

A Review of India and Afghanistan relationship

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ABSTRACT:

Bilateral relations between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Republic of India have traditionally been strong and friendly. While the Republic of India was the only South Asian country to recognize the Soviet-backed Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in the 1980s, its relations were diminished during the 1990s Afghan civil war and the Taliban government. India aided the overthrow of the Taliban and became the largest regional provider of humanitarian and reconstruction aid to Afghanistan. In this synopsis we bring the concept of these two country's relationship and what the economy affect on our country (India). Afghanistan has started the negotiation on gaining the membership of the World Trade Organization and it got its member in 2015. Further to that, Afghanistan is also a member of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC), and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). In this paper we bring that our the relationship between two countries are very good specially after 2011. These relations were started many years ago, no one knows the exact date when these relations were started.

Keywords - National Development Strategy, International , Macroeconomic , Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) , Afghanistan Transit Trade Agreement (ATTA)

I. INTRODUCTION

India maintains good social and cultural relations since ancient times. Today, India is a modern state while Afghanistan still believes in traditional values and norms. In this synopsis we are focusses on this aspect of both the countries. Though India's relations with its neighbouring countries, underwent a huge change, but it did not affected its ties with Afghanistan. In February 1965, Afghanistan's Prime Minister Dr Mohammad Yousuf visited India and both the countries exchanged "Instruments of Ratification of the Culture Agreement" in New Delhi. India reciprocated by participating in Afghanistan's Independence Day celebrations in August 1965.³ As a result, subsequently, a number of culture, economic and social exchange programme between the two countries took place. Earlier in August 1953, Delhi University's hockey and football teams participated in the Jashan festival at Kabul. This event was followed by the visit of an Indian aviation delegation Kabul led by L.C. Jain, director General of Civil Aviation, in October 1953, to finalize the Delhi-Amritsar-Lahore-Kabul-Kandahar Air Services. The Indian government also agreed to sponsor five Afghan students as the Government of India Cultural scholars in 1953, and "offered to give free training to 79 Afghan Air trainees in India."

gesture was well appreciated by Afghani government. Afghanistan reciprocated by sending the Afghan hockey team for a five-week tour to India during November/December 1953. It marked a new beginning in the diplomatic relations between the two countries. When former India's President Radhakrishnan visited Kabul and Kandahar in May 1963, he said, "there is not a single problem which is dividing [India and Afghanistan are creating any] concern." He also expressed the view that India-Afghanistan relations "will continue to be in the same state and will grow as the years pass and make [them] faster friends The Indian-Afghan relationship has drawn closer in the post-September 11, 2001 period. Building on a long history of bilateral relations, the Indian government reengaged with the Afghan government after the 2001 defeat of the Taliban, initially largely on a humanitarian basis. The importance of Afghanistan to India has increased significantly for political and geo-strategic reasons, as well as for access to natural resources. India and Afghanistan have a strong relationship based on historical and cultural links. The relationship is not limited to the governments in New Delhi and Kabul, but has its foundations in the historical contacts and exchanges between the people. In recent past, India-Afghanistan relations have been further strengthened by the Strategic Partnership Agreement, which was signed between the two countries in October 2011. According to a 2010 Gallup poll, which interviewed 1000 adults, 50% Afghans approved of the job performance of India's leadership and 44% disapproved with 6% refusing to answer. It was the highest approval rating of India by another country in Asia. According to the survey, Afghan adults are more likely to approve of India's leadership than Chinese or U.S. leadership.^[13]Development Cooperation The vast majority of India's commitments between 2002 and 2013 is in the form of grants. These grants have spanned a variety of sectors identified by the Afghan government and the Afghan National Development Strategy as priority areas, particularly infrastructure, small and community-based development projects, and education and capacity building projects. As seen in figure 1,

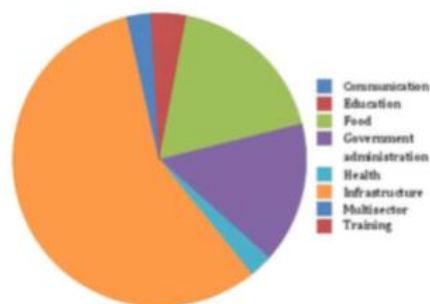


Figure 1 :- Sectoral breakdown of India's development cooperation with Afghanistan.

The majority of India's development financing in Afghanistan is committed to infrastructure projects. Some high-profile projects have included construction of the Afghan parliament building in Kabul, the Zaranj-Delaram road which links Iran's Chabahar port and roads to Afghanistan, a power transmission grid to bring additional electricity to Kabul, the power-generating Salma Dam in Herat, and telecommunications infrastructure in 11 Afghan provinces. Small and community-based development projects have focused on

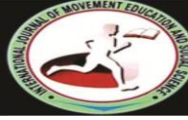


socio-economic development in border areas, while education and capacity-building projects have included provision of 500 annual scholarships for Afghan students to study at universities in India, 500 annual scholarships for Afghan civil servants to receive training in India, and vocational training programs in Afghanistan. The Government of India has recently stated that its development cooperation commitment to Afghanistan has been increased to US\$ 2 billion. Disbursement rates always lag behind commitments and the security environment in some areas of Afghanistan has led to understandable delays (for example, in road construction), other delays in projects, such as only partial delivery of 200 mini buses promised several years ago, point to capacity constraints on the Indian side. Strategic factors undergirding India's Partnership with Afghanistan India's growing engagement in development cooperation with Afghanistan reflects its increasing regional and global ambitions.

II. COMMERCIAL RELATIONS

Indo-Afghan Trade and Investment India recognizes the preeminence of Afghanistan as a junction of trade routes between central, south and west Asia for 3000 years. The bilateral trade at USD 683.02 million for 2013-14 (US\$ 474.25 million export and US \$ 208.77 million import by India) and \$684 million for 2014-15 (\$422 million export and \$ 262 million import by India) is a modest figure going by the actual potential. However, the trade relations can realize its true potential if the Wagah-Attari route is opened for bilateral trade with Afghanistan. So far, the Afghanistan Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA) has been restrictive in this aspect. India after Pakistan is the major export destination of Afghanistan. One of the objectives of building Zaranj-Delaram road by India was to boost bilateral economic relations besides offering Afghanistan another outlet to Sea port. The successful operation of the Chabahar port in Iran could capitalize on this road to offer a new transit route of Afghan products to India while opening a new route for India, and the rest of the world, for trade with Central Asia.

India and Afghanistan signed a Preferential Trade Agreement in March 2003 under which India allowed substantial duty concessions, ranging from 50% to 100%, to certain category (38 times) of Afghan dry fruits. Afghanistan in turn has allowed reciprocal concessions to Indian products, including tea, sugar, cement and pharmaceuticals. In November 2011, India removed basic customs duties for all SAARC LDCs at the SAARC Summit in Male which gave all products of Afghanistan (except alcohol and tobacco) duty free access to Indian market. Afghanistan (as LDC) is signatory to SAFTA and is required to lower its tariffs of all goods not on its sensitive list of 5% or less. This decade-long process helps avoid any sudden or dramatic reductions in tariffs and eases the changes with minimal disruption to Afghan industry. Afghanistan recently reduced its sensitive list from 1,063 tariff lines to 850 out of roughly 6,000 total tariff lines. Only 30% of the tariff lines on Afghanistan's sensitive list have tariff rates above the requisite 5%. Under Afghanistan's sensitive list, the highest tariff rates are applied on fruits, vegetables and nuts, basic construction materials, beverages, plants, articles of leather and carpets. Some other items that are not produced in Afghanistan are also subject to higher tariffs for revenue collection purposes such as tobacco, ceramic products, perfumery, minerals and fuel. Transit is a major bottleneck in Indo-Afghan trade due to denial of export of Indian goods via Wagah border and delays



at Karachi port. Most of the trade occurs via Bandar Abbas port in Iran or through Dubai. Earlier Banks/Insurance companies were refusing to provide their services via Bandar Abbas port due to US sanctions but after lifting of sanctions now the situation may change. Many Indian companies are engaged in the infrastructural development of Afghanistan and are contributing in the development of the country. In the recent times, there are quite a number of visits by business delegations of both the countries to each other's country. The important Afghan/Indian Trade/Business delegations that visited India/Afghanistan in the recent times are: Surajkund International Crafts Mela 1-15 Feb 2015: The event was organized by Haryana State Tourism department and seven craftsmen from Afghanistan attended the event. They were provided with free booths. This is an annual event. 7th MP Expotech 2015: Reverse Buyer Seller Meet 16-18 January 2015; Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. 28 Afghan participants attended the event. Pharmaexcil International Exhibition at Ahmedabad: 45 Afghans attended the event on 9-10 Jan 2015. Vibrant Gujarat 2015: A45 strong Afghan delegation attended the event on 11 Jan 2015 at Ahmadabad. India Stone Mart 29 Jan-01Feb 2015: 18 Afghan participants attended. The Afghan participation was supported under the TCI CBM process with the assistance of FICCI and USAID (ATAR).

Renewal Energy Summit, Delhi, August 2015: A delegation of 43 members led by HoM attended the summit. Indian Pharmaceuticals and Healthcare Expo, Kabul, 28-31 October 2015: 12 Indian Pharmaceuticals company participated. 35th IITF, 2015 at New Delhi, 14-17 Nov 2015: 24 Afghan companies attended the 35th Indian International Trade Fair (IITF, 2015) and showcased their products such as saffron, dried fruits carpet, jewelry and handicraft from 14 – 27 November 2015 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. Punjab International Expo, Amritsar 2015, 4 - 6 December, 2015: 20 Members from KCCI attended the Expo. Rice Expo, Kabul, 08 - 11 December 2015, organized by Afghan Expo Centre, Kabul. 9th MP Expo, 29-31, January 2016: 22 members from KCCI participated. 30th Surajkund Mela 1-15 Feb 2016: Six Afghan participants have been nominated by the Mission. The event is being supported by SAARC Division of MEA.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

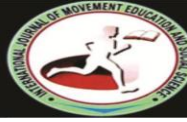
Relations between the people of Afghanistan and India traces to the Indus Valley Civilisation.^[14] Following Alexander the Great's brief occupation, the successor state of the Seleucid Empire controlled the region known today as Afghanistan. In 305 BCE, they ceded much of it to the Indian Maurya Empire as part of an alliance treaty. Alexander took these away from the Aryans and established settlements of his own, but Seleucus Nicator gave them to Sandrocottus (Chandragupta), upon terms of intermarriage and of receiving in exchange 500 elephants.^[15] The Mauryans brought Buddhism from India and controlled the area south of the Hindu Kush. Their decline began 60 years after Ashoka's rule ended, leading to the Hellenistic reconquest of the region by the Greco-Bactrians. Much of it soon broke away from the Greco-Bactrians and became part of the Indo-Greek Kingdom. The Indo-Greeks had been defeated and expelled by the Indo-Scythians in the late 2nd century BCE.^[16] Much of Afghanistan has been influenced by Buddhist, Hindu and Zoroastrian cultures until the arrival of Islam in the 7th century. But despite many Afghans converting to Islam, the Muslims and Hindus lived side by side. "Kabul has a castle celebrated for its strength,

accessible only by one road. In it there are Musulmáns, and it has a town, in which are infidels from Hind."^[17]. Between the 10th century to the mid 18th century, northern India has been invaded by a number of invaders based in what today is Afghanistan. Among them were the Ghaznavids, Ghurids, Khaljis, Suris, Mughals and Durranis. During these eras, especially during the Mughal period (1526–1858), many Afghans began immigrating to India due to political unrest in their regions.



Figure 2; - Border crossing between British India and Afghanistan in 1934.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Khan Sahib were prominent leaders of the Indian independence movement and active supporters of the Indian National Congress. Although the NWFP became part of Pakistan in 1947, active Pashtun support for the Indian freedom struggle led to great sympathy in India for the cause of Pashtun autonomy and freedom. The Indian government continued to support Pashtun leader Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan in lobbying for greater Pashtun freedom in the NWFP.^[2] Indians are working in various construction projects, as part of India's rebuilding efforts in Afghanistan, although the Indian intelligence agency RAW is accused by countries such as Pakistan of working to malign Pakistan and train & support insurgents.^{[4][5][6]} These workers are estimated to be anywhere between 3,000 and 4,000. Indian nationals stationed in Afghanistan have often faced continuous security threats in the country, with kidnappings and many attacks (such as the February 2010 Kabul attack) deliberately carried out on them. The September 2011 assassination of former Afghan president Burhanuddin Rabbani was condemned by India, which stated that, "Tragically, the forces of terror and hatred have silenced yet another powerful voice of reason and peace in Afghanistan. We unreservedly condemn this act of great brutality," and reiterated the steadfast support of the people and government of India in Afghanistan's "quest for peace and efforts to strengthen the roots of democracy".^{[32][33]} India promised to stand by the people of Afghanistan as they prepare to assume the responsibility for their governance and security after the withdrawal of international forces in 2014.^[34] In October 2011, Afghanistan signed its first strategic pact with India.^{[12][35]} The military assistance will include training of Afghan security personnel.^[36] During his visit to India, Karzai told the media that "This strategic partnership is not directed against any country. This strategic partnership is to support Afghanistan." He also stated that "Pakistan is our twin brother, India is a great friend. The agreement we signed with our friend will not affect our brother." He also added that "However, our



engagement with Islamabad has unfortunately not yet yielded the result that we want."^[37] Both sides will launch Partnership Council, topmost body to implement the Strategic Partnership Pact in May 2012.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURAL ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN

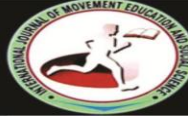
India seeks to expand its economic presence in Afghanistan. Specially, it wants to improve transport connectivity and economic collaboration with countries in Central and South Asia. India has already invested US \$ 10.8 billion in Afghanistan as of 2012 (Yatnoor and Tegnoor 2015). Strategic location of Afghanistan is very important for India Afghanistan is situated at crossroads between south Asia and Central Asia and South Asia and the Middle East and is a major partner in the TAPI (Turkmenistan- Afghanistan-Pakistan- India) pipeline project which will fulfill India's energy need(Anonymous, 2015).

V. CONCLUSION

Present age is the age of technology. Today almost every country prepare the atomic bomb.. If there will be any war in any of the country, then almost whole the world will be destroy. So that there is a lot of need to work on these topic i.e what are the steps taken to make the relationship between nations will be betterment in future. India seeks to expand its economic presence in Afghanistan. Specially, it wants to improve transport connectivity and economic collaboration with countries in Central and South Asia. India has already invested US \$ 10.8 billion in Afghanistan as of 2012 (Yatnoor and Tegnoor 2015). Strategic location of Afghanistan is very important for India Afghanistan is situated at crossroads between south Asia and Central Asia and South Asia and the Middle East and is a major partner in the TAPI (Turkmenistan- Afghanistan-Pakistan- India) pipeline project which will fulfill India's energy need(Anonymous, 2015). Indo-Afghan Trade and Investment India recognizes the preeminence of Afghanistan as a junction of trade routes between central, south and west Asia for 3000 years. The majority of India's development financing in Afghanistan is committed to infrastructure projects. Some high-profile projects have included construction of the Afghan parliament building in Kabul, the Zaranj-Delaram road which links Iran's Chabahar port and roads to Afghanistan, a power transmission grid to bring additional electricity to Kabul, the power-generating Salma Dam in Herat, and telecommunications infrastructure in 11 Afghan provinces. Small and community-based development projects have focused on socio-economic development in border areas, while education and capacity-building projects have included provision of 500 annual scholarships for Afghan students to study at universities in India, 500 annual scholarships for Afghan civil servants to receive training in India , and vocational training programs in Afghanistan.

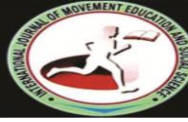
VI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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