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After the fall of Taliban, Indo-Afghan Relations

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ABSTRACT

India provided developmental assistance focusing primarily on Social, Economic and Political development of Afghanistan. India is at the position of the promotion of investment in Afghanistan. In order to ensure a stable government and to cover a wide range of issue to include trade, commerce and security is the India's interest in Afghanistan. India also wants to Counter Pakistan's influence in Afghanistan and its attempts to install a weak and pliable regime is one of the objectives. After the event of 9/11, Afghanistan again has to face the situation of turmoil and chaos due to attack of NATO forces headed by U.S. Besides NATO, China, Russia, Pakistan, Iran and India are also key actors in Afghanistan which are playing their role to meet their strategic and political interests in the region. India has been showing pertinent interest in the development of Afghanistan since 2001. India's support and developmental assistance to this war-torn country has gained indelible reputations from the world developed and developing countries. Its assistance definitely will yield good stride and economic development in India and the region. India's "Soft-Power" has forced the Afghan people to realize about its grand's and humanitarian approach to develop good and friendly relationship with India.

KEYWORDS: - Secular, Democracy, Memorandum, Agreement, Terrorism.

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INTRODUCTION

In order to ensure a stable government and to cover a wide range of issue to include trade, commerce and security is the India's interest in Afghanistan. India also wants to Counter Pakistan's influence in Afghanistan and its attempts to install a weak and pliable regime is one of the objectives. Besides this, India sees the building of stable, long-term relations with the Central Asian Republics (CARS) and Afghanistan as crucial to its economic, trade and security interests and seeks to project itself as a regional power beyond the confines of South Asia. The country is helping Afghanistan in order to strengthen strategic partnership and to preserve security.

According to Shekhar Dutt, the previous Defence Secretary, govt of India had said, "India's primary strategic objective is the improvement of the socio-economic conditions and opportunities, within a secular democratic framework, for its one billion people". He also explains that, "Security is no longer an exclusive military dimension as in the Cold War era and that today it is an inclusive concept. Ensuring India is not subjected to anxiety or intimidation in the global comity, whether political, economic or military, became an essential objective".

After the event of 9/11, Afghanistan again has to face the situation of turmoil and chaos due to attack of NATO forces headed by U.S. Besides NATO, China, Russia, Pakistan, Iran and India are also key actors in Afghanistan which are playing their role to meet their strategic and political interests in the region. India has the potential to play a dominant role in Asia but is known as a stable country in the region. India is very active for reconstruction and economic development of Afghanistan. India is not the member of NATO; it does not take part in military activities in Afghanistan from coalition sides due to various reasons:

- Firstly, unlike other regional countries India does not provide land, air or sea routes to the coalition forces because India did not want to sacrifice the core value of national unity.
- Secondly, if India provides any land, air or sea base, it may hit the sentiments of Muslims of India because the war on terrorism was against pre known militant organisations in Afghanistan like Taliban and Al Qaida. In other words, it was against Muslim radical and extremist organisations.
- Thirdly, Non- involvement in front of war against Afghan has minimised the anti Indian sentiments among the Afghan.

After the overthrow of the Taliban in 2001, India came out in a big way and reached out to renew ties with Kabul. Many current Afghan leaders including President Hamid Karzai, studied at Indian universities resulted in further boosting the India-Afghanistan relations. Hamid Karzai took the reins of Afghanistan's interim government. Jaswant Singh, then External Affairs Minister, on

December 22, 2001 returned to Afghanistan both to observe the inauguration of Hamid Karzai as head of the interim government of Afghanistan and to reopen the Indian embassy, which had closed the day before the Taliban seized Kabul in 1996. The continuous tensed and problematic relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan resulted in India's close alliance and strengthened ties with Afghanistan as Afghanistan accusing Pakistan for supporting and sheltering the Taliban outfits. After the fall of Taliban and US invasion in Afghanistan in 2001, India offered Intelligence support and established diplomatic relations with Afghanistan and also dynamically contributed in reconstruction and rebuilding efforts there. The Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh stated, "Our co-operation with Afghanistan is an open book. We have civilization links, and we are both here to stay ... India will stand by the people of Afghanistan as they prepare to assume responsibility for governance and security" when the international forces would withdraw in 2014".

India has been a major player in the reconstruction of the Post-Taliban Afghanistan. New Delhi's extensive developmental assistance programme makes it the 5th largest bilateral donor in Afghanistan after the US, UK, Japan and Germany.

India provided developmental assistance focusing primarily on Social, Economic and Political development of Afghanistan. In compare, Pakistan, being itself dependent on development assistance and the security of the United States and China. Pakistan has however been wary of India's active role and had not been in the position to provide substantial contributions to Afghanistan. In other words, Islamabad knows that a friendly and beneficial Afghanistan is only possible when it is under its influence and with limited Indian ties. In India's view sustainable development of Afghanistan is very important for us, requires long-term investment in Afghanistan that can help it exploit its natural resource wealth.

Thus India is at the position of the promotion of investment in Afghanistan and a joint group of public and private Indian companies has been selected to make one of the biggest investments in the country's mining sector, in the Hajigak iron ore reserve. The principal objective of India's development partnership stressed by Ministry of External Affairs, covering the all sectors of development and entire Afghanistan, is to build indigenous Afghan capacity and institutions. Afghanistan, in order to become a source of regional stability, Indian approach is based on the understanding that Social, Economic and Political developments key to the country. India through extensive and wide-ranging financial assistance has continued to follow a policy of high-level engagement with Afghanistan and aimed at political reconciliation and economic rebuilding of Afghanistan.

METHODOLOGY

In the present study mostly secondary data have been used. In addition to this, data have also been collected from various journals, articles, newspaper archives, published, unpublished and electronic sources.

In order to understand fully the assistance and developmental partnership between India and Afghanistan and a glance at India's developmental assistance towards Afghanistan since the Post-Taliban era can be categorized under the following major heads.

3.1. Political Development and Support for Democracy

After the fall of the Taliban and the installation of an Interim Authority in 2001, India's relationship with Afghanistan readily became multi-dimensional. As the result of this, Indian representation in Afghanistan from Liaison Office to a full-fledged Embassy was upgraded in 2002. India's active participation in the Bonn Conference to choose the leader of an Afghan interim authority was important in the emergence of Post-Taliban governing and political authority in Afghanistan. Since then, as mandated under the Bonn agreement of 2001, India's main focus has been to support the Afghan government and the political process in the country.

India's main thirst is to install democracy form of government in Afghanistan; it has provided multi assistance, training and all support. It could not say directly that Afghanistan should come for new democracy constitution. But providing all necessary helps for their peaceful life as well as let them understand what types of government would be better than at present existing government there. India's regional support for democracy may also be the most challenging is the clearest example. Afghanistan for its post-Taliban democracy, has received substantial public support from India.

Under U.S-India Global Democracy Initiative (GDI), India has provided assistance for the following projects: New Afghan parliament building construction, training for parliamentary Afghan officials, assistance for the U.N. development program called "Support to the Establishment of the Afghan Legislature," and material support for elections including voting machines and indelible markers.

During the visit of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to Kabul in August 2005, India's support for a sovereign, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan was repeated, when he conveyed that India stood ready to continue contributing to the task of rebuilding Afghanistan, including through the strengthening of its democratic institutions. During his visit, the Prime Minister of India, along with Baba-e-Millat, former King-Zahir Shah laid the foundation stone of the building which would house the newly-constituted Parliament of Afghanistan. The parliament building is being

constructed with Indian funding – a sign of India’s commitment to democracy in Afghanistan. The project is a visible symbol of India’s contribution to strengthening and rebuilding democracy in Afghanistan. Afghan Parliament building in Kabul at a revised project cost of Rs 969 crore, is an example of India’s support for democracy in Afghanistan. The completion of a new Parliament building for Afghanistan is part of India’s efforts in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Afghanistan.

Apart from this, India providing material support during elections, in the form of supplying Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and indelible ink which is applied to the forefinger of voters to prevent them from voting multiple times. India with the cooperation of United Nation Assistance mission for conduct of Afghan loya jirga election in 2003 have been given 65 electronic voting machines and has send two experts for technical support and to operate. Moreover, during the presidential election in October 2005, India gave 50,000 indelible inks markers to prevent bogus voters. India invited 30 staffs’ members from National secretariat of Afghanistan for 3-week training in India at the Bureau of parliamentary study in august 2005, to impart and train up about election procedure and method.

With Afghanistan, India has also expressed its willingness to share its experience with village-level administration (Panchayats), federalism, affirmative action policies (reservations), family law, women’s rights, etc. As the result, India’s efforts has been supported by US to provide assistance to Afghanistan, as it contributes to capacity building of core democratic institutions as well as creates conditions that allow democracy to grow. Ultimately, this is expected to result in the improvement of the law and order situation of the country, which is one of the primary goals of the US.

Shyam Saran, Foreign Secretary, govt of India (2004-2006) said, “As a functioning democracy ourselves naturally we feel very comfortable and enthused if there are more democracies emerging...We don’t believe in the imposition of democracy or democratic values of any country. But if there is any interest in any country about our democratic institutions or in the institutions...we are ready to share these...”

India’s international efforts are aimed at economic rebuilding and political reconciliation of Afghanistan. It has continued to pursue a policy of high level engagement with Afghanistan through extensive and wide-ranging financial, humanitarian and project assistance. More than seven hundred Afghans are trained by India in various professions including diplomats, judges, lawyers, doctors, teachers, paramedic, women entrepreneurs and officials in various departments of Afghanistan’s government include cartographers and public officials. With the Wolesi and Meshrano Jirgas, the

Indian Parliament maintains an exchange of visits. The Indian Bureau of Parliamentary Study & Training is providing training to officials of the National Assembly secretariat.

Based on a Memorandum of Understanding between the two institutions, the India's Election Commission and Afghanistan's Independent Election Commission members and officials have regular exchanges, mutual visits for study and observation and training activities. Assisting Afghanistan to train its administrative and judicial staff to improve governance and the delivery of justice; enhancing people-to-people contacts; Broad-based engagement with all political groups; supporting Afghan-led broad-based reconciliation efforts, as visualised by the Afghan High Peace Council.

During the two-days visit to Afghanistan on 23-24 January 2007 by Indian External Affairs Minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, commenting on the nature of Indo-Afghan relations during a news conference said, "Indian-Afghan bilateral relations are fast developing into a partnership which is very special to us ... we are glad to be able to contribute to the reconstruction and rebuilding of Afghanistan".

In May 2008, an MoU on cooperation in the areas of local governance between India and Afghanistan was also signed. Besides, India's non-interference principles, the country's political engagement with Kabul was limited due to prevailing regional geo-political environment, common Afghans disliking of foreign troops presence, especially the night raids and rising civilian casualty, ineffective regional institutional mechanism, and seemingly unending nature of conflict in Afghanistan.

In October 2009, the then Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao, govt of India declared that India would support the process of recombining individuals into the national mainstream, code for dialogue with the moderate Taliban who agree to abjure violence. He Said, "We support the Afghan Government's determination to integrate those willing to abjure violence and live and work within the parameters of the Afghan constitution".

For India's security, a strong, independent, stable, prosperous and democratic Afghanistan is very important and for overall regional stability in the evolving geo-political and geo-strategic scenarios. Therefore the first and indispensable step in the pursuit of his objective is to building up and sustaining the capability of the Government of Afghanistan through external assistance to provide for her own security. In order to secure its entry into energy rich and untapped markets of Central Asia, Afghanistan is undoubtedly a very important partner in the region to project its power status. India has been respected as the largest pluralistic society in which diverse religious, ethnic, linguistic, and sectarian groups cohabit and coexist together. India being the largest secular democracy is in a position to share it's known-how and practice with Afghanistan. The new born

egalitarianism society of Afghanistan in all its earnestness looks forward for India's support and assurance in its quest for democracy.

To reduce Afghanistan's dependency on Pakistan, India's economic assistance and support to democracy is an important step. For India's point of view a friendly and pro-active democratic regimes in Afghanistan would act as a balancer in the region. If we have a stable Afghanistan, then the stability of the region can be assured would counter the Taliban forces. The then Indian External Affairs Minister, S.M. Krishna in an interview with the Wall Street Journal on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, New York in September 2009 stated that, "India did not believe that war can solve any problem and that applies to Afghanistan too". As such, New Delhi's recognition of the Government of Afghan's efforts to build a comprehensive political order much as the Indian government over the years has been involved in various such negotiations, dialogues, and reintegration mechanisms in dealing with its own insurgencies.

In September 2011, India condemned the assassination of former Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani. India repeated the faithful support of the people and the government of India in Afghanistan's "quest for peace and efforts to strengthen the roots of democracy". Narendra Modi's visit to Afghanistan in December 2015 looked at by Afghans in a favourable manner. A speech was delivered by Indian Prime Minister during the same visit before parliament, encouraging the people to participate in their country's democratic processes and calling on Afghans to vote in the elections. It was a heartening development between the leaders of both countries that built even greater goodwill. For a stable and democratic Afghanistan, India has sought to show its support with significant investments and financial assistance. Afghanistan People also consider India as its friend. Indian influence in the country is highly supported by the people of Afghanistan. It is because of the fact that through most part of Indo-Afghan relations, India has been a true friend. The Afghanistan people realize the fact that India's support for Afghanistan is importance and they wish that it should keep its assistance continue until it is able to stand on its own. The former Indian Minister of State for External Affairs Parneet Kaur said in the national capital that, "India believes the cause of democracy and peace in Afghanistan can be best served through development programmes, which the Afghan Government and people need most urgently".

Indian Prime minister Narinder Modi along with a high level delegation paid a visit to Afghanistan in 25th December 2016 called on President Ashraf Ghani and met Dr Abdullah (Chief Executive) and Former President Hamid Karzai. During his visit he inaugurated the newly built Afghan Parliament and announced 500 scholarships for the children of the martyrs of Afghan Security Forces in school and colleges both in Afghanistan and in India. During his visit, he gifted four Mi25 Attack helicopter to Afghan Air forces. However, India's Afghanistan policy under Prime

Minister Narendra Modi's government is shifting from a reluctant albeit friendly one to a more confident and multi-dimensional approach, strengthening Kabul's defence capability and investing in Afghanistan's nascent democracy and economy; and promoting regional connectivity and integration. India is an inspiration and a model for Afghanistan's aborning democracy, development and its state-building process. India had got a great success in building its state institutions, managing its diverse communities, women's empowerment, nurturing an indigenous democracy, and transitioning from an agrarian society into a developing nation. Afghanistan can learn a great deal from India.

3.2. Economic Development

For India's trade and energy security a peaceful Afghanistan is good. A stable and economically integrated Afghanistan is a fundamental interest of India. Since the fall of the Taliban, Afghanistan economy has recovered significantly. It remains highly dependent on foreign aid and trade with neighbouring countries. Afghanistan Government can retain and enhance its legitimacy by bringing the Afghan economy back on track. To do so largely depend on other states and India is playing an important role in this regard. Important part of India's strategy is the Consolidation of bilateral relations through economic and commercial means. Since 2001, India in Afghanistan and world politics has played a significant role through reconstruction and developmental assistance. India's approach to rebuild and reconstruct Afghanistan is based on the assumption that social and economic development is mostly important for maintaining peace, stability, and security in Afghanistan and the region.

In 2003, India signed a Preferential Trade Agreement with Afghanistan in order to institutionalise the economic cooperation. The Agreement provides duty-free access to the import of figs dried, mulberries, pistachio, asafoetida, pine nuts roasted melons fresh, lapis lazuli, ruby and emeralds from Afghanistan. Also 50% concession has been on duty extended on black, green, red raisins, dried apricots, walnuts, dried plums' almonds, cherries sour dried, raisons golden, fresh grapes, apricots, apples, pomegranates, caraway seeds, anise seeds, linseed, sesame seeds, apricot nuts bitter, liquorice roots, and alpha seeds.

In terms of Afghan imports, India figured at the third place accounting for eight per cent, whereas Pakistan accounted for 29 per cent followed by Iran at 13 per cent as showed by data available with the Asian Development Bank (ADB). In 2003, India ranked at third place in terms of Afghan exports, with 19 per cent imports from Afghanistan as compared to 30 per cent from the US and 22 per cent from Pakistan. During these years India's overall exports have grown robustly in both absolute and percentage terms. In addition, Afghanistan with a rich resource base of unexplored

minerals like gold, silver, iron, copper, chrome, sulphur, barite, talc, mica, magnesium, lapis lazuli, marble, asbestos, mercury, nickel, lead, bauxite, zinc, lithium and rubies. Exploitation of natural gas and oil reserves in and around Afghanistan also promises huge potential. An estimated Afghanistan's natural gas reserves were at about 150 billion cubic metres during the 1970s. And in 1980s, natural gas exports were in the range of 2.5-2.8 bcm a year, and constituted its main source of export revenues. This upstream development in this sector was halted due to the outbreak of civil war in Afghanistan. Recently, government of India has shown its interest to sponsor the Steel Authority of India proposal to set up a steel plant in the iron ore blocks in the Hajigak mines in Afghanistan.

Since from 2001, approximately 100 Indian companies have invested in Afghanistan. The breakdown in investment by sector is 43% in services, 41% in construction and 16% in industries. In a total initial capital of \$20 million around 80 joint ventures have been established by Afghan-Indian firms. All this bulk of investment by India in Afghanistan so far has come from public-sector companies, events like the Delhi Investment Summit on Afghanistan aim to showcase investment opportunities to private investors.

In February 2005, Afghan Minister for Mines, Mir Mohammad Sadiq visited to India had requested India's help in developing the inventory, exploration, and utilization of mineral resources in Afghanistan. He said that, "Afghanistan has about 300 minerals, including gold, coal, zinc, copper and we appreciate the India's investments in a big way to enhance trade and economic co-operation with Afghanistan"

During August 28-29, 2005, Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh paid a State Visit to Afghanistan. The high level delegation included National Security Adviser, Minister of External Affairs, Rahul Gandhi, Member of Parliament, Foreign Secretary and other senior officials. PM Dr. Manmohan Singh and President Hamid Karzai reaffirmed their common interest in reinvigorating the past ties and developing a new partnership for the 21st century. India repeated its continued commitment to the reconstruction and economic development of Afghanistan. During the visit, three important MoUs /Agreements were signed:

- (i) Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Healthcare and Medicinal Science
- (ii) MOU on Small Developmental Projects
- (iii) MOU on Cooperation in the field of Agricultural Research & Education.

Afghanistan wants Indian businesses to take advantage of the low tax regime to help develop a manufacturing hub in areas such as oil and gas, cement, electricity, and in services including banking, hotels and communications. India was also eager to make Afghanistan a member of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) by which issues relating to the transit and free flow of goods across borders can be addressed in the region, to lead greater economic

development of Afghanistan and the region as a whole. Moreover, with Afghanistan as a member of the SAARC, South Asia will be able to reach out to Central and West Asia more meaningfully.²⁸ In order to Integrate Afghanistan into South Asian regional dynamics became a strategic imperative for India. SAARC at the 14th Summit of 2007 in New Delhi, with the help of India, Afghanistan was granted full membership. Since then, the economic realm of India's Afghanistan approach has been increasing. India's historically positive linkages with Afghanistan and demonstrating to the world community that India, although a developing country itself, was able to live up to its great power aspirations.

Nirupama Rao, former Indian Foreign Secretary said, "India is an important neighbour of Afghanistan and we share undeniably close ties that have endured through the centuries into present times. Our focus there is on development activity with the aim to build indigenous Afghan capacities and institutions. This will enable an effective state system to improve the delivery of goods and services to Afghan people".

The Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) further boosted the relations between the two countries and was signed during President Karzai's visit to Delhi in October 2011. In addition, India and Afghanistan also signed two partnership agreements in the production of hydrocarbons and in the mining area.

In November 2011, an association of public and private Indian companies, led by the state-owned Steel Authority of India (the Indian association-also includes the Monnet Ispat and Energy Limited, JSW Steel Limited, National Mineral Development Corporation, Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited, JSW Ispat Steel Limited and Jindal Steel Power Limited) won a bid to mine in three states in Afghanistan's Hajigak iron ore deposits, which includes an 800-megawatt power plant, construction of a six million-ton steel plant and 200 kms each of road the rail and transmission lines. In Afghanistan the Hajigak iron ore deposit is estimated to hold 1.8 billion tonnes of ore and its mineral wealth is thought to be worth some USD 3 trillion and is often talked about as key to ensuring the country's economy. Thus, the Indian involvement in Afghanistan is both in aid and investment.

During the same year, Indian PM Dr. Manmohan Singh said that, "he will work to improve Afghanistan's economic integration with India and with South Asia as a whole. Last year, Pakistan and Afghanistan signed a transit-trade agreement that would allow agricultural products from Afghanistan to cross Pakistan into India. But the agreement has yet to yield major changes in trade patterns across the region". A year later, to attract more foreign investment and promote regional economic cooperation and to give a boost to the Afghan economy, India organised the Delhi

Investment Summit on Afghanistan on June 28, 2012 to highlight business opportunities in Afghanistan.

Indian companies have made investments in the order of US\$ 25 million. Moreover, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani during his first visit to Delhi requested Indian companies to invest more in Afghanistan, especially in energy, telecommunications and fertilizer. The President suggested that Indian businesses enter into joint ventures with the Afghan private sector and guaranteed transparency and accountability. As the result of this form of business agreement is a practical way for Afghani companies to reach regional and global markets. Several mining and development deals were signed in November 2012, which could lead to Afghanistan eventually becoming New Delhi's best investment ever. In order to help Indian investments in a big way, Afghanistan also issued a revised mining policy. Moreover India has generated banking on the goodwill that, Indian officials have been hopeful of getting some prospective oil blocks in Afghanistan without participating in the bidding process.

The trade between the two nations during the year 2012 -13 at US\$ 588.3 million for (US\$ 472.5 million export and US\$ 115.8 million import from India; 19 % of Afghanistan's exports) is a modest figure going by actual potential trade. Afghanistan's share in India total global agriculture import was 1.2 % in (2013-14) whereas India's share in Afghanistan total global agriculture import was 3.7 % (2013). Average agriculture tariff of Afghanistan was around 5.6 % whereas (Average agriculture tariff rate of India was 33.5 %; Anonymous, 2012 -13). During the year 2014-15, the total value of exported goods and commodities of Afghanistan to India was estimated to be \$US 16, 28,19,202. Dried Fig was the major commodity exported with quantity of 69609. Apple was the smallest commodity exported to India in respect of quantity and its value was with 10 quintals of quantity and value of \$US 800 respectively.

Recently, India, Iran and Afghanistan signed the Chabahar Port agreement in May 2016, opening a trade route into Central Asia and Europe and allowing for the bypass of Pakistan.

In 2016, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a two-day summit with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani pledged \$1 billion in economic aid to Afghanistan. Modi also promised India's "abiding support for a democratic, unified, sovereign, peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan". The two countries signed economic agreements but also pledged to work together to combat terrorism.

Recently, New Delhi helped Afghanistan airlift fresh fruits to India, when Pakistan closed the only land route for Afghan products destined for India. Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani is reported to have even warned Pakistan that if they do not allow Afghan imports and exports to India to cross their territory, they will close Pakistan's transit route through Afghanistan to Central

Asia. The Chabahar port agreement between Afghanistan-India-Iran converting into a transit hub will also help Kabul to reduce its dependence on Karachi port. India and Afghanistan bilateral trade has been on the rise. In Iranian port at Chabahar, bypassing Pakistan and India hopes its investment in will allow it to gain trading access to Afghanistan. Pakistan currently allows Afghanistan transit rights for its exports to India, but does not allow goods to move from India to Afghanistan. Trade with Central Asia through Afghanistan seems more probable with the opening of the Chabahar port after the Iran nuclear deal, 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.

TAP or TAPI, the Trans-Afghanistan Pipeline (also known as Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan–India Pipeline,) is expected to be operational by 2019. It is a proposed natural gas pipeline that will transport Caspian Sea natural gas from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan into Pakistan and then to India. Proponents of the project see it as a modern continuation of the Silk Road. Around \$7.6 billion is estimated cost of the pipeline project as reported. India GAIL may become a part of TAPI project. The pipeline will take 34 billion cubic meters of gas annually for the next 30 years after 2016. It is expected that Afghanistan would have the right to use 600 million cubic meters of gas each year during initial years and 5 billion cubic meters later.

3.3. Social Development

India's contributions in the field of Social development of Afghanistan are listed under the following major headings;

3.3.1. Humanitarian Assistance

Following the collapse of Taliban regime, India used humanitarian assistance as one of the important tools to win the hearts and minds of Afghan people and achieve its interests. To the World Food Programme's (WFP) School Feeding Programme, India has been a major contribution. For Afghanistan, the government of India in October, 2001, approved the donation of 1 million tonnes of wheat, which is then converted into biscuits, strengthened with micro-nutrients that reduce short-term hunger, boost a child's nutrition, and improve the ability to concentrate and benefit from the learning imparted. India's aim behind this is to alleviate short-term hunger, to generate parents to send their children to schools, to reduce gender gap among school children and also to improve education and nutritional health of Afghan students. Speaking on the occasion, Emir Ismail Khan then Governor of the Afghan province of Herat in February 13, 2002, thanked the Indian Government for the timely humanitarian assistance of 20,000 blankets, weighing 36 tons, which was

handed over by Mr. Pripuran Singh Haer, then Ambassador of India to Iran in view of the prevailing winter conditions in the region. The assistance was flown from India to the north eastern Iranian city of Mashhad, from where it was transported by road to Herat. He also said that, “in our country's development process India has traditionally been a major partner. He repeated India's deep commitment and active participation in the rehabilitation, relief, and reconstruction efforts of Afghanistan. He expressed the hope that long term stability and peace would be established in the country, which would lead in prosperity and economic development for Afghanistan”. Through the reconstruction of the Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health in Kabul, India's humanitarian assistance has also included medical services and equipment and every month the provision of free medical consultations and services to over 30,000 Afghans through Indian Medical Missions in five Afghan cities. These Medical Missions are providing assistance to expand health care facilities in Afghanistan and pledged Rs. 2 million for equipment worth including setting up of a 300 hundred beds hospital and establishment of an Institute of Child Health in Kabul. Moreover, India has promised annually worth of 2 million Rupees of medicine supply. India through school feeding programme, administered by the United Nations World Food Programme (UNWFP) more than 6.4 million students have benefitted in 33 out of 34 Afghan provinces, except in Kabul. India has set up 5 medical missions, all run by Indian doctors. Apart from India via World Food Programme's school-feeding program provided high protein biscuits since 2003 to local school children there, in 2008, India made a direct donation of 1 million tons of wheat for Afghanistan. In India's developmental assistance and aid programme, Afghanistan was the second biggest recipient in 2009. It received double as much development aid as all African countries joined together, and two hundred times the Indian aid allocated for Latin America. In January, 2009, during President Hamid Karzai's working visit to India, Dr. Manmohan Singh then Indian Prime Minister announced a quarter gift of a million metric tonnes of wheat to Afghanistan in order to help the fraternal people in tiding over their current food crisis. And immediate shipment to be effected as soon as transit and transportation arrangements are finalised. Of this, towards the creation of Afghanistan's strategic food reserves, 100-150,000 metric tonnes are expected to go. The supply of the wheat will be a considerable logistical exercise, involving transportation by sea to Iran and there after overland to Afghanistan by road. A faster and cheaper route across Pakistan by road and trains would depend on facilitation by Pakistan.

3.3.2. Public Health

In the field of health care, India has provided significant development assistance. In the Afghanistan's only children's hospital, India funded the construction and supplied the hospital's

infrastructure and training of its medical personnel along with a telemedicine project that links it with Indian hospitals. Monthly, over 30,000 Afghans through Indian Medical Missions in five Afghan cities are being provided free medical consultation and services. To the Afghan Ministry of Public Health, India also provided ambulances and built numerous basic health clinics in border areas. In December 2001, India sent a team of doctors and technicians to Kabul to set up a camp for fixing artificial limb (Jaipur foot) for Afghan amputees. During the same year, in addition, along with medicines, a team of doctors and paramedics were sent to Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif and are working there. For the reconstruction of Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health Hospital, India has spend \$2.7million. It has supplied incinerator facilities also provided books to library and equipments for the Diagnostic Centre. At the institute of All India Institute of Medical Science, India provided training to 23 Doctors of four batches and paramedics of Indra Ghandi Institute of Child Hospital (IGICH). During post-Taliban period, 12 paramedics doctors were trained in 2003-04. Since 2001, Afghanistan has received more than 400 tons of medical equipments and instruments. Since November, 2001 a team of 13 Indian doctors and paramedics is working in Kabul. Hundreds of patients are being attending daily by this team and disbursing medicines at the polyclinic (OPD) of the Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health (IGICH). In addition, an operation theatre at Koh-e-Markar hospital in Kabul is also running by the Indian medicine team. Moreover, India, Under the Small Development Project Scheme has built basic health clinics in the border provinces of Balkh, Badakshan, Khost, Kandahar, Kunar, Nimroz, Nangarhar, Nooristan, Paktika and Paktia. In 2008, ten ambulances were provided by India to Afghan Ministry of Public Health, two each for use in Kabul and the regional hospitals in Kandahar, Jalalabad, Mazar-e-Sharif and Herat. The Malalai and IGICH Hospitals in Kabul are being linked with reputed Indian hospitals through a SAARC Telemedicine Project.

3.3.3. Education

India has been with us every step of the way over the last three years. I would like to thank India, on behalf of the Afghan people, for its tremendous contribution to the rebuilding Afghanistan” President Hamid Karzai, During his visit to India on February 24, 2005. With respect to Afghanistan’s educational infrastructure, Indian government has always been at the forefront. Habia high School is the oldest school in Afghanistan which is located in front of the Babar mausoleum. This school was founded in 1903 and is the first education institution which is providing modern education. It faced severe damages during the decade of war and lost its structure and shape. Due to financial problem its reconstruction was questionable among the Muslim leaders of Afghanistan. India in order to boost and encourage education facilities in Afghanistan took a marvellous

reconstruction challenges in September 2003. At the cost of \$5 million in less than two years this school was reconstructed by India's support. After the reconstruction was over school was looking as elegant as beautiful.⁴¹ According to the Annual report of 2003-2004, MEA Government of India, an in service training was provided to seven Afghan teachers from the Ministry of education of Afghanistan by Delhi Public School Society from 4 September-15 October 2003. In August 2002, India gave 8,600 educational kits to students to foster educational atmospheres in Afghanistan. In February 2003, 1500 kits stationary were given to students in Paktika province. Twenty thousand desks were provided in three provinces (Jalabad, Kabul, and Mazar-e-Sharif) to make interest students either on reading or writing. With respect to Afghanistan educational institutions, India selected 47 teachers from there and were given training in India's famous schools (Delhi public school and Sanskrit school in new Delhi) to create and shape skill full teachers. In Indian institutions, India has been given scholarship to 44 Afghan students in political science, commerce, economics, engineering and computers science to fulfil educational expenditure of students and degree holders. India has sent many English teachers to Afghanistan because the people had been facing serious English language problems.

In April 2004, India has provided books and laboratory equipment to Kandahar University for letting the students to search books and discover something. During the same year India also gave lab equipment and sports materials to other schools in Nimroz. In August 2005, following the PM's visit to Afghanistan, 500 scholarships under Special Scholarship Scheme for Afghan Nationals (SSSAN) have been awarded to pursue university level courses in India. Now it has been increased to 1000 scholarships annually w.e.f. academic year 2012-13. It is administered as an Agency work for the MEA. From 2006 onwards Under the Special University Scholarship Scheme, annually 500 Afghan students are selected for undergraduate and post-graduate courses and are sent to Indian universities under the Special Scholarship Scheme of the Indian Council of Cultural Relations. There is a selection on the basis of a country-wide competition. Six seats are reserved for representation from remote areas each of the 34 provinces in order to ensure country-wide coverage. At the prestigious Lady Hardinge Medical College for Women in New Delhi, four Afghan girls secured admission and scholarships for MBBS during the academic year (2008-09).

In addition, more than 12,500 students were registered for scholarship to study abroad during the same academic year. The criteria of application for a scholarship was fulfilled over by 10,000 students and for examination board more than 6,000 students were introduced, of which 1,566 students achieved the necessary points of number for scholarship. To study in India, 533 students were awarded scholarship. Also to study in Pakistan 441 students were given scholarships. To study in Russia over 172 students were chosen for scholarships and 66 students for scholarships in Turkey.

At the London Conference in January 2010, India announced, 100 fellowships for Master's and Ph.D. programmers for existing faculty members. To assist in faculty and student development in the Agricultural sector an another 200 fellowships for fresh graduates each year for the next five years as agriculture is the main source of income in Afghanistan. India also announced its strong support to the proposed Afghan National Institution Building Project of the UNDP to build indigenous Afghan capacity and institutions.

By 2014, under a scheme administered by the Indian Council for Agriculture Research (ICAR), India had offered 614 agriculture scholarships for Afghan students. India under the sponsorship of Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) also offers 675 annual long-term university scholarships. India offered a number of small-scale initiatives, for instance, to learn embroidery, 14 young men and women were sent to the International School of Design in New Delhi. Currently, at the Indian School of Mines near about 22 Afghan engineers are undergoing an advanced training programme. A group of 51 Afghan students has started a crash course in maths, science and English at the Indian School of Mines in preparation for undergraduate degrees in mining engineering. In addition, Pune based "Sarhad" an Indian NGOs have sponsored educational exchanges which has given scholarships for Afghan students to study in India. In total there were 10,000 Afghan students studying in India as said by Hamid Karzai in 2013.

Recently, on 14 & 15 September 2016, the President of Afghanistan Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani was warmly welcomed on his working visit to India. During the visit, Indian Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi repeated India's abiding support for a sovereign, democratic, unified, stable, peaceful, and prosperous Afghanistan. He conveyed India's readiness to consider further requirements of Afghanistan for capacity and capability building in spheres such as health, education, skill development, agriculture, empowerment of women, infrastructure, energy, and strengthening of democratic institutions. India as a close neighbour and friend of Afghanistan and its people the Prime Minister offered that India would allocate a sum of USD 1 billion. In addition, he also proposed to supply easily affordable and world class medicines from India and cooperation in solar energy through mutually agreed instruments.

3.4. Cultural Exchange

In Kabul, 'Hindustan Afghanistan Dost' (India and Afghanistan are friends) is a popular chant. Towards the Indians, the Afghans are indeed very friendly and hospitable. In Afghanistan, Indian films, music and actors are very popular. Afghan during their visits to India for education or medical treatment appreciated the Indian warmth and hospitality. Both India and Afghanistan have a shared history, many common traditions and traditional bonds of friendship and enduring cultural

ties, which unfortunately were ruptured during the Taliban regime. India has a strong reason for active involvement in Afghanistan. In India's view, a prosperous Afghanistan is essential for peace and stability of the region as whole. India wants Afghanistan free from terrorism and from anti-Indian elements. Both have common cultural roots and share their classical musical traditions. Now in various Indian music festivals, Afghan musicians are participating. At the 2009, SAARC Band Festival New Delhi, include the band Talaash (the 'quest') and the qawali group led by Mir Ahmed Sham, which performed together with Indian qawali groups. Both the countries musical groups participate at the Nawroz festival in Mazar-e-Sharif annually.

However, now-a-days, India-Afghanistan ties in post-Taliban era have strengthened by the popularity of Indian films, TV serials and songs. Indian government, in order to promote their culture among others, has taken several steps such as organising film screening, concerts, dramas and exhibitions. The popularity of Indian TV serials are greatly found among the masses in Afghanistan. Many TV serials have been dubbed in Dari language like Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi, Kasauti Jindagi Ki, Kum Kum and Kahani Ghar Ghar Ki, Saare-ga-ma-pa, Pratigya, Utran, because of their popularity in Afghanistan. Both on the national as well as private TV Channels, they have the highest overall viewership and shown on prime time slots. India has aimed to take up projects that will render Afghanistan's cultural heritage sustainable as a part of India's restructuring programme for Afghanistan. In February 2002, Indian government's consignment of musical instruments was gifted to the Afghan radio and television centre. And in April 2003, another consignment of musical instruments was gifted to Kabul University. And in June 2003, a third consignment of musical instruments was gifted to the Ceremonial Band of Presidential Guard of Afghanistan. For enhancing cultural exchange, India has set up the Indian Cultural Centre in Kabul was formally inaugurated in September 2007 by Mr. Abdul Karim Khurram, the Afghan Minister of Culture and Information and Mr. Sayed Shahid Mahdi, the Vice-President of ICCR.

Cultural activities between India and Afghanistan are being strengthened further with the opening of the Centre, which is located in the Embassy premises (Kabul). At this centre, the Afghan students and other foreigners are being taught Yoga and Hindustani Vocal Classical Music. Currently for Yoga, there are thirty students enrolled and seventy students for the music classes. All classes are free of cost. For this centre, the people and the Government of Afghanistan are very appreciative of India's cultural efforts in the country. The Centre has a great power of building bridges by organising cultural events between the people of the two countries. In a spirit of mutual bonding through diverse cultural activities, the Cultural Centre hopes to become a place where people of all backgrounds can come together. Regular monthly activities are planned for the Centre comprising musical performances, film screenings, seminars and talks on socio-cultural themes.

Historically speaking, in Patiala Gharana (India), a large number of Afghan musician have been trained. However, currently in India Culture Centre premises there are approximately 50-60 students and 35 in Kabul University are learning music without paying any fee. The cooperation between India and Afghanistan in the field of education began in 1985, when India started providing scholarships to ten Afghan nationals pursuing studies in India.

Moreover, during the national day celebration on 28, 2003, India sent two choreographers from Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) for a period of two weeks for assisting Afghan authorities in producing programmes. During 2002-2003, ICCR has allocated two slots to Afghanistan for learning music in India, of which one has been utilised by Afghanistan. Later on, an India-Afghanistan Foundation for fostering cultural, educational, scientific and technical cooperation was set up between the two nations. A seminar on 'Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti and the Chistia Tradition' in February 2009 was held under its auspices at the Jamia Milia University, New Delhi. India in cooperation with the Afghan Ministry for Women's Affairs, held another seminar during the same year on 'Women between Tradition and Modernity in Afghanistan and India. The Foundation had also helped in translations and publication of several volumes in Pashto and Dari, encouraged exchange of scholars and historians.

3.5. Strategic Partnership Agreement 2011

After the killing of Osama Bin Laden-Al Qaeda founder and the brain behind 9/11 episode, the then Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh lost no time in reaching out to Afghanistan with his two days visit to Kabul in May, 2011. There he announced a fresh commitment of \$ 500 million for Afghanistan's development, over and above India's sustaining aid assistance of around 1.5 billion. The Singh's visit to Afghanistan was followed by Afghani President Karzai's visit to India in October 04, 2011 in which both leaders of Afghanistan and India have signed an agreement popularly known as "Strategic Partnership Agreement" that was the first of its kind in Asia. This happens to be the first such agreement that Afghanistan has ever formally entered with any foreign country. What makes it particularly significant is the timing of the agreement which is evidently linked with the drawdown of US forces from Afghanistan. While the historic document signed in Delhi between Hamid Karzai, the President of Afghanistan and Indian former Prime minister Dr Manmohan Singh. The Sing said "violence in Afghanistan was undermining security in South Asia". He also said that "India would "stand by Afghanistan" when foreign troops withdraw from the country in 2014".

It means that India not only want to train Afghan National Security Forces as it has been doing for the past few years, but also want to provide lethal and non-lethal weapons to Afghan

National Security. As already mentioned, India has given four military helicopters as a gift to the war-torn country Afghanistan which has been trying to strengthen its air power after significant cut in presence of NATO forces.

3.6. Conclusion

India has been showing pertinent interest in the development of Afghanistan since 2001. India's support and developmental assistance to this war-torn country has gained indelible reputations from the world developed and developing countries. Its assistance definitely will yield good stride and economic development in India and the region. India's "Soft-Power" has forced the Afghan people to realize about its grand's and humanitarian approach to develop good and friendly relationship with India. The Assistance may realize the Afghan people not to send its youths for the conduct of terrorism activities against India in south Asia continent. Very affirmatively in future, India shall provide all possible help and assistance to Afghanistan in order to cover all possible places and chances of terrorism against them with the help of Afghanistan.

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