighbourhood state is too small to counter India's economic space. Such economic considerations have been further strengthened under the Congress administration, where the Manmohan Doctrine emphasizes economic development as a driver for foreign policy, in shaping India's strength, interests and relationships. In such an economic vein, Manmohan Singh explained that "our approach to the wider Asian neighbourhood has been so influenced by economic factors."⁹

A southerly implementation of India's extended neighbourhood drive has become well established throughout much of the Indian Ocean and its littoral part where India's strategic "footprint" is becoming noticeable. Maritime means and "Mahanian visions" shape this strategic drive by India. This outreach had been quickly enunciated by the BJP government, its Ministry of Defence Annual Report announcing in 2001 that "given its size, location, trade links and extensive Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), India's security environment extends from the Persian Gulf in the west to the Straits of Malacca in the east . . . to the Equator in the South"; and was something to be safeguarded by the presence of the Indian navy.¹⁰

'Extended Neighbourhood' has been variously defined in geographical terms. It includes countries sharing land and maritime borders whose list goes beyond the geographical description of South Asia; apart from Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh, Countries sharing land and maritime borders with India are China, Myanmar, Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Maldives. In addition, several countries, in proximity, outside of this list are tied to India through close economic and diasporic links and the developments wherein are perceived by Indian policymakers as having strategic implications; one could include in this category countries in the Indian Ocean Region, on the East African seaboard, in the Gulf Region, Afghanistan, in the Central Asian Region as well as countries in south-east Asia.¹¹ An extension

⁹ Manmohan Singh, "*Globalization Both an Opportunity and a Challenge*," February 25, 2005. Accessible via <http://meaindia.nic.in/speech>, accessed on February 9, 2020

¹⁰ Pranab Mukherjee, "*India's Strategic Perspective*," September 25, 2006. Accessible via www.indianembassy.org, accessed on February 19, 2018

¹¹ "*Annual Report 2000–2001*", Ministry of External Affairs, Accessible via <http://meaindia.nic.in/annual-report>. Accessed on 7th may 2018, accessed on February 9, 2019.

of India's maritime extended neighbourhood has been evident as India's involvement has reached past the Equator. Admittedly US military power is ensconced at Diego Garcia in the middle of the Indian Ocean, but India is looking for still further south-westwards. India's then Chief of Naval Staff, Arun Prakash, asserted that an "area of vital interest to us lies in the expanse of the seas; the island nations of the Indian Ocean . . . Mauritius, Seychelles and Comoros" where "we cannot afford to have any hostile or inimical power threatening it . . . Our armed forces are always prepared to help . . . in policing their waters or airspace."¹²

As a part of India's Extended Neighbourhood Policy India introduced Look East Policy. This Look East Policy has brought India into Southeast Asia (SEA) with an increasing presence in various areas of the region. There is not a single reason behind India's involvement in Look East Policy; several crucial factors are to be taken into consideration. The origin of the Look East policy is based on the changed geo-political context of the international system in the 1990s. The policy though first started in 1991, just after the end of the Cold War, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and almost simultaneously with its economic reform. India looked at a new direction in its foreign policy which included resuming the country's traditional ties with the Southeast Asian nations. Based on several national interests, post-independent Indian foreign policy evolved in different ways. In other words, post-cold war Indian Foreign the policy includes different dimensions such as Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization, Look East Policy and Look West Asia Policy, Gujral Doctrine etc. Since the beginning of the last decades of the twentieth century, henceforth, following the "Look East Policy', 'Look West Policy' which looked after India's interests in East Asia and West Asia respectively, the 'Look North Policy' was visualized to guard its national interests in energy enriched Central Asia, which is also known as Look Central Asia policy.

It was in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the end of the cold war, the emergence of the US as the sole super power and the initiation of economic reforms in India. Similar to the Gujral Doctrine, Look East Policy and Look West Policy Look North Policy or Connect Central Asia Policy or" New Silk Road Policy" to improve and establish the relations

¹² Arun Prakash, "Security and Foreign Policy Imperatives of an Emerging India', Lancer; New Delhi, 2005, p. 7.

of the northern countries with India, basically post-soviet countries in the sphere of trade and economics, strategic, cultural and education. The aims of the Look North Policy are to improve the relations with the Central Asian Countries ¹³ of are Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and beyond. It is notable that India's trade and cultural relations with the Central Asian region are as ancient as the legendary Silk Route, that was, long before Christ was born.¹⁴

The need of the time was that after the collapse of Soviet Union India has needed some new friends who could be helpful in accelerating India's growing economic and strategic demands. The Post-Cold War world system suddenly opened many new events; one of it is how to evaluate its position in the rapidly changing global environment. On the other hand, India's role beyond South and Southeast Asia must have been put on the agenda. The actual reasons behind India's Look East policy were to make deep political links with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) for economic development, and close bonds and to show its economic potential in the field of investment and trade. The priority to the idea of "New Regionalism" by India in its foreign policy agenda towards the Southeast Asian Countries in the 21st century was officially unveiled by Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narsimha Rao through his 'Singapore Lecture' on September 1994.¹⁵ In his speech, P.V. Narsimha Rao clearly spelt out the basic outlines of India's Look East model and tried to convince his interlocutors that India was "worth their time and money" and that "investment in India is an investment in the future not only for the investor but for a population of more than one billion which will remain a force for stability for the world."¹⁶

¹³ Sharad. K. Soni, and Vaishali Krishna, "India and Central Asia: Quest for Reconnection" in Biswanath Chakraborty and Debashish Nandy, (ed) *An Outline of Indian Foreign Policy and Relations*, Mitram, Kolkata, 2016, p- 84.

¹⁴ Angira Sen Sarma, *India and Central Asia: Redefining energy and trade links*, Pentagon Press, 2010, p. 11.

¹⁵ Tridib Chakraborty, "India's Southeast Asia Policy in the 21st Century", in Y. Yagama Reddy(ed) *Emerging India in Asia -Pacific*, New Century; New Delhi, 2007, p. 159.

¹⁶ *ibid*

Table No 1

India's import-export towards south Asian countries

Figures in US million dollar

Year	India's Export to Bangladesh	India's Import from Bangladesh	India's Export to Pakistan	India's Import from Pakistan	India's Export to Sri Lanka	India's Import from Sri Lanka
2001-02	1002.18	59.12	144.01	64.76	630.89	67.38
2002-03	1176.00	62.05	206.16	44.85	920.98	90.83
2003-04	1740.74	77.63	286.94	57.65	1319.20	194.74
2004-05	1631.12	59.37	521.05	94.97	1413.18	378.40
2005-06	1664.36	127.03	689.23	179.56	2024.67	577.70
2006-07	1629.57	228.00	765.45	323.62	2167.90	470.33
2007-08	2923.72	257.02	975.23	287.97	2238.39	634.96
2008-09	2497.87	313.11	1439.88	370.17	2425.92	356.57
2009-10	2433.77	254.66	1573.32	275.94	2188.08	392.19
2010-11	3242.90	446.75	2039.53	332.51	3510.05	501.73
2011-12	3789.20	585.73	1541.56	397.66	4378.79	637.43
2012-13	5144.99	639.33	2064.79	541.81	3983.87	625.81
2013-14	6166.93	484.34	2274.26	426.88	4534.35	666.93

Source: Directorate General of Foreign Trade, import-export data bank. Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India.

Table No 2

India's trade share percentage with the world (2007-2008)

Figures in US million dollar

	Zone	Total Trade in 2007	% Share	Total Trade in 2008	% Share
1	Europe	11,446.62	23.80	15,187.19	19.56
2	Africa	3,254.91	6.77	4,630.79	5.96
3	North America	5,351.95	11.13	4,368.15	5.63
4	Latin America	1,547.10	3.22	3,085.34	3.97
5	West Asia and north Africa	9,839.97	20.46	24,614.58	31.70
6	NE Asia with China	6,949.53	14.54	14,214.36	18.31
7	CIS	61.69	0.13	53.40	0.07
8	Others CIS with Russia	452.68	0.94	1,370.86	1.77
9	Unspecified Region total	48,098.43	100	77,639.39	100

Source: Directorate General of Foreign Trade, import-export data bank, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India.

To examine the total trade between India and the World (Table 2), it is evident that India's exchange is creating closer joins with the districts comprising its expanded neighbourhood. If

we compare the export/import of India's exchange by locale at that point discernible varieties rise in the year of 2008 figures with the year 2007. At the worldwide level, the EU and the US stay top on the list of exchange accomplices for India, their April-June 2008 particular total trade share of India's exchange being 22.05/ 28.19 (EU) percent and 10.44/5.12 (US) percent. Russia, despite close military joins, could be a little financial accomplice, bookkeeping for 1.18/0.64 exports/imports offers of India's exchange. Similarly, minimal is India's prompt neighbourhood of South Asia, its April-June 2008 adds up to the exchange share of India's exchange being 5.33/0.64 percent. In general, a see at the period 2003 to 2008 appears South Asia's as of now little 3.52 percent share of India's exchange in 2003-04 declined still advance to a 2.83 percent by 2007-08. After examining the above statistics It's very clear to state that the trade volume between India and South Asia is much lesser than the ASEAN Countries. That's why India's extended neighbourhood policy focuses on these countries.

Table No 3

India's trade business with South East Asian Countries.

Figures in US million dollar

SL Number	Year-	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
1	Export to ASEAN	19,140.63	18,113.17	25,627.89	36,744.35	32,987.79
2	Growth Rate	16.62		41.48		-10.22
3	India's Total Export	185,295.36	187,751.43	251,136.19	305,963.92	300,274.12
4	Growth Rate	13.59		40.49		-1.86
5	% Share	10.3298	10.1335	10.2048	12.0094	10.9859
6	Import from ASEAN	26,202.96	25,797.96	30,607.96	42,528.03	43,744.84

SL number	Year	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
7	Growth Rate	15.56		18.64		2.86
8	India's Total Import	303,696.31	288,372.88	369,769.13	489,319.49	491,945.05
9	% Growth	20.68		28.23		0.54

Source: Directorate General of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India.

India's financial joins with ASEAN and Southeast Asia have been very effective. India's add up to exchange with ASEAN is much more noteworthy than its exchange inside South Asia. India's exchange with SAARC nations, counting Afghanistan, was esteemed at US 4.0 billion dollar in 2003–04, speaking to a few 3.52 percent of India's in general exchange; while ASEAN's exchange with India was esteemed at US13.25 billion dollar, speaking to a few 9.62 percent of India's generally exchange, a share crevice of 6.10 percent. This crevice has extended still advanced, both in terms of quantity and relative share. In 2007–08, India's exchange with SAARC countries was esteemed at US 11.4 billion dollars, speaking to a lower 2.83 percent of India's exchange; though ASEAN's exchange with India has esteemed at US 39.0 billion dollar, speaking to a few 9.55 percent of India's generally exchange, a share crevice of 6.72 percent.

Engaging with the SAFTA (South Asia Free Trade Area) of 2004, India finds herself in the losing side and decided to be involved in more profitable FTA (Free Trade Agreement) which was finalized between India and ASEAN in 2008. However, India is still attempting to capture up with China, whose exchange with ASEAN of US105.9 billion dollar in 2004, US 160.8 billion dollar in 2006 and US 202.5 billion dollar in 2007 is presently over five times that of India. During 2009-10 the growth rate of trade between India and ASEAN grew up to 41.48% which was more than India's total foreign growth rate of 40.49%. Certain nations inside

ASEAN are more critical exchange accomplices for India, with such geo-economic patterns covering more extensive common discretionary and secure connections. India's exchange with ASEAN nations has by and large gone up in terms of amount amid the final decade. India's exchange with Malaysia, in spite of the fact that still deficit huge in amount, has remained inactive as an extent of India's exchange. India's total trade with Indonesia and the Philippines, although too developing, has retreated in relative significance. Myanmar's exchange, although rising in volume, presently accounts for a littler extent of India's general exchange, in spite of the fact that the vitality component has ended up more noteworthy for India. The littler states of East Timor, Laos and Cambodia stay decently financially unimportant to India. Brunei's increments are a matter of expanding oil imports by India.

Energy is a strong reason behind India's trade in its extended neighbourhood. Growing consumer demand, ongoing industrialization and high-tech advances all mean a growing demand for oil and gas energy imports in India, and with-it lines of trade to secure, and perhaps defend? The Hydrocarbon Vision 2025 report, presented to the Indian government in February 2000, set out India's energy security predicament in stark terms. A decline in India's crude oil self-sufficiency from 65 percent in 1989–90 to 30 percent in 2000–01 was envisaged as dropping still further, with rising demand outstripping domestic production, necessitating rising imports, and leaving crude oil self-sufficiency at a low 15 percent by 2024–25. Resultant “energy diplomacy” imperatives have been evident, Manmohan Singh noting that “our concern for energy security has become an important element of our diplomacy and is shaping our relations with a range of countries . . . in West Asia, Central Asia.”¹⁷ The government's logic is that “in order to enhance the energy security of the country, the government are encouraging oil public sector units (PSUs) to pursue aggressively equity opportunities in the oil and gas sector overseas.”¹⁸ The main commercial vehicle for meeting India's energy requirements has been the state-owned ONGC (Oil and Natural Gas Corporation), through its international subsidiary OVL (ONGC Videsh Limited). OVL's role is publicly and politically recognized by the government, “one of the major initiatives taken towards enhancing energy security in the country is the concerted efforts to acquire equity oil and gas abroad and participating

¹⁷ C, Raja Mohan, “*Sakhalin to Sudan: India's energy diplomacy*,” *The Hindu*, June 24, 2002.

¹⁸ Anand Sharma, “*Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No 2521 to be Answered on 06.09.2007 New Division of Energy Security*,” *Parliamentary Questions (Lok Sabha)*. Accessible via <http://164.100.47.5:8080>.

interest in producing or prospective properties. ONGC-Videsh Limited (OVL) and other National Oil Companies are already involved in 14 countries.”¹⁹ The Indian government is clear enough on the security implications of this; “you only have to look at the investments ONGC Videsh is making in extra-regional but energy-rich areas such as Sakhalin, Sudan . . . to realize how our maritime interests are growing.”²⁰

Afghanistan in India’s Extended Neighbourhood Policy?

Afghanistan is important to India as a gateway of central Asian countries as well as a transit state for trade and economic exchanges With Central Asian Countries (CAR) States. Except for the duration of the Taliban India have an excellent relationship with them. Natural resources especially Crude oil, fruits and nuts compiled other countries to invest in Afghanistan. Inspired by other country’s growing engagement, India also changed its foreign policy towards Afghanistan and become more liberal in her approach. India and Afghanistan share a long history of cultural, civilizational, and economic ties. Both countries shared borders till 1947 when Pakistan was carved out of British India. Among the Afghan population, even today, India is considered the most popular country with most opinion polls giving over 70 percent of votes to India. India’s support of the Afghan government and its consistent anti-Taliban stance have been always appreciated in Afghanistan. Like Iran, India supported, funded, and armed the Northern Alliance in the fight to overthrow the Taliban in 2001.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai has called India the” most trusted ally and an all-weather friend,” and giving credence to the confidence that Kabul has in New Delhi, India was the first country Afghanistan signed its Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) with. India is popular not only among the Hazaras and Tajiks but also among many Pashtuns. Its over \$2 billion aid

¹⁹ Press Information Bureau, “*One Year of UPA Government: Major Decisions and Initiatives – Petroleum & Natural Gas*,” Press Releases, May 15, 2005. Accessible via <http://pib.nic.in/release>. See also report to the Indian Parliament by Mani Shankar Aiyar, “Feeding India’s energy hunger,” rep. in Asia Times, July 15, 2004.

²⁰ Pranab Mukherjee, “*International Relations and Maritime Affairs – Strategic Imperatives*,” June 30, 2007. Accessible via <http://meaindia.nic.in/speech>.

to Afghanistan in reconstruction and welfare projects too have been well received.²¹ Since the fall of Taliban in 2001, India suddenly changes its policy toward Afghanistan and maintained excellent relations with Rabbani-led Afghan government. After the Karzai government came to power in 2004, a major policy shift was introduced in favour of India. The 9/11 terrorist strike on the United States make India worried about terror threats which also became a factor in closer India-Afghanistan relations. There also exists a high-level political engagement with Afghanistan through bilateral high-level visits. India is also in a better position to pursue its own interest in Afghanistan and have excellent political relations with the present government. On the other hand, Pakistan and Afghanistan share a long history of commonalities related to religion, culture and language. Pakistan is one of the countries, which officially recognised the Taliban and has been assisting the Taliban insurgency since it was ousted from power.

India has a range of interests in Afghanistan and has made huge investments ranging from infrastructure to human resource development. Afghanistan is most relevant from the strategic and security perspective. India's focus on Afghanistan is aimed at curbing terrorism, containing, and decreasing Pakistan's influence. Afghanistan is important for India for accessing the energy-rich Central Asian market and monitoring Pakistan and even wherever possible, cultivating assets to influence activities in Pakistan. India's Afghan policy can be analysed in the context of the principles and perceptions of the overall Indian foreign policy. It must be understood that Pakistani influence in Afghanistan will always exceed that of India. As an immediate neighbour, Pakistan and Afghanistan will remain tied together forever.

India looks to Afghanistan to help cover its energy needs. Afghanistan offers possible routes for India and Pakistan to gain access to natural gas in Central Asia. The proposed Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline to fulfil her energy requirements. These compelling issues influenced India to include Afghanistan in its Extended Neighbourhood policy.

²¹ *Nearly 70 percent Afghans chose India as best friend: Survey*, Front Line (Madras), December, 8-21, 1990 and also see *The Hindu* (Madras), November 23, 1990.

Chapter Summary

India's outside approach advances in completely different ways from independence to till date but the key point is the national interface. From autonomy to the 1990s or cold war period India's remote arrangement is essentially South Asia-centric. But post-cold war period India's remote approach isn't as it were South Asia-centric but world-centric or globalized. In this manner, India took several policies which are South Asia-centric as well as past South Asia. In particular, the disintegration of the Soviet Union incited a profound crisis in India's universal personality and sense of national security.

Hence, it is as it were the atomic tests of May 1998 that uncover a discursive overhaul of India's universal relations prefaced on a much more assertive remote approach position. The security demeanours revealed by those explosions uncover the exceptional bedrock of India's vital culture- the conviction of the certainty of India's rise to worldwide prominence. In this regard, India's See North Arrangement is an exceptionally fruitful foreign policy. This arrangement not as it was made a difference in India getting to be a global player from the territorial player but moreover made a difference in India proceeding with its growth with the guaranteeing supplies of hydrocarbons. Advance, Central Asian States back India's natural position conjointly back the permanent enrolment in Security Committee at UNO as well. It is expected that in future India is more profited from the See North Policy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The proposed study will be explored the background of a broader context of the nature and evolution of India-Afghanistan bilateral relations from 2001 to 2014, which covers the interim government and two terms of presidentship of Hamid Karzai. In the Karzai era, both countries strengthened their relations. Many international organizations are working on this issue, even though they published documents, reports and research papers. A large number of articles are available that deal with India- Afghanistan relations.

When researching Indo-Afghanistan relations between 1947 and 1967, Jafri (1976)²² also explored their trade ties. As India lost direct access to Afghanistan and had to rely on Pakistan to maintain trade relations with Afghanistan, it was noted that the partition of India caused a substantial fall in Indo-Afghanistan commerce. Instead of offering transit services, Pakistan played a negative role and offered to accept all of Afghanistan's products intended for India. The analysis of the patterns of trade between the two nations revealed that the principal trading goods were the native goods that were accessible for export in each nation. Afghanistan remained India's primary source of fresh and dry fruits. Contrarily, Indian goods to Afghanistan including tea and textiles had to contend with fierce rivalry from other nations. As a result, after 1950, India's trade balance started to be unfavourable. A few trade agreements between the two countries were also included in the study. India also looked at the help and assistance provided to Afghanistan after its independence, which mostly consisted of gestures of goodwill. The research accepted India's promise to build highways connecting Afghanistan to Iranian ports, which might be used as a different trade route. The report identified a few areas where India and Afghanistan may work closely together.

J.N. Dixit²³ has provided an Indian perspective on the history of Afghanistan, from the time of the Taliban until the reign of the last Afghan king, Zahir Shah. Dixit has developed a narrative on the inconsistencies and somersaults in India's Afghanistan policies, particularly during the Soviet intervention, as a result of his experiences in the South Block, how Prime Minister Charan Singh, who had harshly criticised the incursion as unacceptable and shown no consideration for India's relations with the Soviet Union, proposed the rapid withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan to the Russian Ambassador to India, Vorontsov. However, the author describes how, after Charan Singh's death, Indira Gandhi took over and changed this official position within three weeks. How Brajesh Mishra, the Indian ambassador to the UN at the time, disagreed with Mrs. Gandhi's reasoning on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and how, as a result, he resigned from his position. In another story told by Dixit, Abdul Ghaffar Khan accuses Mrs. Gandhi of betraying the Afghan people in the same way that the Congress did the Pathans by supporting the partition of India. The author also gives a thorough explanation of the Taliban's ascent and how India was taken off guard by the occurrence. Being

²² Hasan Ali Shah Jafri (1976). "Indo-Afghan Relations; 1947-67," New Delhi: Sterling

²³ J, N, Dixit. "An Afghan Diary: Zahir Shah to Taliban," Konark Publishers; New Delhi, 2000

a conciliator, Dixit goes out of her way to encourage New Delhi to cooperate with whoever gains power, not even ruling out the prospect of engaging with the Taliban.

Udipaana Mukherjee (2008)²⁴ seeks to explain the complex relationship between India and its geostrategic neighbour, which was recently admitted as a member of SAARC. It also talks about all the infrastructure projects that India has started in that nation. It also emphasises the role Pakistan plays in Indo-Afghan ties. The article makes an effort to outline the bilateral ties between India and Afghanistan, focusing particularly on the post-Taliban era. The paper concludes that Indian efforts have been made to infiltrate all areas of Afghanistan, turning it into a base from which to launch an expansion into Central Asian countries.

Vinod Anand (2008)²⁵ examines the critical significance of the Central Asian region in the article. discusses the crucial significance of the Central Asian Region (CAR) to India due to its proximity to India geographically, historical, and cultural ties, as well as the challenge of radicalization, extremism, and terrorism that both countries share, as well as India's increasing needs for energy and natural resources. The essay focuses on the interconnectedness between Central Asia and South Asia, which has given rise to the idea of "Great Central Asia," as well as the obstacles that must be overcome before this idea can take on any concrete form. It also examines India's position within the Central Asian Regions' growing multi-vector strategies.

According to Brigadier Mahalingam (2016)²⁶, Pakistan's continued belligerence in Afghanistan means that the battle is far from over. According to him, India's foreign policy strategy should be based on the clearly described evolving security situation in Afghanistan. The state of the ANSF and Afghanistan's declining economy have also been emphasised as parts of the report. Along with a brief explanation of India's humanitarian support, the goals and objectives of India in Afghanistan have been stated. The author rejects the notion of deploying troops to Afghanistan because, in his view, doing so will damage India's reputation over time. In his closing remarks, he asked India's policymakers to align their decisions firmly with the

²⁴ Udipaana Mukherjee, "India, Post-Taliban Afghanistan and Pakistan", South Asia Politics, Vol.7, No.7, November 2008, pp.14-16.

²⁵ Vinod Anand. "The New Af-Pak Strategy and Implications for India", World Focus, Vol-xxxii, No-i, 2010, pp. 12-22.

²⁶ V. Mahalingam. 'India's Afghanistan Policy', CLAWS Journal, summer 2016, pp. 91-111.

requirements of the Afghan community. He even advised India to interact with all Afghan communities, which will serve as protection for India's survival if the scenario worsens.

According to Harsh Pant (2011)²⁷, relations between India and Afghanistan have improved significantly since the Taliban administration was toppled, and New Delhi has pursued a "soft power" approach toward Afghanistan that focuses on civilian rather than military issues. He makes the point that India's decision to continue playing an economic role may not be successful, and that a discussion about whether India should start supporting its humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan with a larger military presence has arisen. For India, the Taliban's return to Afghanistan after 2014 will be worrying and dangerous for security. He ends by noting that Afghanistan will serve as a litmus test for the rise of our nation as a regional and international force.

The scenario of the US and its allies leaving Afghanistan in 2014 has been imagined by Arvind Gupta (2012)²⁸ Ashok Behuria, Vishal Chandra, and Smruti Pattanaik. They asserted that at this crucial time, Iran wants the US forces to leave Afghan territory, China is eyeing the country's resources without making any firm commitments to invest in the stability and security of Afghanistan, and Russia is prepared to provide services if the necessary funding can be secured elsewhere. Pakistan, they said, is seeking strategic depth at this time. It is clear that there is insufficient international assistance to maintain the "new Afghanistan." The authors have also discussed the Taliban's rebirth and how their connections to Pakistan will make it more challenging for India to survive. They assert, however, that if India maintains the political will to do so, it can do so even if Afghanistan becomes unrest-free, and they offer a few possible solutions for India to deal with the situation. The paper continues by stating that India should be assertive about its position in the region and should not let Pakistan's attempts to develop its strategic depth get in the way of that role. They suggested that if Pakistan becomes heavily involved in Afghanistan, it may damage its own security and stability.

Harsh Pant (2014)²⁹ discusses India's strategy in Afghanistan following the overthrow of the Taliban administration in a later work. The main goals of India's involvement in Afghanistan,

²⁷ Harsh Pant, 'India's Changing Role: The Afghanistan Conflict', *Middle East Quarterly*, Vol. XVIII, No. 2, Spring 2011, pp. 145-156.

²⁸ Arvind Gupta Behuria, Ashok, Chandra, Vishal and Pattanaik, Smruti, '*Post 2014 Afghanistan and India's Options*', IDSA Policy Brief, July 18, 2012

²⁹ Harsh Pant, *India's Afghan Muddle: A Lost Opportunity*, Harper Collins, Noida, 2014.

according to Pant, are to fight Pakistan, restrict Islamic extremism, build a bridge to Central Asia, and increase regional influence. The US-India-Afghanistan matrix and regional realities are also discussed in the book as confusing signals that can lead to tragic results. Through this book, Pant criticises what he sees as a missed opportunity in India's foreign policy toward Afghanistan. In his opinion, India missed the chance to send troops to Afghanistan at the US request, and this would have been detrimental to Indo-US relations as well as its strategic interests.

Nirmala Joshi (2014)³⁰ argues that for the past twenty years, the Central Asian Nations have been engaged in a process of nation-building. They have advanced significantly in many fields of human endeavour in a short period of time. Central Asian countries have been increasing their interaction with the outside world in order to benefit from the world's accelerating globalisation. India views Central Asia as a part of its extended neighbourhood, making contact with Central Asian nations highly desirable. Although the region's security and stability are of utmost significance, economic involvement is what is propelling the new partnership. The overall focus of this book is on strengthening economic engagement, particularly in the energy sector, and increasing connectivity to support trade and commerce. The future of Afghanistan and expanding India-Central Asia engagement are two of the book's many sub-themes.

She mentions that the Central Asian Nations have been undergoing the process of nation-building for the last two decades. Within a short time, they have made considerable progress in many areas of human endeavor. To take advantage of the rapidly globalizing world the Central Asian nations have been broadening their engagement with the Outside world. Indian engagement with Central Asian countries is quite desirable, India considers Central Asia as a part of its extended neighbourhood. While security and stability in the region are of prime importance but economic engagement is the driving factor of the emerging relationship. This book is broadly built around the theme of security and stability-enhancing economic engagement including the energy sector and increased connectivity to promote trade and

³⁰ Nirmala Joshi. (2010). "*India, Central Asia and Afghanistan: Security and Economic Dimension*", World Focus, 31 (11- 12), pp. 77-98.

commerce. This book contains many sub-themes for widening the India-Central Asia engagement and the way ahead for Afghanistan.

Kaura Vinay (2018)³¹ described how China and India worked together to keep the peace in Afghanistan. He discussed how the training of 10 Afghan diplomats jointly by India and China at the Indian Foreign Service Institute in New Delhi is an indication of better ties between the two countries in his study. Making it impossible for Pakistan to resist Indo-Chinese programmes to strengthen the capacity of the Afghan state is one way that the bilateral relations between India and China are working to maintain peace in the nation. If India and China are able to carry out their joint initiatives successfully going forward, they may be able to persuade other parties, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and NATO, to contribute to the stabilisation of Afghanistan. Additionally, there is considerable overlap between Chinese and Indian interests. Because of the unrest in Afghanistan, terrorist networks have been able to conduct attacks throughout the area. Due to Islamic radicalism among the Uighur community in its far-western province of Xinjiang, China has its own security issues. In the past, Uighur militants have located refuge outside of Chinese territory. As a result, China has strengthened ties with Kabul and is helping the Afghan government fight terrorism by offering training and weaponry. Due to India's generally favourable reputation among Afghans, China is eager to involve it in Afghanistan in order to protect its interests and influence there. In order to increase its own national security and gain access to Central Asian trade, India seeks to bolster Afghanistan.

Rani D. Mullen (2016)³² The author examines the history of the bilateral relationship as well as structural, domestic, and individual-level elements to analyse India's renewed connection with Afghanistan post 9/11. Since India's independence in 1947, the last ten years have seen the closest Indo-Afghan relations. Indian motivation for closer engagement with Afghanistan in the twenty-first century will continue to be driven by India's geostrategic and security interests in Afghanistan, the quest for new energy and mineral supplies, in addition to the potential Afghan market for Indian goods and services.

³¹ Kaura, Vinay, 'India's Afghanistan relations in the Modi-Ghani era', *Indian Journal of Asian Affairs*, Vol. 30, No. 12, June-December 2017, pp- 167-189.

³² Mullen, D. Rani, 'India in Afghanistan: Understanding Development Assistance by Emerging Donors to Conflict Affected Areas', *Stimson Centre*, August 2017

Trivedi (2008)³³ briefly discussed India –Afghanistan relations since 2001. He mentions three factors which affected in Indo-Afghan relations. The first one is the energy factor. The second is the Taliban factor and the third one is the Pakistan factor. According to him economically Afghanistan is a gateway for India to access oil and mineral-rich Central Asia. After the 9/11 incident, because of its geo-strategic locations, Afghanistan remained in the Indian regional policy. After the collapse of the Taliban, India started a strategy to isolate Pakistan from Afghan politics. He argues that there is a felt need to be cautious in the India-Afghan policy because over-enthusiasm can result in an adverse way.

Ved (2005)³⁴ explains the role of Pakistan in Indo-Afghan relations, according to him in 2013 India focussed on gaining physical access through several Central Asian countries, creating conditions for an economic presence in Kabul. He mentions Pakistan as a key factor in India-Afghanistan relations since 2001. India's diplomatic expansion has had a threat to Pakistan. India and Afghanistan share much more good relations compared to Afghan- Pak relations, it seems Afghanistan is a neighbour of India, distanced from Pakistan. He argues that before falling off the Taliban era Pakistan played a more crucial role than India did. The author mentions only Pakistan would be able to play a security role by virtue of its vast border with Afghanistan. India needs to establish much greater interaction on the entire question of the transnational gas pipeline (TAPI).

"Indian Strategic Influence in Afghanistan: Realist Ends through Social Means" by Marium Kamal (2020)³⁵ is an essential player in South Asian and global politics. India is focusing on spreading its wings through security and economy. New Delhi's existence in Kabul is

³³ Ramesh Trivedi (ed) *India's Relations with her Neighbours*, ISHA Books Publication, New Delhi, 2008.

³⁴ Mahendra Ved "Afghanistan Neighbour Distanced by Pakistan", in *Year book 2005*, published by G. Kishore Babu, New Delhi, 2005. Roy. Dadwal, Shebonti. "India's overseas Assets: Do they contribute to Energy Security?", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol.36, No.1, 2012, pp. 45-56

³⁵ Marium Kamal. "Indian Strategic Influence in Afghanistan: Realist Ends through Social Means." *South Asian Studies* 34, no. 2 (2020), pp. 447-468.

increasing its soft image to get its deep-rooted international politics aims. The author described New Delhi's hold on Afghan internal matters and actions in Afghanistan.

Chandra (2007)³⁶ analysis India-Afghanistan relations from an economic perspective. According to him, Afghanistan is a natural resource-rich country, including natural gas, petroleum, coal, sulphur, lead etc. To boost Indo- Afghan trade and commerce India signed PTA on 23rd March 2003 and reopened its consulate in Kandahar on 15th December 2002. For smooth economic relations, India signed an MoU, in the field of civil aviation on 25th February 2005. In 2006 India upgraded the public transportation facility of Kabul and other cities and started working on various projects. Mr Chandra argues that India continues its efforts to rebuild Afghanistan to fulfil its economic necessity. To fulfil her economic goal India expands its investments in a wide range of sectors including hydroelectricity, agriculture, education, industry, and health in Afghanistan.

Debata (2011)³⁷ explains India's policy towards Afghanistan. He mentions a few key factors in Indo- Afghan relations from 2001 to 2014, these are, security interest, economic interest, and China factor. According to him, India could be a suitable replacement for the US in Afghanistan, which would change the current calculus of terror groups. India can place the issue of stabilizing Afghanistan on the agenda of peace dialogue with Pakistan. He argues that helping Karzai against Pakistan's sinister designs in the region will be one of the options to further India's strategic interests in the region and its security interests at home.

Dutta (2009)³⁸ explains India's development assistance towards Afghanistan since 2001. She categorised six components of this development, these are social development, infrastructure development, capacity building development, economic development, the contribution of the

³⁶ Amiya Chandra, "*India and Afghanistan: Renewing Economic Relations*" in Warikoo, K (ed) AFGHANISTAN-The Challenge, Pentagon press, New Delhi, 2007.

³⁷ Mahesh Ranjan Debata. "India's Policy towards Afghanistan", World Focus, Vol-xxxii, No-11-12, 2011, pp. 118-126.

³⁸ Mondira Dutta '*Empowering Grassroots through Capacity Building Measures: Indian Initiatives in Afghanistan*', in Basu Roy, Arpita and Mishra, Kumar Binoda, (ed.), *Reconstructing Afghanistan: Prospects and Limitations*, Shipra Publications, New Delhi, 2011, pp. 408-418.

reconstruction process and technology and scientific upgradation. According to her security is a big issue between Indo- Afghan relations, because India's projects in Afghanistan are targeted by several terror groups. The author mentions that Afghan elections were crucial for the Indian government. After a long journey finally, India got her friendly president Hamid Karzai, who officially declared as President in 2004. In his term, India's assistance in Afghanistan gets momentum. The author argues that terror attacks on Mumbai, which are known as 26/ 11 alert India to make deep linkages with Afghanistan to prevent Pakistan's terror groups from using Afghan soil. Indian policy needs to help and trained such militant groups who are already fighting against the Taliban.

Dar and Kalis (2013)³⁹ analysed India's strategies during the war on terrorism declared by America in Afghanistan in 2001. After the 9/11 terror attack in the US, India's political and strategic conditions changed. India feels insecure and threatened by terrorism. Since 2001 India's aim is to maintain long-term peace and stability in Afghanistan. India has made a huge contribution worth \$ 750 million towards the reconstruction of Afghanistan. India made her strategy to involve itself in the war on terrorism diplomatically rather than militarily. Both authors argue that India's approach to the war on terrorism in Afghanistan is safe and secure because its contribution is never challenged by Afghan or any other states. Its agenda in the war against terrorism was guided by her long-term national interest in the Asian region. India played a major role in establishing a democratic institution in her own interest to counter the Taliban and Al Qaida.

Sujeet Sarkar (2012)⁴⁰ has undertaken a daring endeavour to break free from the conventional wisdom of Afghanistan in terms of vocabulary, perceptions, and opinion. It offers a perspective that dispels a number of fallacies that skew the public's picture of this war-torn nation, particularly in the wake of US intervention. Even though he has written about the efforts made to advance development in the country that has been devastated by war, he raises the question of whether there is a proper balance between development and security support with regard to the rehabilitation of Afghanistan. and queries if requiring the military to serve in both combatant and development capacities will be beneficial. These two inquiries are crucial given the current state of Afghanistan, the withdrawal of NATO, and US plans from the country. The

³⁹ Dar, Shaheen Showkat and Kalis, Naseer Ahamed. "*India's Strategic Response to War on Terrorism in Afghanistan: A Strategic Analysis*", Humanities and Social Science Invention", Vol-2, Issue-5, 2013, pp-54-67.

⁴⁰ Sujeet Sarkar. "*In Search of a New Afghanistan*," Niyogi Books; New Delhi, 2012

conflict, however, is far from ending. The book explores the concept of development vs security and challenges the peace game from the standpoint of the illegal poppy business, which has only grown since US intervention. Millions of dollars have been spent by the West to stop the trade, but it has continued to thrive, in stark contrast to the time under the Taliban, when it was outright forbidden. Sarkar also draws attention to the media's preoccupation with Afghanistan and the country's nebulous statehood. The book offers a critical summary of a number of Afghanistan-related topics.

An account of India's Afghanistan policy from before independence up until the UPA I administration is given by K.N. Tennyson (2012)⁴¹. Tennyson goes into great detail about the key elements of India's policy in Afghanistan and its responses to various events that have altered Afghanistan's history. He discusses the actors who have compelled India to act appropriately in order to maintain its influence in Afghanistan. He also discusses the difficulties that may result from these actors and impair India's policies. He presented chances and difficulties for India in Afghanistan before concluding.

The objectives of the Study

Against the backdrop of the above discussion the proposed study attempts to make a comprehensive understanding of the ongoing relations between India and Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban. The study aims to look into the following components.

1. To find out the reasons behind the two countries' increasing bilateral relations in the post-Taliban period.
2. To examine Afghanistan's role and support towards India's counter-terrorism policy.
3. To access the role of Pakistan in India- Afghanistan relations
4. To find out Afghanistan's role in India's economic and energy requirements from the Central Asian region.
5. To assess the role and activities of Indian civil society in Afghanistan.

⁴¹ K, N, Tennyson. "Political Developments in Afghanistan: Implications for India," KW Publishers; New Delhi, 2012

Research Questions

1. What are the reasons behind India's strategic engagement with Afghanistan?
2. Does Afghanistan have the potential and willingness to prevent anti-Indian terrorism?
3. Does Afghanistan serve as a gateway for India's greater economic engagement in Central Asia?
4. How far do the energy resources influence in India-Afghanistan relations?
5. What role India and Afghanistan play to counter Pakistan's destabilising role in both India-Afghanistan relations?

Methodology

The methodology of the study is analytical and descriptive, based on both primary and secondary data. Publications, reports, Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), pertinent parliamentary debates, relevant documents from the governments of India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the USA, as well as documents from international organisations like the United Nations (UN), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), etc., comprise the majority of the data gathered for the study. Key informant interviews with diplomats and government representatives from both nations were also used in the study. The Asia Foundation, Kabul, Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU), Kabul, Institute of Policy Studies, Islamabad, and Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), New Delhi publications with expertise in Afghanistan were examined in the context of India-Afghanistan relations to supplement these primary data. Books, Theses, Journals, Magazines, Newspapers, Discussion Papers, Seminar Papers, Documentaries and Working Papers are some examples of secondary sources. As a result, the analysis of reports, books, journals, and academic papers—both official and unofficial—makes up the majority of the study.

Qualitative content analysis is performed for the data collection sources and has historical, empirical, and exploratory foundations and goals. To comprehend different perspectives in India-Afghanistan relations, a critical examination of the speeches and interviews of significant individuals is conducted.

Research Design

Chapter 1: India–Afghanistan Relations: The Historical Background

India and Afghanistan have a long history of engagement the current Kabul might have been part of the ancient Hindu kingdom of Gandhara. The goal of this chapter is to paint a picture of positive bilateral relations. Although India enjoyed good relations with Afghanistan, its segmentation in 1947 caused it to lose geographical proximity to the country. However, during the Taliban era, Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan were generally viewed with suspicion because of its long border and Pakistan's ethnic and religious bias.

India lost direct land access to Afghanistan after becoming independent and with the creation of Pakistan, but the geographical significance of the loss diminished. Only a different shape was unearthed due to the new situation. The partition of India resulted in wider-spread unrest on the continent that it itself produced, and between India and Pakistan, there was immediate animosity and envy. But following the war, trade between India and Afghanistan experienced a significant drop. The Indo-Afghan Treaty of Friendship, which was signed in January 1950 as a first step in reviving the trade, made mention of the expansion of trade and collaboration between the two nations. A Treaty of Trade and Commerce that was ratified on 4 April 1950, in New Delhi provided additional support for these. The Treaty guaranteed that citizens of both nations would have preferential treatment in terms of trade, industry, insurance, and commerce on the territory of the other.

Chapter 2: Towards Strategic Partnership

The Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) between India and Afghanistan covers a wide range of cooperation, including trade, economic, capacity-building, civil society, and people-to-people connections, as well as political and security cooperation. This is the first document of its kind between the two countries that covers so many topics.

With the training of the Afghan National Security Forces, India's strategic cooperation agreement intends to elevate the relationship above a simple aid-donor equation to a far higher plane. In the changing geopolitical and geostrategic landscape, India views a strong, independent, secure, prosperous, and democratic Afghanistan as essential to its security interests and for the overall stability of the region. Dealing with "acts of terrorism" is also a part of it. Despite Karzai's assertion that the deal with India won't harm Pakistan, through this

arrangement, which is certain to cause Pakistan severe difficulty, Pakistan believes that India is attempting to isolate Pakistan.

India's long-term national interest in the Asian continent served as the basis for its commitment to the fight against terrorism. The country's favoured policy appears to be one of peace and stability, which would enable it to fulfil its preordained destiny as a global power. The main national political actor favours this policy. The possibility of India engaging Afghanistan peacefully and strategically revolves around the removal of US-led coalition forces from the country. Instead of getting entangled in Afghanistan, India should seek peaceful diplomacy that involves all demographic groups. India could use its soft power to strengthen Afghanistan's institutions, building on the good work it has done there over the past few years. Keeping in touch with Afghan young and making it easier for them to visit India for education and skill development should be a key component of Indian strategies. India should monitor the situation for the time being and look for windows of opportunity where it can be more helpful.

Chapter 3: Economic Dimensions in India-Afghanistan relations

This chapter presents several economic aspects of Indo-Afghan relations. In the South Asian region's process of economic integration, the opportunities and problems facing India and Afghanistan are discussed. Given the geopolitical and geostrategic backdrop, the report emphasises that both countries can attain significant levels of economic connectivity and relations through Afghanistan. Indeed, both Afghanistan and India have been seeking to improve economic ties on a bilateral basis as well as through regional integration. Afghanistan is an essential link in this process for India's connectivity with Central Asia. India and Afghanistan inked a free trade agreement in 2003, and as part of that agreement, India has given Afghans distinct and separate treatment of its products. India and Afghanistan are confronting difficulties in establishing trade ties. India and Afghanistan are becoming more involved economically, but not larger amount in terms of trade volume. The lack of land connectivity is caused by the underdeveloped trade relations between the two nations. Although both Afghanistan and Pakistan are parties to the trade and transit agreement, the same arrangement is not flexible for India, making Pakistan the middle state between the two. As a result, India is collaborating with Pakistan to permit Indian exporters to use the same route to

ship their goods to Afghanistan. The second-best alternative path for India is to enter the third country through Iran's Chabahar port.

Chapter 4: Afghanistan's role in India's Energy interest in Central Asia

Afghanistan is a crucial player for India to connect with Central Asia for its energy needs. Afghanistan is essential for creating a bridge between South Asia and Central Asia, not just for India. Against this backdrop, India's approach to engagement with Central Asia is extremely upbeat and emphasises the creation of a proactive and significant strategy that affords the region top priority. India cannot engage with Central Asia without Afghanistan, yet access to the region is necessary to maintain stability with Afghanistan and maintain good relations with the Afghan government. The conflict over oil in Central Asia is a complex Great Game in the area. In addition to Russia, China, and other neighbours including Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan, it also concerns security, geopolitics, and economic interests for the United States and Europe. It appears that China is utilising Pakistan and Iran to increase its influence while the United States plans to control the oil market for the foreseeable future. India, however, has a different strategy. Despite its interest in Central Asia's energy resources, India still plays the soft power card through its political diplomacy and participation in numerous development initiatives to meet its energy needs.

Chapter 5: Recommendation and Concluding observation

The finding and conclusion of the study will be discussed in this chapter. The nature and process of these bilateral relations and recommendations for better and smooth engagement will be mentioned in this chapter.

Chapter-1

India–Afghanistan Relations: The Background

The road to peace in Afghanistan will be long and hard. But, given the high stakes involved, the commitment of the international community must be sustained by firm resolve and unity of purpose. Democracy in an ancient land like Afghanistan will take time to take root and to come to terms with the country's history and tribal traditions.

- India's Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh,
at the Council on Foreign Relations, 23 November 2009

Washington office. USA

India and Afghanistan have a strong relationship based on historical and cultural links, which suffered a serious setback during the Taliban regime. In its post-Taliban period, India maintained excellent relations with the Rabbani-led Afghan government. Both these countries relations have been more strengthened after falling of the Taliban in December 2001. India had an excellent relationship with NATO forces in Afghanistan. After the Karzai government came to power in 2004, a major policy shift was introduced in favour of India. The 9/11 terrorist strike on the United States make India worried about terror threats which also became a factor in closer India-Afghanistan relations. There also exists a high-level political engagement with Afghanistan through bilateral high-level visits. India's former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Afghanistan in 2008 after 29 years of Indira Gandhi's visit. In 2014 India's newly elected Prime Minister Narendra Modi also visited Afghanistan and signed many treaties. From the beginning of the new government, India is the only Asian country that has come out with an open offer of aid and assistance to develop Afghanistan. India's relations with Afghanistan have grown into multi-sectoral activities in all parts of Afghanistan giving due respect to the priorities of the Afghan government and people. India is one of the largest providers of economic assistance and spends huge amount of money in support of reconstruction projects and development aid to Afghanistan. India is involved in long-term projects such as electricity, road development, parliament building construction and agriculture, etc. Even Afghan President Hamid Karzai has acknowledged India's contribution towards Afghanistan's reconstruction process.

In 2011 India signed a strategic partnership treaty with Afghanistan, which accelerates the relationship between these two states, which is already showing results and visibility India supported the Heart of Asia Initiative to attract finance and investment from across the world for Afghanistan.

India's growing relations since 2001 Afghanistan has many reasons. India pursues a policy of close cooperation to bolster its standing as a regional power and contains its rival Pakistan, which it maintains is supporting Islamic militants in Kashmir and other parts of India.

¹ The Indian government has expressed an interest to establish Afghanistan as a land bridge between India and Central Asia. India's interest in Turkmenistan- Afghanistan- Pakistan- India (TAPI) gas pipeline is also predicated upon stability and security in Afghanistan. Today India has a very legitimate and intense interest in this region. Some countries like Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan are now very important in India's Central policy to fulfill its economic interest and energy demand. In 2014 the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) withdrew the majority of its forces. It provided India an opportunity to increase its presence more strongly. The factors governing India-Afghanistan relations are:

In the first place, it is the security and strategic point of view, this region is much important for India. Taliban and other terrorist groups are always a concern for India. Several times Indian territory are harmed by these terror groups. Now India has entered the ASEAN Regional Forum, which is the only system where security issues of the region could be initiated. India's major interest is to make sure that Islamic extremist remains under control in its neighbourhood. So, it was necessary for India to build up a deep linkage with the Central Asian States Especially with Afghanistan which shares a border with Pakistan.

Another important issue between India and Afghanistan is Economic interest that is compelling India to exploit this region. With an exclusive economic zone of a large area, India needs to exploit this region. India is currently collaborating with Central and Middle East Asian.

¹ Jayshree Bajoria, "*India's Northern Exposure*", *Council on Foreign Relation*, December 5, 2007, <http://www.cfr.org/india/indias-northern-exposure/p14969>. Accessed on 24 June 2013.

Countries in trade and investment. India looks to Afghanistan to help cover its energy needs. Another factor behind India's post-Taliban agenda has been its attempt to carve out itself a greater role in regional affairs. With the dawn of the 21st century, India emerged as a rising power in World politics and the dominant power in the Asian continent. By emerging as an economic donor for Afghanistan, India wants to establish its credentials as a major power in this region. To a great extent, India's engagement with Afghanistan has been a calculation of its Pakistan policy. India would like to ensure that the Taliban does not hold the position again in Afghanistan and prevent Pakistan from dominating Afghanistan.

India and Afghanistan have near financial, cultural, and political relations. The connection between India and Afghanistan can be followed back to the Indus valley civilization. The relationship is not restricted to the governments in New Delhi and Kabul, its foundations are in the historical contacts and exchanges between the people groups. Whereas managing territorial relations, particularly Diaspora, it regularly happens that, analysts drop prey to the authentic trap and are captured in the drag of the outline of history. Be that as it may, not at all like the Indian Diaspora in far-flung and confined nations, where the Diaspora is rootless and a result of transplantation, the territorial Diaspora offers more grounded closeness and civilizational interaction with its roots. This self-evident engagement and its afterward dissociation necessitate clarification. Afghanistan is a large landlocked country of imposing contrasts that covers some 6,50,000 sq. km, of which two-thirds are more than 5,000 feet above sea level and contain some of the tallest mountains in the world. Of the land that is below 5,000 feet, only 10 percent is suitable for cultivation.² Most sources begin the history of the territory that is now Afghanistan between the years 500 BC and 300 BC, developing through the reigns of the Iranian Achaemenid dynasty, Alexander the Great, and the Seleucid dynasty. Although this is the date range in which historians commence stories of Afghanistan, archaeological evidence indicates that urban civilization began in the region between 3000 Bc and 2000 Bc. Afghanistan is certainly a land of crossroads, where There have been a variety of religions, cultural influences, and governments.³ The 19th and 20th century British experience of Two war in Afghanistan. Other Western countries should have learned a lot from Britain's experience fighting in Afghanistan during the 19th and early 20th centuries, but that did not

² Ewans Martin. *Afghanistan: A New History Great Britain*. Curzon press: London. 2002, p. 1.

³ Harsh. V. Pant. "*India's Afghan Muddle: A Lost Opportunity*". Harper Collings: Noida. 2014, p. 19.

happen, and those nations also lost their path, experienced loss, and failed in their attempts to take control of Afghanistan. Afghanistan has a long close cultural and geographical relationship with India. Numerous more dynasties, in addition to the Mauryas, Kushans, and Mughals, have ruled over areas in both India and Afghanistan. Recent studies have also shown that Afghanistan had been a major centre of both Hindu and Buddhist cultures prior to the arrival of Islam. The first Muslim dynasty in India was established as a result of the invasions of Mahmud Ghazni and Mohammad Ghori, which came from Afghanistan and later gave the Muslim rulers of mediaeval India.⁴

The Afghan government has never been particularly good at obtaining data, and population statistics have always been challenging to interpret. In reality, political unrest has made the Afghan government unstable, which has hampered this element as well. Population estimates and ethnic breakdowns are therefore always questionable, with estimates occasionally being adjusted to increase the likelihood of receiving international support on a per capita basis. However, there is little dispute that the Pashtuns, who make up about 42% of the population, are the largest ethnic group, followed by the Tajiks, who make up about 27%. The other significant ethnic groups are the Aimak (9%), the Hazaras (9%) and the Uzbeks (9%).⁵ A multitude of ethnic minorities, including Turkomans, Kazakhs, Qizilbash, Wakhis, Nuristanis, Baluchis, and Kyrgyz, as well as a very small number of Sikhs, Hindus, and Jews, make up the balance of the population.

Afghanistan and India throughout the ages have been maintaining strong and cordial bilateral ties. Even in the first century CE, goods and products of India used to be exported to the east and west via Kabul. During that period not only did Indian commercial items used to pass via Afghanistan but also Indian culture spread throughout the region. From Afghanistan, Buddhism expanded to China, and then via China, it reached Korea and Japan. It was in this

⁴ D. P. Singhal. *"India and Afghanistan 1876-1907."* South Asian Publishers: New Delhi. 1982, p. 2.

⁵ *"The World Fact Book, 2010,"* Central Intelligence Agency, available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2075.html?countryName=Afghanistan&countryCode=af®ionCode=sas&#af>, accessed on September 18, 2018.

era when the Silk Route connected the east and west of the world.⁶ Afghanistan had so been referred to as a "Cultural Province of India" for ages. The Aryans moved southward to India from this point. During Alexander's successful invasion of India, hundreds of people from various regions of modern Afghanistan were a part of his winning armies. Saleucus Nicator, his successor, was compelled to cede to Chandra Gupta Maurya all of his claims to the regions south of the Hindukush. Under Maurya's grandson, Ashoka, Buddhism flourished in the whole region. During the reign of Greco-Bactrian Kings, there were contacts between India and Afghanistan. The Sakas drove them out, and the Kushans drove them out in turn. The Kabul Valley and Northern India once more had close ties during the Kushan empire. Kaniska expanded his conquests from Central Asia to Bengal, transforming Afghanistan under his rule into a sacred land.

As the Buddhist dominance waned in the 10th century, Mahmud Ghazni brought Islam from Afghanistan into India. Following it, there were other voyages that resulted in a population exchange between the two nations. Babur, who in 1504 began to form a new "Asian Empire," conquered Kabul and Delhi two decades later. Until Aurangzeb's reign, this rule by the sole king in the later Mughal dynasty persisted.⁷ Under Maurya's grandson, Ashoka, Buddhism flourished in the whole region. During the reign of the Greco-Bactrian Kings, there were contacts between India and Afghanistan. They were driven out by the Sakas who in turn were forced out by the Kushans.

⁶ Sayed Makhdoom Raheen, *"Afghanistan and India Through the Ages"*. New Delhi: India-Afghanistan Foundation. 2009, P. 1.

⁷ Op-cit. D. P. Singhal. 1982, p. 2.

Kushan Empire indicates that parts of India and Afghanistan shared an Empire's territory in 30-375 AD.



Source: [www. https://www.worldhistorymaps.info/civilizations/kushan-empire](https://www.worldhistorymaps.info/civilizations/kushan-empire).

Under the Kushan dynasty, once again, there were close contacts between the Kabul Valley and Northern India. Kaniska, under whom Afghanistan became a holy land, extended his conquests from Central Asia to Bengal. In the 10th Century, Mahmud Ghazni, carried Islam across Afghanistan into India as the Buddhist influence began to decline. Thereafter, there were many expeditions that brought about the exchange of population between the two countries. In 1504, a new 'Asian Empire' began to emerge under Babur who captured Kabul, and Delhi twenty years later. This control through the only nominal in the later Mughal period continued till Aurangzeb's time.⁸ Shortly thereafter, beginning around the seventh century AD, Afghanistan became subject to Islamic rule, which has lasted into the present. In AD 642, Arabs invaded the region, defeating the remaining Sassanian and Huna rule, giving way to Persian

⁸ ibid

rule until the Turkic Ghaznavids invaded in AD 998. The rule of Afghanistan remained fragmented, however, with local rulers continuing to attempt to rule their own territories. For the first time in hundreds of years, the fragmentation of rule ended temporarily in 1219 when Genghis Khan led the Mongol invasion of Afghanistan. But his rule did not last long, and local ruler competition began once again upon his death in 1227.⁹ It was not until Tamerlane came to Afghanistan in 1381 that there was again a particular ruler. He and his descendants ruled Afghanistan until the early sixteenth century when the locale fell to the Mughals, who had themselves come to India from Turkey by means of Afghanistan. The Mughals ruled for two centuries until the passing of their leader Nadir Shah in 1747. As a result of its location at the confluence of numerous cultures and Asian migratory routes, Afghanistan has a lengthy and diverse history. After the passing of Nadir Shah, Ahmad Shah of the Abdali clan united a number of tiny independent Afghan princes under his control, giving the kingdom of Afghanistan the status of a unified sovereign State in the middle of the eighteenth century. He not only conquered all of Afghanistan, creating a single sovereign state in Asia, but he also advanced toward India. Afghan suzerainty briefly included the Persian Khorasan region, the Punjab and Kashmir, Sind, Baluchistan, and the entirety of Afghanistan.

The upshot is that the nation has a rich heritage of archaeological art and architectural relics, most of which has been destroyed over the course of three decades of modern warfare. Although the nation did not come into existence in its current shape until Ahmad Shah Durrani's rule in 1747, it immediately rose to prominence in European history as a player in the Great Game. In this game, Britain likely tried to use Afghanistan as a buffer zone in order to protect British interests of India and to prevent a rise in Russian hegemony in Central Asia.¹⁰ India was invaded in 1748, setting the stage for subsequent invasions. However, the Marathas became the target of his most significant Indian expedition in 1761. He became so entangled in Mughal politics that he was the only person to whom the Maratha, Jat, and Nawab of Oudh's alliance could turn for assistance. It was said that Shuja al-Dawlah, the Nawab-Wazir of Oudh, and Shah received a letter from Najib al-Dawlah, a contemporary and ally of Durrani, asking for assistance in fighting the Marathas. In 1760, Durrani heeded the summons and marched to

⁹ Harsh. V. Pant. *"India's Afghan Muddle A Lost Opportunity"*. Harper Collins Publishers: Noida. 2014, p- 19.

¹⁰ Frank. A.Clements. 2003. *"Conflict in Afghanistan: A Historical Encyclopaedia."* ABC-CLIO Inc: California, P-xiii.

India. Other Maratha chiefs persuaded Shiva Rao Bhaoji to delay dethroning the Mughal Emperor until Durrani was in power when Shiva Rao Bhaoji hurried to Delhi to do it. Other Maratha chiefs persuaded Shiva Rao Bhaoji to delay the dethronement until Durrani was forced out of the area when he headed to Delhi to overthrow the Mughal Emperor. However, Durrani moved swiftly and met his adversaries at the battle of Panipat in 1761, which he won and which resulted in widespread slaughter.¹¹ The Marathas' hegemony was overthrown in this conflict, which prevented them from becoming a barrier to British colonial development in India.

Durrani passed away in 1772 after becoming weary of his campaigning. But his supporters were unable to create a lasting dominion. As a result, the dynasty he discovered persisted until 1818 and was sustained up until 1978 by a different sub-tribe. As a result, he was regarded as the "Father of the Nation" by the Afghans.¹² After the death of Ahmad Shah Abdali in 1773 CE, the boundaries of Afghanistan continued to fluctuate as a result of unstable internal political conditions brought about by the internecine feuds of succession to the Afghan throne. It was not until the end of the 19th century that, on the initiative of the British and in cooperation with the Russians, the frontiers of Afghanistan were defined and demarcated by several boundary commissions. The present limits of Afghanistan rest on those demarcations.¹³

Timur, the second son of Durrani, succeeded him. He shifted the centre of his empire to Kabul and managed to preserve it until his death in 1793. The empire fell apart as a result of internal warfare among Timur's sons brought on by declining revenues and financial constraints. The tribal leaders grew substantially stronger, and finally a rebellion was led by Pinda Khan's (a Durrani supporter) son Fateh Khan and his half-brother Mahmud. Mahmud took charge, but a battle broke out with Shah Shuja, the brother of Zaman Mirza (the fifth son of Timur), in which the latter eventually won. Elphinstone, a British representative who was in Peshawar to discuss a treaty, arrived there in 1809, during Shah Shuja's rule. The Shah was required under the agreement not to permit French forces to cross Afghan territory during a Napoleonic campaign to India and not to join the Franco-Russian-Iranian alliance. But as soon as Shah Shuja was

¹¹ Ahmad Mahmood, Ghazi. 2004. *"Islamic Renaissance in South Asia (1707-1867): The Role of Shah Waliullah and His Successors"*, Adam Publishers and Distributors: New Delhi, PP-130-32.

¹² Ewans, Martin. *"History, South Asia 2010: Europa Regional Surveys of World"*. Routledge: London. ,2009, P-85.

¹³ Asghar H. Bilgrami, *Afghanistan and British India 1793-1907: A Study in Foreign Relations*, New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1972, p. 1.

overthrown, the pact was rendered illegal.¹⁴ The visit served as the Afghans' initial official encounter with the British.

In the Durrani realm, feudal instability followed Shah Shuja's overthrow. Province leaders essentially became independent kings, and in 1810, Multan's hakim Muzaffar Khan approached the British East India Company with a proposal to become a vassal of the British in order to fight the Sikhs without assistance from the central government, King Jahandad Khan of Nurzai, Attok's ruler, sold Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Punjab authority over the key strategic area that guarded Indus's bridge. The Khans, the most powerful Afghan feudal clans, gained complete control of the situation as inter-tribal fighting increased. Of these, the Barakzai clan, led by Fateh Khan, was the most powerful.¹⁵ The regions that Ahmad Shah included in the Durrani state gradually either attained independence or depended on powerful neighbours. Maharaja Ranjit Singh's rule extended to the territory on the right bank of the Indus and the Kashmir River. Several distinct feudal principalities were created as a result of feudal decentralisation in the Afghan regions. In the majority of them, like in Kabul, Kandahar, and Peshawar, the Barakzai Khans took control in 1819. Shah Mahmud, the grandson of Durrani, reigned only Herat till 1829. His son Kamran succeeded him and ruled Herat until 1842.

From that point, innate Pashtuns influenced the run of the show of Afghanistan, or maybe ostensibly ruled, until 1978. It was during this period that present-day Afghanistan is considered to have been established, particularly by Ahmad Shah Durrani. During this period, keeping with convention, Afghanistan saw awesome competition for sway. Within the nineteenth century took put what is presently called the Incredible Game, with czarist Russia and the British Domain competing for supremacy in Central Asia.

British considered Afghanistan to be an essential component in securing their control over India. The first Anglo-Afghan war began in 1839, and the last one ended in 1878 as a result of British interference in Afghan endeavours. It wasn't until 1880 that the boundaries of contempo

¹⁴ Gankovsky, V. Yu. *A History of Afghanistan*. Progress Publishers: Moscow. 1985, p- 122.

¹⁵ *ibid*

rary Afghanistan were established. Under this, although Afghans would be allowed to keep their freedom, Britain would formally oversee Afghanistan's external projects. By the final decade of the eighteenth century, England had successfully consolidated its hold over a sizable portion of both north and south India. The British empire in India soon nearly embraced the entirety of India, though Sind and the Punjab remained independent of their control. The early years of the succeeding century saw the defeat of Tip Sultan and the Marathas. The other European countries, particularly Russia in the north and France in the east, were also growing their empires at the same time, and it was thought that their fast-expanding borders were converging toward the Indian frontier. Afghanistan was entangled in a web of political and economic rivalry because it was situated between the empires of Britain and Russia, which were constantly inching closer to one another. The Government of India was particularly sensitive to foreign intrusion on its soil due to the fact that Afghanistan served as the communication arteries between the Russian and British military facilities in Central Asia and held the entrance by which the British citadel in India could be entered. Afghanistan became the site of a conflict of interests between the Great Powers by the middle of the nineteenth century.¹⁶

When Amanullah Khan took over as the country's ruler in 1919, he invaded India right away as punishment for British meddling. He was not able to seize any territory from India, but he did succeed in seizing command of Afghanistan's foreign policy. The Treaty of Rawalpindi, which put a stop to the third and final Anglo-Afghan war, codified this seizure. The 19th of August, 1919, is still remembered as a significant event in Afghanistan today since it is still recognized as Independence Day. Following the Second World War, several newly rising states, including India and Afghanistan, were faced with the challenge of developing an international strategy that would best advance their interests in the shifting circumstances of the cold war era.

Under Jawaharlal Nehru's leadership, India began to take on a new position in relation to the newly emerging states. Afghanistan, in keeping with her traditional role as a buffer between Britain and Russia, attempted to adapt her tried-and

¹⁶ Bisheshwar Prasad, *"The Foundations of India's Foreign Policy, 1360-188"* (Delhi, 1967), edn. 2, p- 254.

true neutrality policy to this shifting circumstance. Additionally, it should be mentioned that, at least in the first few years, India did not give the development of ties with its neighbours enough priority in her efforts to play a more constructive role on the global stage.

Although a long history of these relations did result in a bond of friendship, the moral content so crucial in international relations was lacking before India attained independence. This was filled after India's independence by certain ideas and concepts such as nonalignment. Relations between India and her neighbour Afghanistan are essentially the result of mutual conveniences and practical needs of the two countries as they crop up from time to time. The concept of non-alignment came into existence after the Second World War as a result of the numerous changes that were noticeable on the global landscape. Nehru's interim administration in India was the first to take the initiative in announcing the nonalignment policy. Afghanistan asserts that the traditional foundation of our foreign policy, which she has adopted under the name of the policy of unbiased judgment, has been nonalignment.¹⁷ In 1947 India's segment made it lose the geographical contiguity with Afghanistan because as it may India delighted in great relations with Afghanistan but the Taliban period whereas Pakistan incorporates a long border geological vicinity ethnic and devout partiality its relations with Afghanistan have been seen with doubt customarily. Afghanistan and India only established a state-to-state relationship in 1947, following Indian independence. In the time of the British Empire, Afghanistan and India shared the Durand Line, which was divided after India attained independence. With Pakistan acting as the provocateur, it stoked tension between Afghanistan and India. Additionally, this caused a divide in terms of geography between the two nations. Afghanistan nevertheless made an effort to keep things civil with India. From the beginning, it opposed both Pakistan's UN membership and its stance on Kashmir. The relationship was initially founded on the concepts of non-alignment and Panchsheel.¹⁸

Afghanistan has continuously been closer to the civilization of the South Asian religions particularly India Afghanistan was the primary nation to supply protection to driving Indian opportunity warriors such as Subhas Chandra Bose Barakatullah and numerous others in

¹⁷ Ali Hasan, Jafri. " *Indo-Afghan relations, 1947-67.*" Sterling Publishers: New Delhi. 1976, P- 19.

¹⁸ Rajan, Jha. *India - Afghanistan Relations in Post-Taliban Era.* Internat. J. Appl. Soc. Sci. 7 (5&6). 2020 p- 287.

Kabul.¹⁹ The legacy of these Afghan relations deeply affected these bilateral relations. Geographical Cultural economic and all other considerations were subordinated to the preservation of British interest in the region and little attention was the Indian desire for a friendship with her immediate neighbour. There are many instances it would have made a different story of the Indo-Afghan relations had only the desire of Afghanistan to cultivate friendship and strengthen the bonds, been properly reciprocated by the British however the latter had their own wider aims in view and generally throughout this year the existence of an atmosphere of fear and mutual distrust at the official level could not be concealed. during the British regime there was a sort of mixed relationship between the two countries there were times when utmost cordiality prevailed, and there were conflicts and wars at certain other times.

Since India's independence and with the birth of Pakistan the former lost direct contact with Afghanistan but the geographical significance got lost lessened. It only exhumed a different shape in the changed circumstances. The partition of India had self-caused wider spread disturbances in the subcontinent and from the very beginning, an atmosphere of hatred and jealousy prevailed between India and Pakistan. Both these countries are also facing many problems at home and a little later or involved in actual fighting in Kashmir in the light of these developments Afghanistan's strategic importance for India Grew still further. It cannot be denied however that the presence of Pakistan has contributed more towards Creating A bridge between these countries. Kashmir's problem between India and Pakistan and on the other hand Pashtoon issue between Pakistan and Afghanistan Could have proved disastrous for Pakistan but it did not happen because of a common principle involved in them and the principal was self-determination. The government of India was not able to extend its support to the Afghan demand for pakhtoonistan. There was a feeling in the government circles that if India supported the Afghan demand for self-determination in Petunes tall, she herself may have to yield to the application of the same principle in Kashmir similarly as the phone government was the instant thing on the application of the principle of self-determination to the park tunes areas, she could not support the Indian stand over Kashmir.

¹⁹ Shaida Mohammad Abdali. *"Afghanistan Pakistan India: A Paradigm Shift."* New Delhi: Pentagon Press 2016. P- 137.

After the war, however, the India-Afghanistan trade registered a sharp decline. As a first step towards reviving the trade, the Indo-Afghan Treaty of Friendship was signed in January 1950, which contained references to the development of trade and cooperation between the two countries. These were further substantiated by a Treaty of Trade and Commerce signed in New Delhi on April 4, 1950. The Treaty provided for the most favoured nation treatment to the nationals of both countries in matters relating to commerce, industry, trade and insurance in the territory of each other.²⁰ The partition of India and Pakistan caused a climate of animosity and resentment to arise, and the Kashmir conflict has continued to feed this attitude to this day. Demands for an independent Pakhtoonistan were sparked by disagreements between Afghanistan and Pakistan on the validity of the Durand Line. Throughout the years 1950–1963, this resulted in multiple times when the economic ties between India and Afghanistan were disrupted. Despite their continued political closeness, Afghanistan and India's commerce connections suffered greatly from the establishment of Pakistan. Although Iran and the USSR were also trading partners of Afghanistan, historically India was seen as a market for Afghan items. Afghanistan once relied on British-India, a landlocked nation, to do trade with other nations through Karachi port. After thereafter, trade between India and Afghanistan was dependent on Pakistan. Trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan was negatively impacted by the Indo-Pakistan conflict and Pak-Afghanistan animosity. In the bilateral trade between India and Afghanistan, Pakistan had unique geographic significance. When Pakistan did not permit transit facilities, the planes were utilised for selling goods. India was the only country to import fresh and dry fruits from Afghanistan, when Afghanistan broke diplomatic relations with Pakistan. However, Pakistan took advantage of the chance during the 1965 Indo-Pak conflict by denying transit services to India and buying the goods intended for India.²¹

The creation of Pakistan had a more disastrous effect all into Afghan relations in the economic and trade spheres. Being Landlock Afghanistan was totally dependent on the Indian ports for her trade with the outside world, with the birth of Pakistan the picture totally changed India was now deprived of its pre-petition benefits and she became dependent on Pakistan for carrying on her trade with Afghanistan. India's Afghanistan trait greatly suffered fast because a package stole Afghanistan's differences and then because of into concrete. During the Indian-

²⁰ Op- Cit. Jafri. 1976. p-19.

²¹ *ibid*, P- 24.

Pakistan conflict in 1965 Pakistan by refusing transit facilities sufficiently demonstrated that a good relationship has to be maintained with it by both India and Afghanistan in order to maintain normal trade relations between them. These strategic considerations were substantiated by the long history of Afghanistan relations which seen earlier had provided a firm foundation for the development of stroll and intimate relations between the two countries.

A new trading demand for introducing dimensional changes in the pattern of trade between two countries was signed on 30 July 1968. It was decided to give up better trade and instead the payment was to be made in hard currency. A month later when India's commerce Minister Dinesh Singh visited Kabul the pattern of the trade relationship was reviewed when Afghanistan expressed difficulty in the banking system India agreed to continue beta treat character for some more time India also agreed to a quantitate rather than monetary sailing for exports from Afghanistan to India.

The need for expansion of trade relations was a partner in for sized by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi at the time of her visit To Afghanistan in 1969. The setting up of a joint commission at the ministerial level to study and plan various projects for the mutual benefit of India and Afghanistan the Prime Minister however regrets that the absence of direct means of communication has hampered the expansion of trade between the two countries. While the Indian efforts to preserve the Tashkent Spirit did not yield many results, friendly relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan proved a boon to Pakistan at the time of their deep trouble in 1971. Afghanistan not only kept strictly neutral at the time of the Indo-Pak war in 1971 but did not extend recognition to the new nation of Bangladesh for quite some time, which causes concern for India. It was in keeping with the desire for friendly relations between all countries of the region that King Zahir Shah warmly welcome the Shimla agreement. Speaking at the dinner held to honour the visiting Indian president at Kabul on 10 July 1972, he said I trust and sincerely hope we are now on the threshold Of an area of these and constructive activities which will bring benefits to all people in the area is it in Giri explaining the Indian police or a group that the problems of the subcontinent also affected in the start he said it has been our principal endeavour To resolve this difference is honorably, peacefully equitably and permanently.²² Afghanistan is strategically important to India because of its geo-strategic location as a

²² ibid

crossroad to connect South, West and Central Asia (after the disintegration of the USSR). Since early period, India has good and cordial relations with Afghanistan. During the reign of King Zahir Shah (1933-1973), India had enjoyed excellent relations with Afghanistan barring a brief interlude during the 1965 Indo-Pakistani conflict.²³

Newly formed governments in Afghanistan in 1973 and in India in 1977 did not ruin the advance in bilateral relations as both the nations kept on rest confidence in each other. Reciprocal visits of the beat pioneers proceeded to appear as signs of solid relations. Indian Foreign Minister A. B. Vajpayee went to Afghanistan in September 1977. Vajpayee was a warm welcome in Kabul, where he announced India's commitment towards progressed ties between the two states. Relations with Afghanistan were agreeable amid the prevalence of Morarji Desai (1977-79) in India. In any case, the caretaker government of Charan Singh in India confronted a major outside policy challenge when Soviet troops entered Afghanistan in December 1979. Due to India's proximity to both Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, the Singh Government was in a problem and attempted a balancing act when the Western world, driven by the US needed a quick withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

The Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1978 marked one of the greatest rifts in the two nations' ties. The Indian government welcomed the installation of a pro-Soviet rule in the nation, but when the Soviet army intervened to defend it against domestic opposition, Indian position became somewhat precarious. India continued to make efforts to keep its diplomatic relations with the Afghan government intact throughout the PDPA's administration till 1992.²⁴ India's changeless agent told the UN on 12 January 1980 that India had no reason to doubt the Soviet affirmation to pull back its troops when inquired to do so by the Afghan government. India moreover communicated its concern over the reaction of the US, China, and Pakistan on this issue, additionally, over the supply of arms to Afghan rebels and the expansion of naval exercises within the Indian Sea, which India conceived as threats to India's security. New Delhi, in any case, attempted to preserve great relations with two Soviet-backed governments in

²³ Sumit Ganguly, *"India's Role in Afghanistan"*, CIDOB Policy Research Project, January 2012, p. 2.

²⁴ Op-cit, Ranjan Jha. 2020. p- 287.

Afghanistan beneath Babrak Karmal (1979-86) and Mohammed Najibullah (1986-92), due to security discernments coming about from the outside forces' back to Afghan rebels.²⁵

After the withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989, Afghanistan faced a political crisis. Different ethnic groups were trying to oust the Najibullah Government, which became weak sans the Soviet support. India remained concerned with the continuous arming of the Afghan rebels by Pakistan and China and the deteriorating social conditions in Afghanistan. New Delhi did 19Y to provide political support and material assistance to the Najibullah Government. In a loin: Communique (C) issued in New Delhi in August 1990 during the Afghan President's Win, India's support of Najibullah's policy of national reconciliation in Afghanistan was endorsed.²⁶

Afghanistan has since long been a arrive of turmoil amid the Cold War in spite of the fact that Afghanistan remained non-aligned all through it was not lifted so by the most prominent control the intercession made by the Soviet Union in 1979 to bolster Communist PDP a people group Equitable party of Afghanistan government and at the same time, Pakistan's change over a bolster to Mujahideen against the government finished in 1989. India's relationship with Afghanistan has been persevering solid and based on a common interface India has been playing a useful part in Afghanistan and amid Amit Karzai's government, these two nations went on sign different reciprocal and multilateral agreements. Customary respective visits by critical pioneers of the two nations made a difference and reinforce relations. This can be found out from the official visit of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to Afghanistan in 1969. Amid the visit, the two nations concurred to set up a joint commission for financial exchange and specialized participation²⁷. The joint commission was dependent on the responsibility to chalk out programs of participation within the fields of agriculture water systems and control industry and health. India guaranteed Afghanistan to help with the setting up of rural inquire-about centres in Bamiyan Kandahar and Kabul and an industrial state within the capital religion of

²⁵ Sec in this context, M. HA. Ansari, 'Afghanistan; in J. N. Dixit, ed, Extremal Affairs- Cross Border Relations New Delhi: Roli Books), 2003, p. 175.

²⁶ Ibid,p 180

²⁷ ibid

Kabul. The Indian Prime Minister moreover advertised aid set up water system ventures in numerous parts of Afghanistan Indira Gandhi and Afghanistan Prime Minister Etemadi Pronounced that the two countries would direct clear of disputable issues like Kashmir and Appearing regard to the subject of both the countries. Customary respective visit by critical pioneers of the two nations made a difference reinforce relations. this can be a found out from the official visit of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to Afghanistan in 1969. Amid the visit the two nations concurred to set up a joint commission for financial exchange and specialized participation. The joint commission was dependent with the responsibility to chalk out programs of participation within the fields of the agriculture water system and control industry and health. India guaranteed Afghanistan to help with the setting up of rural inquiry about centres in Bamiyan Kandahar and Kabul and an industrial state within the capital region of Kabul. The Indian Prime Minister moreover advertised and offer assistance to set up water system ventures in numerous parts of Afghanistan Indira Gandhi and Afghanistan Prime Minister Etemadi Pronounced that the two countries would direct clear of disputable issues like Kashmir and Appearing regard to the subject of both the countries.

The 1970s seen impressive positive movement in respective relations. An unused exchange understanding was marked between the two nations. In February 1972 assertion was given for the setting up of a joint venture for the generation of extricating of Restorative herbs and plants in Afghanistan which India concurred to utilize within the pharmaceutical industry. The understanding moreover chalked out measures to reinforce exchange on solid lines Indian point Mr. Saran Singh gone to Afghanistan in April amid his visit Solan Singh looked into with Afghan pioneers ranges of participation between the two neighbours with uncommon accentuates on financial and specialized participation. Indian President VV Giri visited Kabul and stressed on the net for close our bilateral ties for peace and stability in the region the Indian president expressed that India-Afghan relations or Kushal for peace and prosperity in South Asia double crown prince visited India towards the end of 1972 and reviewed bilateral relations with the Indian leaders on the occasion of the visit of the crown prince it was noted by the two sides that bilateral trade and economic cooperation was growing rapidly.²⁸

²⁸ Aneek Chatterjee. *"Neighbours Major Powers and Indian Foreign Policy."* Orient Blackswan Pvt Ltd: Hyderabad, 2017, p- 91.

The uncertain governments in Afghanistan in 1973 and in India in 1977 did not prevent or crash in reciprocal lessons as both the nations proceed to rest confidence in each other, and a two-sided visit of the beat pioneers proceeded to appear signs of solid relations. Former Foreign Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee went to Afghanistan in September 1977 and concurred a warm welcome in Kabul where he announced India's commitment to our own progress ties between the two states.²⁹ Relations with Afghanistan were sincere, during the Prime Ministership of Morarji Desai from 1977 to 1979. The caretaker government of Charan Singh in India confronted a major outside approach challenge when Soviet troops entered Afghanistan in December 1979, due to India's nearness to both Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, India's Policy was not much clear and they were in dilemma as to whom to support. In 1980 Prime Minister Indira Gandhi visited Afghanistan, on a speech She said that India's sole concern was that situation in Afghanistan did not escalate from a cold war between big powers into a hot war and that "it does not engulf India".³⁰

Addressing the leaders of the Opposition in Parliament ...After the withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989 Afghanistan confronted political emergency distinctive ethnic bunches were attempting to remove the Najibullah government which got to be powerless sans the Soviets back. India remained steady with the persistent equipping of the Afghan rebels by Pakistan and China and the falling apart social conditions in Afghanistan. Unused Delhi did not attempt to supply political bolster and material right hand to the Najibullah government. within the joint, Communique put in modern Delhi in eminent 1990 amid the Afghan President's visit. India was the as it were South Asian nation to recognize the Soviet-backed Majority rule Republic of Afghanistan in the 1980s, in spite of the fact that relations were lessened amid the 1990s, the Afghan gracious war, and the Taliban government. India supported the ousting of the Taliban and got to be the biggest territorial supplier of help and recreation help to Afghanistan. Indians are working in different development ventures, a portion of India's revamping endeavours in Afghanistan. Thus, India and Afghanistan have been traditionally strong and friendly. While India was the only South Asian country to recognise the USSR-backed Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in the 1980s, its relations were diminished during the Afghan civil wars and the rule of the Islamist Taliban in the 1990s³¹.

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ *Prime Minister Indira Gandhi visited Afghanistan*, The Indian Express, published on January 21, 1980

In the time of Burhanuddin Rabbani Afghanistan dove into ethnic clashes and confronted challenges from his Prime Serve Gulbuddin Hekmatyar Who was backed by Pakistan's inter-services insights. Pakistan was against the Rabbani government because it damaged the ISI-supported Peshawar agreement. India on its portion remained in touch with pioneers of all bunches in Afghanistan from this period 1992 to 1996.

As with most countries, India never recognized the Taliban's assumption of power in 1996 But only Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and the United Arab Emirates recognized the Taliban regime. Following the 9/11 attacks and the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan that resulted, ties between India and Afghanistan grew strong once again. India has restored full diplomatic relations and has provided hundreds of millions of dollars in aid for Afghanistan's reconstruction and development. In any case, the Najibullah Government might not survive for long and fell in April 1992. Just after Najibullah's exit, the control of Kabul went into the hands of the rebels steadfast to Ahmad Shah Masood, who was considered as near to Pakistan. On 26 October 1992, the Mujahideen faction, of Afghanistan met in Peshawar, Pakistan, and concluded the Peshawar Agreement which settled for a rotational course of action of governments in Afghanistan and announced the foundation of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.³² This post-Najibullah government, headed by Mujaddidi, was recognised by numerous nations counting India, with whom the modern government wished to have warm and agreeable relations. Mujaddidi surrendered administration as per the terms of the Peshawar Accord after two months, and was supplanted by Burhanuddin Rabbani, who in turn declined to quit, and kept on running the show Afghanistan till 1996 in the midst of broad hatred of the match ethnic factions, counting the Taliban. Mullah Muhammad Umar, who held the positions of Head of State and "Commander of the Faithful," led the Taliban regime. Despite frequently meeting foreign leaders, he remained in the Taliban control base in Kandahar and avoided public speaking engagements and appearances. frequently receive high level remote authorities. Osama bin Laden, the leader of Al Qaeda, moved from Sudan to Afghanistan in May 1996, just before the Taliban invaded Kabul. Before that, he had recruited Arab fighters for the anti-Soviet war. He first resided in a part of the Nangarhar province (near Jalalabad city) that was under the control of Yunus Khalis, the head of Mullah Umar's gathering, but as the Taliban seized additional territory in the following years, he enjoyed a more liberal reign. Only after

³² Mohammed Hamid Ansari speech over Afghanistan, ministry of external affairs. 1996.

the Taliban overthrew the Northern Alliance in 1996 did the relationship between Afghanistan and India come to an end. Except for the 1999 Kandhar incident, Afghanistan and India had no formal ties throughout the five years the Taliban were in power. This was the worst time for relations between Afghanistan and India. The Taliban's fanatical ideology, its animosity toward nations not ruled by non-Muslims, and its close ties to Pakistan were the causes of the lack of relations between the two nations.³³ Umar reportedly formed a personal and political bond with Bin Laden and rejected American demands to have him removed. Like Umar, the majority of the top Taliban officials were Ghilzai Pashtuns, who predominate in eastern Afghanistan. They are the Durrani Pashtuns' adversaries, who dominate the south. In an effort to bolster their hold on northern and western Afghanistan, the Taliban systematically massacred people, according to a United Nations investigation. According to U.N. representatives, there were "15 massacres" between 1996 and 2001. Additionally, they claimed that "these have been quite systematic and they all link back to the Ministry of Defense or to Mullah Omar himself."³⁴

In 1998, when the Taliban captured Mazar-i-Sharif, about 4,000 civilians were killed by them, and many more were reportedly tortured. Umar and Bin developed a political and personal bond, according to reports.³⁵ The records also make clear the part that support forces from Pakistan and the Middle East played in these murders. The so-called 055 Brigade, directed by Bin Laden, murdered numerous civilians in Afghanistan. According to eyewitnesses in numerous villages who were interviewed for the United Nations investigation, Arab fighters had long knives that they used to cut people's throats and skin them. In his capacity as Chief of Army Staff at the time, Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf was in charge of dispatching 8 UNHCR (February 1999). Afghanistan: The state of affairs in or near Aqcha (Jawzjan Province), includes the majority tribe or ethnic group and those in power at the moment.

The Taliban and Bin Laden were joined in battle by thousands of Pakistanis. To combat Massoud's soldiers, thousands more Pakistanis were fighting alongside the Taliban and Bin

³³ Op-cit. Ranjan Jha.2020. p- 288.

³⁴ UNHCR (February 1999). "Afghanistan: Situation in, or around, Aqcha (Jawzjan Province) including predominant tribal/ethnic group and who is currently in control." [Online Web] Accessed on March 5, 2019.URL: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,IRBC,,AFG,,3ae6aab050,0.html>. UNHCR

³⁵ ibid

Laden.³⁶ There were reportedly 28,000 Pakistanis fighting in Afghanistan in all. Approximate numbers of 20,000 conventional Pakistani soldiers, either from the army or Frontier Corps, and 8,000 to 10,000 militants recruited through madrassa recruitment filled the ranks of the Taliban on a regular basis. Thus, more than 8,000 Pakistanis made up the estimated 25,000 Taliban regular force.³⁷ The U.S. State Department confirmed in a 1998 report that "20–40% of [regular] Taliban soldiers are Pakistani." The letter further claims that until their bodies are returned to Pakistan, the parents of those Pakistani nationals "know nothing regarding their child's military activity with the Taliban."³⁸ A further 3,000 Taliban soldiers who served in the regular army were Arab and Central Asian states. Osama Bin Laden and Ayman al-Al Zawahiri's Qaeda developed into a state within the Taliban rule from 1996 to 2001. Bin Laden recruited Arabs to fight alongside him against the United Front. Only 14,000 of the nearly 45,000 Pakistani, Taliban, and Al Qaeda soldiers battling Massoud's forces were Afghan.

Afghanistan served as a base for Al-Qaeda to train and indoctrinate fighters, import weapons, communicate with other jihadists, and plan terrorist attacks while the Taliban were in power there.³⁹ While Al-Qaeda continued to operate its own facilities in Afghanistan, it also provided support for other organizations training facilities. After terrorist troops hiding out in Afghanistan attacked the US in September 2001, the US declared a "global war on terror." It was able to overthrow the Taliban on its own in 2001 with the aid of the Northern Alliance. Hamid Karzai took charge of a newly formed government. Because Karzai was regarded as friendly with India as well, Afghanistan and India's diplomatic ties were restored in that same year. Since 2001, relations between Afghanistan and India have been quite robust in the political, economic, and strategic spheres. Both nations are aware of how important other

³⁶ Massoud, Marcela Grad (ed.) *"An Intimate Portrait of the Legendary Afghan Leader"*, || Webster University Press.2009, p- 310.

³⁷ Afghanistan resistance leader feared dead in blast, || Telegraph. September 11, 2001, available at www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/1340244/Afghanistan-resistance_leader-feared-dead-in-blast.html, accessed on August 8, 2022

³⁸ Documents Detail Years of Pakistani Support for Taliban, Extremists. || [Online Web] Accessed March 5,2019. URL:<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB227/index.htm#17> George Washington University. 2007.

³⁹ 9/11 Commission Report, 66. [Online Web] available at URL: <http://www.9-11commission.gov/report/911Report.pdf>, Accessed March 5,2019.

nations can be to their political and economic survival and advancement.⁴⁰ Before September 11, between 10,000 and 20,000 persons went through these institutions; the majority of them were assigned to the Taliban's war against the United Front, but a lesser number were accepted into al-Qaeda.⁴¹ But on October 2009, the Indian embassy in Kabul was attacked again by a car bomb. Little more than a year after the previous attacks. The attack killed at least 17 people.⁴² So there are many groups actively works against India.

1.1 Bonn agreement

Following the Bonn Agreement in 2001, a democratic framework was constructed, giving rise to a transitional administration headed by the Pashtun leader Hamid Karzai, who enjoys US support. Afghanistan had its first presidential election in 2004, and Karzai was declared the winner. The new democratically elected Afghan government strengthened its ties with India in wake of persisting tensions and problems with Pakistan, which was suspected of continuing to shelter and support the Taliban.⁴³ The Northern Alliance leaders felt mistreated by the new administration despite the fact that they were instrumental in helping the US fight the Taliban. Additionally, there were claims of widespread election cheating, and the Taliban and a few other warlords started referring to the Karzai administration as a "puppet" of the West. After September 11, 2001, Afghanistan's reconstruction operations got under way, and 43 countries contributed a lot of money to help the country. India remained at the forefront of international efforts to assist Afghanistan in building a stable democratic and pluralistic society. India has been one of Afghanistan's foremost development partners since the end of 2001.⁴⁴ India offered USD (US Dollar) 1.2 billion for Afghanistan's reconstruction since 2001, making it the largest regional donor to the country.⁴⁵ Consolidated efforts were made to establish a national police force, judicial system, and army. Despite today's weak army, rapacious police, and nearly non-existent judicial system, a boost in funding and troops has brought some relief to the average Afghan as rehabilitation efforts have, for the most part, been effective. The new democratically

⁴⁰ Op-cit. Ranjan Jha. 2020. P- 288

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² Deadly Kabul bomb targets Indian embassy, the gurdian, October 8,2009

⁴⁴ "India's Assistance Programme in Afghanistan", Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2008, available at http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/IMG/pdf/Indias_Assistance_Programme_in_Afghanistan_-_May_2008.pdf. Accessed on 13 May 2019.

elected Afghan government strengthened its ties with India in wake of persisting tensions and problems with Pakistan, which was suspected of continuing to shelter and support the Taliban.⁴⁶ However, the West lost favour with the Afghan people who had always campaigned for a free country due to indiscriminate killings, night raids, torture, heavy airstrikes, and government corruption. The saying "There are no nice guys among the living and no evil ones among the dead" has become quite well-known in Afghanistan, according to Anand Gopal, who noted this in his book.⁴⁷ Afghanistan dove into ethnic clashes, with Rabbani facing challenges from his Prime Serve Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who was upheld by Pakistan's Inter-Services Insights (ISI). Pakistan was against the Rabbani government because it damaged the ISI-sponsored Peshawar agreement. India, on its portion, remained in touch with pioneers of all groups in Afghanistan amid this period (1992-96). In September 1996, the Taliban captured Kabul and pronounced it the authentic government of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

Taliban forced rigid form' of Islamic law in the areas they controlled. In Admirable 1998, as the Taliban showed up on the skirt of taking over the whole nation, US rockets crushed broad fear monger preparing complex close Kabul run by Osama canister Loaded, a Saudi-born aggressor blamed for planning the 1998 bombings of the American government offices in Kenya and Tanzania.⁴⁸ In any case, the Taliban successfully controlled the country by 2000, but its government was not by and large perceived by the universal community (the Joined together Countries perceived President Burhanuddin Rabbani and the Northern Alliance), which too included India. In early 2001, the Taliban volunteer army annihilated all statues within the nation, including two old mammoth Buddhas in Bamiyan, the exterior of Kabul. The annihilation was requested by the devout pioneers, who respected the figures as unIslamic. This activity brought about condemnation from over the world, which moreover included numerous Islamic countries. In September, Ahmad Shah Masood, the pioneer of the Northern Collusion, was murdered by the Taliban in a suicide bomb attack. Two days after that assault, on 11 September, obliterating psychological militant attacks on the World Trade Centre and the

⁴⁷ Gopal Anand 2014. *"No Good Men Among The Living: America, the Taliban and the War through Afghan Eyes,"* Metropolitan Books: New York. p- 2.

⁴⁸ Aneek Chatterjee, *Neighbours Major Powers and Indian Foreign Policy*, Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan Pvt Ltd, 2017, p.137

Pentagon, which Loaded engineered, incited US President George W Bush's request for his capture.

When the Taliban denied to hand over Canister Loaded, the US launched attacks, in October 2001, against Taliban and Al Qaeda's (Osama- Bin Laden's association) positions and forces. India did not perceive the Taliban government in Afghanistan, and India-Afghan relations suffered a backlash from 1996 to 2001 when the Taliban wiled Afghanistan. India was out of touch with the Taliban government for numerous reasons, such as their vision of Kashmir, and their acceptance into Jammu and Kashmir for the 'liberation Of Kashmir; nearness with the ISI and the seizing of an Indian Carriers plane to Kandahar by Terrorists connected to the Taliban, rankled the Indians. Ties between India and Afghanistan grew strong once again. India has restored full diplomatic relations and has provided hundreds of millions of dollars in aid for Afghanistan's reconstruction and development. India seeks peace and tranquillity across the Durand line. Thus, after the overthrow of the Taliban rule in 2001, India reached out for new ties with Kabul.⁴⁹ The events of 11th September 2001 presented opportunities for India which had been largely shut out of Afghanistan throughout the Taliban period. It became an important partner for reconstruction in that country by extending huge aid package mounting to USD 2 billion since then. Frequent high-level visits and constant interactions of top dignitaries have signified the importance of Afghanistan in India's foreign policy. And India's commitment, in spite of terrorist killings of its citizens engaged in developmental activities; imply India's seriousness to improve its relations with Afghanistan.⁵⁰

Since 2002, the Taliban have been vociferously demanding the departure of Indians involved in the developmental activity, and these demands have been followed up with threats and actions. Against this background, Pakistan views India's growing influence in Afghanistan as a threat to its own interests in the region. For Pakistan, the Taliban offer the best chance for countering India's regional influence. It is viewed by some scholars that Pakistan's support for

⁴⁹ Fahmida Ashraf, "India-Afghanistan Relations: Post -9/11," The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, http://www.issi.org.pk/old-site/ss_Detail.php?dataId=432. Accessed on 25 May 2019.

⁵⁰ Outcome document on Indian Prime Minister's visit to Afghanistan, May 13, 2011, <http://strategicchaat.blogspot.com/2011/05/outcome-document-on-visit-of-indian.html>. Accessed on 17th May 2011.

the Taliban has led to the increasing instability in Afghanistan, from the growth of terrorism to upped opium cultivation.⁵¹

In any case, India kept a near observe on the Improvement in Afghanistan amid this period, and upheld the Northern Alliance together, which was battling the Taliban's strengths. India established links with the Northern Alliance to maintain its influence in Afghanistan and to counter Pakistan's support to the Taliban government. Subsequently, India provides high-altitude warfare equipment worth USD 10 million through its Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) to strengthen the defence of the Northern Alliance, and Indian defence advisers also provided technical advice to the Northern Alliance, established a hospital in Farkhor, and Indian doctors provided medical assistance to the Alliance, also operated against the Taliban from bases in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.⁵² After the event of September 11, Islamabad and Kabul never enjoyed friendly ties. Islamabad and Kabul have a lack of trust; both countries are blaming each other for supporting terrorism. New Delhi always took cashed this moment and used Afghan political leaders against Islamabad. New Delhi increased its commerce links with Afghanistan. The Indian regime also supported private firms to infuse money into Afghan markets. Hundreds of firms from India have infused money into various projects from industry to agriculture. Indian humanitarian assistance includes providing vitamin-fortified biscuits to two million Afghan school children on a daily basis and free provision of medicines and medical services monthly to over 30,000 Afghans within the country and also expedited visas for Afghans seeking medical treatment in India.⁵³ A report from the Indian embassy in Kabul reveals that over 100,000 medical visas has been issued since the beginning of 2010 to 2013 which was about half the number of total visas for travel to India from Afghanistan.⁵⁴ A report from the Tribune newspaper suggests that India has been fast emerging as a preferential

⁵¹ Vishal Chandra, "The Afghan Maze and India's Options", Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, http://www.idsa.in/event/TheAfghanMazeandIndiasOptions_vchandra, September 4, 2009. Accessed on 9th March 2011.

⁵² Muskan Ghuman, "India-Afghanistan Relations: Post-9/11", CSS Forum, November 8, 2007, <http://www.cssforum.com.pk/css-compulsory-subjects/current-affairs/current-affairs-notes/13887-indiaafghanistan-relations-post-9-11-a.html>. Accessed on 24 June 2013.

⁵³ Mullen, D. Rani. *India in Afghanistan: Understanding Development Assistance by Emerging Donors to Conflict Affected Areas*, Stimson Centre. 2017, p. 4.

⁵⁴ Bearak Max, *'India a Hub for Patients from Afghanistan'*, The New York Times, November 1, 2013, available at: <http://www.india.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/11/01/india-a-hub-for-patients-from-afghanistan/>, accessed on July 21, 2018

treatment hub for majority of Afghans replacing Pakistan. India's treatment has been cost effective and north Indian states of New Delhi, Gurgaon and Noida have emerged as three preferred cities for thousands of Afghans for treatment purposes.⁵⁵

Chapter Summary

New Delhi always tried to capture the minds of the Afghan youth and provided sports facilities to the youth of Afghanistan. India has participated in the global food initiative in Afghanistan. Indian media, especially its tv and film industry, is attracting local Afghans. The people of Afghanistan are very much interested in the Indian Bollywood industry and sports industry. Media plays a significant role in public opinion in modern times, and countries are using media to increase their soft images. India has been working with Afghanistan in a few specific areas, and the results have been fruitful in many ways. There is undoubtedly an opportunity for improvement by exploring the worries of the Afghan people and making necessary course corrections.

Agriculture is one area where India might have made a significant contribution to the people of Afghanistan. Agriculture is the foundation of Afghanistan's economy, yet the country has limited water resources, and because Afghanistan lacks adequate canal infrastructure, 80 percent of its water sources cannot be used for irrigation. Afghanistan is also a disaster-prone nation. India relies heavily on its agricultural industry and has a long history of agrarian operations. As a result, India plays a crucial role in agriculture and may share and transfer the various experiences that the Indian government or Indian farmers have to help the agricultural sector in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, India is not doing much to assist Afghanistan in this regard because India's strategy does not extend beyond the dialogue system. As a result, the

⁵⁵ Varinder Singh 'Pak losing Afghan medical tourism to North India', The Tribune, December 26, 2018, available at: <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/punjab/pak-losing-afghan-medical-tourism-to-north-india/704169.html>, accessed on February 7, 2019.

region is dealing with more issues than anticipated because problems in one area of the territory affect other areas as well as the entire region.

It is clear that cooperation between nations is essential to combating the terrorism issue in the region. Pakistan's significance in this cooperation belt is increased by the fact that it is well known that Pakistan harboured, and the three nations most heavily impacted by terrorist activity are Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. To bring about peace and stability in the region, all of the nations must assert themselves and oppose any state-sponsored terrorism. It is important to remember the United States' contribution to the region in this. It has a suspicious interest in stopping terrorism in Afghanistan. It encourages Pakistan to exploit its territory to expand its sphere of influence in the neighbourhood in the name of terrorism.

The contribution of India to Afghanistan's democratic transition may be seen in various facets of that country's democratic transition. Without a doubt, both communism and political Islam failed in Afghanistan, and today is the test and the time for democracy. The Afghan people at least have hope that a democratic approach is the only way to solve their issues. India, which has experienced both western and eastern forms of democracy, has done more than any other state to institutionalise democracy in Afghanistan. As a South Asian society, Afghanistan shared several traits with Indian society, such as the existence of Panchayats, which are India's most ancient form of local government. India, which has a similar size and geographic location to Afghanistan, could serve as a model for how to localise democracy in that country. Democracy should not be imposed from outside; rather, it should be localised and institutionalised based on the principles that Afghans have held dear throughout history, which may differ from those of the USA, UK, or some other western nations.

India provides educational aid to Afghan students, which could have a significant future impact on the social fabric of Afghans. In India, there are thousands of students. However, there were primarily two issues that Afghan students had to deal with in India. First, is the issue of scholarship classification and the lack of coordination between several ministries in both Afghanistan. Second, the majority of scholarships offered to Afghan students are in the fields of politics, economics, and other social sciences. There are surprisingly few students in Afghanistan's crucial engineering, agriculture, and medical universities. Both classification and focusing on certain vocations are necessary for Afghanistan, as is continuing the provision of scholarships to the Afghan people.

India has been training Afghan Army personnel and giving non-lethal weapons to the Afghan National Army in response to Afghanistan's request for military assistance. The two nations' current relationship is built on security and strategic concerns in the region, reflecting a high realism view that "security" is the primary issue. With regard to its relations with Afghanistan, India's policy is transitioning from an idealist to a realist one. India considers its own security as well as the security of the region to be entwined with that of Afghanistan. For its own security as well as the security of the entire region, India must provide Afghanistan with military assistance in order to remove terrorism and any other security threats there.

Chapter- 2

Towards strategic Partnership

India's approach to towards Afghanistan has been a function of its Pakistan policy. It is important for India that Pakistan does not get a foothold in Afghanistan and so historically India has attempted to prevent Pakistan from dominating Afghanistan. India would like to minimize Pakistan's involvement in the affairs of Afghanistan and to ensure that a fundamentalist regime of the Taliban variety does not take root again. Pakistan, on the other hand, has viewed Afghanistan as a good means of balancing out India's preponderance in South Asia.

¹ Good India-Afghanistan ties are seen by Pakistan as detrimental to its national security interests as the two states flank the two sides of Pakistan's borders. A friendly political dispensation in Kabul is viewed by Pakistan as essential to escape the strategic dilemma of being caught between a powerful adversary in India in the east and an irredentist Afghanistan with claims on the Pashtun-dominated areas in the west. ² Given its Pashtun-ethnic linkage with Afghanistan, Pakistan considers its role to be a privileged one in the affairs of Afghanistan. Given these conflicting imperatives, both India and Pakistan have tried to neutralize the influence of each other in the affairs of Afghanistan. Both are stuck in a classic security dilemma in so far as their policies towards Afghanistan are concerned. Any measure by either Pakistan or India to increase its own security causes the other to act in response, thereby causing a deterioration in the overall regional security environment.

India's other major interest is to make sure that Islamist extremism remains under control in its neighbourhood and its struggle against Islamist extremism is also closely intertwined with the rise of extremism in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Pakistan has long backed separatists in Jammu and Kashmir in the name of self-determination and India has over the years been a major victim of the radicalization of Islamist forces in Kashmir which have been successful in expanding their network across India. Any breeding ground of radical Islamists under the aegis of Pakistan has a direct impact on the security of India, resulting in a rise in infiltration of terrorists across borders. as well attacks. It is vital for both India and Afghanistan that the latter would never again emerge as a safe haven for terrorism and extremism. A friendly Afghanistan where religious extremism continues to flourish is seen by Pakistan as essential to keep the pressure on India in Kashmir by providing a base where militants could be trained for fighting against the Indian forces. The Mujahedeen fighting in Kashmir have not only drawn inspiration from the Afghan resistance against the Soviets but has also drawn resources and materiel

¹ Marvin G. Weinbaum, "Pakistan and Afghanistan: The Strategic Relationship," Asian Survey, Vol. 31, no. 6, (1991), pp. 498-99.

² Rifaat Hussain, "Pakistan's Relations with Afghanistan: Continuity and Change," Strategic Studies, 22(4), 2002, Available at http://www.issi.org.pk/journal/2002_files/no_4/article/3a.htm

support from Pakistan.³ Kashmiri militants were among the thousands of “volunteers” from various Islamic countries that participated in the war against the Soviet forces. They went back indoctrinated in a version of Islam that destined their victory over the “infidels” as well as with important knowledge of guerrilla warfare.⁴ India rightly perceived that the victors of mujahideen against the Soviet Union would fundamentally alter the direction of Islamic extremism as Afghanistan would end up playing a crucial role in the shaping of Islamic geopolitics sitting as it does astride the Islamic heartland involving South and Central Asia as well as the Middle East.

2.1 Significance of Afghanistan in India’s security policy

Afghanistan is also viewed as a gateway to the Central Asian region where India hopes to expand its influence. Central Asia is crucial for India not only because of its oil and gas reserves that India wishes to tap for its energy security but also because other major powers such as the US, Russia and China have already started competing for influence in the region. The regional actors view Afghanistan as a potential source of instability even as their geopolitical rivalry remains a major cause of Afghanistan’s troubles. India was forced to increase its military profile in Central Asia after the diplomatic humiliation it had to endure in 1999 when an Indian Airlines flight from Kathmandu was hijacked by Pakistan backed terrorists to Kandahar in southern Afghanistan. India had to negotiate a deal with the Taliban that involved the release of the aircraft in exchange for three hardened terrorists held by India. India then decided to set up its first military base abroad in Fakhre in Tajikistan, close to the Afghan border, which was used to provide assistance to the Northern Alliance fighters and later to provide assistance to the post-Taliban government in Kabul. As the geopolitical importance of Central Asia has increased in recent years, all the major powers have been keen to expand their influence in the region and India is no exception. It shares many of the interests of other major powers such as the US, Russia and China vis-à-vis Central Asia, including access to Central Asian energy resources, controlling the spread of radical Islam, ensuring political stability, and strengthening of regional economies. But unlike China and Russia, its interests converge with that of the US in Central Asia and some have even suggested that it is in the US’s interests to have a greater

³ Ahmad Rashid, *Taliban: “The Story of Afghan Warlords”* (Oxford: Pan Books. 2001), pp. 183-187

⁴ Rasyul Bakhsh Rais, “*Afghanistan and the Regional Powers*”, *Asian Survey*, 33(9), 1993, pp. 915-16

Indian presence in Central Asia to counter growing Chinese or Russian involvement.⁵ India cannot afford to overlook Central Asia if it has any ambition of remaining a “rising power” in the international system. The other incentive for a new look at Central Asia was that India was losing its “immediate neighbourhood” to China, which developed very good political and economic relations with nearly all of India’s neighbours, thereby strategically encircling India. China has made deep inroads in the Central Asian republics in terms of investments in and with the region. It was in this context that India formulated its Connect Central Asia Policy which is a broad-based approach including political, security, economic, and cultural connections.

The primary goal behind the Connect Central Asia policy was, as the name suggests, re-connecting with the region which has a long-shared history with India. In the words of Indian strategic expert K. Subramanian, “The Central Asian Republics (CARs) posed the most excruciating and complex challenges to Indian diplomacy judged whether by geostrategic compulsions or by India’s energy concerns.” India’s Minister of State for External Affairs E. Ahmed unveiled the “Connect Central Asia Policy” (CCAP) at the first meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue, a Track II initiative, held from June 12-13, 2012 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan to fast-track India’s relations with the Central Asian states, In his keynote speech, Ahmed mentioned that “the policy calls for setting up universities, hospitals, information technology (IT) centres, an e-network in telemedicine connecting India to the CARs, joint commercial ventures, improving air connectivity to boost trade and tourism, joint scientific research, and strategic partnerships in defence and security affairs.” The key elements of this policy cover many important issue areas, including political cooperation, economic cooperation, strategic cooperation, regional connectivity, information technology (IT), cooperation in education, people-to-people contact, medical cooperation, and cooperation in regional groupings.

Central Asia is so close and yet so far from India. The betterment of trade and commerce between India and the region would just not be in the arena of pure economics but would enter the domain of geo-economics. This is because Central Asia is strategically positioned as an access point between Europe and Asia and offers extensive potential for trade, investment, and growth. Since, the region is richly endowed with commodities such as crude oil, natural gas, cotton, gold, copper, aluminium, and iron, the increasing importance of the region’s oil and gas resources has generated new rivalries among external powers. Geo-economics is intimately

⁵ Stephen Blank, “*US Interests in Central Asia and the Challenges to Them*”. Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2007, pp. 31-32

linked with geopolitics and therefore economic cooperation between India and the CARs plays an important role in developing strong defence ties, by strengthening strategic and security cooperation with a strong focus on military training. Security cooperation also includes conducting joint research on military-defence issues, coordinating on counterterrorism measures, and a special focus on consulting closely on the issue of Afghanistan, whose security is extremely crucial for both India and Central Asia.

This security cooperation has a limitation of its own and that factor is geography. Since Central Asia is not a part of India's immediate neighbourhood and therefore it doesn't share borders with India, the issue of connectivity between the two regions becomes of paramount importance. For India to reach Central Asia, the shortest route goes via Pakistan and Afghanistan. Since Pakistan's hostility with India and its cooperation with China against India are evident, overland connectivity with Central Asia remains problematic.

The other problem is that both Pakistan and Afghanistan are not secure and stable countries, so even if India shared good relations with Pakistan, this route to Central Asia from India is not a safe and reliable path for trade and commerce, The safety of goods and transport of energy resources is extremely crucial as the stakes of both the governmental and private players in terms of investments are very high.

India needs energy security for both domestic and foreign policy reasons. Domestically, India needs robust economic growth of around 10 per cent for the next 25 years or so. Central Asia as a geographic entity is a land-locked region. Countries like Uzbekistan are further double landlocked. The northern route is favoured by Russia. According to this option, Kazakhstan would expand its existing pipelines to link them to the Russian network and Azerbaijan would build a pipeline from Baku to Novo rossisk. Currently, energy-hungry India is vigorously building relations with Central Asian states to gain direct access to Central Asian energy resources. India has initiated Areas of Cooperation's, in the case of Energy which is the most important area of co-operation. The CAR countries have an abundance of energy resources. Kazakhstan is one of the first countries with which India launched civil nuclear cooperation. It has been supplying nuclear fuel to Indian nuclear plants since 2010. The TAPI project, a trans-country natural gas pipeline from the Caspian Sea, Turkmenistan to India through Afghanistan and Pakistan is as important to connect energy-rich Central Asia with energy starved South Asia. It contains vast hydrocarbon fields both on-shore and off-shore in the Caspian Sea which

homes around 4 percent of the world's natural gas reserves and approximately 3 percent of oil reserves.

Because of the ongoing political problems in Afghanistan and Pakistan because of this reason, important projects like the TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) pipeline are still in limbo. To date, not a single drop of oil from Central Asia has reached India. There are many other reasons for that as well but a lack of good regional connectivity is one of the major problems. Due to the landlocked nature of Central Asian states, there is no direct sea route between India and the region and that too has a huge impact on regional connectivity. To address this problem, talks have been going on the issue of working jointly to reactivate the international north-south transport corridor.

Despite the limitations of regional connectivity, India is working to invest in the region in the IT and education sectors. Since India has a big IT sector and very qualified and talented working professionals, India is looking to use its power in this sector to set up a Central Asian e-network linking all five Central Asian states with its hub in India to provide tele-education and telemedicine connectivity. The IT sector has huge potential and can work as a bridge to bring the region closer.

The “people-to-people” contact has been a defining feature of India's Connect Central Asia Policy. Already, many students from Central Asia come to India for higher studies because India provides higher education at a marginal cost when compared to European and American universities. Many Indian students also visit Central Asia for research purposes. India needs to make itself a more attractive destination for educational purposes to Central Asian students. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the five Central Asian states presented an excellent opportunity for India to nurture peace in a region being swept by radical extremist winds. India needs to use its soft power while dealing with the region. Indian cultural products have been extremely popular in the region since the time of the USSR. People there listen to Hindi music and watch Indian Movies from Bollywood. India needs to exploit this in its favour. In that way, India can increase its attractiveness to the region's countries more effectively than by any other means. Sometimes, soft power can achieve what hard power can't. Connect Central Asia policy is a holistic policy which is not just about energy, oil, and natural resources but about cooperating in every sphere, including politics, culture, and defence.

Connect Central Asia policy shouldn't just remain on paper but it should be realized in practice. If New Delhi manages to do that, India's stature will rise in the international system. On the whole, this policy will be a game changer in times to come. Central Asian regional dynamics will become very interesting with India's involvement in the region in the coming years.

2.2 Spreading a head its local impact

A major factor behind India's pro-active Afghanistan agenda has been India's attempt to carve out for itself a greater role in regional affairs, more in consonance with its rising economic and military profile. India wants to establish its credentials as a major power in the region that is willing to take responsibility for ensuring stability around its periphery. By emerging as a major donor for Afghanistan, India is trying to project itself as a significant economic power that can provide necessary aid to the needy states in its neighbourhood. It has been contended that India's "pro-active foreign policy vis-à-vis Afghanistan has been predicated upon New Delhi's keenness to be of use to American regional policy" to the detriment of a traditional "independent" Indian approach towards its neighbours.⁶ It is not clear, however, what alternative policy India can pursue given that America's "war on terror" – its strategic priority – has at its centre the goal of achieving Afghanistan's stabilization. Though India's interests are best served in helping the US achieve that aim, India will have to make some difficult choices now that the US commitment to creating an enduring environment in Afghanistan has waned and it plans to leave before achieving its long-term objectives. India will find the going tough if the US decides to revert back to its policy of the 1990s when despite convergent security interests, it failed to develop an effective counter-terrorism partnership with India.

⁶ M.K.. Bhadrakumar, "The Taliban turns its Attention on India," The Hindu, November 28, 2005

2.3 Boundaries of India's soft power strategy

Despite having a range of interests in Afghanistan, a consensus has emerged in India in recent years that India's soft power strategy of relying on political and economic engagement and cultural outreach, while making India one of the most popular foreign presences among ordinary Afghans, has not brought it any perceptible strategic gains. Rather, India stands sidelined by the West despite being the only country that has been relatively successful in winning the "hearts and minds" of the Afghans. From the very beginning the prime objective of India's Afghanistan policy has been pre-empting the return of Pakistan's embedment in Afghanistan's strategic and political firmament. And ironically it is India's success in Afghanistan that had driven Pakistan's security establishment into a panic mode with a perception gaining ground that India was, taking over Afghanistan. "The Obama Administration's desire for a rapid withdrawal of American forces from Afghanistan has given the necessary opening to Pakistan to regain its lost influence in Kabul."⁷

In order to keep Islamabad in good humour, Washington has insisted on India limiting its role in Afghanistan. Washington seems to have bought Islamabad's argument that a large Indian presence in Afghanistan threatens Pakistan and makes it difficult for it to cooperate fully with the international community in the fight against Al Qaeda and the Taliban. Yet India had a very limited presence in Afghanistan in 1990s and it was then that Pakistan got a free hand in nurturing the Taliban. India has much to consider. The return of the Taliban to Afghanistan would pose a major threat to its borders. In the end, the brunt of escalating terrorism will be borne by India, which already has been described as „the sponge that protects“ the West. Indian strategists warn that a hurried US withdrawal with the Taliban still posing a threat to Afghanistan will have serious implications for India, not the least of which would be to see Pakistan, its eternal rival, step in more aggressively. As Henry Kissinger has warned, "In many respects India will be the most affected country if jihadist Islamism gains impetus in Afghanistan."⁸

⁷ David E. Sanger and Peter Baker, "Afghanistan Drawdown to Begin in 2011, Officials Say," New York Times, December 1, 2009

⁸ "Fundamentalist regime in Kabul to affect India most," Indian Express (New Delhi), September 13, 2010.

Afghanistan's President, Hamid Karzai, meanwhile, is grudgingly accepting a larger role for Pakistan in his country. His decision to send a contingent of Afghan military officers to Pakistan for training underlines his desire to seek a rapprochement with Islamabad.⁹

The July 2011 deadline was intended to force Karzai to address urgent problems like corruption and ineffective governance. But it may have had the opposite effect, convincing Karzai that in a year from now he will be on his own. Though the US is at pains to underline that July 2011 "will be the beginning of a conditions-based process" and that the deadline will be debated in the military's formal review of progress later this year in December, there are few who are willing to bet at the moment that the Obama Administration has the stomach to stay for much longer in Afghanistan. Karzai in particular seems convinced that Americans will not be able to stay the course.

Not surprisingly, Karzai is trying to craft a more autonomous foreign policy. Karzai lost no time in dismissing two high-profile ministers – interior minister and intelligence chief – from his cabinet who were most closely allied with the US. These were the men Washington had insisted Karzai include in his cabinet after his re-election last year and they were resisting Karzai's attempts to negotiate with the Taliban and closer ties with Islamabad. Karzai now views Pakistan as an important player in ending the war through negotiations with the Taliban or on the battlefield. The decision to send officers for training in Pakistan is of great symbolic value and is the result of talks between the Afghan government and Pakistan's security agencies that began in May. It has even been reported that Karzai had a face-to-face meeting with Sirajuddin Haqqani in the presence of Pakistan's Army Chief and the ISI Chief.¹⁰ Taliban's growing power is evident in their dismissal of proposed negotiations with the US. The Taliban seem convinced that they are winning the war in Afghanistan and that public opinion in the West is turning against the war. Pakistan's security establishment is relishing the double game it is playing in Afghanistan. Pakistani support for the Taliban in Afghanistan continues to be sanctioned at the highest levels of Pakistan's government with the ISI even represented on the Quetta Shura – the Taliban's war council – so as to retain influence over the Taliban's leadership. Taliban fighters continue to be trained in Pakistani camps.

⁹ Karin Brulliard and Karen DeYoung, "Some Afghan military officers to get training in Pakistan," Washington Post, July 1, 2010.

¹⁰ Ibid.

The ISI does not merely provide financial, military and logistical support to the insurgency. It retains strong strategic and operational control over the Taliban campaign in Afghanistan.¹¹ Despite launching offensives against militants in North and South Waziristan, Pakistani military continues to look upon the Taliban as a strategic asset. The conclusion of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Trade and Transit Agreement (APTTA) is a major shot in the arm for Pakistan as it explicitly affirms that India will not be allowed to export goods to Afghanistan through the Wagah border.¹² Both Pakistan and Afghanistan are hedging their bets against the coming US withdrawal. In one of the largest single disclosures of such information in US history, WikiLeaks, a self-described whistle blower organization, released more than 91,000 classified documents in July 2010, largely consisting of low-level field reports.¹³

These documents merely confirmed the long held belief that Pakistan's intelligence agency continues to guide the Afghan insurgency even as it continues to receive more than \$1 billion a year from Washington to combat the extremists. The ISI has been helping Afghan insurgents plan and carry out attacks on US forces in Afghanistan and their Afghan government allies. The efforts by the ISI to run the networks of suicide bombers and its help in organizing Taliban offensives at crucial periods in the Afghan war have also been underlined.¹⁴ These revelations made it clear that India has been systematically targeted by the ISI. The bombing of the Indian embassy in 2008 was at the behest of the ISI and Haqqani network sent bombers to strike Indian officials, development workers and engineers in Afghanistan. The ISI paid the Haqqani network to eliminate Indians working in Afghanistan as well as gave orders to orchestrate attacks on Indian consulates in Afghanistan.¹⁵ That the Pakistani security complex has engendered targeting of Indian interests in Afghanistan was hardly news in New Delhi. But what has been troubling the Indian policy-makers is Washington's reluctance to counter Pakistan's designs in Afghanistan. Though India continues to insist that it won't retreat from

¹¹ Miles Amore, "Pakistan puppet masters guide the Taliban killers," The Sunday Times (London), June 13, 2010

¹² Jay Solomon and Alan Cullison, "Islamabad, Kabul Sign Pact," Wall Street Journal, July 18, 2010.

¹³ Greg Jaffe and Karen De Young, "Leaked files lay bare war in Afghanistan," Washington Post, July 26, 2010

¹⁴ Mark Mazzetti, Jane Perlez, Eric Schmitt and Andrew W. Lehren, "Pakistan Aids Insurgency in Afghanistan, Reports Assert," New York Times, July 25, 2010.

¹⁵ Manu Pubby, "Evidence of Pak blackmail, how ISI paid Taliban to hit Indians in Kabul," Indian Express, July 27, 2010.

Afghanistan, there are signs that it is indeed scaling down its presence. Almost half of the Indian personnel working on various projects in Afghanistan have returned back. India is not taking on any new projects and various Indian schemes have been put on hold. The training programs for Afghan personnel are now taking place in India.

2.4 India is debating its opinion

India is debating its options in Afghanistan in a strategic space that seems to have shrunk over the last few years. By failing to craft its own narrative on Af-Pak ever since the U.S. troops went into Afghanistan in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, New Delhi has allowed the West, and increasingly Pakistan, to dictate the contours of Indian policy towards the region. Two major strands can be discerned in the present debate on Afghanistan in India. There are those who argue that despite recent setbacks, India should continue to rely on the U.S. to secure its interests in Af-Pak.¹⁶ They suggest that there is a fundamental convergence between India and the Obama Administration in viewing Pakistan as the source of Afghanistan's insecurity and the suggestion that the world must act together to cure Islamabad of its political malaise. In recognizing that the borderlands between Pakistan and Afghanistan constitute the single most important threat to global peace and security, arguing that Islamabad is part of the problem rather than the solution, and asking India to join an international concert in managing the Af-Pak region, the U.S. has made significant departures from its traditionally held posture towards South Asia. India, therefore, would be best served by coordinating its counter-terror strategy with the American one and should help the U.S. by acknowledging the linkage between Pakistan's eastern and western frontiers. India should, in this view, try to address Pakistan's fears of Indian meddling on its western frontiers, unfounded as they might be and should not even hesitate in reaching out to the Pakistani Army.¹⁷

The other side in this debate is getting impatient with India's continued reliance on the U.S. to pull its chestnuts out of the fire. According to this argument, a fundamental disconnect has

¹⁶ K. Subrahmanyam, "The Second Deception," Indian Express (New Delhi), March 3, 2010.

¹⁷ C. Raja Mohan, "Great Game folio," Indian Express (New Delhi), January 27, 2010.)

emerged between U.S. and Indian interests in Af-Pak.¹⁸ The Obama Administration has been systematically ignoring Indian interests in the crafting of its Af-Pak priorities. While actively discouraging India from assuming a higher profile in Afghanistan, for fear of offending Pakistan, the U.S. has failed to persuade Pakistan into taking Indian concerns more seriously. Anxious for some kind of victory, the West has decided to court “good” Taliban with Pakistan’s help. This has underlined Islamabad’s centrality in the unfolding strategic dynamic in the region, much to India’s discomfiture. By pursuing a strategy that will give Pakistan the leading role in the state structures in Afghanistan, the West, however, is only sowing the seeds for future regional turmoil. While the U.S. may have no vital interest in determining who actually governs in Afghanistan, so long as the Afghan territory is not being used to launch attacks on U.S. soil, India does. The Taliban – good or bad – are opposed to India in fundamental ways. The consequence of abandoning the goal to establish a functioning Afghan state and a moderate Pakistan will be greater pressure on Indian security.¹⁹

Indian influence in Afghanistan rose significantly as American support for Pakistan shifted and Washington demanded that Pakistan adopt policies that India had long wanted in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. Moreover, India emerged as a major economic actor in Afghanistan trying to bolster the Afghan state’s capacity in various measures. But by refusing to use hard power and asserting its profile more forcefully India soon made itself irrelevant as the ground realities changed and a divergence emerged between the strategic interests of India and Washington. The Obama Administration intent on moving out of Afghanistan has managed to signal to Indian adversaries that they can shape the post –American ground realities to serve their own ends. India lost the confidence of its own allies in Afghanistan. If India was unwilling to stand up for its own interests, few saw the benefit of aligning with India. The Indian presence which looked formidable during George W. Bush period started weakening with the emergence of the Obama Administration which deepened its security dependence on Pakistan in the hope of achieving rapid success. To preserve its interests in a changing strategic milieu, India is coordinating with states like Russia and Iran more closely with whom India has convergent interest’s vis-à-vis Af-Pak. New Delhi, Moscow and Tehran will not accept a fundamentalist Sunni-dominated regime in Kabul and re-emergence of Afghanistan as a base for jihadi

¹⁸ G. Parthasarthy, “US at crossroads in Afghanistan,” The Tribune (Chandigarh), August 19, 2010.

¹⁹ Kanwal Sibal, “Don’t Lose the Game,” Hindustan Times (New Delhi), March 4, 2010; Shyam Saran, “How not to exit Afghanistan,” Business Standard, September 15, 2010.

terrorism directed at neighbouring states. India has reached out to Russia with political interactions at the highest levels reiterating the two nations' shared positions on Afghanistan and institutionalising cooperation on Afghanistan. Much like New Delhi, Moscow has, time and again, laid down certain „red lines” on the integration of the Taliban that include renunciation of violence by the Taliban, cessation of armed struggle, acceptance of the Afghan constitution and a complete break-up with Al Qaeda.²⁰ During the visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin earlier this year to New Delhi, India had sought Russian support in countering what it views as a US-Pakistan axis in Afghanistan. Moscow is refocusing on Afghanistan as Islamist extremism and drug trafficking emanating from Central Asia have emerged as major threats to its national security. Moscow hosted the Presidents of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Tajikistan in August 2010, promising to invest significant resources in Afghanistan to develop infrastructure and natural resources. After keeping itself aloof from Af-Pak for years after Taliban's ouster, Russia is back in the game and even the US seems to be supporting greater Russian involvement. This has prompted greater cooperation between India and Russia on Afghanistan.²¹ Iran is the third part of this triangle and India's outreach to Tehran has become serious after signals from Iran that the relationship is drifting.²²

India and Iran had worked closely when the Taliban was in power in Kabul and have continued to cooperate on several infrastructure projects with Iran allowing transit facilities for Indian goods. India's decision to vote against Iran at the IAEA on the nuclear issue however led to a chilling in Indo-Iran ties. Now New Delhi is trying to revive its partnership with Iran in Afghanistan. The two sides have decided to hold “structured and regular consultations” on the issue of Afghanistan. Despite western sanctions, the Indian government is encouraging Indian companies to invest in the Iranian energy sector so that economic interests can underpin India-Iran political realignment. Iran is worried about the potential major role for leaders of the almost exclusively Sunni Taliban in the emerging political dispensation in Afghanistan. It has even encouraged India to send more of its assistance to provinces in northern and western Afghanistan that are under the control of those associated with the Northern Alliance. At the

²⁰ Vladimir Radyuhin, *“India, Russia to step up cooperation in Afghanistan,”* The Hindu, August 3, 2010

²¹ Jason Motlagh, *“With US Approval, Moscow Heads Back to Afghanistan,”* Time, August 24, 2010.

²² On the present state of India-Iran ties, see Harsh V. Pant, *“Delhi's Tehran Conundrum,”* Wall Street Journal, September 20, 2010.

initiative of Iran, India is now part of a trilateral initiative on Afghanistan and this India-Iran-Afghanistan initiative is aimed at countering Pakistan's attempts to freeze India out of various other regional initiatives.

New Delhi is seeking reassurances from Moscow and Tehran that the three states are on the same page on the Af-Pak situation as the US presses ahead with the accommodation of the Taliban in the Afghan power structures. It remains to be seen, however, if India's gravitation towards Russia and Iran would be enough to change the situation in Af-Pak from evolving to India's disadvantage. Overall, New Delhi has not had a very consistent policy towards Afghanistan over the last decade. Part of it is a function of the rapidly evolving ground realities in Afghanistan to which India is having to respond. But a large part of it is India's own inability to put its own house in order. There is an overarching lack of coherence in Indian response as New Delhi seems to making several arguments depending on the audience at hand. On the one hand, India is signalling to the US that it views long-term American presence in Afghanistan as integral to regional security. On the other, it is reaching out to the Iranians who want to see a full and complete US withdrawal from the region.²³ Even as India has signed a strategic partnership agreement with Afghanistan promising to enhance its role in Afghan security sector, it is at the same time reducing its economic footprint in Afghanistan. As a result, New Delhi has not only complicated its own future options but it has also lost allies who are having difficulty in viewing India as a credible partner in the emerging strategic realities in Afghanistan.

On 15 August 2021, the Taliban took control of Afghanistan's capital, Kabul, forcing elected President Ashraf Ghani to flee the country as the Afghan security forces chose not to fight back. This development came only days after the US and NATO forces began their planned withdrawal from the country after 20 years. The Taliban's return was regarded as a strategic failure for the US and its NATO allies.²⁴ and proved the old dictum that Afghanistan is a 'graveyard of empires'.²⁵ Afghanistan's neighbours must now contend with the aftereffects of

²³ Pranab Dhal Samanta, "Now, a India-Iran-Afghanistan tri-summit," Indian Express, September 21, 2010.

²⁴ Julian Borger, "US Afghanistan withdrawal a 'logistical success but strategic failure', Milley says," The Guardian, September 28, 2021.

²⁵ Akhilesh Pillalamarri, "Why Is Afghanistan the 'Graveyard of Empires'?", The Diplomat, June 13, 2017.

the Taliban takeover as it has provided a fillip to radical groups that hope to establish their religious utopias in the region. Indeed, given the centrality of Afghanistan in a terrain spanning Southern and Central Asia, tremors of Taliban's return are already being felt in the region.

Since coming to power, the Taliban have assured the international community that they will adhere to international norms and the terms of the 2020 Doha Agreement, under which they gave sureties of not allowing any "international terrorist groups or individuals,"²⁶ including the Islamic State of Khorasan (ISKP) and al-Qaeda, to use Afghan soil against the US, its NATO allies, and other countries. The same assurances were given to the neighbouring countries individually through bilateral meetings and agreements. However, a May 2022 letter by the Chair of the Security Council Committee Established pursuant to Resolution 1988 (2011) addressed to the President of the UN Security Council highlighted the contradictions in the Taliban's assurances and actions. For instance, links between al-Qaeda and the Taliban are either intact or have deepened over the last 20 years. Under the Taliban, the al-Qaeda will likely feel like it operates in a safe haven and has greater freedom of action.²⁷

On the other hand, the ISKP has, since August 2021, gained in strength in its operations against the Taliban and innocent Afghan people.²⁸ The presence in Afghanistan of terror outfits from the neighbouring countries is also a cause of concern. Additionally, rifts and resistance within the Taliban has made the situation in Afghanistan more volatile, with a potential impact across Eurasia. Consequently, India and the CARs are seeking greater convergence on tackling the compounded security, geostrategic, and geo-economics threats emerging in the aftermath of the Taliban's return. In January 2022, Modi held a virtual meeting with his counterparts in the CARs to discuss the evolving situation in Afghanistan and its implications on regional security

²⁶ US Department of State, *"Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan between the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan which is not recognized by the United States as a state and is known as the Taliban and the United States of America,"* February 29, 2020.

²⁷ UN Security Council Committee Established pursuant to Resolution 1988 (2011). Chair, Letter dated 25 May 2022 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee Established pursuant to Resolution 1988 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council, New York: UN, 26 May 2022

²⁸ UN Security Council Committee Established pursuant to Resolution 1988 (2011)

and stability.²⁹ The leaders agreed to continue holding close consultations on Afghanistan and established a joint working group at the senior officials' level.³⁰ The increased convergence between India and the CARs is the outcome of several common challenges arising from a volatile Afghanistan:

2.5 Presence of Global and Regional Outfits

The Taliban's re-emergence in Afghanistan has opened Pandora's box of radicalism, extremism, and Narcotics- trafficking. The presence of terror outfits, such as the ISKP and al-Qaeda and others, has also made the Eurasia region more vulnerable. Recruitment activities by the ISKP have seen an upward swing in recent months, even as the release of the group's members (thought to number between 500 and 1,000) from Afghan prisons has increased its strength.³¹ The ISKP has seen some success with its recruitment activities, mainly due to the Taliban side lining ethnic Uzbeks and Tajiks since its return. For instance, in December 2021, the Haqqani-led Badri 313 Battalion disarmed a large group of Uzbeks from the Taliban's ranks on the pretext of their relations with the ISKP, and a Tajik Taliban leader was also side-lined for the same reasons.³²

Another factor driving the ISKP's recruitment is the grievances among some Taliban members about not being paid salaries and Pashtuns being favoured within the group's ranks. As of May 2022, the ISKP is estimated to have between 1,500 to 4,000 fighters.³³ The ISKP has become the most active group against Taliban rule in Afghanistan, and former members of the Afghan army, directorate of Afghan security, and Afghan intelligence are said to have joined the group.³⁴ Furthermore, according to a UN Security Council report, half of the ISKP's members

²⁹ Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, "*Delhi Declaration of the 1st India-Central Asia Summit*", January 27, 2022.

³⁰ Ministry of External Affairs, "*Delhi Declaration of the 1st India-Central Asia Summit*"

³¹ Lucas Webber, Riccardo Valle, "*Islamic State in Afghanistan seeks to recruit Uzbeks, Tajiks, Kyrgyz*", Eurasianet, 17 March, 2022.

³² UN Security Council Committee Established pursuant to Resolution 1988 (2011)

³³ UN Security Council Committee Established pursuant to Resolution 1988 (2011)

³⁴ Yaroslav Trofimov, "*Left Behind After U.S. Withdrawal, Some Former Afghan Spies and Soldiers Turn to Islamic State*", The Wall Street Journal, October 31, 2021.

are foreigners. The inclusion of US-trained former security personnel and foreign terrorists has made the group more deadly, and the number of high-profile, complex attacks has also increased. According to estimates, the ISKP was involved in 150 attacks between August and December 2021, an eight-fold increase over the same period in 2020.³⁵ The ISKP has also increased its footprints in all Afghan provinces, and has mainly targeted the Shia and Hazara minorities. At the same time, al-Qaeda remains in close contact with the Taliban since August 2021. In the months since, al-Qaeda's strength has also increased, with estimates ranging from 180 to 400 members. The group also has many fighters from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and India.³⁶

Taliban's Afghanistan is now an inspiration for other regional terror groups. The Taliban regime views many terrorists and terror groups (such as al-Qaeda) as 'brothers of faith'.³⁷ However, under global pressure, the Taliban has disarmed and relocated some of these groups away from Kabul. The presence of thousands of militants from the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Islamic Jihad Union (IJU), Jamaat Ansarullah, Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement, and Pakistan-based radical terror organisations like Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) makes Afghanistan a perfect launching pad for terror activities against regional countries. The TTP became the strongest of these groups following the Taliban's return and began its offensive against Pakistan security forces in March 2022.³⁸ Notably, these regional terror organisations have helped the Taliban recapture Afghanistan and have maintained their training camps in the country. For instance, the JeM has eight training camps in Nangarhar, three directly under the Taliban's control. Similarly, the LeT has three training camps in Kunar and Nangarhar.³⁹

³⁵ "UN recorded 152 attacks by ISIL-K in 16 provinces between Aug-Dec '21, compared to 20 attacks a year ago: Secretary-General", *The Economic Times*, February 4, 2022.

³⁶ UN Security Council Committee Established pursuant to Resolution 1988 (2011)

³⁷ Lindsay Maizland, "*The Taliban in Afghanistan*", Council on Foreign Relations, August 17, 2022.

³⁸ UN Security Council Committee Established pursuant to Resolution 1988 (2011)

³⁹ UN Security Council Committee Established pursuant to Resolution 1988 (2011)

Most of the JeM and LeT cadre is from Pakistan, and many are likely to have already made their way to Jammu and Kashmir, which has seen an increased presence of foreign terrorists. For example, in the first six months of 2022, 32 of the 118 terrorists killed in Jammu and Kashmir were foreigners. In contrast, of the 182 terrorists killed there in 2021, only 20 were foreigners.⁴⁰ While the exact origin of these foreign terrorists is not known, Indian intelligence personnel believe most of them to be from Pakistan. Additionally, according to the Indian Army's Northern Command chief Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi, 200 Pakistani terrorists were ready to infiltrate into Jammu and Kashmir in May 2022.⁴¹

The presence of around 3,000 IMU and IJU fighters in Afghanistan is a cause of worry for Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan (and the other CARs), which share a 2,387-km-long porous border with the country.⁴² With the Afghanistan-Pakistan region as their base, these terror outfits organised 19 attacks that killed 138 people in the CARs, primarily in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and the Kyrgyz Republic, between 2008 and 2018.⁴³ The IMU is a Salafi-jihadist militant group seeking to overthrow the Uzbek government and install an Islamic, Sharia-driven government. The IMU's ideology is similar to that of al-Qaeda and the TTP, and, as a result, the groups are closely associated.⁴⁴ Similarly, Tajikistan is particularly tense about the resurgence of the Jamaat Ansarullah, known in Afghanistan as the 'Tajik Taliban', is a cause of worry for Tajikistan as the Taliban has given the group charge of the strategically crucial northern border.⁴⁵

2.6 Rising Extremism Through Use of social media

⁴⁰ "184 ultras killed in J&K in 2021, 44 of top rung, 20 foreigners among them: DGP", The Hindu, December 31, 2021.

⁴¹ Sunit Bhat "200 Pak terrorists ready to infiltrate into J&K: Northern Army Commander", India Today, May 7, 2022.

⁴² Edward Lemon, "Talking Up Terrorism in Central Asia", Kennan Cable, No 38, 2018.

⁴³ Mapping Militant Organizations, "Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan," Stanford University.

⁴⁴ Tanya Mehra LL.M, Matthew Wentworth, "The Rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan: Regional Responses and Security Threats", International centre for Counter-Terrorism, August 27, 2021.

⁴⁵ Mumin Ahmadi, Mullorajab Yusufi, and Nigorai Fazliddin, "Taliban Puts Tajik Militants Partially In Charge Of Afghanistan's Northern Border", Radio Free Europe Radio Library, July 27, 2021.

Terror outfits like the ISKP and al-Qaeda have increased their presence on social media platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, and Telegram, and propaganda websites to target thousands of potential recruits to join their ranks and further their cause globally. The ISKP has also tried to broaden its support in the CARs using the media. For instance, it has ramped up the production and translation of various kinds of material to reach Uzbek, Kyrgyz, and Tajik speakers in the region.⁴⁶ For instance, since February 2022, Al-Azaim, the ISKP's dominant media organ, has published two books and 15 audio recordings in the Uzbek language. The ISKP is also republishing lectures by the charismatic IMU leader Asadulloh Urgenchiy and translating these to the Tajik and Kyrgyz languages.⁴⁷ The ISKP has also broadened its campaign against India. For instance, the cover of the July 2022 edition of the ISKP's *Voice of Khorasan* magazine said India was "between pain and hope".⁴⁸ The group also issued death threats against former BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma for her remarks on the Prophet;⁴⁹ criticised the Taliban and its leaders for meeting with Ministry of External Affairs Joint Secretary JP Singh in June 2022; and threatened to carry out attacks against Sikhs and claimed responsibility for the attack on a gurdwara in Kabul in June 2022.⁵⁰

Before his death in a drone attack in July 2022, al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri had released eight videos on social media calling for jihad. In an April 2022 video, he also expressed support for Indian Muslim women amid the controversy over allowing school and college students to wear hijabs.⁵¹ In June, following Sharma's remarks, al-Qaeda threatened to carry out suicide attacks in Delhi, Mumbai, Gujarat, and Uttar Pradesh to "fight for the honour of the Prophet".⁵²

⁴⁶ Webber and Valle, "Islamic State in Afghanistan seeks to recruit Uzbeks, Tajiks, Kyrgyz"

⁴⁷ Webber and Valle, "Islamic State in Afghanistan seeks to recruit Uzbeks, Tajiks, Kyrgyz"

⁴⁸ Manoj Gupta, "How Islamic State-Khorasan Province Is Spreading Propaganda against Hinduism And PM Modi", News 18, July 14, 2022.

⁴⁹ "After Al Qaeda, ISIS threatens Hindus and Sikhs over Nupur Sharma's comments on Prophet Muhammad, 10-minute video features PM Modi too", OpIndia, June 17, 2022.

⁵⁰ "Islamic State claims responsibility for Kabul gurdwara attack", The Hindu, June 19, 2022.

⁵¹ UN Security Council Committee Established pursuant to Resolution 1988 (2011)

⁵² "After Al Qaeda, ISIS threatens Hindus and Sikhs over Nupur Sharma's comments on Prophet Muhammad, 10-minute video features PM Modi too"

Increased propaganda through social media will likely rejuvenate the idea of establishing a Caliphate from Afghanistan to the European border. Moreover, the use of social media and cyberspace for propaganda will likely attract the disgruntled youth from the CARs and parts of Jammu and Kashmir and may catalyse further terrorist violence in Eurasia.

2.7 Taliban's Internal and External Dynamics

Since its return to power, the Taliban has failed to form a functioning inclusive government to provide the Afghan people with basic economic opportunities, health facilities, and even educational options. The interim government consisted of senior Pashtun leaders from the Taliban, without any outside political figures. A split within the group became apparent in March when the government announced it would permit secondary education for girls. The education minister was summoned by the Hibatullah Ahkundzada faction to Kandahar, the Taliban's power base, to assert itself over Kabul.⁵³ The decision was reversed, and girls' secondary schools were closed indefinitely.⁵⁴

Most Taliban officials and ministers in the interim government were educated in *madrasas* (Muslim schools, colleges, or universities that are often part of a mosque) and have no experience in administration. In addition, even the lowest positions in the government have been given to religious leaders and Taliban forces who manage day-to-day matters like policing still lack any formal training. This inexperience has had an adverse impact on governance in Afghanistan.

The marginalisation of different ethnic groups has remained a source of dismay for many Afghans. The increased attacks on non-Pashtun ethnic communities by the ISKP, raids by the Taliban on Tajik communities, and extrajudicial killings have also aggravated the situation. In addition, increased poverty levels have led to a rise in transnational crimes (such as narcoterrorism) emanating from Afghanistan.⁵⁵ Additionally, the Taliban's policies for

⁵³ Leela Jacinto, "Taliban failures speed up Afghan brain drain, battering an already crippled economy", France 24, August 14, 2022.

⁵⁴ Heather Barr, "Taliban Close Girls' Secondary Schools in Afghanistan, Again," Human Rights Watch, March 23, 2022.

⁵⁵ United Nations Office of The High Commissioner for Human Right, "High Commissioner updates the Human Rights Council on Afghanistan", June 15, 2022.

minorities and women have caused regional countries and western democracies to ponder over recognising and working with the interim government. As the humanitarian and economic situation worsened in Afghanistan, the European Union and the US increased aid to the country, stressing that this should go directly to groups working on the ground and not to the Taliban government.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, as economic and humanitarian concerns grow in Afghanistan, and in the absence of a truly representative and inclusive government, India and the CARs must remain watchful.

2.8 Lack of Regional Cohesion

The re-emergence of the Taliban and multiple other terror groups will alter the security scenario for the neighbouring countries and Eurasia. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)—a Eurasian political, economic, and security grouping—has failed to form a joint mechanism on Afghanistan and the new terror threats emanating from Kabul. This is mainly because of a trust deficit among the SCO member countries, which has reduced the forum of regional heavyweights to a disparate group with no cohesion on regional security issues. The growing fault lines, parochial interests, and self-interest-driven diplomacy have only increased tensions in Eurasia and made regional peace elusive. For instance, China and Pakistan (both SCO members) did not attend the November 2021 regional summit on Afghanistan hosted by India,⁵⁷ and instead held a “Troika plus” meeting in Islamabad with Russia and the US.⁵⁸

The widening fault lines within the SCO have forced India and the CARs to seek more convergence on regional strategic and security issues. The evolving situation in Afghanistan was discussed during the third India-Central Asia Dialogue in December 2021. During the meeting, it was stressed that “Afghan territory (can) not be used for sheltering, training, planning or financing terrorist acts ... formation of a truly representative and inclusive government, combating terrorism and drug trafficking”.⁵⁹ Modi and the CARs presidents—

⁵⁶ Jacinto, *“Taliban failures speed up Afghan brain drain, battering an already crippled economy”*

⁵⁷ *“India hosts NSA-level summit on Afghanistan; 7 nations in attendance,”* Hindustan Times, November 10, 2021.

⁵⁸ *“Troika plus’ group holds conference on Afghanistan in Pakistan,”* The Times of India, November 11, 2021.

⁵⁹ Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, *“Joint Statement of the 3rd meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue,”* December 19, 2021, 2021.

Kassym-Jomart Tokayev (Kazakhstan), Sadyr Japarov (Kyrgyz Republic), Emomali Rahmon (Tajikistan), Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov (Turkmenistan), and Shavkat Mirziyoyev (Uzbekistan)—held the first India-Central Asia Summit in January 2022, where they reiterated the need for convergence on the growing strategic and security threats emanating from Afghanistan. The leaders not only underscored the importance of security dialogue “in view of the common challenges of terrorism, extremism and radicalisation in the region”, but also condemned the “dissemination of a radical ideology and abuse of cyberspace to spread disinformation and incite violence”.⁶⁰ They also decided to establish a joint working group on Afghanistan at the senior official level, and stressed the need for an inclusive government in Kabul that can combat terrorism and drug trafficking. The leaders also recognised defence cooperation as an important pillar of India-Central Asia relations and agreed to hold joint counterterrorism drills.⁶¹

The Taliban in Afghanistan is now a political force that cannot be ignored. This is especially true for India and the CARs, who must engage with the group since most of their connectivity projects run through Afghanistan. Over the last 20 years, India has provided about US\$750 million in humanitarian and economic aid, invested US\$3 billion in the welfare of the Afghan people, and has undertaken “500 projects in critical areas of power, water supply, road connectivity, healthcare, education, agriculture and capacity building”.⁶² This assistance has won India many friends among the local population and the government. Many in the Taliban see India as a sincere friend of the country, and New Delhi extending humanitarian aid since August 2021 has made the Taliban more pragmatic in its approach to India. During his meeting with India’s foreign ministry joint secretary in Kabul in June 2022, Taliban’s acting deputy foreign minister Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanekzai “thanked the Indian government for its humanitarian aid” and said that “Afghan-Indian relations would move forward based on mutual respect and joint bilateral legitimate interests, and would not be influenced by other countries’ inter-rivalry”.⁶³

⁶⁰ Ministry of External Affairs, “*Delhi Declaration of the 1st India-Central Asia Summit*”

⁶¹ Ministry of External Affairs, “*Delhi Declaration of the 1st India-Central Asia Summit*”

⁶² “*India willing to stand by Afghans: Jaishankar, calls for non-discriminatory distribution of humanitarian aid across Afghanistan*,” The Times of India, September 14, 2021.

⁶³ “*Afghan-Indian relations would not be influenced by other countries’ inter-rivalry: Stanekzai*”, Aamaj News, June 03, 2022.

In June 2022, India also reopened its embassy in Kabul to coordinate humanitarian assistance and continuous engagement with the Afghan people under a security guarantee from the Taliban.⁶⁴ By engaging with the Taliban, India and the CARs can pressurise the group on minority and women's rights. The countries should work closely with humanitarian organisations on the ground to win over the peace-loving Afghans. However, they should not prioritise artificial stability over an inclusive government or democratic rights.

During the Fourth Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan in May 2022, Indian National Security Advisor Ajit Doval said that regional countries must “enhance the capability of Afghanistan to counter terrorism and terrorist groups which pose a threat to regional peace and security.”⁶⁵ The CARs and India must reach a consensus on enhancing these capabilities to strengthen their counterterrorism and counterinsurgency grid. They can consider sharing relevant data with the Taliban and training the group on managing the porous borders to curtail the movement of terrorists. This will undoubtedly ensure a more agreeable Taliban, as seen when it assured New Delhi it would act against groups targeting India if specific information and pinpoint intelligence is provided.⁶⁶

2.9 India's Options in Afghanistan

Talking with the Taliban:

Talking to Taliban would allow India to seek security guarantees from the insurgents in return for continued development assistance or other pledges as well. At this point, talking to the Taliban looks inevitable. But India should not overlook the deep ties between Pakistan's security establishment and the Haqqani Network, a major faction within the Taliban. The USA overlooked it while fighting the Taliban along with Pakistan, and it paid a heavy price for it.

⁶⁴ Suhasini Haider, “India reopens Embassy in Kabul”, The Hindu, June 24, 2022.

⁶⁵ “At Regional Security Dialogue, NSA Ajit Doval calls for enhancing Afghanistan's capability to counter-terrorism”, The Hindu, May 27, 2022.

⁶⁶ Shishir Gupta, “Taliban to act against Pak LeT/JeM terrorists in Afghanistan on specific intel”, Hindustan Times, June 10, 2022.

Taking Afghan Government in Confidence: There is no guarantee that India's quest for engagement with the Taliban would produce a desirable outcome. So, India should opt for options like While talking to the Taliban to protect its interests, India should also enhance aid to Afghanistan's legitimate government and security forces and work with other regional powers for long-term stability in the country. Supporting Afghan Military Forces the Afghan military has some 200,000 battle-hardened soldiers, including the highly trained Special Forces. The only force that is standing up to the Taliban is the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces. India should urgently step up training Afghan forces and provide military hardware, intelligence and logistical and financial support so that Afghan military can continue to defend the cities. India should also coordinate with other regional powers to support the Afghan government because if the government forces crumble before the Taliban, the prospects for a political settlement would be narrowed.

Regional solution mechanism: There is a convergence of interests between India and three key regional players — China, Russia and Iran — in seeing a political settlement in Afghanistan. None of these countries would like to see the Taliban taking over Afghan militarily, which means there would be an isolated Sunni Islamist regime in a country with fractured ethnic equations. Thus, there is a need for cooperation from like-minded countries on this front India's immediate goal should be the safety and security of its personnel and investments.

The long-term goal should be finding a political solution to the crisis. None of this can be achieved unless it works together with the regional powers. Russia has cultivated links with the Taliban in recent years. India would need Russia's support in any form of direct engagement with the Taliban. Iran shares a long border with Afghanistan and has a close resemblance to ethnic minorities. The original objective of India's Chabahar project in Iran was to create direct access to Afghanistan, bypassing Pakistan. This direct access is critical for India in all different scenarios — move supplies to Afghanistan in larger quantities, retain its presence in the event of a civil war or carry out covert operations if the Taliban take power by force. However, the US's pressure on India is a roadblock in good relations between the two countries. India should talk with China, with the objective of finding a political settlement and lasting stability in Afghanistan.

2.10 Chapter Summary

India, as would be impacted by the consequences of American withdrawal, has to work with the Eurasian powers to protect its interests and stabilise Afghanistan. If India remains active and patient too, many opportunities could open up in the new Afghan phase.⁶⁷ Since the Taliban regime in Afghanistan began to crumble, India has assumed the initiative to rebuild the war-torn nation by committing to various areas and subsequently carrying out reconstruction work that has won the hearts of the Afghan people. India and Afghanistan have historically been peaceful and cordial. India became the biggest regional donor of humanitarian assistance and reconstruction funds after the Taliban were overthrown. In light of ongoing tensions and conflicting issues with Pakistan, the newly democratically elected Afghan government strengthened its relations with India. In terms of strategic location, Afghanistan is important to realise India's foreign policy objectives in relation to Central Asia, Pakistan and Iran. Afghanistan was used as a barrier between two adversarial countries. Iran, Pakistan, and the Central Asian States are all closely connected due to their strategic location.

Indian foreign policy towards Pakistan and Iran has continued to be centred on Afghanistan. India's policy towards Afghanistan has largely been dictated by its goals in preventing anti-Indian terrorism, countering Pakistan's influence, gaining access to the oil-rich Central Asian region, boosting its influence there, and becoming a player in the ongoing Great Game. Afghanistan's safety is crucial for the security of India and the rest of South Asia and therefore has been a major challenge in the case of regional cooperation or integration. Afghanistan is the key to India's effective Central Asia strategy through its "Connect Central Asia" policy. Undoubtedly, Afghanistan is a crucial partner for India's entry into Central Asia's untapped, energy-rich markets. Former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh has announced

That the importance of the establishment of a "Strategic Partnership" between India and Afghanistan in a joint statement made on May 2012. The partnership was formally signed in October of the same year and will allow the two countries to discuss and work together on issues of shared concern as well as closely coordinate at UN and other international and

⁶⁷ <https://www.drishtiiias.com/daily-updates/daily-news-editorials/india-s-options-in-afghanistan>

regional summits. India has had always a stake in seeing Afghanistan remain secure. It is crucial for Indian officials to be dedicated to their relations with Afghanistan given Pakistan's support for the Afghan Taliban and numerous other terrorist organisations. Further highlighting the need for India to have a well-defined and long-term vision in its relations with Afghanistan is the growing Chinese influence and investments in Pakistan. India's interest in Afghanistan is primarily perceived as a result of its geographic location at the intersection of central, southern, and western Asia as well as its desire to have a foothold in the New Great Game. Afghanistan's development and its capabilities are the main goals of India's development cooperation, which covers the entire edifice of its bilateral relations. India has taken a proactive role in the country's development projects encouraging institution building leading to a secure and stable Afghanistan because a stable Afghanistan will be helpful in realising India's interest in Pakistan Iran and Central Asia.

Chapter- 3

Economic Dimensions in India-Afghanistan relations

After the introduction of the new economic policy and Extended Neighbourhood Policy by India, a new opportunity opened up for her to forge relations with the wider world. After an initial period of economic crisis, the nation adopted multi-vectored foreign policies to choose their international patterns in order to achieve economic stability, domestic democratization, and preserve its acquired independence. In the economic sphere, India has chosen various degrees of opening new policies. Regarding this framework, India has tried to establish diplomatic ties with a number of nations, including Afghanistan, in an effort to rekindle their long-standing historical and cultural ties while also pursuing their desire to interact with other nations. India plays a vital role in Afghanistan's plan to strengthen its bilateral and multilateral ties with the rest of the world in light of the country's rising regional and global profile. In such a situation, geo-economics has essentially been playing a large role in comparison to geopolitics, and overcoming the crisis that is responsible for impeding the desired extent of economic interactions between India and Afghanistan is the toughest nut to crack.

Aside from its oil and uranium resources, Afghanistan presents an underserved market for Indian consumer goods, particularly given that the region's customers have few options other than to purchase expensive imported western goods or inexpensive but lower-quality Chinese manufactured items. Indian businesses have established a presence in a number of these areas throughout the years. Additionally, there is enormous potential for Indian aid in Afghanistan's development of its small and medium-sized businesses due to the abundance of joint venture opportunities in various sectors. However, India is offering assistance in some of these sectors as part of its long-running ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation) initiative. Afghanistan has had a unique place in India's foreign policy priorities since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Since both India's and Afghanistan's economies are expanding quickly, there are

many opportunities for bilateral collaboration. Although there is a favourable trend in India's commerce with Afghanistan, there is still room for growth given Afghanistan's abundance of natural resources in addition to its geopolitical significance. In the past, Afghanistan has experienced foreign invasions, ongoing instability, and US-led Operation Enduring Freedom. These events collectively have been referred to as The Great Game, the Soviet invasion, and

India can successfully pursue her foreign policy goals in a regional and international context by using Afghanistan as a suitable gateway. This is due to Afghanistan's geographically advantageous placement between South, Central, East, and West Asia and the participation of major world powers in this war-torn country. For India to contain the non-traditional security concerns in the area, knowledge of the connections between international terrorism and the Afghan problem is also crucial. India's Afghan Policy is a crucial component of her neighbourhood and extended neighbourhood orientations in this situation. Afghanistan's strategic location is justified by its proximity to China in the northeast, Iran in the west, Pakistan in the south and east, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan in the Central Asian Republics in the north. Due to this, academics have referred to her area at the crossroads of history,¹ which has always piqued the interest of major nations. Some academics claim that because of Afghanistan's geographic importance as an Asian crossroads, "power over Afghanistan will immediately lead to control over South Asia, Iran, and the resource-rich regions of Central Asia."²

India has promised to help rebuild Afghanistan with US \$ 2 billion since 2002, and is recognised as the largest regional and fifth-largest international donor in this effort. The Indian government has finished a number of projects in Afghanistan involving civil infrastructure, human resource development, and capacity building in the fields of education, health, agriculture, and other fields, as well as social and economic development, skills and capacity building, and science and technology advancement.³ From "catering to school children to

¹Rubin, Barnett R," *The Search for Peace on Afghanistan – From Buffer State to a Failed State*," Yale University Press,1995, pp. 138-139.

² Mondira Dutta (2008): "*India-Afghanistan Relations – Opportunities and Challenges*," World Focus, XXIX (11-12), p. 412.

³ Op-cit, Matinuddin Kamal, p. 505.

technical capacity building," she engages in a variety of capacity-building and skill-development initiatives in Afghanistan. ⁴ The nation is developing structures ranging from public sanitary facilities, including toilets, to electricity transmission lines as part of the reconstruction of Afghanistan in all areas, including health, education, politics, the economy, and infrastructure, power, irrigation, and civil aviation. Indian assistance has focused on building human capital and physical infrastructure, improving security, and helping the agricultural and other important sectors of the country 's economy. The Indian government is building roads, providing medical facilities, and helping with educational programs in an effort to develop and enhance long-term Afghan capabilities.⁵ Indian Prime minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee assured Hamid Karzai that —Indian people are committed to stand by our Afghan friends in this hour of need. The task of rebuilding and reconstructing Afghanistan is enormous. Our unflinching and unconditional cooperation is available to the Afghan nation, as it pursues the return of prosperity and restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan. We have made some contributions towards humanitarian assistance, reconstruction and rehabilitation. We are prepared to do much more.”⁶ Attacks on her initiatives and staff in Afghanistan have not been an impediment, but the nation has remained generous in its support. "India is involved in developmental and humanitarian work to assist the Afghan people as they construct a peaceful, stable, inclusive, democratic nation," said Nirupama Rao, a former foreign secretary of India.⁷

India has worked to secure economic growth, energy security, nuclear capability, democratic tradition, and soft power capability ever since the conclusion of the Cold War. The nation understood new outlooks and orientations in her economic interactions with the rest of the globe after realising the importance of geo-economic elements in modern times, and is now positioned to become one of the largest economies in the world. Her pursuit of the status as a world power was clearly evident throughout the past 20 years. The nation has altered her worldview as a result of the altered internal and external determinants of her foreign policy. India strives for a politically significant, strategically important, and economically significant Afghanistan that serves her interests. Additionally, this will guarantee both general regional

⁴ Op.cit., Mir Haraun., p. 416.

⁵ Harish V Pant, "*The Afghanistan Conflict: India 's Changing Role*", Middle East Quarterly, Spring, 2011, p .32

⁶ Richard J. Kozicki, "*The Changed World of South Asia: Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India after September 11,*" Asia Pacific Perspectives, Vol. 2(2), 2002, p. 8

⁷ Ministry of External Affairs, GoI (2011): "*Reaching Out to Afghanistan,*" available at www.mea.gov.in, accessed on July 8, 2012, accessed on march 08, 2021

stability and a long-term resolution to India's issues with terrorism, extremism, and separatism. The nation works to advance Afghanistan's political and economic standing while maintaining a strong democratic tradition. She views it as vital to her security that Afghanistan remains independent, united, and unaffected by outside forces. She hopes to use her potential market for importing goods and services to boost the Afghan economy. In addition, Afghanistan has stated its desire to build manufacturing hubs in a variety of industries, including cement, oil, gas, electricity, banking, and communications. India will have a solid foundation in South-West-Central Asia to explore trade relations if Afghanistan is democratic and stable.

India's energy needs rose due to the country's rapid population growth, economic expansion, and energy deficit, making energy security essential to maintain economic growth.⁸ The desire for continued economic growth, energy and marine security, access to technology and innovation, as well as internal and external security, are currently the driving elements behind India's foreign policy.⁹ The financial crises of the early 1990s, which were followed by the adoption of the Liberalization-Privatization-Globalization (LPG) economic model, the shock therapy used in the 1990s on newly independent states of the former USSR, the process of globalisation, and the recognition of the capitalist mode of economy in more of the world are some of the other factors that forced India to review its fundamental foreign policy tenets. Thus, the end of the Cold War, international terrorism, the globalisation of different economies, the information technology revolution, the supremacy of geo-economics over geo-politics, the preference for non-conventional threats over conventional threats, and comprehensive security. Modern nation-states' foreign strategies are entirely based on economic development. India must ensure sufficient supplies of energy resources and raw materials to maintain her economic growth. Her hopes for socioeconomic advancement, safety, and tranquillity, however, rely on a tranquil and successful neighbourhood. Thus, within a regional context, India's foreign policy aims to promote regional economic integration while promoting peace, stability, and prosperity. The nation must also give the core and peripheral neighbourhoods the recognition they deserve for their geo-economic, geo-strategic, and geo-political significance.

⁸ Keynote Address of Yashwant Sinha as the External Affairs Minister of India at the Third India-Central Asia Conference, Tashkent, November 06, 2003, <http://mea.gov.in/mystart.php?id=53017303>.

⁹ Chaudhury, Dipanjan Roy, "India's Foreign Policy Priorities – Economy Emerges as the Driving Force", *World Focus*, XXXI(11-12), 2010, p. 503.

The nation is aware of the necessity for finding alternate energy sources because it imports 50% of its gas and 70% of its oil. Energy demand has been increasing quickly; it is predicted to go from 122 million tonnes in 2001–2002 to 364 million tonnes in 2024–25.¹⁰ This implies a thorough relationship with the Central Asian Republics (CARs), which are rich in natural resources. Afghanistan is significant because it will serve as a transit country for this energy supply to India. By connecting Central Asia to Afghanistan, India will also have overland access to the resources in Russia and the Middle East.¹¹ India wants to promote regional economic integration through stronger regional trade, transit, and energy cooperation.

3.1 Afghanistan's strategic location and India's interests

Afghanistan's geocentric location, proximity to Iran on the west, Pakistan on the east, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan in the north, and a little section of the border with China in the northeast all increased the country's geostrategic importance. A number of global powers became very active and seized the chance to gain political and economic sway. Afghanistan sprang to life in the world scene, especially among Pakistan, Iran, Russia, China, the United States, India, etc., thanks to a sudden flurry of ideas and activities from the international community. India is positioned right next to Central and South Asia, and its goal is to exert control over and influence the Afghan government in order to further its strategic objectives by attracting trade, investment, and political support. India's geopolitical interests and Afghanistan's strategic location

The geographic centre of Afghanistan, is close vicinity to Iran on the west, Pakistan on the east, and Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, three Central Asian nations.

¹⁰ Ahmed, Talmiz. *Oil Diplomacy for India's Energy Security*, Atish Sinha, Madhup Mehta, eds., Indian Foreign Policy: Challenges and Opportunities, New Delhi, p. 1093.

¹¹ Mavlonov, Ibrokhim R. *India's Economic Diplomacy with Central Asian Nations and the Economic Development of the Region*, Dialogue, 07(03), 2006, p. 25.

3.2 Afghan Economy Overview

Over the long history of conflict, Afghanistan's economy has suffered extensive damage. Due to the Soviet occupation, population displacement, and ferocious combat between different Mujahideen factions, the majority of the country's key social, administrative, and economic institutions have disintegrated. Among the most severely damaged industries are heavy and small-scale industries, heavy and small-scale industries, education, and agricultural infrastructure. The severity of the nation's poverty and economic misery has increased as a result of this economic downturn. The country, which is largely dependent on subsistence farming, has seen dropping income levels, declining food security, decreased access to critically needed services, and a growth in population. There are a variety of differences both between and within each region. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has significantly decreased. Since 11 September 2001, the US has launched a war on terror. After 7 July 2005, Britain also realized the scourge of Islamic militancy. The G-8 Summit was held at Gleneagles (Scotland) on 8 July 2005 and announced a total package of US \$ 80 billion a year by 2010, signifying an increase of US \$ 50 billion. The fact remains that the rich world cannot afford to ignore the massive sufferings and plight of the extreme poor. Former US Secretary of State, Colin Powell once stated, "the war against terror is bound up in the war against poverty." Hence, it is cheaper - and smarter - to make friends out of potential enemies than to defend oneself against them. The perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks might have been wealthy Saudis, but it was in the collapsed, poverty-stricken state of Afghanistan that they found succour and sanctuary.¹²

The international community organised a number of meetings on Afghan reconstruction following the fall of the Taliban government in late 2001 and the political agreement reached between various Afghan factions in Bonn in December 2001, including the formation of the Steering Group of donor governments, particularly the US, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and the European Union. Afghanistan has a largely agrarian economy. The major components such as agriculture, manufacturing, and infrastructure were seriously harmed by the terrible wars of the 1980s and 1990s. After the war ended and reconstruction got underway, Afghanistan's economy recovered strongly thanks to prudent, conservative government macroeconomic policies, a highly successful currency reform, and structural changes, particularly in the trade

¹²IMF Country Report No. 03/299, *Islamic State of Afghanistan: Rebuilding a Macroeconomic Framework for Reconstruction and Growth*, September 2003, p. 170.

and banking sectors. It is one of the poorest nations, but there are still some serious issues. Large-scale international aid, the resurgence of the agricultural sector, and significant expansion in the services sector have served as the foundation for the economic recovery since 2001. Afghanistan recently began negotiations with the World Trade Organization to become a member. Additionally, Afghanistan is a member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation, and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). Afghanistan has signed bilateral trade and economic cooperation agreements with Russia and Turkey, as well as reciprocal agreements to promote and protect investments with Turkey, as well as a bilateral preferential trade deal.

Transit Trade Agreement (ATTA) with Pakistan and Afghanistan has been permitted to use Iran's Arabian Sea port at Chabahar under advantageous terms. Trade Agreement with India and finally Afghanistan.¹³ Despite all the obstacles that still stand in the way of exporting, Afghanistan saw an increase in the volume of items. Pakistan, which the Afghan government estimates to have received US\$ 300.8 million in exports in 2007, is the nation's biggest export market, according to the 2009 publication of the commercial guide for doing business in Afghanistan. India comes in second with US\$ 61.2 million, followed by Iran with US\$ 9 million, Germany with US\$ 7 million, and Saudi Arabia with US\$ 4.6 million. China (\$611.3 million), Japan (\$494 million), Pakistan (\$440.9 million), and Iran are the top four countries for imports (138.3 million). Fruits and nuts, carpets, wool, cotton, hides and pelts, as well as valuable and semi-precious jewels, are among the exported items. While India ranked second among Afghanistan's exporter partners, Pakistan is the country's biggest trade partner overall. Afghanistan's total export value was 132 US million in 2008, but this number has been declining since 2012, falling to 308 US million in 2013.

Table 3.2.1 lists the top destinations for Afghanistan's exports.

Figures in US million Dollar

Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Pakistan	482	307	597	878	883	1998

¹³Aziz, R, The Economy of Afghanistan, "An overview of opportunities and risk of doing business in Afghanistan", 2010, p. 54.

USA	18	45	78	91	1493	1410
India	105	106	113	104	118	514
Russia	97	198	181	804	938	484
China	429	360	704	577	714	329
Kazakhstan	159	291	208	333	321	249
Turkey	51	71	109	138	290	228
Germany	65	144	422	244	258	221
Thailand	17	17	40	36	144	184
UK	10	16	32	24	31	108

Sources-ministry of finance Afghanistan, available at <https://www.mof.gov.af/en>

Table 3.2.2 lists the top destinations for Afghanistan's imports.

Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Pakistan	264	191	151	181	201	308
India	132	76	65	70	70	213
USA	2	17	4	4	34	41
Finland	6	5	3	6	13	17
Germany	0.7	0.8	1.9	1.5	1.6	17
Russia	37	26	30	33	11	14
Turkey	18	6	35	11	7	11
China	2	4	12	6	5	10
France	0.13	0.15	0.26	0.17	4	8
Spain	2	0.5	0.13	0.04	4	8

Sources-ministry of finance Afghanistan, available at <https://www.mof.gov.af/en>

3.3 Major export partner of Afghanistan

Share of Percentage (figures in US million Dollar)

Major Trade partners of Afghanistan from 2008 to 2014 are Presented in the below table 3.3.1 (share of trade percentage wise)

Country	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Pakistan	77.6	63.7	66.2	48.4	47.3	38.9	48.1	37.8	38.4
India	5.9	18.9	17.8	24.9	18.8	16.7	18.6	22.1	20
Tajikistan	0	0	0	0	0	1.8	1.3	2.8	0.5
Germany	1.8	0.9	1.5	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.2	1.9
Iran	0.7	1.2	1.9	3.3	10.1	8.2	5.3	6.9	8.3
Iraq						2.3	3.9	4.0	4.4

Table 3.3.2 Import partners of Afghanistan-

Country	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Iran	7.8	6.8	4.5	6.6	5.3	7.4	8.9	11.6	17.3
Pakistan	15.9	15.2	14.2	16.1	9.2	11.6	13.4	23.1	19.9
UAE	2.4	3.5	3.5	2.9	1.4	2.0	3.0	13.1	14.2
Turkmenistan	1.2	1.0	1.9	2.6	2.2	2.2	5.4	6.9	7.3
Malaysia	0	0	0	0	0	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.2

Japan	16.7	15.2	16.3	12.1	10.1	9.5	6.3	1.2	0.9
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Sources: *Central Statistics Organization, 2018.*

Based on the findings and the data presented in Table 1 regarding the export markets for Afghan products from the years (2005 to 2017), Pakistan is by far Afghanistan's largest export market for goods and services, and the data shows that the volume of trade between the two countries is very high. On the other hand, India has also tried to offer Afghanistan good market opportunities so that it can become an alternative for exportation. The data on other nations of the world has also shown that Turkey, Germany, Tajikistan, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Russia, and to a lesser extent China are among the major export markets for Afghani goods worldwide.

Afghanistan has only recently begun exporting to Tajikistan, Iraq, China, and Turkey because prior to 2010 it had limited exports to the aforementioned nations. In the years 2005–2006, Afghanistan's primary source of imports was Japan, which accounted for roughly 17 percent of the market. However, in the following years (2006–07), Afghanistan's primary source of imports was China, which accounted for 18 percent of the market. Since 2008, China has been the primary source of imports for Afghanistan. Since (2009 to 2010), Uzbekistan products have had the highest percentage of product availability in the market, increasing even to 26 percent of the market, but according to the time period in (2010-11), the volume of Pakistan imports to Afghanistan got the highest market percentage among the others. In the year (2008-09), Uzbekistan had the highest percentage of imported products to the Afghanistan market with the percentage of 17 percent in the market. Afghanistan currently has the largest share of the import market.

3.4 PTA agreement

In March 2003, India and Afghanistan agreed to a preferential trade agreement, as a result of which India granted significant duty cuts to a specific category (38 times) of Afghan dry fruits, ranging from 50% to 100%. In exchange, Afghanistan has made concessions to Indian goods like tea, sugar, cement, and pharmaceuticals. At the SAARC Summit in Male in November 2011, India eliminated all basic customs duties for all SAARC LDCs, allowing all items from Afghanistan (apart from alcohol and tobacco) duty-free access to the Indian market. As a

signatory to SAFTA and an LDC, Afghanistan is obligated to reduce all tariffs on items that are not on its sensitive list to 5% or less. This ten-year procedure aids in preventing any abrupt or drastic tariff reductions and eases the changes with little impact on Afghan industry. Out of nearly 6,000 total tariff lines, Afghanistan has decreased its sensitive list from 1,063 tariff lines to 850 tariff lines. On Afghanistan's sensitive list, just 30% of the tariff lines had rates higher than the required 5%.¹⁴ The most expensive tariff rates are applied to fruits, vegetables, nuts, basic building supplies, beverages, plants, leather goods, and carpets under Afghanistan's sensitive list. Tobacco, ceramic goods, perfumes, minerals, and gasoline are just a few of the non-Afghanistan-produced goods that are subject to higher tariffs for the aim of raising money. India eliminated the fundamental customs taxes for all SAARC LDCs, allowing all exports from Afghanistan (apart from alcoholic beverages and tobacco) duty-free access to the Indian market. India and Afghanistan have established an aviation freight corridor since June 2014 to address obstacles to land connection brought on by neighbouring Pakistan.

3.5 Scenario of Bilateral Trade

Bilateral trade between India and Afghanistan has been on the rise. India hopes its investment in the Iranian port at Chabahar will allow it to gain trading access to Afghanistan, bypassing Pakistan. Pakistan currently allows Afghanistan transit rights for its exports to India but does not allow goods to move from India to Afghanistan. With the opening of the Chabahar port after the Iran nuclear deal, trade with Central Asia through Afghanistan seems more probable, given the maintenance of peace in Afghanistan. The economic corridor that China proposed to build along the Kashgar-Gwadar route is of strategic importance to India as the area is a disputed one. India acknowledges Afghanistan's long history as a crossroads for trade between central, south, and west Asia. According to the real potential, the bilateral trade was only about USD 683.02 million in 2013–14 and USD 684 million in 2014–15 (USD 422 million in exports and USD 262 million in imports by India, respectively). However, if the Wagah-Attari route is established for bilateral trade with Afghanistan, the trade connections can reach their full potential. The Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA) has so far placed limitations on this. India is Afghanistan's second-largest export market after Pakistan. Along with giving Afghanistan another route to the seaport, India built the Zaranj-Delaram road to

¹⁴ "Indo-Afghan Trade and Investment," Ministry of external affairs, available at <https://eoi.gov.in/kabul/?0297?000>, accessed on 20 June 2022.

strengthen bilateral economic ties. The effective running of the Chabahar port in Iran might take advantage of this path to provide a new transit route for Afghan goods to India while providing a new route for trade between Central Asia and the rest of the world. Here is the import-export data from 2001 to 2014 of these two nations.

India-Afghanistan import export

Table 3.5.1

Year	India's Exports to Afghanistan	India's Imports from Afghanistan	Total Trade
2001-02	24.37	17.52	41.89
2002-03	60.77	18.46	79.23
2003-04	145.47	40.51	185.98
2004-05	165.44	47.01	212.45
2005-06	142.67	58.42	201.09
2006-07	182.11	34.37	216.48
2007-08	249.21	109.97	359.18
2008-09	394.23	126.24	520.47
2009-10	463.55	125.19	588.74
2010-11	422.41	146.03	557.81
2011-12	510.9	132.5	643.41
2012-13	472.63	159.55	632.18
2013-14	447.34	208.77	683.10

Sources: *ministry of commerce. Import-export data bank, government of India.*

Table 3.5.2Export intensity

Year	Afghanistan with India	India with Afghanistan
2008	9.71	6.54
2009	9.83	6.89

2010	9.14	8.87
2011	10.05	9.12
2012	10.28	10.08
2013	12.07	10.95
2014	13.05	11.07

Table 3.5.3 Import intensity

Year	Afghanistan with India	India with Afghanistan
2008	6.45	9.17
2009	6.98	9.38
2010	8.78	9.41
2011	9.21	10.50
2012	10.80	10.82
2013	10.59	12.70
2014	11.70	13.50

Source- *ministry of Commerce, Import export data bank, government of India.*

3.6 India's Energy Interests in Afghanistan

Afghanistan serves as India's entry point to the energy-rich region of Central Asia, which is referred to as an "extended neighbourhood." A stable Afghanistan will provide India with a

practical conduit for bringing energy resources from Central Asia to the Indian market. This will give the unstable Middle East region alternate energy source channels.

Afghanistan, however, has enormous potential for hydrocarbon reserves with a very high reserve-to-production (R/P) ratio including an estimated 49.6 billion cubic metres, or 1750.0 billion cubic feet, of proven natural gas, and 0.4 to 3.6 billion barrels of oil. (US Geological Survey, 2002) In addition, the heart of Afghanistan contains minerals such as granite, marble, chromites, cobalt, niobium, uranium, cobalt, lithium (substantially high deposits), iron ore (2,200 million tonnes), copper (60 million tonnes), other metallic and non-metallic minerals (Russian's conducted Survey 1980) (US Geological Survey, 2002) The energy market in Central Asia will certainly be shaped by these deposits, nevertheless.

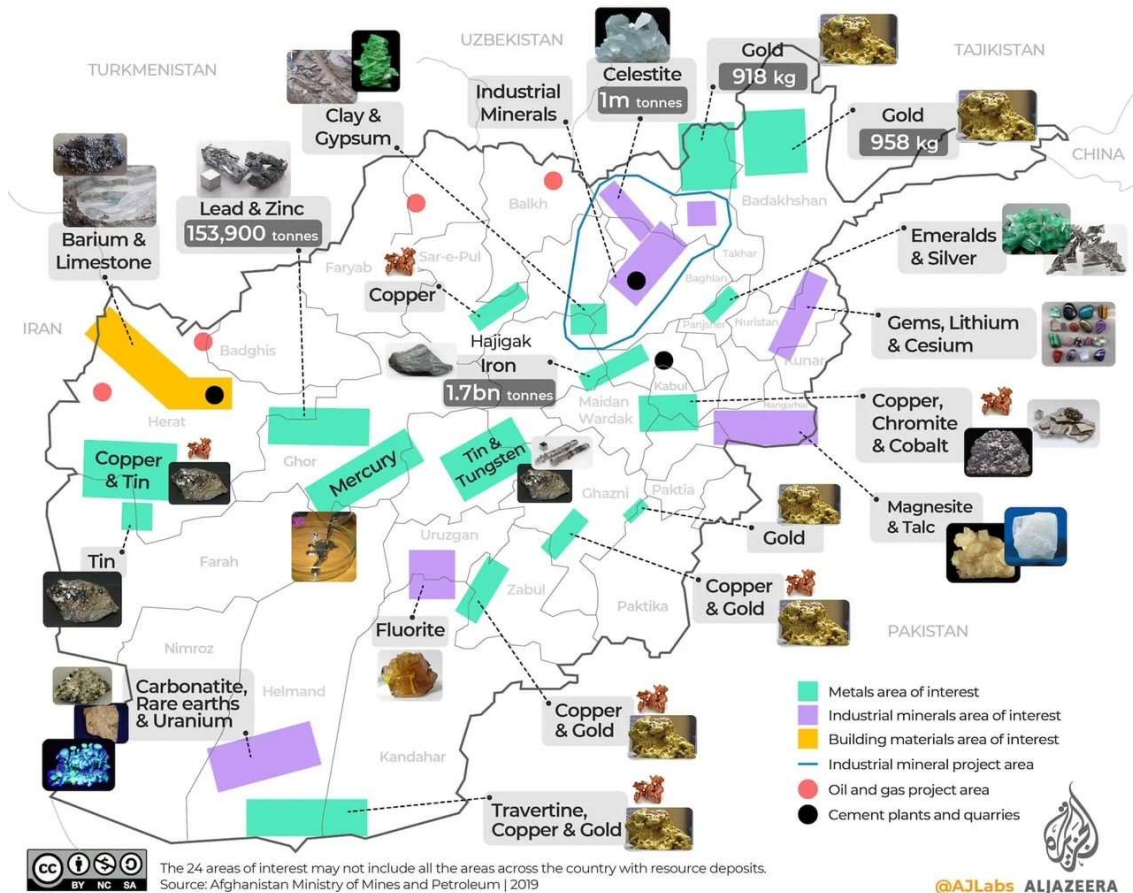
China is equally interested in this region and has recently increased both its military and economic clout. India and China are expected to compete in this market, as seen by the excessive bidding for Petro-Kazakh. The most thorough geological survey of the nation was carried out in 2010 by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and the Afghanistan Geological Survey (AGS), which also identified 24 particular areas of interest (AOI) throughout Afghanistan's 34 provinces. The areas of interest are colour-coded on the map below. They include valuable metal reserves (green), building material reserves (yellow), industrial mineral reserves (purple) and areas with oil and gas (red).

Map.3.6.1

AFGHANISTAN

Untapped natural resources

Afghanistan is believed to hold more than \$1 trillion worth of mineral resources and metals but faces many challenges in untapping it.



sources:Aljazeera.com

The most prevalent precious metal in Afghanistan is iron. Afghanistan is among the top 10 nations in terms of extractable iron, with a total reserve estimated at 2.2 billion metric tonnes. The greatest iron ore resource in the area, with 1.7 billion tonnes of high-grade ore containing 63-69 percent iron, is at the Hajigak mine, which is 130 kilometres west of Kabul. To put that in perspective, it is estimated that 2.2 billion tonnes of iron ore could be used to build at least 200,000 replicas of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, which rises to a height of 324 metres (1,063 feet) and was made from 7,300 tonnes of iron in 1889. The nation is also thought to contain 183 million tonnes of aluminium reserves, mostly in the districts of Badakhshan and

Kandahar. The lightweight metal is second only to iron in terms of global usage. A total of 2,698kg of gold resources are also thought to exist in Afghanistan along two major gold belts, from Ghazni in the southwest to Zabul and Badakhshan in the southwest to Takhar. With this much gold, 300,000 gold-pound coins, each weighing eight grammes, may be produced. Afghanistan is the eighth-most mountainous nation in the world, making access to many areas challenging. The landlocked nation's northeast is home to the Hindu Kush Himalayas, which are rich in numerous minerals and building materials like marble, limestone, and sandstone. A versatile rock often used in sculpting and building is marble. The nation produces an amazing 1.3 billion tonnes of the lovely building stone, or enough marble to erect 13,000 Washington Monuments, each measuring 169 metres (555 feet) high and 17 metres (55 feet) wide.¹⁵The pink onyx marble from the Pakistani border province of Nangarhar is among the most prized in the area. Common forms of sedimentary rocks utilised extensively in construction are limestone and sandstone. Limestone is a crucial material. At least 500 million tonnes of limestone are thought to exist in Afghanistan, mostly in the provinces of Badakhshan, Herat, and Baghlan.¹⁶

India would therefore benefit from a friendly and stable Afghanistan as a substitute fuel supply route to keep up with its predicted increase in hydrocarbon demand by 2030. (World Energy Council, 2016). 12 On the other hand, Afghanistan is India's entry point into and control over the Central Asian energy market, particularly to ensure security for the recently constructed natural gas pipeline (TAPI), or India has the chance to avoid Pakistan, her major security danger in the future.

3.7 Pakistan Factor: as an Issue

Both India and Afghanistan can't ignore the long shadow of Pakistan in their relationship. Pakistan and India see each other as neighbours fraying, first for area of influence and second to minimise the influence of each other in Afghanistan. As Indo-Pak relations is characterised by what John J. Mearsheimer in his one of the realist principles calls states cannot be certain about others' intentions.¹⁷

¹⁵ *Mapping Afghanistan's untapped natural resources*, in AL Jazeera published on 24 September 2021. available at Aljazeera.com, accessed on 25 June 2021.

¹⁶ *ibid*

¹⁷ Toft, Peter. "John J. Mearsheimer: an offensive realist between geopolitics and power." *Journal of International Relations and Development*, vol- 8. No- 4, 2005, p. 381.

India lost direct access to Afghanistan and was forced to rely on Pakistan to maintain all ties, including their trading links. Afghanistan gained a new market that was closer to her home, which obviously had an impact on her trade with India.

Without the conflicts between Pakistan and Afghanistan, which forced the latter to keep ties with India, India would have been at an even bigger loss. The period of normal Pak-Afghan relations provides an illustration of how Pakistan's existence, in the absence of any significant differences with Afghanistan, would have negatively impacted the Indo-Afghan commerce.

Because of the close proximity of the borders and the Pakistani rupee's lower exchange rate compared to the Indian rupee, trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan boomed. At the same time, Pakistan's political disagreements with both India and Afghanistan proved to be a barrier to their countries' trade flowing freely.

By blocking transit routes, Pakistan served as a strategic reminder to Afghanistan and India of the need of continuing trade between them. The trade between India and Afghanistan was significantly impacted by the shutdown of the cheapest and most natural route through Pakistan. The interactions probably aided in the discussion of issues preventing the free flow of trade and also brought about minimal changes in the overall volume of trade. However, the majority of the trade was still reliant on Pakistan's behaviour, over which neither of them had any control. The closing of transit facilities through Pakistan increased the cost of transportation and led to the diversion of goods that were formerly imported into one market and sold in another to other markets. Afghanistan was forced to diversify her commerce, which ultimately had an impact on her trade with India's traditional markets. Pakistan believes Afghanistan's territory is being used by India, in connivance with Afghan leaders and intelligence agencies, to interfere in the Baluchistan Province of Pakistan and in other trouble spots. Afghanistan has not ceased accusing Pakistan of intervention and using the Afghan Taliban as an instrument of Pakistani regional policy.¹⁸ According to Pakistan's Foreign Office spokesman, —Pakistan did not demand that Afghanistan should cut all ties to India' and has no objection ... We have only stressed that those external forces which are using the soil of Afghanistan to destabilise Pakistan should be discouraged.¹⁹ Pakistan is concerned about India's expanding commercial

¹⁸Rasul Bakhsh Rais, —Afghanistan and Pakistan: Difficult neighbours|| in Post -September 11 Afghanistan-Pakistan Relations: Prospects for Counter-insurgency Cooperation, National Bureau of Asian Research Analysis. Vol. 19 (5), 2008. P.511.

¹⁹Anita Joshua, —Pakistan denies asking Afghanistan to snap ties with India||, The Hindu, March 29, 2013.

ties to Afghanistan and its aid contributions. Although the ongoing war and instability in the state have made it difficult for the Indian Assistance programme to carry out the projects on the ground. The ongoing global conflict dictates how Pakistan will react to the warming up of ties between India and Afghanistan. According to Pakistan, Afghanistan is the best location to raise the Taliban. Afghanistan is essential for its strategic depth because it can give the remaining Taliban preserves.²⁰ due to India's catastrophic victory over Pakistan in the third Indo-Pak War in 1971. Pakistan views India's growing involvement in Afghanistan as a strategic loss for the country and as the dissolution of a long-standing Islamic alliance between Islamabad and Kabul.²¹

3.8 Nature of invest in Afghanistan

Near some of the biggest and fastest-growing markets in the world, Afghanistan is a rapidly developing emerging market of strategic importance. A vital transit route for Central Asian hydrocarbons (oil and gas) to markets in South Asia and elsewhere is provided by Afghanistan's strategic location between the energy-rich Central Asian republics and the major South Asian seaports. Afghanistan also has easy access to vital, rapidly expanding markets like China, India, and Pakistan as well as those of its neighbours. Importantly, India has geopolitical interests for which it has chosen to engage Afghanistan through a soft power approach, choosing to make a significant contribution to the civilian sector rather than to defence and security (www.dsafghan.in).²² India has identified the telecommunications, health, pharmaceuticals, information technology, and education sectors for cooperation. India is also active and effective in the construction, infrastructure, human capital formation, and mining sectors. However, as part of bilateral agreements, India has committed to giving Afghanistan more than \$2 billion in aid and has agreed to build a 600-kilometre rail line between Bamiyan and Herat that will link the Hajigak mines to Herat and then to the Iranian port of Chabahar via the Delaram-Zaranj highway, which India had to build in 2009.²³ will instead usher in a new era of regional

²⁰Sumit Ganguly and Nicholas Howenstein, *"India-Pakistan Rivalry in Afghanistan"*, *Journal of International Affairs*, 63(1), 2009, p. 129

²¹ *ibid*

²²Why Invest in Afghanistan, available at <http://www.dsafghan.in/pdf/why-invest-in-afghanistan.pdf> accessed on 4/11/2017.

²³ Saira Kanti Bajpai and Krishnappa v Basit, *"India's Grand Strategy: History, Theory, Cases"* (Routledge, 2014), p-389.

cooperation by being able to achieve the complete spectrum of connectedness - from culture to business, traditions to technology, investments to IT, services to strategy, and people to politics. The construction of the Parliament (\$178 million), the Pul-i-Khumri to Kabul power line (\$120 million), the Salma Dam power project (\$130 million), the Delaram-Zaranj road (\$150 million), the supply of 250,000 tonnes of wheat, the creation and rehabilitation of schools, an air freight corridor, the construction of the Delaram-Zaranj road, and food assistance for primary school students are just a few of the significant projects on which India has invested in Afghanistan. Despite this, India has pledged to Afghanistan to have a long-term commitment in designing its development aid to rebuild the energy sector, institutions, and education in order to help Afghanistan attain self-sufficiency in a number of areas.²⁴

Table 3.7.1 Commodities wise Indian export to Afghanistan

(Figures in US Million Dollar)

Items	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total	Share Percentage
Manufactured tobacco and substitutes	3.30	6.98	9.94	9.96	13.31	17.58	61.07	3.46
Woven fabrics of synthetic filament yarn	15.51	18.73	48.21	111.96	199.58	140.15	534.13	30.25
Medicaments consisting of mixed or unmixed products	28.06	36.67	35.79	50.44	39.12	25.42	215.49	12.20
Women suits, ensembles, jacket	1.07	2.30	6.47	9.81	12.52	19.17	51.33	2.91
Woven fabrics containing predominantly	1.14	0.63	3.17	2.33	0.22	6.52	14.01	0.79

²⁴India- Afghanistan Commercial Brief, Embassy of India, Kabul's website: <http://eoi.gov.in/kabul>.

Jerseys, pullover, and similar articles	0.47	0.86	2.25	2.93	7.33	6.95	20.78	1.18
Structures and parts of structures	0.11	4.80	4.73	1.69	4.94	11.47	27.72	1.57
Imitation jewellery	2.27	0.56	0.53	0.62	2.10	1.49	5.58	0.32
Human blood, animal blood prepared for therapeutic	0.24	0.82	1.10	4.31	11.34	4.96	22.76	1.29
Women suits, dresses, skirts, divided skirts	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.10	0.17	1.24	1.52	0.09
Stranded wire, cables of aluminium	11.58	2.54	4.78	5.13	23.98	33.15	81.15	4.60
Tracksuits, swim wear and others garments	0.02	0.11	0.14	0.81	0.66	0.34	2.08	0.12
Wheat and meslin	0.00	2.12	1.23	0.24	0.05	0.00	3.64	0.21
Footwear with outer and uppers soles	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
New pneumatic tyres of rubber	0.00	0.10	0.01	0.20	1.13	0.11	1.55	0.09

Made up articles of textile materials	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.06	0.07	0.00
Milk and cream	1.68	3.14	2.28	2.91	4.08	2.35	16.44	0.93
Men's shirts	2.48	0.67	0.20	0.18	1.50	2.76	7.79	0.44
Men's suits, ensembles, jackets, blazers	1.83	1.73	3.79	9.89	15.18	4.83	37.24	2.11
Cane or beet sugar and chemically pure sucrose	0.25	0.40	0.67	2.68	2.70	3.27	9.96	0.56
Instruments used in medical sciences	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.03	0.19	0.22	0.01
Shawls, scarves and similar articles	0.00	0.86	18.04	5.15	1.22	0.00	25.26	1.43
Tea, flavoured or not	2.36	2.58	2.05	2.18	2.30	3.75	15.21	0.86
Cigars, and cigarettes of tobacco or substitute	1.14	0.88	0.32	0.54	0.86	0.63	4.37	0.25

Sub total	71.55	87.46	145.77	224.13	344.52	286.70	1160.12	65.70
Total trade	147.90	170.60	218.40	364.80	471.50	392.50	1765	100
	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total 2011 to 2014			
Woven fabrics of synthetic filament yarn	151.93	88.65	180.33	146.28	567.19			
Medicaments consisting of mixed or unmixed products	39.06	31.55	39.37	33.64	143.62			
Footwear with outer and	32.56	30.11	23.74	27.92	114.33			
Manufactured tobacco and substitutes	52.78	28.32	11.15	15.61	107.86			
Woven fabrics containing predominantly	8.30	24.69	25.27	26.93	85.19			
Jerseys, pullover, and similar articles	15.73	16.07	11.98	16.60	60.38			
Structures and parts of structures	3.60	9.01	6.57	7.23	26.41			

Imitation jewellery	41.85	67.21	8.43	3.15	120.64
Human blood, animal blood prepared for therapeutic	14.17	7.30	13.61	9.24	44.32
Women suits, dresses, skirts, divided skirts	5.60	14.62	14.92	9.71	44.85
Stranded wire, cables of aluminium	1.25	0.02	0.49	4.96	6.72
Tracksuits, swim wear and others garments	2.57	1.18	0.78	0.60	5.13
Wheat and meslin	0.00	15.00	35.68	9.75	60.53
Footwear with outer and	0.51	0.78	1.56	2.46	5.31
New pneumatic tyres of rubber	10.59	5.74	3.34	7.43	27.1
Made up articles of textile materials	0.89	3.71	1.85	1.53	7.98
Milk and cream	0.32	1.87	4.25	2.37	8.81

Men's shirts	1.00	1.31	3.00	5.77	11.08
Men's suits, ensembles, jackets, blazers	0.15	0.62	0.51	0.44	1.72
Cane or beet sugar and chemically pure sucrose	5.79	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.79
Instruments used in medical sciences	1.54	2.62	2.02	4.08	10.26
Shawls, scarves and similar articles	4.03	4.10	5.95	1.85	15.93
Tea, flavoured or not	1.32	1.61	6.89	4.73	14.55
Cigars, and cigarettes of tobacco or substitute	0.00	0.69	0.75	0.09	1.53
Sub total	398.57	3.65.41	404.34	344.25	
Total trade	504.50	475.60	513.50	442.80	

Source- ministry of Commerce, Import export data bank India

The composition of India's exports to Afghanistan from 2005 to 2014 is shown in the above table. The main goods that India exported to Afghanistan during this time were artificial

filaments, articles of clothing, accessories, pharmaceutical products, articles of iron and steel, tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes, electrical and electronic equipment, rubber and articles, coffee, tea, mate, and spices. In 2014, India's exports to Afghanistan comprised 0.2 per cent of all its exports. Woven fabrics made of synthetic filament yarn and medicines made up the majority of India's exports to Afghanistan, accounting for 18% and 8.1% respectively during the period 2011–2018 and 30.2% and 12.2% during the period 2005–2010. In 2005, their shares were 10.4% and 18.9% respectively. Additionally, its proportion climbed to 35.7% and 6.4% in 2010. However, the share of woven fabrics fell to 30.1% in 2011, while the share of pharmaceuticals rose to 7.7%. The percentage of synthetic filament yarn used in woven clothes peaked in 2009 at 42.3% and fell to 5.2% in 2014. With a peak of 21.5% in 2006, the proportion of pharmaceuticals fell to 13.8% in 2008 and then further to 8.2% in 2018. The percentage of manufactured tobacco and tobacco replacements was 4% in 2005, grew slightly to 4.4% in 2010, and then increased again to 11% in 2018. Tea's market share was 1.5% in 2005, but it fell to 1% and 0.3% in 2010 and 2014, respectively.

During the period of 2011 to 2014, the percentage of manufactured tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes, woven fabrics with a majority of synthetic staple fibres by weight (but not more than 85%), other, knitted or crocheted structures and parts of structures, and imitation jewellery in India's exports to Afghanistan was 7.5%, 7.2%, 5.3%, 4.4, 3.6%, and 3.2%, respectively. Additionally, between 2005 and 2010, their respective shares were 2.9%, 3.4%, 0.7%, 1.1%, 1.5%, and 0.3%. Since 2005, India has continued to export all of these commodities to Afghanistan. Although manufactured tobacco and its alternatives and imitation jewellery made up only a small portion of India's overall exports to Afghanistan in 2010, they climbed to 10.4% and 8.2%, respectively, in 2011. The percentage of women's or girls' suits, synthetic tobacco and tobacco substitutes, woven fabrics with 85% or more of synthetic staple fibres by weight, knitted or crocheted jerseys, pullovers, cardigans, waistcoats, and similar items, as well as structures and parts of structures, jerseys, and pullovers. and building components, imitation jewellery, human blood, and animal blood processed for medicinal, preventative, or diagnostic uses made up the majority of India's exports to Afghanistan in 2005, which were 0.7%, 2.2%, 0.7%, and 0.3%, 0.07%, 0.1%, and 0.1%, respectively. These corresponding proportions climbed in 2014, rising to 5.8%, 12.1%, 5.1%, 4.4%, 8%, 0.4%, and 3.1%. However, 10.4% of all India's exports to Afghanistan were woven fabrics made of synthetic filament yarn, drugs, stranded wire, cables, plaited bands, and similar items..

Commodities wise Indian import from Afghanistan

(Figures in US Million Dollars)

Table 3.8.2

Items	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total	Share of Percentage
Other oil seeds and oleaginous fruits	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.03	0.01
Natural gums, resins and others	9.90	13.45	17.92	25.09	22.85	40.85	130.05	22.66
Seeds, fruits and spore, foe sowing	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.01
wool	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.08	0.01
Yarn of combed wool	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Fruits, nuts and other edible parts of plants	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00
Dates, figs, pineapples, mangos	9.14	4.95	22.52	32.72	36.73	40.73	146.78	25.57
Grapes, fresh or dried	8.93	10.03	6.66	13.23	12.79	13.08	64.73	11.28

Item	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total	Share of Percentage
Others nuts, fresh or dried	18.46	10.90	19.00	45.54	34.55	21.29	149.73	26.09
Dried apricots, apples, peaches, pears etc	3.18	2.80	5.86	10.45	5.25	8.28	35.81	6.24
Seeds of anis, badian, cumin or caraway	2.62	3.24	2.40	2.10	2.51	3.27	16.14	2.81
Dried leguminous vegetables, shelled	0.01	0.07	0.00	0.00	3.56	9.71	13.35	2.33
Ginger, saffron, turmeric and others spices	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Plants and parts of plants	0.20	0.09	0.20	0.20	0.18	0.18	0.18	1.05
Onions, garlic etc	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.31	2.31	0.40
Apples, pears and quinces, fresh	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.01
melons	0.14	0.09	0.19	0.30	0.33	0.18	1.23	0.21
Apricots, cherries, peaches	0.00	0.01	0.12	0.13	0.01	0.03	0.31	0.05

Marbles and others calcareous	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.00
Fresh strawberries, raspberries, blackberries	0.07	0.00	0.43	2.29	1.27	3.35	7.41	1.29
Sub total	52.65	45.63	75.30	132.10	120.04	143.37	569.09	99.14

Items	2011	2012	2013	2014	total
Seeds, fruits and spore, foe sowing	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Natural gums, resins and others	27.76	33.64	39.05	65.92	166.37
Dates, figs, pineapples, mangos	44.64	13.29	67.11	66.26	191.3
Grapes	6.08	11.66	29.70	42.37	89.81
Others nuts, fresh or dried	21.86	7.48	25.55	29.97	84.86
Dried apricots, apples, peaches, pears etc	6.77	2.71	11.33	12.08	32.89
Seeds of anis, badian, cumin or caraway	1.54	1.31	5.64	9.32	14.96

Dried leguminous vegetables, shelled	0.62	3.65	12.62	4.85	21.74
Ginger, saffron, turmeric and others spices	0.00	0.00	0.03	1.60	1.63
Plants and parts of plants	0.27	0.34	3.14	3.52	7.27
Onions, garlic etc	2.32	0.00	4.45	0.05	6.82
Apples, pears and quinces, fresh	0.00	0.00	3.23	1.38	4.61
melons	0.05	0.00	0.11	0.08	0.24
Apricots,	0.09	0.02	0.08	0.05	0.24
Marbles and others calcareous	0.28	0.14	0.08	0.13	0.55
Fresh strawberries, raspberries, blackberries	1.64	0.00	0.79	0.62	3.05
Fruits, nuts and other edible parts of plants	0.00	0.00	0.15	2.04	2.19
Others oil seeds and oleaginous fruits	0.03	0.01	0.05	0.09	0.18
wool	0.05	0.18	0.09	0.05	0.37

Yarn of combed wool	0.00	0.03	0.04	0.08	0.15
Total	113.98	75.45	203.25	240.45	

Source- *UN comtrade databank. UNO*

Afghanistan is becoming a minor source of imports for India. The principal items that India imported from Afghanistan between 2005 and 2010 and between 2011 and 2014 are listed in the above table. The two most significant imports from Afghanistan to India are Lac, which includes natural gums, resins, gum-resins, balsams, and other oleoresins, and during this time, fresh or dried dates, figs, pineapples, avocados, guavas, mangoes, and mangosteens were included. During the years 2005 to 2010, these constituted 22.6% and 25.5%, respectively, of India's total imports from Afghanistan. Additionally, from 2011 to 2014, it made up 24.5% and 24.3%, respectively. In 2005, dates, figs, and pineapples made up 16.7% of the total, but by 2018, that percentage had risen to 18.5%. The percentage of dates, figs, and pineapples peaked in 2011 at 37.1% and fell to 18.5% in 2014. However, from 18.2% in 2005 to 24.6% in 2014, the share of lac; natural gums, resins, gum-resins, and balsams grew. Other nuts, fresh or dried, whether or not shelled or peeled (26.0 percent), grapes, fresh or dried (11.2 percent), dried apricots (6.2 percent), seeds of fennel and coriander (2.8 percent), dried leguminous vegetables (2.3 percent), etc. were the other major items of India's import from Afghanistan between 2005 and 2010, and their shares were 13.3 percent, 17.5 percent, 2.7 percent, and 3.3 percent, respectively, between 2011 and 2014. Grapes and other nuts, whether fresh or dried, had a share of 33.8% and 16.3% in 2005. By 2010, these shares had fallen to 14.7% and 9%, respectively, and by 2014, they had increased to 13% and 22.3%, respectively. From 5.8%, 0%, 0%, and 4.7% respectively in 2005 to 6.4%, 4%, and 2% respectively in 2014, the share of dried apricots, ginger, and leguminous vegetables from Afghanistan grew. However, the proportion of other nuts, whether fresh or dry, shelled or not, and seeds such as fennel and coriander in India's overall import from Afghanistan was 33.8% and 4.7%, respectively. in 2005, and decreased to 13.1 and 4.3 percent, respectively, in 2014. India's exports' composition has evolved over time. Over time, India used to export a variety of goods to Afghanistan.

India and Afghanistan have established an aviation freight corridor since June to address obstacles to land connection brought on by neighbouring Pakistan. Afghan exports to India via this route are primarily high-value goods like pomegranates, apples, apricots, cherries, melon, watermelons, walnuts, almonds, figs, pine nuts, pistachios, and dried apricots. They also include medicinal herbs like asafoetida and saffron. Kabul, Kandahar, and Herat are connected to New Delhi, Mumbai, and Chennai via the Air Freight Corridor. The Gulf of Oman's Chahbahar port, which is in southeast Iran, is now only partially operational but is expected to increase trade between India, Afghanistan, and Iran in the future. Afghanistan imported goods from India worth US 208.77 million Dollar in 2014. Electrical equipment, sugar, iron, steel, pharmaceuticals, fruits, tobacco, aluminium, and various types of clothing were among the imported goods.

3.9 Role of SAARC

The first SAARC summit, held in Dhaka in December 1985, after the formation of SAARC in the same year. Following its liberation from British domination, India embraced the strategy of NSR, or national self-reliance, and together with six other South Asian countries—Bangladesh, Bhutan, Pakistan, Nepal, Maldives, India, and Sri Lanka—formed SAARC. These six countries are still members of SAARC today. India was successful in establishing positive commercial links and friendly relations with these nations. India has been a participating member of SAARC, which promotes improved intercultural understanding by promoting efforts amongst individuals. India is the only SAARC member having shared borders with all six countries, making it a tremendous source of the prospective investment in terms of trade and commerce.

SAARC's prime objectives include: promoting the welfare of the people of South Asia, accelerating Economic growth, and social progress; providing dignified livelihood to all individuals and on a larger scale promoting self-reliance amongst the South Asian nations and building trust and appreciation for other countries' problems. In the way to achieving these objectives, poverty has been a major hindrance. India offered a contribution of US \$ 100 million at the twelfth Summit held in Islamabad in 2004. India's disputes and military rivalry with Pakistan are believed to be the cause of the ineffectiveness of SAARC in integrating South

Asian countries. Indo-Pak relations improve, many SAARC nations could benefit from it through improved trade relations and the creation of better export markets.²⁵

SAARC has failed to work towards regional cooperation mainly because India has been reluctant to solve major regional disputes which have given rise to economic and political problems in South Asia. Since India has an unbeatable economic, and military strength and international influence compared to all 6 members of SAARC, the disparity of power brings in the reluctance from smaller states to work with India. They have fear of dominance from India if they co-operate in order to facilitate faster economic growth.²⁶ India has also heightened the fears of South Asian nations by acting in a dominating and arrogant way. Its dispute with neighbouring Bangladesh due to The redirection of water flows impacting Bangladesh's agricultural production has kept Bangladesh afraid of its powers. Nepal is also fearful that India may take over its world trade because of its geographical suitability.²⁷ As a result of all these fears and disagreements; SAARC has failed to promote regional co-operation and mutual trust amongst the South Asian countries. The tension between India and Sri Lanka that prevailed for Four years over the Indian Military trying to curb the revolution by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and Indo-Pak Dispute over the Kashmir valley and the resulting Trade violations are enough to prove that South Asian countries fail to achieve SAARC objectives by any means. India must come to the front and initiate measures to encourage nations to prove their mettle and make the SAARC summit a meaningful affair appropriate measure should be taken with the intent of maintaining peace and resolving disputes amongst the SAARC member countries. Special Economic Zones and Export Promotion Zones should be created in all member countries to make trading easier and smooth the relations between the South Asian nations.²⁸

3.10 Few Bilateral visits on Economic Agreements

²⁵ Charter of the United Nations "Regional Arrangements," Published by the United Nations Department of Public Information, DPI/511, New York- 10017 December 2006, p. 34.

²⁶ Madan Davinder Kumar "SAARC: Origin and Development, Encyclopaedia of SAARC Nations, Volume ed. Verinder Grover, Deep and Deep Publications, F- 159, Rajouri Gander, New Delhi- 110027, 1997, pp. 634- 636.

²⁷ *ibid*

²⁸ *ibid*

Hamid Karzai, the head of the Afghan interim government, travelled to India on February 26 and 27, 2002. 13 ministers accompanied him. He had meetings with the Prime Minister, Vice President, and Minister of External Affairs of India. India's contribution to Afghanistan's restoration and rebuilding efforts was the main topic of debate. A donation of US\$10 million for the Afghan government's urgent use was also announced by the Indian Prime Minister. On March 5–8, 2003, Hamid Karzai travelled to India while serving as the president of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan. Three ministers accompanied him. He received an honorary doctorate from a university in Himachal Pradesh. The Zaranj-Delaram road in Afghanistan will be built with a financial commitment of US\$70 million from the Indian Prime Minister²⁹. Additionally, a Preferential Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Afghanistan from August 28 to 29, 2005, at the invitation of the Afghan President. Rahul Gandhi, the member of Parliament, the national security adviser, the foreign secretary, and other top officials were part of the high-level trip.

Afghani President Hamid Karzai and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh underlined their shared interest in reviving previous connections and forging a new cooperation for the twenty-first century. India reaffirmed its ongoing commitment to Afghanistan's reconstruction and economic growth and provided an extra US \$50 million in aid, bringing the total amount of aid already committed to 2 US \$ 650 million.³⁰ Three significant MoUs /Agreements were inked during the visit. MOU on Cooperation in the field of Agricultural Research & Education. During his visit from August 10–12, 2002, Yashwant Sinha, EAM, pledged reconstruction assistance of US \$ 4 million for both Habibia School and Indira Gandhi Hospital. He also travelled to Kandahar, Mazar-e Sharif, and Herat. On February 15, 2005, he was there.³¹

Natwar Singh, EAM presented the Afghan National Army with 50 trucks and the Surgical Block of the Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health (IGICH) (ANA). He also announced the establishment of a diagnostic facility with Indian aid in IGICH and the provision of 5000 metres of fabric for the Afghan National Army's summer uniforms.

²⁹ Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs Annual Report 2000-2001, (New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs, 2001), <http://meaindia.nic.in>. accessed on June 8, 2021

³⁰ *ibid*

³¹ Bilateral briefs of India Afghanistan, Embassy of India Kabul, available at <https://eoi.gov.in/Kabul>, accessed on 12 December 2021.

- From January 23 to 24, 2007, Pranab Mukherjee, AM, the Foreign Secretary, and other top officials travelled to Kabul to present President Karzai with a formal invitation to the 14th SAARC Summit, which will take place in New Delhi on April 3–4, 2007. Additionally, he spoke with Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta, Afghanistan's foreign minister, at the delegation level. A Memorandum of Understanding between India, Afghanistan, and UNDP on Capacity Building in Public Administration was signed in front of both foreign ministers.

Along with a matching commitment from UNDP, India is contributing US\$1.08 million. 30 Indian experts would collaborate with the Afghan government as part of this programme to help the latter develop its competence and capability in the process of reconstruction. The additional US\$100 million offered by EAM brought India's total support to US\$750 million. Additionally, he sent the Afghan authorities the Polyclinic Block of the Indira Gandhi Institute for Child Health Care as well as a shipment of Indian medications.³²

The road next to the Indira Gandhi Institute for Child Health Care (IGICH) was named "Indira Gandhi Road" by a plaque that was also erected. There have been numerous high-level visits from both sides, including those of the Prime Minister in May 2011, the Vice President in March 2014 (to attend the funeral of FVP Marshal Fahim), the External Affairs Minister (EAM) in January 2011, the President of ANAASTU in February 2014, and the National Unity Government's inaugural ceremony in September 2014, as well as the National Security Advisor (NSA) in January 2011. On September 10, 2014. Prior to the then-Indian Prime Minister's visit to Afghanistan in May 2011, both nations signed a memorandum of understanding to implement 60 approved projects under the \$100 million SDP scheme. SDPs have played an increasingly important role in economic growth and the creation of sustainable jobs, bringing about important governmental reforms and programmes that support growth and the development of small businesses. They are also becoming more prevalent in the manufacturing and light industrial sectors, in addition to playing a significant role in the agricultural, construction, and commercial services industries. Initiatives including alternative livelihood possibilities, capacity-building measures, humanitarian assistance, education, health, and minor development projects have an impact on the lives of the poor (SDPs).

³²Op-cit, Sumit Ganguly, 2009, p.129.

Hon'ble EAM Smt. SushmaSwaraj visited Afghanistan, paid a courtesy call to President Karzai, and they jointly unveiled a colossal Afghan flag. The Flag Foundation of India and other sponsors helped to organise this flag, which serves as a symbol of Afghan unity and nationhood. India announced US\$1 million to build a national park open to the public around the flag. Afghans and the world community both praised the Indian initiative. The new Kabul chancery complex, where the Embassy has been working since July 2014, was also opened by EAM. She emphasised that this was India's most blatant declaration of its "no exit" policy.³³

3.11 India's Contribution to the Development and Reconstruction of Afghanistan

Reconstruction and development are the focus areas of India 's engagement in Afghanistan. New Delhi believes inclusive development is essential to establish a viable and peaceful statehood in Afghanistan. India has made substantial contribution in building infrastructure. For example, the Zaranj-Delaram road.³⁴ Salma dam power project, Pul-e Khumri transmission line and schools, hospitals in Kabul, Jalalabad, Kandahar, Heart and Mazar-e-Sharif, etc. Education, public health and infrastructure have improved significantly since 2001 and India 's assistance in these areas has been considered crucial by the people of Afghanistan as well as the international community. Capacity building and empowerment of women particularly in terms of skill development is another crucial area in which India has made a meaningful contribution. New Delhi provides a large number of scholarships to various sections of Afghan population; for instance, 2,000 scholarships to Afghans annually for schooling and training in India, including for 500 Afghan civil servants.³⁵

In order to rebuild Afghanistan, it is also necessary to look into the commercial ties between India and Afghanistan. India's approach to Afghanistan has been formed primarily utilising economic and military measures. India became the fifth greatest donor to Afghanistan as a

³³ *ibid*

³⁴ Looking for the Brains Behind Terror Cells: M.K. Naryanan,|| The Hindu. August 13, 2008. <http://www.hindu.com/2008/08/13/stories/2008081360241400.htm>, accessed on July 22, 2013

³⁵ Indian Embassy in Afghanistan. —India-Afghanistan Development Partnership.|| <http://meakabul.nic.in/pdfs/partnership.pdf> , accessed on July 23, 2013).

result of economic policy, having pledged US \$1.2 billion since 2001. India provided financial support for the construction of Afghan infrastructure. It donated Airbus aircraft to the official Afghan airline and provided US \$25 million for the construction of the Afghan parliament building. Infrastructure initiatives, humanitarian aid, small-scale community development projects, as well as education and capacity building, are all covered by Indian programmes. Consignments for immediate humanitarian reliefs, medications, instructional packages, books, school rebuilding, and donations of desks and benches for the school are all examples of social development. Infrastructure development now includes the production of buses, planes, and other vehicles as well as the building of transmission lines and solar electrification. The third sector includes the establishment of capacity-building measures through the training of school teachers, physicians, and diplomats, skill development, and the provision of sewing machines. Construction of cold storage, agribusiness, and deep well drilling were all examples of economic development. The World Bank oversaw the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund as well as contributions made to the Afghan government budget during the reconstruction process. Information systems, TV satellites, telecommunications, the establishment of service centres for shared facilities, TV studios and transmitters, a mobile TV-Satellite uplink, and TV relay centres restoration and renovation.³⁶ (Abdali, 2016).

India provides aid to war-torn countries In comparison to the prior year, Afghanistan has seen a decrease of about Rs. 660 crore in 2016–17. Between April 2016 and March 2017, India gave Afghanistan development aid at Rs. 221 crore, down from Rs. 880 crore in 2015–16. (ET, 2017). India's development cooperation and aid to Afghanistan span four main areas: Wide areas of Kabul are being helped by the humanitarian aid going to New Delhi. With assistance from India, Afghanistan built hospitals in Kabul, Heart, Jalalabad, Mazer-e-Sharif, and Kandhar. Gandhi Institute for Children's Health was founded in Kabul with Indian assistance. In addition to providing medical aid, India sent millions of tonnes of wheat to Kabul by utilising Pakistan's right of transit for the delivery of wheat to Afghanistan. India provided approximately 2 million children with a daily supply of 100 grammes of fortified, high-protein biscuits as part of a school feeding programme run by the World Food Programme. To help Afghanistan overcome its food crisis, a donation of 250,000 metric tonnes of wheat was announced in January 2009 and dispatched right away. Over 30,000 Afghans receive free

³⁶ Op-cit Abdali, p. 184.

medical advice and medication each month from 5 Indian Medical Missions. India has sent 10 ambulances for public hospitals in five cities as well as 400 buses and 200 minibuses for urban mass transit, 105 utility vehicles for municipalities, 285 military vehicles for the Afghan National Army.³⁷ (MEA, 2010)

3.12 Salma dam

Originally built in 1976, Salma Dam has lately been renamed India-Afghanistan Friendship Dam. It was damaged during the Afghan civil war and is located on the upper banks of the Hari Rud River in Herat province. An Indian business (WAPCOS Ltd.) started the dam repair project in 1988, however, due to the continuous instability brought on by the civil war, the project was abandoned for a considerable amount of time. India pledged in 2006 to pay the \$275 million anticipated cost of finishing the dam. The Salma Dam Project entails building a 42 MW powerhouse with three units of 14 MW each as well as a 107.5-metre-high earth and rock-fill dam.³⁸ Additionally, it has a clause that allows for the release of water for the irrigation of 75,000 hectares of land (stabilising the irrigation of 35,000 hectares already in place and developing irrigation facilities for an additional 40,000 hectares of land).³⁹ The project cost has had to be revised due to the fluctuating exchange rate between the Indian rupee and the US dollar, as well as increases in consulting fees because the project would now take longer to complete, escalation, training of Afghan staff, etc.

The project's increased cost of 21,457 cores (US\$ 273.3 million) was approved by the Indian cabinet in January 2013, and it was announced that it will be finished in December 2014⁴⁰, two years later than originally planned. After the project is successfully completed, the provision of water and power will contribute to the general economic growth of Afghanistan's western region and build India's reputation there. When this project is finished, the electricity needs and irrigation needs of western Afghanistan will be met.

³⁷Rebuilding -Afghanistan, Ministry of external affairs India ,available at https://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/182_Rebuilding-Afghanistan.pdf, accessed on July 8,2022

³⁸ ibid

³⁹Shaida Mohammed Abdali., "Afghanistan-Pakistan-India: A Paradigm Shift", Pentagon Press, New Delhi, 2016, pp. 101-102.

⁴⁰ ibid

To improve ties between the two nations, the Afghan cabinet changed the name of the Salma Dam to Afghan-India Friendship Dam. The choice was made by President Ashraf Ghani during a meeting of the cabinet, according to a statement from the Presidential Palace.

3.13 Afghanistan-India Scholarship Programme

Following the renovation and reconstruction of Kabul's Habibia School, India is providing support for training and upkeep of the institution. Human resource development and capacity building initiatives make up a significant portion of India's assistance portfolio in Afghanistan. A special scholarship programme (managed by ICCR) that offers 1,000 scholarships to Afghan nationals annually has been extremely effective, with 100% utilisation.⁴¹ The Indian government has been educating Afghan citizens in the field of skill development. Afghanistan receives 500 seats every year through India's Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC).⁴²

The establishment of the Afghanistan National Agricultural Sciences and Technology University (ANASTU) with aid from the Indian government is enhancing agricultural science expertise. Afghanistan receives 500 seats every year through India's Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC). The establishment of the Afghanistan National Agricultural Sciences and Technology University (ANASTU) with aid from the Indian government is enhancing agricultural science expertise. The university's establishment, equipment, and training are being handled by the Indian Agriculture Research Institute (IARI).

Women's Vocational Training Center in Baghe-Zanana for training Afghan women (war widows) in garment making, nursery plantation, food processing, and marketing is carried out by the renowned Indian NGO, SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association). India-Afghanistan Vocational Training Center for training Afghan youth in carpentry, plumbing, welding, masonry, and tailoring is carried out by the Confederation of Indian Industries. Under the areas of municipal government, electoral management, and public administration, capacity-

⁴¹Afghan-by-birth-Indian-by-heart, Available at <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/karnataka/afghan-by-birth-indian-by-heart/article19096586.ece>.

⁴² ibid

building programmes were also in progress. The Indian government-built schools organised the training of Afghan instructors and provided sports and lab supplies to Afghan children.

3.14 The transmission of power

India has pledged 40% of its approximately US \$ 650 million assistance package to Afghanistan to electricity generation and transmission. It comprises building the Kabul Substation and the transmission line from Pul-e-Khumri. construction of the 42 MW Salma Hydel Project, which includes a transmission line to Herat.

- Equipment/material supply for the 125 km transmission line between Andhkhoi and Maimana, as well as for the three substations and four pole-mounted stations in the province of Faryab. In 2003, 24 deep tube wells were built in the province of Herat following a field survey and water quality testing at 100 locations. In the North Western provinces of Afghanistan, 26 further tube wells will be drilled in 2006. Amir Ghazi, Quargha reservoir, six mini/micro hydro projects, irrigation projects in Khanabad, and other projects have all undergone thorough project assessments. The rehabilitation of Amir Ghazi and Quargha, for which \$4,1 million in US dollars has been allocated. At the end of 2003, a pre-construction survey for the Bamiyan micro hydroelectric plant was conducted.⁴³ India has also supplied equipment for the 110 kV transmission line (130 Km long) and 20 kV transmission line (150 Km long) along with 20/0.4 kV substation and 110 kV and 20 kV transmission line material, in Faryab province of northern Afghanistan at a cost of around Rs 39.2 crore. India also helped in constructing Afghanistan 's new Parliament building at an estimated cost of US \$ 75 million.⁴⁴

3.15 The road from Zaranj to Delaram: A New Entrance

At a cost of US \$84 million, India is building a road from Zaran to Delaram in Afghanistan. The road will connect the Garland Highway to the Milak Bridge at the Iran border, then continue on to the port of Chahbahar in Iran. By cutting the distance from Afghanistan to the

⁴³ Op-cit, Amiya Chandra, p. 185.

⁴⁴Shanthie Mariet D'Souza, —India's Aid to Afghanistan: Challenges and Prospects|| Strategic Analysis, Vol. 31, (5), 2007. P. 833.

sea by about 1,000 km, this road will give Afghanistan a valuable additional route. By the end of 2007, the project would be finished. A significant amount of material would need to be mobilised for the project, including 18,000 metric tonnes of cement, 500 metric tonnes of steel, and 21,000 kilolitres of POL products.⁴⁵

3.16 Telecommunications

Afghanistan is keen to rehabilitate its telecommunication sector. Therefore, India initiated a project to restore emerging tele communication infrastructure in all the provinces in Afghanistan. These telephone networks in all the eleven provinces were formally inaugurated and systems were handed over on 10 December 2005. The project involved the installation of a digital telephone exchange with infrastructure facilities like towers, power supply systems, pre-fabricated shelters and air conditioners. With the implementation of this project, eleven provincial capitals of Afghanistan would get national and international dialling facilities through media satellite/ microwave connected to the Central Hub and International gateway at Kabul. Subscribers would have internet access facilities besides facilities for making telephone calls with a wireless telephone instrument having coverage of over 20 kilometres radius. In addition, India sent a two-member team to Kandahar and Paktika provinces in April 2005 and helped Afghanistan in reprogramming VHF Communication Set and setting up the programming Kit GM 950 IVHF set for Kandahar.

3.17 Transportation

Out of the 400 buses that India gave to Afghanistan, 205 are in use in Kabul, 35 are in Kandahar, 30 are in Herat, 20 are in Balkh, 17 are in Nangarhar, eight are in Baghlan, seven are in Paktiya, six are in Takhar, Kunduz, and Bamiyan, five are each in Parwan, Wardak, Kapisa, Logar, Badakhshan, Ghazni, Saripul, Samangan, India has sent the Ariana Afghan Airlines Three Airbus planes as well as necessary spare components. In September and December of 2002, the first two aircraft were delivered, and then in March 2003, the third aircraft. Air India has provided training to 51 employees of Ariana Afghan Airlines. Eight employees of Ariana Afghan Airlines received six weeks of Flight Engineers' Ground

⁴⁵Op-cit, Amiya Chandra, p. 184.

Classroom Training in September and October 2003 at the Indian Airlines Training Centre in Hyderabad.⁴⁶

On February 25, 2005, Afghanistan and India signed a Memorandum of Understanding in the area of civil aviation. In accordance with the terms of this Memorandum of Understanding, India will cooperate in providing the necessary professionals and labour for airport management, air traffic control, air navigational aids, pilot, cabin crew, and navigational aid expert training, communication system development, airport and airline safety, security oversight, and aircraft maintenance. India would provide essential assistance and support in order to teach the Afghan professionals. India will also supply the CNS-ATM facilities with the requisite teachers and other assistance. India would provide the essential assistance and support in order to teach the Afghan professionals. Along with regular repair of aircraft by Indian Airlines at mutually agreed-upon terms, India shall also supply the Civil Aviation School in Kabul with the necessary teachers with expertise in CNS-ATM facilities and other assistance. In order to strengthen Afghanistan's capabilities, the Government of India is now choosing highly qualified civil aviation employees to be deputed there for a year.

3.18 Future Co-operation Areas of Indo-Afghan economic engagement

Afghanistan's economy is just getting started, yet it already has all the makings of the next big market. There must be determined and focused efforts made to ensure that all Indian and South Asian organisations engage together in taking advantage of the potential presented by this region, as the nature of competition has undergone a considerable change. In order to increase the likelihood of trade between India and Afghanistan, it is crucial to take note of several possible regions. Some of the key areas, including infrastructure, education, the mining and manufacturing sectors, and others, have investment potential and may improve the trade corridor between the two nations. Despite the fact that India is investing in Afghanistan to bypass Pakistan, India should instead come to a rational agreement with Pakistan regarding the unresolved Kashmir issue for the benefit of all parties involved (including Kashmir), as this would allow India to obtain security from Pakistan and realise the dream of Turkmenistan Afghanistan. Without any foreseeable danger, the Pakistan-India (TAPI) natural gas pipeline

⁴⁶ Amiya Chandra. "India and Afghanistan: Renewing Economic Relations" in Warikoo (ed) Afghanistan challenges and Opportunities, Pentagon Press, New Delhi, 2015, pp. 184-185.

will run across Pakistani territory. However, if such an investment is used and invested in J&K State, India will undoubtedly realise the dream of a "New Switzerland" in Kashmir. As a result, they should reconsider and rethink the outstanding issues rather than continue to blame and denigrate one another over Kashmir. Instead, they ought to reevaluate and reconsider the pressing problems, as those nations that excel in the commercial, industrial, and military spheres will have a greater influence on world economies than those with more powerful armaments.

More importantly, in the near future, any country will benefit greatly from strong economic and social ties between the nations. In order to attain their common goal of mutual progress, two Asian economies have teamed up to construct the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). As it travels through the Gilgit Baltistan region of J&K State, the projected corridor has an impact on ties between India and Pakistan. There are tensions between India and Pakistan, there is no doubt about that, but when the people on both sides are actively participating in economic advancement and activities, the conflicts may fully disappear and stakeholders may occasionally consider the peace in both regions. It would be a step in the direction of commercialising line of control (LOC) trade. Therefore, if both nations agree to the concept, CPEC could be expanded to India through additional links from Punjab and Kashmir, turning the mutual security threat suspicion into benefits. For example, CPEC has the potential to materialise an Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline faster to meet India's energy needs. India must therefore accept the situation or else its influence on future decisions about any economic activity will be lost.

SAFTA was intended to serve as a step on the path to a Common Market, Customs Union, and ultimately an Economic Union. At the Council of Ministers' 16th Session meeting in December, preliminary discussions were started. In 1995, and during the 12th SAARC meeting in Islamabad, Pakistan, in January 2004, the SAFTA agreement was signed. The SAFTA Ministerial Council and SAFTA Committee of Experts frequently convene to discuss next stages in this process. Both groups will get together in Thimpu, Bhutan, on July 22 and 23. Since the formal commencement of the SAFTA trade liberalisation initiative in July 2006. Since the official commencement of the SAFTA trade liberalisation initiative in July 2006, the overall value of intraregional exports has been estimated at about \$3 billion as of September 2013, a figure that the SAARC itself recognises is well below potential.

According to a 2010 World Bank report, regional conflict is the main cause of South Asia's dubious distinction as one of the least integrated regions in the world. The report further suggests that "market integration and regional cooperation" must be combined with "policy and institutional reforms aimed at removing domestic constraints to growth and job creation" if the region is to reconcile its two contradictory faces—the first, which is dynamic, urbanised, and globally integrated, and the second, which is agricultural, and landlocked.⁴⁷ After four rounds of trade discussions, the Agreement on SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) was signed in 1993. The Agreement's goal is to advance toward a South Asian Economic Union (SAEU). The Twelfth Summit in Islamabad in January 2004 saw the signing of the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA). SAFTA could become effective in the upcoming days.

The Association has conducted regional studies on SAFTA, customs, commerce, manufacturing, services, the environment, and reducing poverty. There have also been significant disagreements among member nations since SAARC's founding in 1984 on its objectives and operation. These discrepancies have been evident in verbal spats at various SAARC meetings. These discrepancies have been evident in verbal spats at various SAARC meetings. This runs counter to the notion that stronger social, economic, and cultural ties—ideals championed by SAARC—are seen as South Asia's one and only chance to develop regional cooperation in the years to come. In fact, commerce inside each trade bloc has expanded due to the growing rationalisation of global trade and the flexibility of the new global system, and the nations that do not belong to any trade blocs are probably going to suffer as a result.⁴⁸ Additionally, this offers a compelling case for maintaining the SAARC in light of South Asia's potential for future trade. The idea that peace can be established through SAARC without addressing the political issues in the region has not been successful in fostering peace or reviving the SAARC process. Although it has been able to organise summit meetings on a regular basis since its founding, there have been breaks due primarily to intrastate disagreements among the member countries.

⁴⁷ Dupree Nancy Hatch (1977). *An Historical Guide to Afghanistan*. 2. Edition, Afghan Air Authority, Afghan Tourist Organization. p. 492, accessed on June 8, 2019

⁴⁸ Times of India (New Delhi), 2& 3 August, 1983 and also see Indian Express (New Delhi), 2& 3 August, 1983.

3.19 Importance of Chabahar Port to Indian

One such project that has recently taken a substantial economic and strategic relevance is the Chabahar Port. Iran has direct access to the Indian Ocean through the Chabahar Port, which is situated on the Makran Coast off Southeast Iran. The development of the port at Chabahar would potentially lower the cost of transportation to the eastern parts of Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia. It is closer to Mumbai and Karachi than Bandar Abbas, the other major port in Iran. Chabahar's importance is increased by the fact that it is situated outside of the Straits of Hormuz, in contrast to Bandar Abbas.⁴⁹

Access to Afghanistan has been one of the major drivers for India's efforts to build the Chabahar Port. The construction of a port in Iran could provide an alternate path to landlocked Afghanistan and Central Asia because Pakistan has refused to provide land transit to India. With its abundant natural resources, projected to be worth US\$700 billion, Afghanistan would be able to export goods through this port to Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. In addition to trade and business, Afghanistan can act as a transit country for pipelines, roads, and trains that connect Central Asian nations to Chabahar, providing a significant source of transit income for that nation (Hasan, 2016). India, Iran, and Afghanistan have reached a deal to give Indian commodities transiting to Afghanistan and Central Asia priority treatment and tax reductions at Chabahar. India is eager to expand bilateral trade and its presence in Afghanistan in the future. Chabahar is ideally equipped to make this process easier because products taken in at the port can be quickly moved to the Afghan border via a network of roads built by the Iranian government, from which point they are distributed to various regions of Afghanistan via the Zaranj - Delaram route.⁵⁰ There are two more Indian goals for Afghanistan that are served by Chabahar Port. First, it serves the greater purpose of integrating Afghanistan in a regional trade

⁴⁹ Lindsay Hughes, *"Bypassing Pakistan: Afghanistan, India, Iran and Chabahar"*. *Strategic Analysis Paper*, 2016, p. 24

⁵⁰ Aryaman Bhatnagar, A., & Divya John, D. *"Accessing Afghanistan and Central Asia: Importance of Chabahar to India"* 2013, p.12

and transportation network. Increased regional cooperation, in India's opinion, will encourage all players to see Afghanistan as a platform for collaboration rather than rivalry, perhaps fostering Afghan stability. Second, India's aim to lessen Pakistan's influence in the nation is another reason it supports Afghanistan's integration with the rest of the region. In the past, Afghanistan's ability to access marine trade from the Arabian Sea depended on Pakistani land. The Chabahar Port offers an alternate route to the sea, which helps Afghanistan become less dependent on Pakistan.⁵¹

3.20 The following significant business events occurred in 2014:

In March 2014, a business innovation fair took place in Mazar-e-Sharif. FICCI conducted a "Road Show on Investment Opportunities in Afghanistan" on April 15, 2014, in Ahmedabad in collaboration with the Indian Embassy in Kabul, the Taskforce for Business and Stability Operations (TFBSO), the United States, and Global Network. This event was put together under the auspices of the Heart of Asia Process for Afghanistan's Trade, Commerce, and Investment Opportunities Confidence Building Measure. From May 21–23, 2014, Mumbai will host the IPHEX (Indian Pharmaceuticals and Healthcare Expo). There were seven Afghan pharmaceutical distributors present. EPAA signs an agreement with FIEO and IIA. On June 18 and 19, 2014, in New Delhi, the Export Promotion Agency of Afghanistan (EPAA) and the Federation of Indian Export Organization (FIEO) and India's Importers Association (IIA) each signed two memorandums of understanding.⁵² Participation of Afghan delegation in India Mining Summit - On August 8, 2014, in New Delhi, ASSOCHAM hosted the 7th "India Mining Summit," which was attended by an Afghan team led by Mr. Jamil Hares, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Mines and Petroleum (MoMP). Opening of the "India Bazar" - On September 18, 2014, Kabul officially opened the "India Bazar," which features a variety of produced goods from India. More than 80 prominent Afghan businessmen and representatives from the Chambers of Commerce and Industry attended the "Make in India" campaign that the Indian Embassy in Kabul hosted on September 25, 2014.

⁵¹Hassan Hossein bor, M. "India-Iran Chabahar Agreement the Geopolitics of Baluchistan Regional and International Implications." Arabian Gulf Centre for Iranian Studies, 2016, p. 15.

⁵²Press Release of ficci, / available at <http://ficci.in/PressRelease/1590/ficci-press-april17-afghanistan.pdf>, accessed on June 8, 2018.

Afghanistan Investment Forum in Mumbai - The Global Network, a private consultancy firm with offices in Ahmedabad, hosted an "Afghanistan Investment Forum" in Mumbai on October 1–2, 2014, with the help of the Navi Mumbai Chamber of Commerce and USTFBSO. B2B meetings were held the day after the event, on October 2. India Product Show, held in Kabul from November 2 to 4, 2014, was organised by FICCI and ACCI in partnership with the Indian Ministry of Commerce and Industries and the Indian Embassy in Kabul. 24 Afghan enterprises participated in the 34th Indian International Trade Fair (IITF, 2014), which took place in New Delhi from November 14 to 17, 2014, and displayed their wares there, including saffron, dried fruits, carpets, jewellery, and handicrafts.⁵³

3.21 Chapter Summary

Trade can help two countries get along better and become more independent of one another. India benefits from its geographic proximity, shared cultures, languages, and rituals, which aid in boosting trade with Afghanistan. Due to their shared history, India and Afghanistan can benefit economically from bettering their cultural ties. It will enhance interpersonal interactions that result in business transactions. The pre-and post-SAFTA trade patterns and structures between India and Afghanistan, as well as the imports and exports of the top twenty commodities in India, must all be examined in this study. According to the study's findings, trade between India and Afghanistan increased during the time of the study. Additionally, the analysis forecasts India's imports and exports will be high in the future years. It suggests as a matter of policy that India should make use of its advantageous location to broaden and diversify its export market, as well as to compete with other nations like China, Iran, and Afghanistan for the Afghan market. The main conclusions of the analysis that came before led to the conclusion that India has contributed significantly to the growth and stability of Afghanistan since 9/11. Her aid is concentrating on the country's economic growth in this war-torn region. Her "Connect Central Asia Policy" (CCAP), which is a component of her economic diplomacy, is based on the "economy first" concept. Her efforts in the context of the area show that India's Afghan Policy is an important component of her "Connect Central Asia Policy," as Afghanistan is significant in that it serves as a solid connection between India and the Central

⁵³ ibid

Asian Republics. The nation has a persistent desire in fostering closer economic ties and collaboration with South and Central Asia as well as the Middle East through Afghanistan for trade, transit, and energy. However, there are some serious and widespread threats within Afghanistan, including terrorism, religious extremism, ties between terrorist groups, and the trafficking of illegal weapons, and drugs. These threats affect all the countries in the region and call for cooperation to be eradicated. In addition to all of these difficulties, the Taliban's comeback and the US exit have made everything more complicated. India must therefore ensure that it plays a constructive role in gaining the support of the Afghan people on the one hand and in the training of Afghanistan's security forces on the other. To stop the growth of Islamic extremism and restore a democratic polity in Afghanistan, the nation must provide the ANSF with contemporary military training and equipment. India must be cautious when dealing with Pakistan in order to ensure collaboration for the growth, stability, and democratisation of Afghanistan and to prevent any attempts by Pakistan to lessen India's influence there or exploit Afghan territory against her interests. The nation must engage Iran passionately to break her dependence on Pakistan in order to reach Afghanistan and Central Asia, keeping in mind the geographical constraint and the dynamic nature of Indo-Pak relations. In order to maintain its presence and combat the unsettling elements in the area, the nation must continue its rebuilding assistance, capacity building, human capital development, and other developmental programmes in Afghanistan. US also declared India as an important player in Afghanistan, US Secretary of State John Kerry acknowledged that because of the relationship between New Delhi and Islamabad it is "complicated circle" between the war-torn nation, Pakistan and India and added that "India can play a huge role."⁵⁴

⁵⁴ PTI, Indo-Pak relations might affect India 's Afghan Role|| The Hindustan Times, April 18, 2013, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/NorthAmerica/Indo-Pak-relations-might-affect-India-s-Afghan-role/Article1-1046209.aspx>.

Chapter- 4

Afghanistan's role in India's Energy interest in Central Asia

India has historical, cultural, and religious links with Central Asia dating back more than two millennia. The spread of Buddhism from India, the Silk route linkages of Bukhara and Samarkand, the Kushana empire commonality, the spread of Sufism and Islam, the arrival of Babur, and many more such linkages are indicative of the deep-rooted relationship.

¹ Through trade, culture, religion, and commerce, the historic silk route not only linked the region, but also its people. The Central Asian nations became independent states with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. As of right now, there are five nations that make up Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Along with South Asia and Southeast Asia, the region was included in India's "Extended Neighbourhood" foreign strategy, which was announced in 2001. While our interactions with South and SE Asia improved substantially, we were still wary about the Central African Republic.

A well-known alternative route to reach Central Asia from India is by sea to Iran's Chabahar port and then via a road or rail link through either Iran or Afghanistan, avoiding Pakistan. The International North-South Transport Corridor is the main driving force behind this concept (INSTC). For the transfer of freight and merchandise between India, Iran, Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, Central Asia, and Europe, there is a 7,200 km long multi-modal network of ship, rail, and road based linkages. INSTC, which was developed before China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), will not only reduce the costs and amount of time it takes to transit commodities from India to Russia and Europe via Iran, but it will also offer a different

¹ Nirmala Joshi. "*Reconnecting India and Central Asia- Emerging Security and Economic Dimensions*", Singapore: Central Asian-Caucasus Institute Silk Road Studies Program, 2010, available at https://www.silkroadstudies.org/resources/pdf/Monographs/2010_03_MONO_Joshi_India-Central-Asia.pdf. accessed on march 8,2021.52

connectivity initiative to nations in the region. The estimated capacity of the corridor is 20-30 million tonnes of goods per year.²

Central Asia's importance for India can be judged from many perspectives such as historical-cultural, geopolitical, and economic. The historical and cultural contacts between India and Central Asia date back to the very dawn of history. Since early times, there has been a constant flow of culture and commerce between the two regions. 'Waves upon waves of immigrants came to India from Central Asia, and many of these were scholars, scientists, technicians, and artisans. They contributed to the rich tapestry of Indian life and culture. This was reciprocated by Indian missionaries and merchants who transmitted religions, arts, and merchandise to that region.³ The cultural and economic interaction between India and Central Asia became particularly strong during the Greek and Saka rule, when some areas of northern India and Central Asia became part of the same state formation.⁴ The pinnacle of India-Central Asia relations was reached under the Kushana Empire, which included territories of Central Asia and a considerable part of north India. The Kushana period witnessed lively and reciprocal cultural exchanges between Central Asia and India. The carriers of cultural influences in India were primarily the Kushana authorities, functionaries, and soldiers, whereas in Central Asia they were Buddhist missionaries and monks.⁵

The interaction between India and Central Asia intensified further when the Islamized Central Asian Turks established their control over the north India in the early thirteenth century. During the latter half of sixteenth

² Dezan Shira & associates. *"India's Export Opportunities Along the International North South Transport Corridor"* 21 February 2022. Available at: <https://www.india-briefing.com/news/indias-export-opportunities-along-the-international-north-south-transport-corridor-22412.html/> Accessed on June 6, 2015

³ Hasan S Nurul Inaugural Address at the Indo-Soviet Seminar on Scientific and Technological Exchanges between India and Soviet Central Asia in Medieval Period, Bombay, 7-12 November 1981. Proceedings, B.V. Subbarayappa (ed.), New Delhi: Indian National Science Academy, 1985. p.6.

⁴ Bongard G.M-Levin, "Studies in Ancient India and Central Asia" Calcutta: Indian Studies; Past and Present, 1971, p. 203.

⁵ Ibid. p.197

and the seventeenth century, the consolidation of the Mughal Empire in India gave a boost to India's interaction with Central Asia. The political stability and economic prosperity under the Mughals led to the growth of India's trade with that region and an increase in the number of Indian traders and bankers there. The colonization of India by the British and the annexation of Central Asia to the Tsarist Empire led to the decline of trade between the two regions and the consequent decrease in India's ties with that region.⁶

There were no direct political ties between India and the Soviet Central Asian Republics (CARs) throughout the Soviet era. Through Moscow, the sociocultural ties between Central Asia and India were facilitated. The Soviet government made an effort to isolate Central Asia from the rest of the world. However, India was one of the very few nations that had access to these republics because of the very special relationship that New Delhi and Moscow enjoyed. The people and elites of Central Asia had a great deal of affection for India, largely because of historical linkages and the appeal of Indian culture and Hindi films. For India, the collapse of the Soviet Union was a setback. In regard to being the main provider of modern weapons at significantly reduced costs and offering financial help by allowing payments in rupees for Soviet items, the USSR gave the nation significant political backing in the international arena. Its collapse took away India's foreign policy's major pillar. With the newly independent nations of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, India established diplomatic ties in 1991 and 1992. Since then, India and CARs have collaborated to create a framework for diplomatic, economic, and cultural cooperation. In addition to its extensive historical ties to this region, India sought positive relations for a number of reasons, including to prevent Pakistan from forging a coalition against it with the Central Asian states in the Kashmir conflict; to persuade those states not to aid Pakistan in its nuclear program; to maintain contacts with long-standing commercial and military supplier, and open up new business opportunities for Indian companies.⁷ India and the five newly independent Central Asian nations quickly recognized their shared interests and significance. Due to their shared background, personal friendship, and close cooperation during the Soviet era, both parties were

⁶ Sanjay Kumar Pandey. '*The Rise and Decline of Indian Trading Community in Central Asia*', in Mushtaq A. Kaw (ed.), *Central Asia in Retrospect and Prospect*, New Delhi: Readworthy Publications, 2010, pp. 315-26.

⁷ Sahgal Arun and Anand Vinod, 'Strategic Environment in Central Asia and India', 2010, URL <http://www.silkroadstudies.org/new/docs/publications/1004Joshi-V-Strategic.pdf>. Accessed on 3 February 2020.

aware that the other had a special place in their minds. Both Indian and Central Asian nations' multi-ethnic and multireligious structures generate related issues and strategies. India upgraded its missions in Alma-Ata and Tashkent as a result, opening its embassies. On the other hand, Presidents Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan and Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan visited India in August 1991 and February 1992, respectively. Numerous agreements in the fields of science, technology, culture, and particularly economics and investment were reached. In terms of geopolitics, Central Asia has evolved into a battleground between three major players—Russia, China, and the United States, thanks to its involvement in Afghanistan—and three minor ones—Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan. It is extremely challenging for New Delhi to have a direct influence in Central Asia given the current situation, particularly given China's and Pakistan's opposition to India's active involvement in the region. In the 1990s, as Chinese influence increased and Russian influence in Central Asia decreased, it had a severe impact on India's security interests. The rising American presence in the region since 2001 has helped to partially stabilize the situation. The interests of the United States and India are increasingly aligning, especially given both nations' opposition to having one country dominate the region exclusively.

The term 'Energy' covers the entire area of energy resources, such as primary, renewable and non-conventional; mainly oil and gas. Energy security ranks high on the agenda of the priorities of India's policy towards Afghanistan and Central Asia. It is a fact India will become the third largest global consumer of energy after China and the US. According to a report, "India is currently the seventh largest energy-consuming country in the world, with an average daily oil consumption of more than 2 million barrels. Owing to its limited reserves, 70 percent of its oil and gas is imported."⁸ Energy is the lifeline of any developing country like India. To sustain her growth rates India requires reliable and increased access to energy resources. Its recent energy has rarely been counted in security and has hardly factored in foreign policy. Energy has not been used in all sectors of India except the sectors of industrial and domestic sectors. The industry is totally based on energy and the domestic sectors are characterized by depending on biomass for cooking or electricity. In India, there are huge opportunities for energy efficiency improvement.

⁸ Li Chenyang, "The Policies Of China and India towards Myanmar" in Lex Rieffel(ed) MYANMAR/BURMA; INSIDE CHALLENGES, OUTSIDE INTERESTS, Brookings Institution Press, Washington DC, 2010, p. 117.

Indian foreign policy is sensitized to the growing demands of energy imports in the country. The “Report of the Group on India Hydrocarbons Visions-2050 (February 25, 2000), stated unambiguously that India’s economic growth will be increased depending on external supplies of oil and gas as the principal sources of commercial energy consumption. India ranks sixth in global energy demand and imports 70% of its oil and 50% of its gas.”⁹ It is projected that India will import 80% of its energy needs by 2025. India has been trying hard to bridge the gap between energy demand and energy supply because India can never fulfill its demand for its own energy. With 0.80% of the world’s known oil and natural gas resources, India faces the toughest challenge of substituting oil imports. That is why India shifted its focus to alternative energy sectors. International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates, “India in order to stay on its current growth trajectory will have to increase its energy consumption by at least 3.6 percent annually which will lead India’s energy demand to double by 2025, compelling it to import 90 percent of its petroleum supply.”¹⁰

India is suffering from one of the energies called commercial energy, it has several problems, like, electricity consumption is equivalent to sixty-two million tons of coal replacement increasing 4.8 percent per year, as against the present shortage of 10-12 percent per year. This shortage could emerge as a serious threat after the second decade of the next century. “In coal, it is 183.50 mt at an annual 5.3 percent, with the possibility of exhaustion of metallurgical coal around 2035 AD; in petroleum products, it is 329.38 mt at an annual rate of 5.6 percent which is likely to be exhausted in twenty years; in natural gas, it is 52.91 growing at 12.2 percent per Annam, whose longevity is yet to be assessed.”¹¹ The shortage of coal is not only affecting the current economy but is also raising concerns about the viability of future power projects. The lack of coal linkages is making the difficulty for power generation companies to raise capital for their proposed thermal plants. Therefore, to resolve the power crisis, the Indian government should take a holistic approach, by eliminating roadblocks to increased domestic coal production and allowing generation companies to pass high-fuel costs on to end consumers. According to projections, India’s primary energy demand is expected to grow from 570 million

⁹ Vallabu Srilatha, “Energy Security and India’s Foreign Policy”, in the journal of Indian Ocean Digest, vol-23, no-1, January-June 2008, p. 43.

¹⁰ Sanjay kumar Pradhan, “Sparty Dispute: Looking through Oil & Gas India’s Energy Approaches, in the Journal of World Focus, Vol-xxxiii, No 6, June 2012, p. 80.

¹¹ Malcolm Adiseshiah, “Natural Resource Environment of India” in MV. Nadkarni, AS.Seetharamu, Abdul aziz (ed) India the Emerging Challenges, sage publication, New Delhi 1991,p. 213.

tons of oil equivalent to over 1200 metric tons by 2030. India still concerns with its oil reserves, uncertainty over future oil supply, fluctuations in global oil prices, and the growing concerns over climate change have further increased its apprehensions with regard to energy security. “India has only 0.4 percent of the world’s total reserves, with a reserve to production (R/P) ratio of 21.1 years. While it produces 35.4 million tons (mt) or 0.9 percent of the total oil production, it consumes 3.8 percent or 148.5 mt of oil, making it the world’s fourth largest oil consumer India depends on imported oil for up to 70 percent of its demand. This dependence is expected to go up to 90 percent by 2025.”¹² India’s new economic policy (1991) led to rapid industrialization and the emergence of India as the potential fourth-largest economic power in the world. India’s growing population and economic growth have been a considerable increase in demand for oil, which is aroused as fuel to land sea, and air transportation.

With regard to natural gas, “it reserves stand at 1.12 trillion cubic meters (0.6 percent of the world’s proven reserves) with an R/P ratio of 28.4 years. Currently, India produces only 39.3 billion cubic meters (bcm) of gas, which is only 75 percent of the total gas consumed (51.9 bcm). However, India’s gas demand is set to touch 280 million metrics standard cubic meters per day (mmscmd) by 2011-12, which would account for 14 percent of India’s overall energy mix by from the current level of 10.5 percent.”¹³

Table no 4.1.1

India’s Oil Scenario 2012-2014 *figures in million tonnes*

Year	2012	2013	2014
Production	42.5	42.5	41.6
Consumption	173.6	175.3	180.8
Total Consumption % of the world	4176.2	4220.9	4254.8
India’s % Consumption of the world	4.1	4.1	4.2

Source: *Bp statistical review of world energy 2015*

¹² Bhupendra Kumar Singh, “India’s Energy Security: Challenges and Opportunities”, *Journal of Strategic Analysis*, vol-34, no-6, Nov-2010, P-799.

¹³ Ibid.

Table no- 4.1.2

India's Gas profile 2012-14 (in billion cubic metres)

Year	2012	2013	2014
Production	38.9	32.1	48.8
Consumption	56.5	49.3	48.8
Total Consumption % of the world	3323.1	3383.8	3480.1
India's % Consumption of the world	1.7	1.4	1.4

Source: *Bp statistical review of world energy 2017*

As we know India does not have sufficient fossil fuel reserves to meet its demand. Around 63% of India's power sector is dependent on thermal energy, 25% on hydroelectricity, and 3% on nuclear energy. India's total coal reserves are around 58,600 mt, in 2009-10, the country's total coal production was 211.5 million tons (Mtoe) or 6.2 percent of the world total, while consumption was 245.8 Mtoe or 7.5 percent of the world total, making India the world's third largest coal consumer. ¹⁴India's many thermal power sectors are fueled by coal and this is the most abundant resource available locally.

Table no- 3.3 Summary of Coal statistics listed below.

Year	Tons	World Ranking
Coal Reserves	107,726,551,700	5th
Coal Production	761,662,038	2nd
Coal Consumption	966,288,693	2nd
Yearly Deficit	-204,626,654	
Coal Imports	215,789,801	
Coal Export	1,018,312	
Net Imports	214,771,489	

Source: *Ministry of Coal, government of India*

¹⁴ Ibid.

On renewable energy, the Fuel Wood Committee estimates, “firewood at 50 million tones, which does not meet even half the cooking requirements of the country, urban users alone purchasing 14-20 million tones. This has led to sharply rising fuelwood prices, suffering by the urban and rural poor, and large-scale forest destruction. The committee estimated agricultural wastage at 111 million tones, and animal dung used for energy purposes at 73 million tones.”¹⁵ Another renewable energy is Biogas, but it is still in the primary stage. Some other energy providers, like solar energy, wind energy, and geothermal are still in the pilot stage and are searching for cost-effective technology. But these should be pursued rapidly and relentlessly because they should in the future replace fossil fuel when exhausted. Crude oil prices have impacted negatively the Indian economy. In July 2008 it had gone up to record levels of \$ 147 per barrel then dropped to almost \$ 32 per barrel in December 2008¹⁶. Market stability is a very important but common challenge for energy-importing countries like India. Another issue related to this discussion is energy market integration. It is important for enhancing energy security and diversity of supply besides promoting cost competitiveness.

4.2 India’s Energy security Strategy

For energy security, India introduced the energy strategy which recommended by the fuel policy committee (1974) and the Working Group on Energy Policy (1979) it remains valid today. The five-year plan set out the broad components of energy policy, these are as follows; Exploiting the domestic energy resources endowments. Containing the demand for oil; energy conservation; and induction of new and renewable energy technologies.¹⁷ In 2010 India adopted this strategy on the basis of the country’s energy security policy, “former petroleum minister Murli Deora in fact said, ‘acquisition of exploration and oil producing properties overseas is a key strategy to reduce our dependence on world’s oil reserve.’ With the country’s oil imports alone expected to account for 90 percent of total oil demand by 2030, and an oil import bill equivalent to almost seven percent of the country’s GDP, it should not come as a

¹⁵ Malcolm Adiseshiah, “*Natural Resource Environment of India*” in MV. Nadkarni, AS.Seetharamu, Abdul Aziz (ed) *India the Emerging Challenges*, sage publication, New Delhi, 1991, p. 215.

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Malcolm Adiseshiah, “*Natural Resource Environment of India*” in MV. Nadkarni, AS.Seetharamu, Abdul Aziz (ed) *India the Emerging Challenges*, sage publication, New Delhi, 1991, p. 278.

surprise that India’s energy policy is focusing on acquiring overseas hydrocarbon assets.”¹⁸ India’s Hydrocarbon Vision-2025 is divided into a two-way strategy planned economic growth of 8-10% over the next three decades. Both this track would accelerate efforts to find out and produce oil at home and other would empower Indian companies to find equity oil abroad. Those energy-related objectives are basically the strategy to enable India to achieve its ultimate goal of Energy Independence. Energy Independence means to ensure the environment, where the Indian economy functions smoothly with complete freedom from coal, oil and gas imports without external pull and pressures.

India’s Energy security, therefore, emerged as a crucial factor in Foreign Policy decisions. India is increasingly playing a more proactive role to secure its future oil demand. The lack of energy resources, not only slowed economic growth but delivered a deeply negative impact on security and strategic interest. According to Vallabu Srilatha, the foreign policy objectives of the new energy policy are follows;

- 1) Mobilization of investments for the domestic sectors, expansion, and diversification of foreign sources of oil and supplies.
- 2) Ensuring the existing supplies by consolidating energy ties.
- 3) Achieving comprehensive energy security through the enhancement of oil and gas exploration and production worldwide by 2020.
- 4) Attaining energy independence by 2030.¹⁹

Table no- 4.2.1

Source of future energy supply in India in percentage

Year	Coal	Oil	Gas	Hydel	Nuclear
1997-98	55	35	7	2	1
2001-02	50	32	15	2	1
2006-07	50	32	15	2	1
2010-11	53	30	14	2	1
2024-25	50	25	20	2	3

Source: ONGC. available at <http://www.ongcindia.com>, accessed on July 8, 2020

¹⁸ Shebonti Roy Dadwal, “India’s overseas Assets: Do they contribute to Energy Security?” in the Journal of Strategic Analysis, vol-36, no-1, January -2012, p. 12.

¹⁹ Vallabu Srilatha, “Energy Security and India’s Foreign Policy”, in the journal of Indian Ocean Digest, vol-23, no-1, January-June 2008, P-45.

India's foreign policy is influenced by energy-related engagements. The world primary energy demand is projected to increase by 1.5 percent per year between 2007 and 2030, from just over 12,000 Mtoe to 16,800 Mtoe, i.e. an overall increase of 40 percent. India's Planning Commission's Integrated Energy Policy document asserts that India would need to sustain an economic growth rate of 8-10 percent over the next 25 years, in order to eradicate poverty and meet its human development needs. This would require augmentation of primary energy supplies by nearly four times, and an increase in power generation from the current level of nearly 160,000 MW to about 800,000MW by 2030-31.²⁰

India is extremely dependent on oil imports; around 70% of India's oil is imported. India's biggest overseas energy success is the reached by Indian Oil Corporation with the Iranian government, both these countries signed several deals on crude oil and natural gas to fulfill their business interest. This gas supply was considered through a gas pipeline between India-Pakistan-Iran, or a pipeline between Turkmenistan-Pakistan-India. But this pipeline yet not worked. One of the reasons behind its delay is, India-Pakistan relations and US position of the India Iran deal. For crude oil import, India is very much depending on Middle East, Saudi Arabia is the top most country in the context of supplying oil, another State from this region Iran is now become third largest country, who export oil to India. However, India is looking beyond Middle East is complicated by number of factors: "Post 9/11 war against terrorism, attack on Afghanistan and Iraq aggravated the instability of the region effecting high oil prices, and spurring higher gas prices. Strait of Hormuz the only ocean access for tankers leaving the oil-rich Persian Gulf has become vulnerable to acts of maritime terrorism."²¹ After the terror attacks on New York, Government of US announced a restriction to all the oil importing state for Iran's nuclear test, by that restriction India have reduce importing oil from Iran. This international policy definitely would impact India's energy policy. It could influence in India-Iran gas pipeline. India's performance on the oil front in the last 10 years has been progressive; oil dependence went down from 70% at the commencement of the sixth plan to 30% at the end of the five-year period, one must note that almost the entire increase in oil production was

²⁰ Sing Bhupendra, "*India's Energy Security: Challenges and Opportunities*", Journal of Strategic Analysis, vol-34, no-6, Nov-2010, P. 800.

²¹ Vallabu Srilatha, "*Energy Security and India's Foreign Policy*", in the journal of Indian Ocean Digest, Vol-23, No-1, January-June 2008, p. 48.

contributed by the Bombay High Offshore fields. In the present profile, some oil reserves like Bombay High, Ankleshwar, Gandhir, and Assam doing a fantastic job. In India the most productive fields are either in a declining phase or are facing technical problems, the situation in another heavy oil-bearing field as Mehsana and Rajasthan is poor. In average recovery factor in India is as low as 28 percent against the global figure of over 40 percent. The heavy oil fields it is only 11 percent mainly due to the high viscosity of the oil.

4.3 Central Asian Energy Profile

The Energy Resources of Central Asia were developed and controlled by the former Soviet Union for many decades in the past soon after the soviet disintegration. Since 1990, central Asia has emerged as new energy hubs for the world. Almost 4 percent of the oil and 7 percent of the world natural resources are centred in the Central Asia. All the five nations such as Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan has full of different natural resources. The region has perhaps deposited of 170.5 billion barrels of oil and 15.3 trillion cubic meters of natural gas.²² Power is centralized at the summit of a pyramidal political framework shared by all five countries. There are few things that set Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan slightly apart from the other CARs. In terms of economic liberalization, these republics are likewise at various levels of development, with Kyrgyzstan at one extreme and Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan at the other. While Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan do not have deposits of exportable oil and gas, the three CAR nations of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan have.

Recent discovery of natural resources also provides opportunities for Indian investments in Afghanistan. It is estimated that Afghanistan has mineral wealth of more than US\$ 3 trillion, including huge reserves of oil, gas, copper, iron, gold, etc.²³ The iron ore deposits are worth US\$ 421 billion; copper deposits about US\$ 274 billion and gold deposits are worth US\$ 25

²² Mahalingam Sudha, "Energy Security in a Changing World", in the journal of Strategic Analysis, Vol-28, No-2, April-June 2004, P. 260.

²³ Ashraf Haidari, M. —Afghanistan: The Silk Road to Opportunities,|| Diplomatic Traffic. http://www.diplomatictraffic.com/opinions_archives.asp?ID=156 (Accessed December 16, 2012).

billion.²⁴ Besides, the country has 36.5 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 3.6 billion barrels reserves of oil.²⁵ Indian companies were granted four blocks of Hajigak mine, which have an estimated reserve of 2 billion tonnes of iron ore.²⁶ Indian Inc. has also shown interests in Afghanistan's petroleum blocks and copper ore mines. New Delhi and Kabul are engaged in exploring opportunities for greater economic Indian Inc. has also shown interests in Afghanistan's petroleum blocks and copper ore mines. New Delhi and Kabul are engaged in exploring opportunities for greater economic.²⁷ Trade between India and Afghanistan has been hampered because there is no direct connectivity between the two countries. During Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Tehran to attend the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit in August 2012, tripartite agreement between India, Iran and Afghanistan was concluded successfully and it was decided to set up a Joint Working Group to boost trade and transit through Chabahar to Afghanistan and Central Asia.²⁸

Table no- 4.3.1

Total proved reserves of Crude Oil (Figures in Thousand Million barrels)

	At the end of 2004	At the end of 2013	At the end of 2014	Share of total
Kazakhstan	9.0	30.0	30.0	1.8%
Turkmenistan	0.5	0.6	0.6	Less than 1%
Uzbekistan	0.6	0.6	0.6	Less than 1%

Source: BP statistical reviews, 2015

²⁴ BBC. —Afghan Mineral Mean 'Self Sufficiency' in 10 years,|| 25 June 2019. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10412085> (Accessed December 10, 2015).

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ SAIL-led Consortium AFISCO Bags Ore Mining Rights in Hajigak, Afghanistan,|| The Economic Times, November 29, 2011. http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2011-11-29/news/30454344_1_hajigak-aynak-copper-mines-iron-ore (Accessed July 21, 2016)

²⁷ SAIL, Nalco and JSP Among 6 Indian Companies in Race for Afghan Mines.|| The Economic Times. April 26, 2015. http://artilces.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-04-26/news/31410262_1_hajigak-iron-ore-deposits-shortlisted-private-players (Accessed December 17, 2012).

²⁸ Department of Commerce, Government of India. Data on India-Afghanistan Trade <http://commerce.nic.in/eidb/iecnt.asp> (Accessed August 6, 2018).

4.4 Oil and Gas Reserves in Central Asia

However, with the implementation of India's "Connect Central Asia" Policy in 2012, the relationship between India and Central Asia has taken on a new scent. The important thing to keep in mind is that India lacks the strategic clarity needed to forge and foster economic integration and political collaboration with the Central Asian countries. India needs to increase its engagement in Central Asia and revitalize its regional policy initiatives for a number of reasons, including (i) gaining a significant foothold on the region's hydrocarbon map (ii) preventing Pakistan from advancing its radical Islamic agenda at the expense of India's security interests (iii) keeping an eye on the situation in Afghanistan. (iv) to monitor drug trafficking and any potential weapon proliferation that could gravely jeopardize India's security interests; (v) to promote India's commercial interests. ²⁹India has substantial economic interests in Central Asia. India promotes bilateral connections through the use of soft power and its easy acceptance in Central Asia. Indian traditional dance, music, Bollywood movies, yoga, literature, etc. are all hugely popular.

Energy Potential of CARs in present

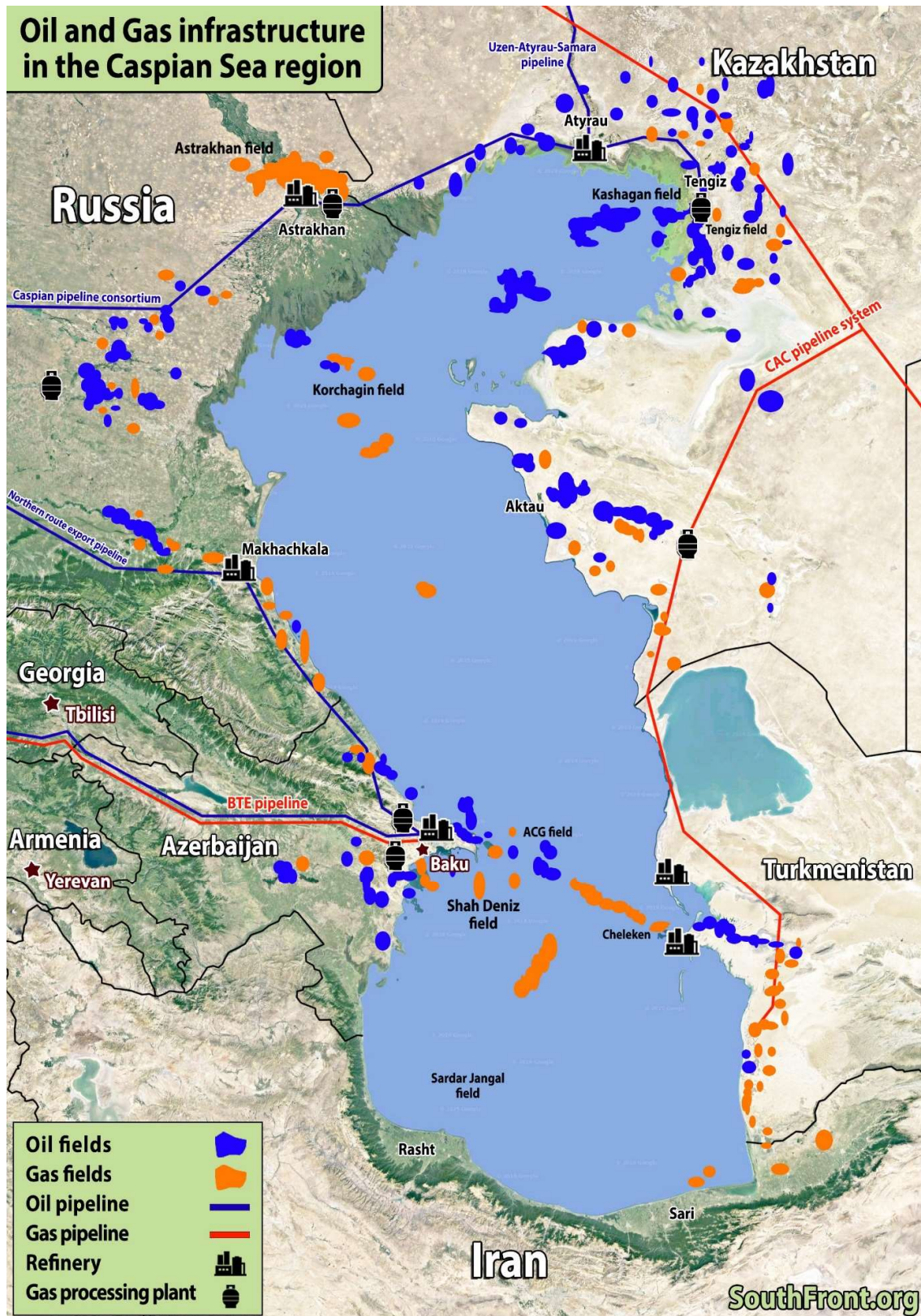
Oil in (billion barrels), Natural gas in trillion cubic feet, Coal in million short tons, Uranium in thousand tons-.....Table no- 4.4.1

Year	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan	Share of CARs in world reserves
oil	30.000	0.040	0.012	0.600	0.594	2.37%
Natural gas	100			100	65	4.28%
Coal	34.502	895			3.307	4.16%
Uranium	817				111	17.00%

Source: *Asian development bank, 2010*

²⁹ Kothari Raj Kumar and Mukherjee Sukanya in "India's Connect Central Asia Policy, emerging security and economic dimensions" progressive publishers, Kolkata, 2019, p. 18.

Energy scenario of Central Asian Countries.



The greatest oil and gas reserves have been found in Kazakhstan. The three main fields, Tengiz, Karachaganak, and the giant Kashagan, have been responsible for generating the majority of the state's oil and gas. From India's perspective, the fields' location—in and around the northern coasts of the landlocked Caspian Sea—is not very advantageous. Kazakhstan estimated its total petroleum and other fluid production as 1.70 million barrels per day in 2014. The important to its continued growth in liquids production from this level will be the development of its massive Tengiz, Karachaganak and Kashagan field. The discovery of the Kashagan offshore oil fields in 2002 often referred to as the elephant as it is considered reserves of 7 to 13 billion barrels of crude oil.³⁰ which is the largest oil reserve in Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan's present oil production dominated by two giant on shore, such as the Tengiz and Karachaganak. It produces about half of the Kazakhstan's total petroleum liquids output. The offshore Kashagan field in Kazakhstan part of the Caspian Sea will also play a major role in Kazakhstan liquids production.³¹ The Karachaganak gas field is estimated to contain vast quantities of natural gas, it contain 85 trillion cubic feet in the year 2014. The most of Kazakhstan gas reserves are in crude or condensate rich fields. The two major petroleum liquids fields Karachaganak and Tengiz are also the two largest natural gas fields of Kazakhstan.³²

In 2013, the Karachaganak and Tengiz natural gas fields jointly accounted for more than 90 percent of Kazakhstan's raw natural gas production. The Tengiz project includes a gas processing plant, which according to Chevron produced 251 billion cubic feet (Bf) of dry marketed natural gas in 2013 that was sold to local consumers and export to outside.³³ According to the government's statement in Lok Sabha, India's installed nuclear power capacity increased by 40% in the last seven years, from 4,780 MW to 6,780 MW. To ensure long-term energy security in a sustainable manner, the nation is pursuing an indigenous three-stage nuclear power programme. Additionally, the government announced a significant nuclear power expansion initiative to supply the nation with clean electricity. MEA

³⁰ US Energy Information Administration 2015, <https://www.eia.gov/petroleum/>. Access on 2nd January 2019.

³¹ Mahalingam Sudha, "Energy Security in a Changing World", in the journal of Strategic Analysis, Vol-28, No-2, April-June 2004, P-260.

³² Oil & Gas Journal, "Worldwide look at reserves and production," January 1, 2014.

³³ *ibid*

officials are certain that the Central Asian countries' abundant natural resources, including uranium, will be sufficient to power India's upcoming nuclear power programme. India's nuclear power expansion programme, according to a report, aims to boost installed capacity from 6.78 GW to 22.48 GW by 2031.³⁴

Production of oil by CARs (thousand barrels per day)

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Kazakhstan	1368	1413	1485	1609	1672	1684	1662	1720	1701
Turkmenistan	187	199	208	211	217	217	222	231	239
Uzbekistan	114	104	102	95	78	77	68	68	67
Kyrgyzstan	50	15	35	22	26	45	32	26	17
Tajikistan	41	10	21	10	11	19	16	12	09

Source- *BP statistics, 2015*

Turkmenistan has huge gas resources in Central Asia. The country has the sixth largest depository of natural gas of the world accounting of 265 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of natural gas. In September 2014, Turkmenistan declared the beginning of commercialization Galkynysh, which produces more than 1 Tcf in the phase first.³⁵ Turkmenistan has several of the world's largest natural gas fields, including 10 with over 3.5 Tef of reserves which primarily situated at Amu Dara basin, the Murgab Basin in the south, and the South Caspian basin in the western part of the country. Turkmenistan is also developing chemical industry, and country hopes to export products like ammonia and synthetic gasoline. Russia was formerly the country's main market for gas exports, but with falling

³⁴ The Daily Guardian, "India's upcoming nuclear power programme". Published on 24 December 2021.

³⁵ US Energy Information Administration 2015, available at <https://www.eia.gov/petroleum/>. Access on 2nd January 2019.

exports to Russia, China became the major importer of Turkmenistan's gas. In 2011 imports through the recently built Central Asia China Gas Pipeline has increased. Turkmenistan needs to build new infrastructures for the transport of its products and passage of gas. It became an important natural gas importer amongst the Caspian and Central Asian countries. Turkmenistan exported 1.5 Tcf through pipeline in 2014 out of which more than half of it exported to China, Russia and Iran. Turkmenistan has signed many contracts with China related to natural gas, and the most recently in September 2013, and will supply 2.3 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of natural gas to China by 2020 by network of parallel gas pipelines running through Central Asia.³⁶ With a 600 million barrel oil resource and a 2014 oil production of 238,000 barrels per day (b/d), Turkmenistan produced around the same amount of oil that it did in 2013. It is one of the five nations that border the Caspian Sea, which has significant natural gas and oil deposits. These nations have frequently clashed over issues involving resolving maritime borders and dividing the region's abundant petroleum resources. Conflict makes it unlikely that anything will change until an agreement is achieved. Nearly 237,000 b/d of crude oil may be distilled at Turkmenistan's oil refineries, The Seidi and Turkmenbasin, with 594 million barrels of "crude oil" in reserve as of 2015.

Uzbekistan has a small energy wealth. Production of all liquids, including oil, was 67,000 barrels per day (b/d) in 2014. About 60% of the world's oil and natural gas reserves are found in the Uzbek province of Bukhara-Khiva. About 70% of the nation's oil production comes from there. With a 224,000 b/d crude oil distillation capacity, three oil refineries are situated in Ferghana, AltyArik, and Bukhara. These refineries operated at or below capacity as a result of insufficient domestic oil production. In 2014, it produced 2 Tcf of natural gas and used 1.7 Tcf of it, making it the third-largest natural gas producer in Eurasia, behind Turkmenistan and Russia. Furthermore, as of January 2015, it had proved reserves of 65 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of "natural gas." Uzbekistan, which ranks among the top 20 gas-flaring nations globally despite a decline since 2006, flared 60 billion cubic feet (Bcf) of natural gas in 2011.³⁷ With a highly energy-intensive economy, Uzbekistan has significant hydrocarbon reserves, principally of natural gas. However, recently, due to aging energy infrastructure and a shortage of pipelines

³⁶ US Energy Information Administration 2015, available at <https://www.eia.gov/petroleum/>. Access on 5th January 2020.

³⁷ *ibid*

for the export of increasing amounts of hydrocarbons, production, distribution, and exports have decreased.

4.5 China Factor in India's Energy Security Strategy

Afghanistan is of great importance to China because of its abundant resources. China has the objective of exploiting Afghanistan's untapped deposits of copper, iron ore, gold, oil, gas and massive vein of rare earth elements including critical lithium which are suited for their needs. Several roads, railway, pipeline projects are underway to link Western China to Afghanistan through Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.³⁸ SAR is emerging as a strategic priority for China and sees much of the region's importance on account of India's overwhelming presence.³⁹ In this region, China is positioning itself as an important actor and extending its reach with its growing economic and strategic influence in the region and emerging as a major trading partner in all the countries of SAR.⁴⁰ India lacks a shared border with any of the five Central Asian nations, making it less geographically advantageous than China in terms of commerce. Afghanistan is therefore crucial for India's journey across Central Asia. China appears to be unconcerned with the type of governance in Afghanistan, while India is worried about Pakistan and China's increasing mutual understanding and interaction. India, therefore, thought that democratic Afghanistan will lead to deeper ties between India and Afghanistan than communist China did. India and China are increasingly using their growing demand for energy to strengthen linkages with emerging, energy-rich countries like Afghanistan and CAR. Energy hunting in both countries needs more investment to explore the gas potential in this zone. China is far ahead in the search for energy sources and has also been consistently outbidding Indian companies in a foreign land.

³⁸ P Stobdan, "India and China: Exploring Partnership in Afghanistan", Policy Brief, 2nd December 2013.p.111.

³⁹ Sinha Palit Parama and Palit Amitendu, "Strategic Influence of Soft Power: Inferences for India from Chinese Engagement of South and Southeast Asia", ICRIER Policy Series, No. 3, 2011, p. 14.

⁴⁰ Ghoshal Balladasl, "India and China Towards a Competitive-Cooperative Relationship?", IPCS Issue Brief, No.153, August 2010, p. 1.

Indian national oil companies are commercially structured and driven; they are expected to play a strategic role in ensuring the country's energy security. China's National Petroleum Corporation invested \$ 45 billion while India's Oil and Gas Cooperation (ONGC) has invested \$ 5 billion, so China's energy policy far longer than India's and has been more successful in Africa to Middle East. China had no long-standing strategic interests in the Middle East but they currently import around 58% of oil from the region and is expected to increase to 70% by 2015. In the present scenario, Saudi Arabia and Iran have become important trading partners. Chinese and Indian oil companies are well-known opposition in overseas. Chinese Petroleum Company (SINOPEC) edged out ONGC Videsh in acquiring an oil exploration block from Shell Oil in Angola in 2004. In 2005, "overseas Indian and Chinese state-owned petroleum companies have been a successful competitive bidder for oil and Gas assets in many of the same energy-rich countries and region of the world...Chinese companies have outsmarted India's ONGC bids in Kazakhstan, Ecuador, and Angola."⁴¹

After the escalation in energy prices of the 1970s, few industrialized countries have moved away from energy-intensive industries. But as some other developing countries, India cannot make the same structural shifts because they have to increase industrialization. China and India are the world's second and fourth-largest consumers of energy, with their indigenous reserves of hydrocarbons no longer sufficient to meet their growing needs. Both these countries are keen to supplement their dwindling domestic energy reserves by gaining access to the world's residual reserves to ensure sustained supplies for their growing economies. The energy richness of Central Asia is seen as one of the most significant new resource bases for the expanding Indian economy, but the competition to harness the region's resources is getting fiercer, with China playing a leading role. The most crucial one is to provide India a sizable footprint on the region's hydrocarbon map so that it may diversify and secure energy sources that are essential to her growing momentum. China is the rising power and India is the emerging power in Asia. Both the country has competition over South and Southeast Asia to project itself as a dominant power and expected to dominate all aspects of future global affairs. India perceives China to be a near-term challenge and China looks at India as a potential rival in the longer run.⁴²

⁴¹ Vallabu Srilatha, "Energy Security and India's Foreign Policy," in the Journal of Indian Ocean Digest, Vol-23, No-1, January-June 2008, P-55.

India's growing interest in the area has been stoked by the need to further New Delhi's interests in the major categories listed below.

In this table no 4.5.1 information covers the years 2001–2002 through 2013–14.

India-Central Asia Trade Analysis

(Figures in US Million Dollars)

Year	India-Central Asia Trade	India's Total Trade	Percent of India's Total Trade
2001-02	108.2	95,200.0	0.11
2002-03	135.2	1,14,100.0	0.12
2003-04	218.0	1,41,900.0	0.15
2004-05	275.3	1,95,000.0	0.14
2005-06	275.3	2,52,300.0	0.11
2006-07	425.9	3,11,900.0	0.14
2007-08	544.1	4,14,786.	0.13
2008-09	747.0	4,88,491.7	0.15
2009-10	796.4	4,67,124.3	0.17
2010-11	738.0	6,20,905.3	0.12
2011-12	1596.2	7,95,283.5	0.20
2012-13	1354.9	7,91,137.3	0.20
2013-14	2502.2	7,64,606.0	0.41

Source: *import -export data bank, Ministry of Commerce, Government of India.*

Trade between India and Central Asia is steadily increasing. Trade between India and Central Asia surged from \$108.2 million in 2001–2002 to \$2502.2 million in 2013-2014, expanding by a factor of over 23. In the meantime, India's total commerce increased by over 7 times, from \$95.2 billion in 2001–2002 to \$764.6 billion in 2013-2014. Thus, it can be shown that commerce between India and Central Asia increased more quickly than India's overall trade throughout the aforementioned time. The percentage of trade between India and Central Asia in India's overall trade also reflects this.

Commodity Composition of India's Imports from Central Asian Countries

figures in US Million Dollars

Table no- 5.5.2

Central Asian Countries	2010-11	2011-12	Growth Rate
Products:	Kazakhstan		
	50.80	54.50	7.20
Coffee, tea, mate, and spices	7.69	39.44	413.18
Electrical equipment	48.76	43.81	-10.15
	2010-11	2011-12	Growth Rate
Pharmaceutical products	26.32	34.83	32.36
Clothing accessories	172.16	244.39	41.95
Total Export			
Products:	Kyrgyzstan		
Clothing accessories knitted	9.11	9.42	3.46
Clothing accessories not knitted	4.31	6.29	45.91
Pharmaceutical products	5.11	5.65	10.43
Total Export	25.79	30.55	18.16

	2010.....2011.....Growth Rate		
	Tajikistan		
Clothing accessories knitted	0.76	3.54	366.10
Meat and edible meat	4.78	4.67	-2.38
Pharmaceutical products	7.54	8.14	7.94
Total Export	18.31	21.28	16.22
Products	Turkmenistan		
Machinery and Mechanical appliances	4.48	13.08	192.25
Electrical Equipment and parts	0.44	4.10	842.71
Pharmaceutical product	8.70	11.35	30.42
Total Export	26.16	43.95	68.04

	2010-11. . 2011-12. .Growth Rate		
Machinery and Mechanical appliances	5.16	6.44	24.61
Vehicles other than railway	1.20	11.62	868.32
Pharmaceutical products	33.80	39.30	16.26
Total Export	60.42	89.39	47.94

Source: *UN Comtrade database 2019*

India's exports to Kazakhstan surged by nearly 42% from \$172.16 million in 2010–11 to \$244.39 million in 2011–12. India increased its exports to Kazakhstan from \$50.8 million in 2010–11 to \$54.5 million in 2011–12, a 7.3% increase. These exports included coffee, tea,

meat, and spices. Pharmaceutical exports from India to Kazakhstan fell from \$48.8 million in 2010–11 to \$43.8 million in 2011–12, a decline of more than 10%. However, India's exports of electrical machinery, equipment, and parts to Kazakhstan rose by 413 percent from \$7.7 million in 2010–11 to \$39.4 million in 2011–12. India raised its exports of knitted or crocheted clothes and accessories to Kazakhstan from \$26.32 million in 2010–11 to \$34.83 million in 2011–12.

India raised its exports of knitted or crocheted clothes and accessories to Kazakhstan from \$26.32 million in 2010–11 to \$34.83 million in 2011–12, a growth of 32.4%. From \$25.8 million in 2010–11 to \$30.6 million in 2011–12, India's exports to Kyrgyzstan climbed by 18.5%. India raised its exports of knitted or crocheted clothes and accessories to Kyrgyzstan from \$9.11 million in 2010–11 to \$9.42 million in 2011–12, a 3.5% increase. While India's exports of non-knitted or crocheted clothing and accessory items climbed from \$4.31 million in 2010–11 to \$6.29 million in 2011–12, or by around 46%. India boosted its pharmaceutical exports to Kyrgyzstan from \$5.11 million in 2010–11 to \$5.65 million in 2011–12, a 10.4% increase. Tajikistan imports from India climbed from \$18.31 million in 2010–11 to \$21.28 million in 2011–12, a 16.2% rise. Pharmaceutical exports from India to Tajikistan grew from \$7.54 million in 2010–2011 to 8.14 million in 2011-12, increasing by around 8%. India's exports of meat and meat products to Tajikistan fell from \$4.78 million in 2010–11 to \$4.67 million in 2011–12, a 2.4% decline. India's sole export to Tajikistan in this category has been frozen boneless meat from cattle. Knitted or crocheted garments and accessories from India were exported to Tajikistan in quantities totalling \$3.54 million in 2011–12, a 366.1% increase from \$0.76 million in 2010–11. India raised its exports to Turkmenistan by 68% between 2010 and 2011, rising from \$26.16 million to \$43.95 million. India boosted its exports of equipment and mechanical devices to Turkmenistan from \$4.48 million in 2010–11 to \$13.1 million in 2011–12, a growth of 192%. India boosted its pharmaceutical exports to Turkmenistan from \$8.7 million in 2010–11 to \$11.35 million in 2011–12, an increase of more than 30%. India boosted its exports of electrical machinery and equipment to Tajikistan by 842% from \$0.44 million in 2010–11 to \$4.10 million in 2011–12. India's exports to Uzbekistan climbed by 48% between 2010–11 and 2011–12, from \$60.4 million to \$89.4 million. India's pharmaceutical exports to Uzbekistan climbed by almost 16 percent from \$33.8 million in 2010–11 to \$39.3 million in 2011–12. India boosted its exports of non-rolling stock cars to Uzbekistan from \$1.2 million in 2010–11 to \$11.62 million in 2011–12, an increase of 868.3%. The most significant export from India in this category has

been the chassis for 3-wheeler goods vehicles other than those powered by gasoline. Tajikistan received \$6.44 million in exports of machinery and mechanical appliances from India in 2011–12, a 24.6% increase from \$5.16 million in 2010–11. The most significant product of this category of India's exports to Uzbekistan has been speed indicators and tachometers.

It is evident from the data above that Indian exports to Central Asian nations have increased consistently. Additionally, the majority of the goods that India exports to Central Asian nations have increased in value. However, it is still true that India's exports to Central Asian nations have grown at a very slow and unsatisfactory rate.

India's Imports from Central Asia *figures in US Million Dollar*

Table no- 4.5.3

Commodity	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan
Mineral oil	1.08		0.12		3.45
Chemicals, precious metal	11.22	0.29		11.11	
Plastic goods	0.5	0.09		0.04	0.48
Raw hides and leather	0.16	0.09		0.11	0.44
Wool and woven fabric	96.54	0.21	0.04		0.68
Iron and steel	5.31	0.08			0.11
jewellery	48.48				29.62
Mechanical appliances	1.95	0.03	0.15	0.07	1.87
Electrical machinery	0.36			0.01	0.38
Total	166.35	0.67	7.09	16.89	61.58

Source: *BP statistics, 2015*

India's imports from Central Asian nations increased by more than 3,700% between 2001–2 and 2011–12. India's total imports from throughout the world rose by 852% during the aforementioned period, from \$51,400 million in 2001–2002 to \$489,319 million in 2011–2012. As a result, it is discovered that, compared to growth in India's imports from the rest of the globe, imports from Central Asian nations increased significantly quicker over the analysed period. This is also reflected in the percentage of global imports that India receives from Central Asian nations. India's imports from the rest of the world increased from 0.06 percent in 2001–2002 to 0.22 percent as a percentage of all imports. Kyrgyzstan is at an all-time low. Kyrgyzstan's imports to India dropped from \$1.2 million in 2010–11 to \$0.67 million in 2011–12, a 44 percent reduction. Tajikistan has not been a major source of imports for India. Additionally, it decreased from \$23 million in 2010–2011 to \$7.1 million in 2011–2012, falling by 69%. From \$22.44 million in 2010–11 to \$5.64 million in 2011–12, imports of aluminium and its products decreased by almost 75%. Turkmenistan-related imports into India climbed from \$9.73 million in 2010–11 to \$16.9 million in 2011–12, a 73.6 percent improvement during the aforementioned period.

Turkmenistan's exports of inorganic chemicals to India improved, rising from \$5.32 million in 2010–11 to \$11.11 million in 2011–12, improving by 108.8% as a result. Turkmenistan's cotton exports to India climbed from \$4.20 million in 2010–11 to \$4.59 million in 2011–12, a 9.43% rise. India's imports from Uzbekistan surged by almost 200 percent from \$20.63 million in 2010–11 to \$61.58 million in 2011–12. India's imports of non-monetary unwrought gold from Uzbekistan increased from \$29.6 million in 2011–12 to zero in 2010–11. Fertilizer imports to India from Uzbekistan surged throughout the aforementioned period, rising by 83.8% from \$8.92 million in 2010–11 to \$16.4 million in 2011–12. Crude oil imports from Uzbekistan to India also saw a significant increase, going from \$0.31 million in 2010–11 to \$4.35 million in 2011–12. It is evident from the research above that Indian imports from Central Asian nations have increased significantly, though not consistently. In addition, India has seen a fall in the import of various commodities from Central Asian nations. Only crude oil imports to India from Central Asian nations have significantly increased. The balance of trade between India and Central Asia is examined in the next section.

India's Trade with Five Central Asian Countries. (Figures in US Million Dollar)

Table no-4.5.4

Country Name	India's Export	India's Import	India's Balance of Trade	Total Trade
Kazakhstan	244.39	166.35	78.04	410.74
Kyrgyzstan	30.55	0.67	29.88	31.22
Tajikistan	21.28	7.09	14.19	28.37
Turkmenistan	43.95	16.89	27.06	60.84
Uzbekistan	89.39	61.58	27.81	150.97

Source: *Ministry of Commerce, Government of India.*

The facts for India's trade balance with several Central Asian nations in 2011–12 is presented in this table. According to the statistics in the table, India maintained a surplus with Kazakhstan of \$78.04 million in 2011–12, while maintaining a surplus with Kyrgyzstan of \$29.88 million. With Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, India also enjoyed a trade surplus. respectively to the tune of \$14.19 million, \$27.06 million, and \$27.81 million in 2011–12. Thus, it is discovered that India's trade balance with the various Central Asian nations has not been atrocious. Of course, India's trade surpluses with the other Central Asian nations were offset by its significant trading deficit with Azerbaijan. This only highlights how critical it is to increase Indian exports to Central Asian markets.

The growth of India-CARs trade

from 2012-13 to 2013-14 is tabulated below

(Figures in US million)

Table: 4.5.5

Country Name	2012-13	2013-14
Kazakhstan	426.22	917.48
Kyrgyzstan	37.07	35.18

Country Name	2012-13	2013-14
Tajikistan	48.01	55.13
Turkmenistan	78.25	87.73
Uzbekistan	156.75	145.56

Source: *Ministry of Commerce, export data bank, Government of India.*

Indian efforts to obtain energy from Central Asia have had mixed results. Indian efforts may not have been as aggressive as they should have been in the past, but the trend has significantly changed in favour of an active participation recently. However, India has a number of obstacles in Central Asia that must be overcome. First, India's lack of geographic proximity to the Central Asian region is a barrier, long distances limit the possibilities for trade between India and Central Asia; as a result, it is doubtful that trade will increase via these Chinese or European routes. However, trade with Central Asia is predicted to increase by two to three times if the proposed trade route through Iran is operational.⁴² In addition to the CARs' position as landlocked nations. A new pipeline's infrastructure is heavily influenced by third countries as well as by current political and geopolitical factors. India sees this as a barrier to developing a respectable presence in Central Asia, notably in the energy sector. Building transport links with the area may be a complementary factor. Indian participation was initially minimal even though they were not a participant in the ongoing tournament. The subject of ensuring energy security only became a priority in Indian policy at the turn of the century. The major and regional powers had already made their presence known at that point in the energy sector. The current focus is on building a trustworthy presence. The building of pipelines and the enlargement of existing ones are areas of collaboration.

⁴² K. Sharma. "Spotlight on trade gateway as India hosts talks with Central Asia". *Nikkei Asia*. 18 December 2021. Accessed on 6 July 2021. Available at <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Spotlight-on-trade-gateway-as-India-hosts-talks-with-Central-Asia>

4.6 Afghanistan role in India- Central Asia relations

Afghanistan is one of the friendliest nations, India's Central Asian Extended neighbor and geographically closer to Energy rich Middle East region. The main demand for India's energy imports is natural gas and crude oil. India's main motivation for establishing ties with Central Asia is to gain access to a sizable market in Asia. Her secondary goal is to obtain the energy she needs from the region.

Other regional players are likewise eager to connect with Central Asia in order to meet their own energy needs and economic prospects. China, Iran, Russia, Pakistan, and India are the main participants in the region. China is in a better position to engage with the region than India, which has only recently entered the region in terms of its economic and geopolitical importance. It is obvious that India, together with China and Japan, maybe a key player in the developing Asian economic unification. When it comes to India's economic ties to Pakistan and the Central Asian region, however, they will be ineffective. India has to improve the framework for its economic policies that Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Central Asian region view as advantageous for further economic progress. Additionally, this policy framework will increase India's energy security because it may eventually gain access to some of the region's resources. Afghanistan is essential for the stability and security of Asia, especially India, because to its connections to the Middle East, Central, and South Asia. Afghanistan also happens to be a component of the complex of regional conflicts in Asia, which also includes Afghanistan's neighbours Pakistan, Iran, and the five republics of Central Asia. These nations all have close international ties to Afghanistan. Networks in politics, religion, and society help them communicate with different Afghan war participants. Therefore, creating a strategy to bring neighbouring nations into alignment politically and economically is essential to protecting Afghanistan. Afghanistan's geostrategic location is particularly important in terms of India's interactions with Central Asia. In actuality, Afghanistan connects India to Central Asia. This engagement between India and Central Asia can be expanded through Kabul. Even though various measures have been made to strengthen commercial and trade ties, New Delhi is primarily seeking to deepen its energy cooperation with Central Asian nations in order to fulfil its expanding energy needs. It thinks that multilateral participation in regional initiatives, which is economically advantageous for all parties involved, would be less risky and that its success would lead to increased interdependence and opportunities in the future. However, how the political and security situations in Afghanistan develop over the next few

years will determine how successful the programmes are. It's important to note that former Prime Minister Manmohon Singh and the current Delhi government, led by Narendra Modi, has shown a strong interest in fostering relations and collaboration with Afghanistan. The developing export industries of India have a market in Central Asia. New Delhi wants to enhance commerce and investment in the area while securing dependable access to Central Asian oil and gas sources.

The Shanghai Collaboration Organization (SCO) might assist take cooperation between India and Central Asia to a new level with India's full membership. Senior officials from various fields and the Minister of India will meet and conduct negotiations with the SCO. Our comprehension is deepened, and new avenues for thought and collaboration are made possible. Minerals, including oil, natural gas, uranium, and hydropower, are found in this area. India has few energy resources, yet it seeks reliable and significant energy consumers. India's expanding economy and rising energy needs will make the situation in India and Central Asia more obvious. Address security concerns while balancing China's hegemonic role in the area. The SCO will support India's participation in issues that affect it and assist in resolving current and other terrorism-related challenges. As a result, the SCO will be better able to guarantee the restoration of the Indian boundaries, maintain bilateral ties with the Member States, and advance communications, infrastructure, and social spheres.

4.7 TAPI Project

The Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline is an approximately \$6.7 billion and 1820km-long project. ⁴³The project is supported by the major regional and global powers in spite of the apparent security issues surrounding the pipeline's proposed path. The Russian objectives appear to have aligned with those of the US, and the US is backing the initiative to demonstrate the potential of the American New Silk Road Initiative, in all situations, Russia has volunteered to help with pipeline building. Chinese businesses have also expressed interest.

⁴³ Shaida Mohammed Abdali, in "Afghanistan- Pakistan-India, A Paradigm Shift" published by pentagon press, New Delhi,2016, p -117.

TAPI Pipeline



Source: [India seeks revision in gas price from TAPI pipeline - The Hindu BusinessLine](http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/markets/commodities/).

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/markets/commodities/>

The capacity of the TAPI is 90 million metric standard cubic meters/day of gas, to be transported from Daulatabad-Herat-Kandahar-Quetta-Multan to Fazilka (India). India and Pakistan have agreed on a uniform transit fee. Obviously, Pakistan will accept whatever India and Afghanistan agree upon. India has approved the special purpose vehicle (SPV) for TAPI and the feasibility study is over. GAIL has made an initial investment of US 5 million. Even Bangladesh is interested. The total time required is four years, as according to the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The project is expected to be completed by 2017. India is expected to receive 38 mmsc; Afghanistan is to receive 38 mmsc and Pakistan will receive 14 Mmsc, thus totalling up to 90 mmsc.⁴⁴

One of the most important regional initiatives that can assist in meeting Pakistan's and India's energy needs is TAPI. Afghanistan's role is crucial because a large portion of the pipeline will pass through Afghan territory. The project has been on hold in part because of Afghanistan's present security situation. At the same time, Pakistan and India, two neighbouring nations, must contribute equally positively to the stability and security of Afghanistan. Therefore, it benefits both the three countries as well as the others in the region, who may generally cooperate

⁴⁴ Abdali Shaida Mohammed, in "Afghanistan- Pakistan-India, A Paradigm Shift" published by pentagon press, New Delhi, 2016, p. 118.

sincerely for the benefit of one another. In addition to meeting their significant energy needs, Pakistan and India will benefit from the energy supply since it will maintain their long-term political and economic interdependence. Cross-border gas pipelines have become a significant topic of discussion regarding India's energy security over the past 20 years. Cross-border gas pipeline projects in India have been envisioned as playing a significant role in numerous reports from the government and the commercial sector. The Indian Government chose the Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India (TAPI) gas pipeline over the Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline after years of discussions (IPI). There are regional benefits from the pipeline project, the energy requirement of Pakistan and India and other countries need a peaceful environment for its distribution. As the Turkmen President said "The pipeline between Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India will be a weighty contribution to the positive cooperation of this continent."⁴⁵

After India joined this project in 2008, both Pakistan and India have a keen interest in the energy resources of Central Asia. The TAPI pipeline project is an instrument for both Central Asia and South Asia to integrate their economy with each other. Apart from the development of Afghanistan and the regional integration of both regions, it is important to look after the development, which is going on in the areas the TAPI pipeline passes through. So far, the expenditure is concerned, recently ADB presented updates and it is noted that the estimated capital cost has doubled to 7.6 billion US dollars⁴⁶. The cost increase was attributed to a sharp increase in the price of steel, an increase in construction cost, and an increase in the cost of the compressor station.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ India to produce gas in Turkmenistan, Kazakh News Agency, April 2008, available at <http://www.inform.kz/showarticle>. Accessed on June 8, 2020.

⁴⁶ *Delay in TAPI projects doubled its cost*: ADB, Daily Times Lahore, Pakistan, 24 April 2008, <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp>

⁴⁷ *India facilitated to join TAPI: GSFA signed*, Business Recorder Islamabad, Pakistan, 25 April 2008, <http://www.brecoder.com/index.php>.

In Afghanistan, more than 1000 industrial units have been planned near the pipeline route and would need gas for their operation. Around 300 industrial units near the pipeline route had already been established.⁴⁸ Afghanistan's geographic position is essential to the initiatives' success. If the projects are completed without problems or delays, it would likely be regarded as India's greatest accomplishment because it will meet the country's energy needs. Iran separately offered an alternate route through Afghanistan and Pakistan to supply the Iranian gas pipeline to India in the interim. The IPI gas pipeline project is impacted by the US-Iranian dispute over the latter's nuclear programme. The US has opposed the IPI project due to the ongoing sanctions on Iran. It has protested Pakistan's decision to move through with the \$7.5 billion gas pipeline project. In April 2010, US Assistant Secretary of State Robert Blake informed Pakistan that now is not the time to conduct such business with Tehran. The US has also attempted to persuade India to forgo joining IPI in favour of finding alternate energy sources to meet its needs. As an alternative to the IPI pipeline, the US has sponsored and backed the construction of the TAPI gas pipeline. The IPI project is not only being delayed by US opposition, though. The IPI project has also been impacted by disagreements over matters related to pricing mechanisms, security guarantees, transit costs, and other issues.⁴⁹

4.8 Chapter Summary

For India to connect with Central Asia and meet its energy needs, Afghanistan is a crucial player. Afghanistan is crucial for building the bridge between South Asia and Central Asia, not just for India. In this environment, India's approach to engagement with Central Asia is cautiously optimistic, with an emphasis on the creation of a proactive and significant strategy that gives the region top priority. India cannot engage with Central Asia without Afghanistan, yet access to the region is necessary to maintain stability with Afghanistan and maintain good relations with the Afghan government. The New great game is very important in this region. In addition to Russia, China, and other neighbours like Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan, it also encompasses security, geopolitics, and economic interests for Americans and Europeans. It appears that China is utilizing Pakistan and Iran to increase its influence while the United States

⁴⁸ Delay in TAPI projects doubled its cost: ADB, Daily Times Lahore, Pakistan, 24 April 2008, <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp>.

⁴⁹ *TAPI Gas pipeline*, The Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, <https://idsa.in/taxonomy/term/617>. Access on 25 March 2021.

intends to remain the energy superpower for the foreseeable future. But India has a different strategy to employ; despite its interest in Central Asia's energy resources, India is still using its political diplomacy and participation in various development projects to play the Soft Power card in order to meet its energy needs. India is also taking part in initiatives like TAPI, IPI, and CASA-1000 to meet its energy needs. These three initiatives are crucial for India. South Asia and Central Asia as a result of the regional decline in Islamic radicalism, which has improved the environment for regional development projects, cooperation has been advancing quickly. India has also begun investing in a number of Central Asian sectors, particularly the automotive and pharmaceutical sectors. Despite all of India's involvement in Central Asia and Afghanistan, insecurity continues to be a significant obstacle to any development involving Afghanistan and Pakistan. It is challenging to forecast the environment in South Asia in the future with Afghanistan. With the installation of a new government and the departure of foreign troops, Afghanistan is transitioning. A vacuum of power in Afghanistan and Central Asia would open up new opportunities for regional and international players to compete there.

Subsequently, Indian endeavors to get into Central Asian vitality have met with limited victory. Likely, Indian endeavors were prior not as overwhelming as they ought to have been in spite of the fact that the slant has presently been impressively reversed in support of a dynamic engagement. India faces numerous challenges in Central Asia and these got to be overcome. To begin with, separated from the landlocked status of the CARs, India's need for geological contiguity with the Central Asian locale is an obstacle. The development of a new pipeline framework exceedingly depends on other nations, and the prevailing political and geo-political contemplations. From the Indian perspective, it limits India from setting up a good bonding with Central Asia. India is an emerging market economy whereas Central Asian countries are modest economies, which rely on international trade for many of their needs. As a result, trade

between India and Central Asia has great potential.⁵⁰ India's trade with Central Asia is about \$2Bn compared to China's \$60 Bn.⁵¹

India's involvement in Central Asia during the post-Soviet era was motivated by the desire to further New Delhi's interests in a number of sectors. Giving New Delhi a sizable imprint on the region's hydrocarbon map is the most crucial one because it would allow India to diversify and secure the energy supplies, it needs to maintain her growing momentum. In this strategically significant area, it's also critical to keep an eye out for drug trafficking and potential weapons proliferation. India's long-term strategic management of its geopolitical interests, impacts, and participation in Central Asia is referred to as a geo-strategy. With a goal to develop long-term cooperative cooperation with each of the nations in the area, India has stepped up its engagement with the CARs in a much more targeted manner. Since 1991, India has made a consistent effort to forge close political ties with all the nations of Central Asia. The conclusion of the cold war fundamentally altered India's foreign policy environment. India eventually moved from being a poor developing country to a rising power, although one with significant poverty and inequality inside its boundaries. India's standing within institutions of global governance has increased since the 1990s as a result of its increased economic clout, general political stability, and growing international prominence. However, India's interaction with them has been uneven, with unsatisfying outcome.

⁵⁰ P Agrawal and S. Sangita. "Trade Potential between India and central Asia", The Journal of applied Economic Research, 2017;11(4):418-448, Available at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0973801017722268?journalCode=mar> accessed on 25 February 2022

⁵¹ Saaransh Mishra. "India on the right track to bolster relations with Central Asia". Observer Research Foundation. 13 December 2021. Available at: <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/india-on-the-right-track-to-bolster-relations-with-central-asia/>

Conclusion

India and Afghanistan have historically been powerful and friendly. The Afghan civil conflicts damaged its relationships. India became the biggest regional donor of humanitarian relief and rehabilitation funds after the Taliban were overthrown. In light of ongoing tensions and issues with Pakistan, the newly democratically elected Afghan government boosted its ties with India. In terms of strategy, Afghanistan is important to India's foreign policy. Both an ongoing source of concern for Pakistan and a constant in Indian foreign policy has been Afghanistan. The Indian subcontinent is still accessible through Afghanistan. Afghanistan was used as a barrier between two adversarial countries. Afghanistan has maintained an important location due to its proximity to Iran, Pakistan, and the Central Asian States. India's policy toward Afghanistan has largely been dictated by its goals in preventing anti-Indian terrorism, countering Pakistan's influence, gaining access to the Central Asian region, boosting its influence there, and becoming a player in the new great game. Afghanistan's stability is crucial for the security of India and the rest of South Asia, and there is a chance for a regional solution there. Afghanistan is the key to India's successful Central Asia strategy. Undoubtedly, Afghanistan is a crucial partner in the area for projecting its power position and securing its access to Central Asia's undeveloped, energy-rich markets.

Manmohan Singh announced the establishment of a "Strategic Partnership" between India and Afghanistan in a joint statement made on May 12, 2011. The partnership was formally signed in October of the same year and will allow the two countries to discuss and work together on issues of shared concern as well as closely coordinate at UN and other international and regional summits. India has always had a stake in seeing Afghanistan remain stable. It is crucial for Indian officials to remain dedicated to their relations with Afghanistan given Pakistan's support for the Afghan Taliban and several other terrorist organisations. Further highlighting the necessity for India to have a well-defined and long-term vision in its relations with Afghanistan is the growing Chinese presence and investments in Pakistan. India's interest in Afghanistan is primarily perceived as a result of its geographic location at the intersection of central, southern, and western Asia as well as its desire to play the New Great Game. Building local Afghan institutions and capabilities is the main goal of India's development cooperation, which covers the entire country of Afghanistan. India has actively contributed to the growth of Afghanistan based on the belief that Afghanistan's ability to contribute to

regional stability through social and economic growth. Along with geopolitical considerations, India's help to Afghanistan is motivated by love and service to others. India is aware of the difficulties Afghanistan faces.

India's strong humanitarian concern in Afghanistan is seen in its adoption of 100 villages for integrated rural development by bringing solar power and rainwater collecting technologies. Other intangibles exist, such as goodwill and trust, which can be transformed into reciprocal trust and gain. Given Afghanistan's historical ties to Russia, its proximity to Pakistan, and the American involvement in the war-torn nation, it is an intriguing example with global implications. Aside from this, India has a significant stake in Afghanistan's reconstruction because it is an Islamic nation and because India and Afghanistan have historically had close ties.

India has been working with Afghanistan in a few specific areas, and the results have been fruitful in many ways. There is undoubtedly opportunity for improvement by exploring the worries of the Afghan people and making necessary course corrections. Agriculture is one area where India might have made a significant contribution to the people of Afghanistan. Agriculture is the foundation of Afghanistan's economy, yet the country has limited water resources, and because Afghanistan lacks adequate canal infrastructure, 80 percent of its water sources cannot be used for irrigation. Afghanistan is also a disaster-prone nation. India relies heavily on its agricultural industry and has a long history with agrarian operations. Therefore, India plays a significant role in agriculture and may share and impart a variety of experiences that Indian In a study carried out by ABC News in late December 2008 and early January 2009, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 1534 adult Afghans from all 34 provinces, who made up "A Random National Sample." India was regarded favourably by nearly three out of four Afghans, making it the most well-liked nation there. Gary Langer's article, "Frustration with War, Problems in Daily Life Send Afghan's Support for U.S. Efforts Stumbling," The Afghan agricultural system needs to be supported by the government or Indian farmers. Unfortunately, India is not doing much to assist Afghanistan in this regard because India's strategy does not extend beyond the dialogue system. As a result, the region is dealing with more issues than anticipated because problems in one area of the territory affect other areas as well as the entire region.

India provides educational aid to Afghan students, which could have a significant future impact on the social fabric of Afghans. In India, there are thousands of students. However, there were primarily two issues that Afghan students had to deal with in India. First, it has to do with the issue of how scholarships are categorised and the lack of collaboration between different ministries in India and Afghanistan. Second, the majority of scholarships offered to Afghan students are in the fields of politics, economics, and other social sciences. There are surprisingly few students in Afghanistan's crucial engineering, agriculture, and medical universities. Both classification and focusing on certain vocations are necessary for Afghanistan, as is continuing the provision of scholarships to the Afghan people.

It is clear that cooperation between nations is essential to combating the terrorism issue in the region. It is a known truth that Pakistan harboured bases for terrorists on its soil, making Pakistan all the more significant in this cooperation belt. And the three nations most heavily impacted by terrorist activity are Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. To bring about peace and stability in the region, all of the nations must assert themselves and oppose any state-sponsored terrorism. It is important to remember how important the United States is to the region in this. It has a suspicious interest in stopping terrorism in Afghanistan. It encourages Pakistan to exploit its territory to expand its sphere of influence in the neighbourhood in the name of terrorism. The two nations' current relationship is centred on security and strategic concerns in the area, reflecting the realism viewpoint that "security" should be the primary concern of foreign policy. India's approach to its relations with Afghanistan is therefore changing from an idealist to a realistic perspective. India considers its own security as well as the security of the region to be entwined with that of Afghanistan. For its own security as well as the security of the entire region, India must provide Afghanistan with military assistance in order to remove terrorism and any other security threats there.

Therefore, the connection between India and Afghanistan beginning in 2001 marks the start of their partnership's golden era. Both nations started to be inspired by their previous interactions and sought to adamantly resuscitate through collaboration on their respective key capabilities. Afghanistan recognizes India's strategic interest in Afghanistan and beyond to the energy-rich Central Asian nations, and it has made concurrent efforts to make that interest a reality while also seeking India's generous assistance, which is primarily given on a humanitarian basis, to

stabilize and rebuild the infrastructure that has been devastated by the country. Both nations have made serious efforts to institutionalize democracy that is localized and reflective of Afghan societal values. Both nations believe in the values of democracy and condemn the fundamentalist elements that have played a "spoilsport" role between different countries in the region.

Because of the two nations' desire to maximize their power by strengthening their already-established historical and civilizational ties, mutual understanding between the two nations reached an all-time high. This was caused by concerns about national security. The unusually frequent high-level visits between the two nations; their joint efforts to create an economically integrated South Asia; old projects like the Salma Dam that have been renamed the India-Afghanistan Friendship Dam; the Zaranj-Delaram Highway that is popularly known by India as the Afghanistan Road to Friendship; on social media, young Afghans who are thanking and appreciating India's commitment and referring to the two nations as "Borderless Neighbours" and the two nations' generous and admirable acts are consistent with the provisions of the Treaty of Friendship between the Governments of India and the Royal Government of Afghanistan on Strategic Partnership between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Republic of India. The unusually frequent high-level visits between the two nations; their joint efforts to create an economically integrated South Asia; old projects like the Salma Dam, now known as the India-Afghanistan Friendship Dam; the Zaranj- Delaram Highway, also known as the Afghanistan Road to Friendship; and their social media posts on thanking and praising India for their commitment, which they refer to as the "India Road to Friendship." There would be "everlasting peace and friendship between the two Governments who will further seek to maintain and expand the cordial relations existing between the people of their respective countries," according to India's declaration of 4 October 2011. The goodwill established so far between the two great ancient nations will continue to blossom in light of the words above-scripted.

Recommendations

Keeping mind, the broad the broad perspective of the proposed research, the following recommendation need to be addressed.

India must continue to contribute economic assistance in Afghanistan, but it needs to take a more organised approach to determine the goal and extent of each project. Large infrastructure projects may be less possible in the short term as Afghanistan's security situation worsens. However, India needs to keep supporting Afghanistan's socioeconomic sector.

India needs to considerably increase the flow of military hardware to Afghanistan, especially if it wants to bolster its air force. Additionally, it needs to increase the ANSF's training and capacity-building support. It must aggressively carry out the pertinent clauses of the Agreement on Strategic Partnership in order to accomplish this. However, the public diplomacy around such actions should stress that they are merely a means to a civil end: a stable, diverse, and forward-moving Afghanistan.

India must maintain its patience and not anticipate any big bilateral actions from the National Unity Government of Afghanistan, which is preoccupied with its own problems. Additionally, India must continue to respect Afghanistan's desire to give Pakistan a chance to bring about peace, whether through the currently deadlocked peace process or any upcoming peace initiatives. In order to decide whether Afghanistan is willing to bear the political price of a Pakistan-backed peace, Kabul should consult with agreeable Afghan parties. Additionally, it needs to do a better job of incorporating and articulating the viewpoint of the Afghan people in international negotiations.

India could look into the possibility of delivering trustworthy and reasonably priced pharmaceuticals to Afghanistan. Given that Afghanistan currently imports cheap medications from Pakistan with lax quality monitoring, this area calls for urgent assistance. India can immediately donate affordable test kits to Afghan hospitals and clinics to help them undertake medical procedures.

In order to open Pakistani markets to Indian trade, India could use the SAARC forum to pressure Pakistan into granting overland trade access. India and Afghanistan should exert pressure on Pakistan to take part in regional commerce or risk being left out in order to achieve this goal using the newly negotiated transit agreement between Iran and Afghanistan as leverage.

India should actively participate in narrative-building, keeping in mind that a war of ideas will be a crucial component of Afghanistan's destiny over the next ten years. To do this, a number of actions can be taken. It is crucial to emphasise Afghanistan's strengths rather than just its security issues, and there is a need to more actively confront the Pakistani concept of strategic depth. In order to address claims that it is using its consulates in Afghanistan to undermine Pakistan, India must also engage in public diplomacy. This is essential in light of the advice of Afghan analysts, who claim that certain Afghan circles are inclined to believe these accusations.

Instead of delegating this responsibility to Pakistan, India should represent the security interests of Afghanistan in Washington. Instead of supporting the existing trilateral collaboration between India, Afghanistan, and China, it must portray these interests in the framework of an overall vision of the country. While India can benefit from China's "One Belt, One Road initiative" in Afghanistan, China has influence over the Pakistani military and is interested in a stable Afghanistan.

The security perspective overlooks India-Afghan relations, despite the enormous potential for trade and economic growth. India should concentrate on the economic side of the relationship because security and the economy go hand in hand.

Since it is anticipated that the Taliban's role will expand once US forces leave Afghanistan, it is crucial to maintain back channels of communication with them now. The Chabahar Port in Iran is a crucial pillar in achieving India's foreign policy goals in West and Central Asia. Chabahar Port is crucial for Afghanistan as it offers an alternate channel for trade with other nations while avoiding Pakistan. Economic sanctions against Iran have diminished its usefulness, but since India has committed a lot of resources and time to this project, it is crucial to protect strategic assets from outside aggression.

While friendly relations with Pakistan are in both India's and Afghanistan's best interests, they cannot be mandated due to the threat of terrorism in the region. For the benefit of the entire area, it is preferable to refute the myth that there are good and bad terrorists in Pakistan. It is possible to lessen the pressure that major world powers are putting on Pakistan to halt its support of terrorism. Both in India and Afghanistan, the security situation will undoubtedly improve as a result.

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