

India-Afghanistan Relations in Post Taliban Regime

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Abstract— India has played a pivotal role in the reconstruction process in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is a neighbour of India and a member of South Asian association for regional corporation (SAARC). The need for a Stable Afghanistan, security and development is mutually reinforced, and the establishment of peace and security remains essential. After the overthrow of the Taliban, India established diplomatic relations with the newly established government and provided aid, Afghanistan's recent political transformation starkly confirms the current witnessing of the transformation of the role of the entire South Asian region with in global geostrategic re-alignments. The US disengagement from Afghanistan put India and China into a new competitive scenario of cultivating their respective Relations with Afghanistan. Relations between India and Afghanistan are characterized by strong historical and cultural links. The two nations share common ideals in the domain of foreign policy, such as adherence to multilateralism, respect for a rule-based international order and eliminating the North-South divide. The article examines how the Indian policy towards Afghanistan even after the takeover of the Taliban stresses norm development and transcendental power as India strives for a peaceful and stable Afghanistan marked by a strong democracy and rule of law. India's security concerns in Afghanistan after the seizure of the Taliban are also emphasized.

Index Terms— India–Afghanistan Strategic Partnership, Post-Taliban Political Transition, Regional Geostrategic Realignment, Regional Security Complex (South Asia–Central Asia), Post-Conflict State Building, Democratic Reconstruction and Rule of Law.

I. INTRODUCTION

India and Afghanistan historically have shared close cultural and political ties and the complexity of their diplomatic history reflects this fact India was among the first known communist states to recognise the government installed by the Soviet Union after its 1979 invasion of Afghanistan New Delhi supported successive government in Kabul until the rise of the

Taliban in 1990s but like most countries Indian neighbour recognised the Taliban Egyptians of power in 1996 only South Arabia Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates recognised the Taliban regime following the 9/11 attacks and the US-led war in Afghanistan that resulted ties between India and Afghanistan grow is strong once again.

During the US lead invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 India offered intelligence and other forms of support for the coalition forces after the overthrow of the Taliban India established diplomatic relations with the newly established democratic government provide aid and participated in the reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan's recent political transformation has starkly confirmed the countries in irritable connectedness to volatile global geopolitics currently witnessing the transformation of the role of entire South Asia region within global Geo strategic realignments The US disengagement from Afghanistan put India in a China into a new competitive scenario of cultivating their respective relation with Afghanistan. The usual and the Taliban signed a peace deal in Doha on 29 Feb 2020 to end the war in Afghanistan marking A milestone in America's longest-ever war according to the peace agreement the US agreed to withdraw 500 troops from Afghanistan in 135 days reducing its troops strained to 8600. The US and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation also agreed to withdraw all troops from the country by 13 April 2021. The Taliban on its part decided that it would prevent al Qaeda and other terrorist organisations from planning and organising operating attacks against the US and its allies in areas under its control. The Taliban also led to participation in an intra-Afghan dialogue to be held on 10 March 2020 in Oslo Norway. As a confidence-building measure, the agreement included a prisoner exchange with two 1000-gun security personnel to be set free in exchange for 500 Taliban prisoners by the time that I log will

take place. The withdrawal of troops however is not too contingent on the prisoner exchange. The conditional peace deal is not without its downsides the peace agreement will likely note anger about peace and stability in Afghanistan the Taliban government was not party to the agreement. Taliban are continuing to carry out two attacks against the Afghan forces and there has been no reduction in violence. Despite US efforts, there is no sign of a presidential revival between President Ghani and its rival Abdullah abating soon leading to a properly functioning government. Even if there is a reduction in violence and a temporary or partial ceasefire, many things will not last long. There is pessimism regarding the Taliban cutting ties with al Qaeda and other international terrorist organisations. In turn the deal is successfully implemented such sections of the Taliban could be expected to play a larger role in Afghanistan time politics. This is hardly desirable for a state like II to have serious concerns about the US-Taliban peace deal especially the withdrawal of American and NATO troops. New Delhi worries that intra-Afghan dialogue is first an end to violence by declaring a ceasefire second an intra-Afghan dialogue for lasting peace third the Taliban cut ties with terrorist organisations such as al Qaeda and 4th U.S. troops withdraw by April 2 2021. Fail and that in the absence of U.S. troops, the Afghan security forces will be unable to hold off the Taliban. Some in India's restlessness that the Taliban will capture power in Kabul and re-establish an Islamic immediate switch will pose a threat to India's security and strategic interests (Singh 2020, Sharma 2020) ¹.

India's end of Coniston has historical and political good ties India ascents in Afghanistan have been targeted by the Haqqani group and India has invested in Afghanistan in the presence of US-led troops. India has interconnected goals first India wants a plural and democratic Afghanistan envisioning it as an Islamic Republic with an inclusive national government. To that end, it has extended political diplomatic and economic support to Kabul and invested billions of dollars in building state capacity. According to Harsh London Singler former Indian ambassador the United States democracy and constitutional order in Afghanistan are the major gains achieved in their last 18 years and we believe these are worth preserving (Shringla 2019) ². second New Delhi wants to balance minimised Pakistan's influence in Afghanistan its

interest in Afghanistan is bound up with its longstanding revival agree with Pakistan. Islamabad fears that strong ties between New Delhi and Kabul will undermine its security as a result Pakistan has sought strategic depth in Afghanistan since the 1970s favouring blind and favourable systems and trying to minimise India's influence. It was instrumental in the formation of the Taliban after the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989. Pakistan's army and its intelligence agency, Inter-Services Intelligence provided it with arms training and Political and diplomatic support. After the Taliban government was overthrown in 2001, Pakistan provided sanctuary to its leadership, along with fighters found refuge in the tribal areas along the Afg-Pak border. Pakistan has also allegedly provided shelter, arms, training and political and diplomatic support to a plethora of terrorist organizations such as Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Hizbul Mujahideen, Harkat-ul Ansar and Haqqani network among others to conduct terrorist attacks in India and Indian interests in Afghanistan. By contrast, India would like to see Afghanistan develop into a bulwark against Islamic Terrorism. India is aware that terrorist attacks in Indian Kashmir increased significantly when the Taliban were in power in Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, to achieve its goals; India has invested approximately US\$3 billion in Afghanistan to Develop infrastructure and human resources development in various sectors such as education, agriculture, health, water management and tourism among others.

Under the 2011 Strategic Partnership Agreement between India and Afghanistan, India has trained, equipped and launched capacity capacity-building programme for the Afghan security forces. It has also provided small arms and a small number of attack Helicopters. Apart from sending Indian para-military forces to protect Indian citizens and projects in Afghanistan, India has refrained from putting boots on the ground to support Afghanistan's security forces. It would like, however, to use Afghanistan as a springboard to increase trade and commerce, diplomatic ties and influence in energy-rich Central Asia, especially oil-rich Kazakhstan and gas-rich Uzbekistan. Afghanistan also serves as a case for India's values and political system, a champion of pluralist democracy.

II. INDIA'S CONCERN:

Some in India believe that in the absence of building a peace deal involving all the parties, including the government in Kabul, a US withdrawal from Afghanistan may lead to the country becoming a battleground for rivalry and influence between regional powers, especially Iran Pakistan and India. In particular, they are concerned that Afghanistan could become a fertile ground for attacks on Indian citizens and interest by Pakistan and its proxies. It may allow Pakistan to increase covert operations against India after the US withdrawal, which would be difficult to attribute, hard to defend and challenging to punish (Constantino 2020) ³. India's options for managing these eventualities are limited. It could try to forge an understanding with the Taliban, with which it has had discreet contacts (Paliwal 2017)⁴. These have helped secure the release of hostages such as a group of Taliban engineers held captive in 2019. Some in New Delhi take a practical view that a more open dialogue with the Taliban is necessary and opening their office in Doha, the Taliban have shown increasing flexibility to overcharge from powers previously opposed the insurgents, including Iran and Russia. The pragmatics not that the Taliban know have publicly expressed this desire to establish good ties with the Taliban argues they will need to add expertise if they return to power in Malhotra in 2020. However, New Delhi remains sure about establishing formal ties with the Taliban. It'll recognise that the group is truly close to Pakistan, despite the stress in Pakistan Taliban relations, and two to rate of another militant group of hostiles to India. More ever India remains keen note to isolate the current government in Kabul it is for this reason that India didn't join the US Taliban peace talks despite repeated requires from former President Hamid Karzai (Basu 2020)⁵. India continues to place its bets on an inclusive and multi-ethnic Afghan government.

On the other hand, India could opt to provide and hence support to the government in Kabul including security assistance. To date, New Delhi has made it clear that the US or another friendly country should provide security, while it focuses on the while on contractions of infrastructure including hospitals and the education and training of Afghan people and government official trains. Afghanistan's Sovereignty and Regional Order, India stresses Afghanistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity at international

forums like the UN Security Council, calling for balanced global engagement with the Taliban that prioritises Afghan stability instead of punitive isolation (Times of Oman)⁶. Diplomatic and Strategic positioning, India seeks to remain engaged with Afghanistan to avoid strategic isolation and counterbalance China and Pakistan in the region. New Delhi has revived its diplomatic presence and is upgrading its technical mission to a full embassy, signifying a careful move toward deeper ties while watching Taliban actions closely (The Indian Express)⁷. In any case, India's limited military capabilities and merger expanded capital city including non-existent independent intelligence capacity and limited surveillance essence. As well as lack of land access to Afghanistan constrains India's military options in Afghanistan. Their probability of India intervening military or dispatching troops to Afghanistan to fill the void after the US withdrawal is therefore extremely low. After 2023, India's policy towards the Taliban regime has shifted from restricted humanitarian engagement to pragmatic diplomatic outreach, highlighted by the upgrading of its Kabul mission to an embassy and high-level visits in 2025. Nevertheless, New Delhi continues to balance its strategic interests especially concerns over terrorism, governance weaknesses, and regional power dynamics involving Pakistan while pursuing humanitarian cooperation and people-to-people ties (the Indian express)⁸.

Similarly, India's option for limited military action to punish attacks on its interests is next syllable even India is an option for limited military action to punish attacks on its interests, even if it could identify who had carried them out given the multitude of armed groups operating in Afghanistan, attribution of food responsibility would be difficult, especially if U.S. intelligence capabilities in the country were diminished after the withdrawal. Moreover, even if responsibility could be established, finding and punishing that response would be no easy task. An attack on the Indian embassy or consulate, or Indian citizens working on a project in Afghanistan would in all likelihood not lead to a proper strike against the offenders of the attack. India didn't retaliate against the bombing of the Indian embassy in Kabul in July 2008, allegedly committed by the Haqqani network. Similarly, there was no retaliation after the four attacks on the Indian consulate in Jalalabad committed in 2007

or after the 2009 bombing of the Indian embassy. India does not possess the military capabilities to undertake covert missions in Afghanistan or use missiles to launch attacks against terrorist groups based in that country. It would be impossible to carry out retaliatory strikes like those undertaken by Narendra Modi's government after the attack on the Indian Army Bridgen headquarters in would be in 2016 or the Pulwama suicide bombing in Feb 2019. If the peace deal doesn't elevate the risk of terrorist attacks, can be as options for protecting its diplomats and citizens would be limited to reducing their number in Afghanistan, which would diminish New Delhi's capacity and influence.

Finally, India could respond to the peace deal by addressing long-standing domestic security challenges that can be and have been exploited by outsiders, including groups that have found centuries in Afghanistan in the past In the 90s Taliban rule allowed several anti-Indian groups, focused on Kashmir, to establish themselves in the country, and huge it as a base of trained militants for cross border rates and terrorist attack. New Delhi is concerned that the impending US withdrawal from Afghanistan could allow such groups 2 operate within its border once more. There is evidence that India's intelligence agency advised the Modi government to act in Jammu Kashmir to try to mitigate the trade that could arise from anti-India terrorist organisations after the US vital troops from Afghanistan (Gupta 2019)⁹. Modi's government's decisions to move to abrogate article 370 of the Indian constitution, which gave a special status to Jammu Kashmir soon after its election win in May 2019, and to divide the unrest state into two union territories is Ladakh, and Jammu and Kashmir appears to have been partly motivated by these concerns. These actions permit New Delhi to intervene more directly in Kashmir and manage the security situations; it should worsen because of attacks carried out by groups based in Pakistan or a Taliban-dominated Afghanistan.

III. THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS RESEARCH PAPER:

1. To understand India's policy to contain terrorism for this reason with the Taliban regime.
2. To understand India's policy in Afghanistan after the takeover by the Taliban re-established as a government.

3. Study the effects as the government of the Taliban's works, affecting India's ongoing projects and planning in Afghanistan.
4. Examine the US and the Taliban peace agreement implementation.
5. The next step of India, in balancing or dealing with the Taliban in Afghanistan as a "Padoshi Mitra"

IV. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH PAPER:

India and Afghanistan have a strong relationship based on historical and cultural links. India's has played a significant role in the reconstruction's rehabilitation of Afghanistan. Moreover, the strategic partnership agreement, (SPA) reinforced the strong, vibrant and multi-faceted relations between the two countries.

The contact between the people of modern-day India and Afghanistan has existed since the days of the Indus Valley civilisation. During the Soviet intervention (1979-89), India was the only South Asian nation to be recognised as a nation. In 2005 pliant and favourable systems tried to Taliban after its intelligence agency, InterServices Intelligence provided it with arms training and political and diplomatic support. After the Taliban government was overthrown in 2001, Pakistan provided sanctuary to its leadership, along with fighters found refuge in the tribal areas along the Afg-Pak border. Pakistan has also allegedly provided shelter, arms, training and political and diplomatic support to a plethora of terrorist organizations such as Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Hizbul Mujahideen, Harkat-Ul Ansar and Haqqani network among others to conduct terrorist attacks in India and Indian interests in Afghanistan. By contrast, India would like to see Afghanistan develop into a bulwark against Islamic terrorism. India is aware that terrorist attacks in Indian Kashmir increased significantly when the Taliban were in power in Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, to achieve its goals; India has invested approximately US\$3 billion in Afghanistan to develop infrastructure and human resource development in various sectors such as education, agriculture, health, water management and tourism among others. Under the 2011 Strategic Partnership Agreement between India and Afghanistan, India has trained, equipped and launched a capacity-building programme for the Afghan security forces. It has also provided small arms and a small number of attack helicopters. Apart from

sending Indian para-military forces to protect India like, however, to use Afghanistan as a springboard to increase trade and commerce, diplomatic ties and influence in energy-rich Central Asia, especially oil-rich Kazakhstan and its gas-rich political system, a champion of pluralist democracy.

Some in India believe that in the absence of a binding peace deal, involving all parties, including the government in Kabul, a proposed Afghanistan membership in the South Asian Association for the Regional Corporation (SAARC) and an Indian government proposal, Afghanistan became a member of static in 2007. Indo- the Afghan revolution was signed by the strategic partnership agreement signed between the two countries in 2011.

Afghanistan is important for India in several regions reasonable balance of power, strategic location, security concerns, energy and resources Regional Corporation, cultural ties, connectivity, strategic partnership agreement and most importantly the heart of Asia process or the Istanbul process, it started in 2011 to provide more assistance to Afghanistan. The process has three main pillars political consultations confidence-building measures CBMS, Corporation with regional organisations. This platform was established to address the shared challenges and interests of Afghanistan with its neighbour and regional partners. The heart of Asia is comprised of 14 participating countries, 17 supporting countries and 20 supporting regional and international organisations. India hosted the 6th ministerial conference of Heart of Asia in December 2016 at Amritsar.

India is important for Afghanistan for several reasons defence corporations, people-to-people ties, military training, multilateral corporations like Saarc memberships and Chabahar port etc, disaster assistant emergency relief, development aids line of credit too. There are several roadblocks in a funny Stan and India relationship including Pakistan's role, terrorist groups, economic and infrastructure challenges, China factor, drug trafficking, national security, rising international engagement, and mutual benefits.

Taliban encouraged India to reopen its mission in Kabul resumed direct flights to the country and also accepted Afghan military trainees. India needs a long-term strategic approach towards Afghanistan that waves political, economic, military and diplomatic dimensions into a coherent whole within the framework of a grand strategy. India's gun policy must

be based on a clear-cut understanding of India's strategic goals in the reason and the regional and global strategic environment and the regional and global strategic. Is necessary for both sides India and the Taliban to consider each other's concerns and improve diplomatic and political-economic relations. To increase its investment in Afghanistan, particularly in areas such as infrastructure development, agriculture and energy. This would help improve the Afghan economy create jobs and also deepen India's economic engagement with Afghanistan. Research methods, this research paper used primary sources like the Ministry of External Affairs official documents, Indian Council of World Affairs reports, CRS reports, embassy papers of Afghan and India, official reports and secondary data collected from newspaper editorials, articles, UN reports, webinar and saving us or it is in.

V. RESULTS:

Wide spreading knowledge of the relationship between Afghanistan and India. This research paper mentioned information about the Taliban and its role in Afghanistan and the need to change the policy of India towards the Taliban.

VI. CONCLUSION:

India's relationship with Afghanistan is multi-layered. There is a military and security angle, under which India aspires for stability within Afghanistan. By making Taliban the central focus of their relationship India and Afghanistan overlooked the great potential for their bilateral ties. Indeed, the Indian government's newly pragmatic policy towards Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover in 2021 has reduced a strategic partnership to one that is focused on tactical short-term benefits. Additionally, if this relationship endures into the longer term, it will help prop up the Taliban regime and therefore strengthen and institutionalize Islamic radicalism in Afghanistan, with heavy costs for the security of the reason. New Delhi has the potential to play a more responsible and contractive role in Afghanistan.

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