



Major Powers' Interest in Afghanistan and the Impact on Pakistan

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Over the last four decades, the Afghan crisis has become a source of unease and turmoil in the region. It remained the cornerstone of the interests of regional as well as global powers. Moscow's mistake to intervene in Afghanistan revealed its unassailable vulnerability. After the disintegration of Soviet Union Kabul has again become the center of attention of 9/11 terror attacks and importance of US policy in the region. The United States' consistent set of interests and concerns in Afghanistan are in flux as well and many sanctuaries are deemed to be found in Pakistan from where militants can target US and its allies. Pakistan remained locked in the Afghan conflict and faced a threat of extremism and militancy in various forms. Further complicating the situation is what can only be described as rivalry among the regional powers particularly India, Iran, and Pakistan as they pursue their competing interests. The paper examines the concerns and interests of major powers in continuing conflict in Afghanistan.

Key Words: Turmoil, Vulnerability, 9/11, Sanctuaries, Interests

Introduction

South Asian countries in general while Afghanistan, in particular, are of feudal and tribal nature. Having heterogeneous cultures with unstable economies their political institutions have not yet been strengthened on the pattern of developed countries. The people are divided on the basis of ethnicity, religion, racism, and culture. The entire region has been engulfed with ethnic violence and sectarianism. All the states have differences in various areas including border disputes, mistrust, arms race, competition of superiority and terrorism. Consequently there is found a sense of fear among the smaller states against the major powers of the region.

Afghanistan's strategic location and lying at the crossroad linking the Central Asian States with South Asian region forced major powers to take interest and competing with each other for the purpose of dominance. This paved the way for making Afghanistan battleground of different powers. Continued confrontation in Afghanistan raised the alarming security situation in the region.

The Soviet Union increased its influence during 1970s decade which culminated in its full fledged intervention in 1979. The presence of Red Army on Pakistan's border rose threats which forced it to take diplomatic and military measures to ensure its stability. Both Soviet and Afghan governments deemed these actions of Pakistan detrimental to their motives. As a result Pakistan had to face security issues, internal instability, and deteriorating law and order situation.

The United States' involvement in Afghanistan after 9/11 raised many security and stability threats to Pakistan. The US with international forces fully intervened in Afghanistan. Taliban and Al Qaeda were targeted and destroyed. The whole situation was catastrophic for Pakistan. It became a battleground in the war against terror. The West and U.S. accused Pakistan of playing double games while Taliban were annoyed with Pakistan

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for helping US and allied in their ousting from Kabul. Pakistan was in security dilemma as internal situation had worsened day by day.

Emerging of IS activities on the globe in general while its involvement in Afghanistan in particular complicated the whole scenario. As the plans for withdrawal are going on there is a very possibility of becoming Afghanistan sanctuary of Al Qaeda, Taliban and IS. Moreover civil war can be started as was after Soviet Union withdrawal and there are also the chances of proxy war among the regional as well as major powers.

This article deals with the interests and interventions of regional and major powers in Afghanistan. Kabul's tilt towards Tehran in the changing current scenario has been specially assessed. New Delhi's keen interest in the development of Chabahar port in Iran and development projects in Afghanistan have been chalked out in the article. Its ripple effects on Pakistan have also been widely exposed. Pak-Afghan relationship and Islamabad's main concerns in Kabul have also been overlooked in the article. Moreover war on terror and effects of Afghan Jihad on Pakistan have also been evaluated in this paper.

The Soviet Union and Afghanistan

Afghanistan is situated geographically at the crossroad linking the Indian Ocean with Heartland of Eurasia. Major Powers of the world attached much importance to these regions owing to fulfill their land and naval interests. This region derived the attention of major powers also due to the presence of minerals, gas and oil resources. World powers also focused on this area because of bad health, education conditions, unstable government, fragile communication system as well as bad governance system.

During the 19th-century competition of interests between British Empire and Russia was termed as "Great Game". Afghanistan acted as buffer state between these two powers and their area of interest was to enhance their power in Kabul's affairs in particular while in Central Asia in general (Morgan, 1973).

Moscow's interference in Afghanistan led to start a cold war between two major powers. There was a race for supremacy and Afghanistan became a battleground in the whole scenario. Despite promoting the principle of secularism religion was used by United States to counter Soviet Union's interests in Afghanistan, Middle East and other countries of the region.

Before the Afghan war, Islamic movements all over the Muslim countries were found in a scattered form. The leaders of these movements had the agenda against their governments but devoid of any conceptual framework and power. A well planned and organized resistance was launched against Soviet Union intervention in Afghanistan. The war against Soviet resistance was labeled as "Holy Jihad" by the West (Jones, 2008).

Later on, Jihadi culture did not confine to Afghanistan rather spread over in the world along with other countries of the region. The Washington and Islamabad relationship during 1980s was so cordially that both unitedly gave hard time to Moscow and supported Islamist groups against the Red Army. Both the U.S. and Pakistan had different national security interests in the whole scenario which continued even after the Soviet withdrawal. They were not even awarded the Afghan Jihad's impact on their own respective countries (Taylor, 2014).

Afghan jihad proved to be an outcome of the "legacy of bitterness" in Pak-US relations in the next few decades. Soviet Union withdrawal from Afghanistan was the end of the cold war to whom U.S and its allies benefitted much while Pakistan was left unprotected after Soviet withdrawal to face "jihadi blowback". After Soviet pullout there created a power vacuum to be filled by Mujahedeen factions and different warlords resulted in broke out of civil war. Consequently Afghanistan once again was in the throes of anarchy, chaos and deteriorating law and order situation. Under these circumstances the Taliban rose and entered the fray in 1994. Soon they got tremendous success and swept whole of Afghanistan with 90 percent of the country under their control (Allen, Flournoy & Hanlon, 2013).

After the Soviet invasion, Pakistan sided Mujahedeen resistance in all its manifestation against the Red Army's attack on a sovereign state. During 'Afghan Jihad' and after the conclusion of Geneva Accord Pakistan had more influence over the warring factions and situation than any other state. In the Afghan jihad four main factors could be assessed which played a significant role in security dilemma for Pakistan (Laub, 2014).

Firstly there was an influx of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and they settled everywhere in the country after Soviet Union intervention in Afghanistan. Soon refugees' activities started in the adjacent areas of Pakistan

especially in the province of KPK, FATA, and Baluchistan. About three million Afghan refugees living in various parts of Pakistan were shown in the census scheduled to be held in 2005. This report showed a large portion of the population was under the age of 28 years (Kepel, 2008).

An important thing about the refugees was the emergence of radicals among these who later on shattered the socio-political, religious and security environment in Pakistan. Secondly, a large number of refugees were not alone rather they accompanied with weapons, drugs, and militants who were responsible for the rise of militancy and terrorism in Pakistan. After 1980s social fabric of Pakistani society broken and new kinds of crimes originated due to use of drugs and modern weapons. Criminals were grown stronger than law enforcing agencies. Kalashnikov culture was introduced in society and gangsters used it to rob people/banks and created fear and harassment in society. On the other hand law Enforcement Agencies were lacked modern weapons and equipped with outdated and outmoded weapons (Cheema & Nuri, 2005).

Thirdly Muslim youths belonging to every corner of the world took part in the jihad who fought in the name of Allah. The Afghan war gave a new meaning to global jihad as well as socio-religious and political movements working in different countries of the world. This paved the way for another war which was later on termed as “war on terror”. Pakistan had to face many hardships due to its crucial role as a frontline state in the whole game. A new culture of intolerance, fundamentalism, and extremism was introduced by the jihadists with new developments taking place at the regional and international levels which forced the country into a new security dilemma. The arrival of foreign jihadists affected the social fabric of the tribal society settled on the border area of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Fourthly religious extremism and sectarianism flourished during the Zia-ul-Haq era. Seminaries during Afghan jihad met the interests of Pakistan for a short while but their repercussions on the local population and different schools of thought were deemed far-sighted. Even after the demise of Zia-ul-Haq politics of Pakistan was under the banner of religious extremism (Jalalzai, 2003).

These jihadi organizations not only fully involved in the war against Soviet Union rather exploited the war on terror in Afghanistan and US role in Iraq in their best interests. They manipulated miseries of Iraqi and Afghans with collateral damage to persuade Pakistani youths to launch holy jihad against rest of the world. During 1950s decade there were few Shi'a and about 137 Sunni madrasas in Pakistan. These numbers grew in large and in 1970s the madrasas with students and teachers flourished everywhere in Pakistan (Anzar, 2003).

To counter communism emphasis was laid down on religious motivation and seminaries increased in Pakistan manifold. According to an estimate held in 2008 the figure crossed over 45, 000. The detail of these madrasas was as: Punjab 26000, Baluchistan 5000, Sindh 4000 and NWFP 10000 (Ali, 2012).

United States Interests in Afghanistan

The United States misused Islam during Afghan war as a Cold War weapon which paved the way for fundamentalism and extremism in Pakistan. The democratic and liberal forces in Pakistan after the Cold War remained unsuccessful to flourish the environment for democracy, polity, justice, and liberalization. Under the circumstances Islamic militants got strength and used dissatisfied strata of the society for their ulterior motives. Militants started their activities in the FATA and adjoining areas which later on expanded to whole the country. An interesting thing during the period was the involvement of militant organizations in the public and welfare services which were greater than the government services.

Pakistan found similarity of interests with the United States in Afghan war. After Geneva Accord United States along with other countries of the world completely ignored Afghanistan. During the war on terror Pakistan once again like Afghanistan war drew the attention of US foreign policy and security makers. General Pervez Musharraf fully supported the US in its effort to oust Taliban from Kabul. During his reign Islamabad decided to be part of the coalition which was made against “global war on terror” (Cheema & Nuri, 2005).

In the wake of 9/11 US-supported Northern Alliance to topple Taliban government. Apart from this US remained engaged in making dialogue with Taliban leadership into Pashtun areas of Afghanistan (Christine, 2004).

The ripples did not confine to Afghanistan rather could easily be sought in the tribal areas of Pakistan. Inhabitants around the Durand Line deem themselves a single entity and take the division unnatural. They have similarities in every walk of life including social, cultural, religious and linguistic with common bonds to share

with each other. Anything taking place on one side directly hits the other. In 2002 for the first time in its history Pakistan deployed its troops in FATA to watch the Afghan border. This action was disliked by the religious strata and tribal people. Therefore they turned against the existing government (Khan, 2011).

In Pakistan, a campaign aimed to root out Taliban and Al Qaeda was launched under the policy of “capture and kill”. Consequently various terrorist groups, Taliban and Al Qaeda created law and order with many security problems for Pakistan. They targeted and attacked institutions, high profile civilians, military and paramilitary personnel. They destroyed state property/installations and committed indiscriminate suicide bombing.

Pakistan had to pay a high price in its “military action” while achieved a few success. Pakistan suffered heavy casualties in its effort against “war on terror”. Till May 2017 Pakistan lost 54,458 lives in which there were 19,505 civilians and 5,935 armed personnel with the price of \$ 123.13 billion dollars (Dawn, 2017).

Pakistan’s sacrifices and efforts in the war against terrorism are more than any other country of the alliance as far as the provision of intelligence assistance, use of troops and apprehension of Al Qaeda operatives are concerned. Also the number of casualties suffered by Pakistan is greater than any other country of coalition forces engaged in Afghanistan. However, Washington’s showing of reservations about the services rendered by Pakistan to counter-terrorism is souring the relations between the two allies (Roy & Zahab, 2004).

Islamabad played an effective role in Afghan war against Soviet Union and West acknowledged its services as compared to its role in the war on terror conflict 9/11. Further Indian influence in Afghanistan is disliked by Pakistan. As Islamabad is facing many security and terrorist threats within its boundaries the mounting Indian influence in Afghanistan can increase this menace manifold. Using Afghan soil by India to provide assistance to anti-state elements against Pakistan add worries to Islamabad. Indian involvement in FATA and Baluchistan against anti-Pakistan activities are on record to cite an example Kulbhushan Sudhir Jadhav. So New Delhi’s presence in Kabul is against the stability of Pakistan. Islamabad assures US and its allies that it has done a lot in Afghanistan to gain their objectives. Moreover peace and stability in Kabul are more essential and beneficial for Islamabad’s solidarity than rest of the world (Weitz, 2016).

India’s Role in Afghanistan

After Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, Najibullah government continued in Kabul and Islamic militia group deemed it pro-Soviet Union. In 1992, the Najibullah government was ended and a new regime under Ahmed Shah Masood, Rashid Dostum, and Babrak Karmal formed government. This regime was against Indian interests and motives in Afghanistan. India got a sigh of relief when fight started between Hikmatyar and President Rabbani forces in 1992. Pakistan played an important role to end the differences which led to conclude an agreement between the parties. Accordingly Hikmatyar took the charge as Prime Minister while Rabbani assumed the office of President. In 1994 President Rabbani resigned which paved the way for civil war among warlords in Afghanistan. The coming years proved unfavorable for Indian interests in Afghanistan; ultimately Indian role in Afghan affairs remained extremely limited. Indian objectives in Afghanistan got a severe setback after the rise of Taliban in Kabul. New Delhi did not accept Taliban government and ended diplomatic relationships with Kabul. It left no stone unturned to topple their government in Afghanistan. Moreover it supported anti-Taliban Northern Alliance. This alliance was comprised of different ethnic groups like Tajiks, Uzbeks, Pushtuns, and Hazaras. Apart from India other countries including Russia, Iran, Tajikistan, and West were behind this alliance (Yakolev, 2001).

At the beginning of new century twin cities in U.S.A were attacked which brought a bad fate to the Taliban regime as America alleged these attacks were made by Osama Bin Laden who had links with Taliban. Consequently U.S President Bush launched a military campaign against Taliban government under “Operation Enduring Freedom” which established a pro-US regime in Afghanistan (Javaid & Fatima, 2012).

New Delhi has been persuading multidimensional agenda in Afghanistan. Its relations with the Taliban regime were not good. According to India it would create certain security challenges for India. Furthermore if Taliban regime continued it would undermine Indian investment and future plans in Afghanistan (Fair, 2010).

After the removal of Taliban government, India-Afghanistan cordial relations began during interim Afghan government. In 2011 both countries entered a new phase of strategic relations and a strategic agreement took place which included training of Afghan security forces as well as assistance in the socio-economic matters. This agreement enabled India to use Afghan soil for its future plans and easy access to Central Asian States. Islamabad

was not happy over New Delhi's rising strategic influence in Afghanistan which might create troubles on Pakistan's western borders. Pakistan showed its resentment over India's opening of four consulates near Pakistan's border. These consulates could provide assistance to militant groups involved in creating insurgency in tribal areas and Baluchistan (Javaid & Javaid, 2016).

In December 2001, when Hamid Karzai was appointed as President of Afghanistan's interim government New Delhi abruptly established cordial relations with Kabul and reopened its embassy which was closed during Taliban regime in 1996. Also it opened four consulates in Jalalabad, Mazarsharif, Herat, and Kandhar (Mahmood, Nasir, Zubair & Ahmad, 2016).

Indian objectives that were not fulfilled during Taliban regime got an opportunity to be realized in Hamid Karzai's era and New Delhi entered in strategic partnership with Kabul government in reconstruction projects. India gave aid of US \$ 100 million to Afghanistan and began several development schemes to upgrade Afghanistan's infrastructure (Asif, 2002).

The Afghan government and its international partners welcomed India's constructive role while Pakistan was not happy over India's negative role in using Afghan soil against Pakistan. On the other hand Hamid Karzai government fully supported India in materializing its policy in Afghanistan and becoming regional power in the area. India was the biggest beneficiary in the "war on terror" led by US after 9/11 and regained its lost status in Afghanistan without any major sacrifice (Fishstein & Amiryar, 2015).

Hamid Karzai regime facilitated the Indian government to fulfill its objectives in various ways including i) Engagement of manpower through Afghanistan's reconstruction schemes, ii) Easy access to oil and gas riches Central Asian States and iii) Minimize Pakistan's role in Afghan affairs. To counter Pakistan's interests India invested huge amount of funds in different fields. Islamabad described Karzai government pro-Indian government which could intend in holding anti-state activities against Islamabad especially after the exile of United States led NATO forces from Islamabad. Moreover Pakistan disliked Hamid Karzai's statement regarding Durand Line as a line of hatred dividing Pushtunes of both the countries (Ashraf, 2007).

New Delhi's policy towards Kabul during Hamid Karzai's regime was not only Pakistan centric rather it exposed its motives to become a regional power. The incident of 9/11 changed the whole strategic and security situation of the region which could be described as Hamid Karzai's pro-Indian policy, halting Pakistani influence, US policy of containing Chinese growing influence in South Asia and India's hegemonic designs (Ghosh, 2009).

Indian objectives towards Afghanistan can be traced back in the following way: minimize Islamabad's influence in Afghanistan; improvement of infrastructure through rebuilding and reconstruction to strengthen relationship with Afghans; enhancement of living standard of Afghan people and stability of Afghan economy; easy and safe access to CARs and checking the way of anti-Indian government into power in Kabul (Ganguly, 2012).

During the first decade of 21st-century Indian economic assistance to Afghanistan reached US \$ 2 billion. It also concluded treaty of strategic partnership with Afghanistan even when US forces were withdrawn (Kasturi, 2012).

Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh made it clear to the Afghan government that India would provide all kinds of support to Kabul government in maintaining security and good governance after the expulsion of US-led forces in 2014 (Akhtar & Malik, 2016).

New Delhi has undertaken the Salma Dam project in Herat near Hari Rud River to overcome the energy shortage in Afghanistan (The Hindu, 2019).

By this dam, Afghanistan started to get 42-megawatt electricity. Apart from this various water and power projects were launched in Afghanistan with the collaboration of Indian government. In 2004 during Berlin conference India pledged to spend US D 550 million in the same projects (Mullen & Arora, 2016).

Under the infrastructure development program, New Delhi has made roads over the area more than 700 km in Afghanistan. Delaram-Zarang highway 218 km long in southern province of Afghanistan was worth mentioning under the scheme (The Hindu, 2019).

There is a divergence of interests between New Delhi and Islamabad in Afghanistan matters. India tries its best to minimize Pakistan's role in Afghanistan. Therefore it made cordial relations with every government installed in Kabul to gain its objectives. With the exception of Taliban period Indian influence in Afghanistan

could easily be seen and it enhanced its area of interest to CARs. In past New Delhi with the collaboration of the United States engaged in Afghanistan in various sectors including development projects, institution building and reconstruction of infrastructure, etc. However Washington kept it away in security-related issues. But Trump's administration seems to be more interested in the involvement of India in security matters of Afghanistan (George, 2016).

When Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid a visit to United States both the countries reaffirmed their strategic relations, as well as India's due role in Afghan security affairs, was acknowledged (George, 2017).

Iran's Interests in Afghanistan

Tehran's interests in Kabul are manifold. First of all, it wants to minimize Riyadh's influence in the area. Secondly it intends to maintain good relationship with Hazara and Tajik tribes in Afghanistan to strengthen its relationship with Central Asian States which will help it to establish transit route to Europe. Thirdly by strengthening trade and economic relations with Afghanistan will help it to capture oil market of Afghanistan. Fourthly Iran shares long border with Afghanistan which is 582 miles apart from these rivers in Iran come from Afghanistan. So Iran is more interested in Afghan affairs especially with the settlement of borders and rivers issues with it. Fifthly Afghanistan is also important for Iran due to settlement of a large number of refugees in Iran which it wants return back safely. Moreover Iran's settlement of nuclear deal and lifting of international sanctions pressing it to evolve viable strategy to play an important role in the regional matters (Khan, 2014).

Recently Chabahar port of Iran attracted the attention of regional countries of the region. It is situated in the south of Iran while geographically it lies on Makran coast. Iran has declared it a free port. The majority of the inhabitants of this area belong to Baluch race. They are about 80,000. Main language of the people is Baluchi and their source of income is fishing. The Central Asian States can easily get access to Indian Ocean through this port. An understanding has been taken place among Tehran, New Delhi and Kabul for the safe passage of Indian goods to Afghanistan and Central Asia region through this port. A nominal tariff has been agreed according to this agreement (Yakolev, 2001).

Kabul has an opportunity to develop its trade linkage with the international community through this port. India is main monetary contributor in the completion of the said port. Tehran's strained relations with USA and strict embargos from western countries compelled it to take serious interest in this project. By providing trade and transit facilities to regional states Tehran's economy and trade will grow up firmly. New Delhi will get a lion's share in the whole project.

This port will not only provide a trade route to Afghanistan and Central Asia rather opens Iran's oil as well as gas reserves to rest of the world. To link Afghanistan and Iran a Chabahar-Milak-Zarang-Delaram route is being completed very soon. India has already completed Zarang-Delaram road in Afghanistan. New Delhi setting aside Islamabad has undertaken Indo-Iran gas pipeline project. This will be the replacement of Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline scheme. India is making plan to convince Iran to get gas from Turkmenistan for its northern areas and provide it via Chabahar port from southern gas reserves.

India is taking a keen interest in Chabahar to counter Pakistan's Gwadar port which has been accomplished with the cooperation of China. The Distance between the two ports is 70 km. Kabul will come out from trade and geographic isolation after the functioning of Chabahar port. New Delhi wants to lessen Kabul's dependence on Islamabad and will try to marginalize Pakistan's role in Afghanistan. Kabul can get many benefits from this port like easy access to international trade, import of required goods, attraction of foreign companies to reach minerals of Afghanistan and Indian and Iranian trade to Central Asian States through Afghan territory (Peter, 2010).

Pakistan and Afghanistan

Afghanistan did not recognize Pakistan soon after his birth and was the only country that opposed Pakistan's entry in United Nations when it applied for its membership in 1947. Since then bitterness started in Pak-Afghan relations. Later on Kabul's raising of Pakhtunistan issue further soared the relations between the two countries. Some events like Indo-Pak wars of 1965, 1971 and Sino-Indian war of 1962 widened the gulf between Islamabad

and Kabul while on the other hand paved the way for New Delhi and Kabul to come close to each other (Ganguly & Howenstein, 2009).

Pakistan in its eastern and western side has such neighbors to whom it has a bad relationship since the partition of the sub-continent. India due to certain issues maintains hostile relations with Pakistan and same is the case with Afghanistan on western side. Despite Islamabad's sincere efforts to make cordial relationships with Kabul nothing came out positive from the other side. Both India and Afghanistan posed serious threats to Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Keeping in view these foreign policy makers in Pakistan attach much importance to Islamabad's policy towards both these countries (Hussain, 2002).

New Delhi's closeness with Kabul is to destabilize Pakistan and becoming of regional power. Islamabad took notice of the opening of India's consulates in Afghanistan's cities near Pakistan border which is meant to create insecurity and instability in Pakistan. Indian intelligence agencies are using these consulates against anti-Pakistan activities in tribal areas and providing assistance to Baluch separatists in Baluchistan (Bajoria, 2009).

Indo-Afghan cordial relationship raised many questions in the minds of policymakers in Pakistan. Islamabad is facing strategic encirclement from both neighbors arch-rival India on eastern side while hostile Afghanistan on western side. India backs Afghanistan to raise border issues with Pakistan and terming Durand line as a line of hatred (Ahmadzai, 2010).

The civil and military establishment in Pakistan is fully awarding about the ulterior Indian motives in Afghanistan to corner Pakistan. Therefore it is making all its efforts to remove Afghanistan's concerns injected by India in its mind. It is impossible for Pakistan to cope with the two hostile entities on opposite sides at the same time (Tausif, 2011).

Since the start of the global war on terror in 2001 Pakistan has suffered a lot from any other country in the world. Islamabad has to face serious kind of implications in this war. This war left bad effects on Pakistan's economy and security. Contrary to US and European countries terrorist groups targeted Pakistan cities and jeopardized Pakistan's peace. Pakistan has to face suicide attacks each and every day in busy markets and bazaars. On the other hand there was a great loss of civil and military personnel in the hand of these extremists. Pakistan has to pay a huge price due to this war on terror in Afghanistan (Hussain, 2002).

Pak-Afghan relationship cannot be understood emanated by the official policies and the exchanges made between Islamabad and Kabul. Apart from the interaction found between both the countries, this can be visualized among various interest groups, people, tribes and traders. From 1980s religious, political and madrassa networks of both countries have gained much importance. These informal interactions are unique in terms of habits, traditions, and size. This phenomenon is strengthened due to difficult mountain terrain and weak institutional governance lying on both sides of the border. Any policy based on separating both countries is hard to realize. The interaction of people cannot be interrupted (Yusufzai, 2002).

Afghanistan raised the stunt of an independent "Pashtunistan" soon after the birth of Pakistan. Accordingly, Pashtuns living in the province of northwestern were given the right of seceding and emerged as an independent state. Under the scheme half of West Pakistan including Baluch majority areas were to become part of Pashtunistan (Ross & Vassefi, 2012).

The Afghans did not accept the Durand Line without exposing the nature of their claim. The Pakistanis should realize that Afghanistan is not ready to accept this formal and solid border as it will undermine certain realities relating to geography, history, and demography. The need of the hour is to improve functional and operational management of the border as interest of both the countries lie in this. To make the relationship smooth certain regulatory measures are wanted. Kabul intends to enhance its trade with New Delhi with the help of Islamabad. Due to tension with India Pakistan suspects the close relationship between India and Afghanistan. Enhancement of Indian influence in Afghanistan after 9/11 and working of Indian consulates in Afghanistan cities of Jalalabad and Qandahar as Indian intelligence centers are a matter of grave concern in the civil and military quarters of Pakistan. Moreover Indian involvement in the reconstruction works and training of Afghan National Army (ANA) are signs of displeasure for Islamabad (Yusufzai, 2002).

Conclusion

A war-torn Afghanistan demands the challenge of state-building which is not an easy task rather a very complex

and multifaceted. Although Soviet Union intervention in Afghanistan, civil war going on among different warlords, Taliban coming into power and the US “war on terror” possess a regional dimension and needs a regional approach, Kabul government cannot get peace and stability until and unless the regional aspects of violence are addressed effectively.

To make Afghanistan modern and stable state international community and regional states should adopt a long term commitment aiming to invest in touching both short and long term requirements of the local people. For the restoration of peace and stability, there should be a strategy aiming to create effective governance system capable of imposing the rule of law, ending the insurgency, strengthening economic development, providing public services and human security that can remove the illicit drug trafficking with legal economic activities.

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