

## **Indian Influence in Afghanistan and its Implications for Pakistan**

### **Abstract**

Pakistan and Afghanistan are geo-politically and geo-strategically interlocked with each other and so the growing Indian influence in Afghanistan is a matter of grave concern for Pakistan. The affairs in Afghanistan directly affect Pakistan due to its location cultural, historical, linguistic, religious and traditional ties; thus, Pakistan's strategic strength lies in a strong and stable Afghanistan. The conflict scenario between traditional rivals in South Asia, India and Pakistan are coming to front with a new dimension in Afghanistan. Therefore, India is trying to achieve a significant soft role and make her presence justified there in order to achieve her broader objectives via Afghanistan. Although, there will remain a sizeable US presence in Afghanistan, but Indian presence is providing local socio-economic infrastructure and civil, military and political services to promote peace and sanctuary in the war-torn country, which is a sources of fear and anxiety for Pakistan. The paper examines the strategic interests and the level of cooperation and influence of India in Afghanistan and its implications for Pakistan.

**Key Words:** India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, influence, interests, role, implications, strategic.

### **Introduction**

Afghanistan has great geo-strategic importance; she is the gateway to Central Asia, Middle East, and South Asia. Many nations tried to make their hegemony over Afghanistan. It is also called 'graveyard of empires' due to her natural resistance to any foreign invasion. In the current scenario, the circumstances unfurling in Afghanistan and their implications gave a daunting challenge to internal, regional and international actors who have stake in future and making efforts towards rebuilding the war-ravaged country. Accordingly, India emerged as one of the main regional actors, who have broader objectives in rebuilding and developing Afghanistan. The steady improvement in India and Afghanistan relations emerged since the collapse of the Taliban rule in post 9/11. Indian support to the Northern Alliance against the Pakistan-sponsored Taliban in the 1990s bolstered her place in Kabul after 2001 as many alliance members have come to hold key governmental or provincial posts.

To decide the fate of post US withdrawal Afghanistan, India is aspiring to play a major role in Afghanistan and this seems a major threat to security and stability of Pakistan. For long, Pakistan viewed Afghanistan, as significant component of her area of influence, Islamabad for this very reason does not want

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India to gain footing in Afghanistan and impose strategic encirclement on Pakistan defying her policy of 'strategic depth'. To seize the growing presence and influence of India in Afghanistan is the main concern for Pakistan. However, India has been displaying her soft power in Afghanistan, she focused on education, health, humanitarian assistance, energy construction, human capital, women empowerment, communications, physical infrastructure, upgrading security, and assisting the agricultural, rural developmental and other major regions of the country's fiscal system. Vocational training is also promised in the country. Building roads, giving medical facilities, and helping in educational programs in an effort to develop and enhance long-term Afghan capabilities. By investing in Afghanistan, India will boost her trade. India's enormous monetary activity and investments in "Afghanistan have played an important role in helping the flailing government of President Hamid Karzai, with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in May 2010, to retain and enhance her legitimacy by bringing the Afghan economy back on track" (Ahmed, 2007).

### **Indian Strategic Interests in Afghanistan**

Ties between India and Afghanistan can be traced back to over 2000 years ago. Since 1947, India is always striving to maintain her influence in Afghanistan. The only South Asian state, India recognized Communist Republic of Afghanistan and military presence of USSR in Afghanistan, and possessed good relations with Communist regime in Afghanistan during the period of Soviet invasion from 1979 to 1989. Humanitarian aid was provided to the Najibullah's government (from 1987-92) by India and she continued to provide after Najibullah's government (Crossette, 1989). The splintering in the relationship came in outbreak of civil war in Afghanistan and Taliban rose to power. India underwent many security threats during this period; 1) the destruction of monument of Bamiyan Buddha 2) the hijacking of Indian airlines flight in 1999, and 3) proliferation of Afghan militants in Kashmir (Balachandar, 2012).

Since the US-led NATO attacks (9/11), the situation in Afghanistan gets more badly (Balachandar, 2012). For three decades, Afghanistan irked by foreign interventions and civil war, is longing for peace, stability, adequate human security, good economic condition and development. After toppling down the Taliban rule in Afghanistan, India dynamically contributed in reconstruction and rebuilding efforts there. Afghanistan's close alliance and strengthened ties with India are due to her persistent tensed and problematical relations with Pakistan accusing her for supporting and sheltering the Taliban outfits. After the overthrow of Taliban and US invasion in Afghanistan in 2001, India established diplomatic relationship and also offered Intelligence support to Afghanistan. The Indian Prime Minister stated, "Our co-operation with Afghanistan is an open book. We have civilizational 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 (Tisadall, 2012). India vowed to stand by the people of Afghanistan as she thought herself for the task for governance and security of Afghanistan, after US forces withdrawal.

India also supported the coalition government in Afghanistan. In 2005, India offered membership of SAARC to Afghanistan and in 2007, Afghanistan became the eighth member of SAARC. Both states expanded strategic and martial

collaboration against Islamic militants. In 2006, Hamid Karzai's visit to India, three memorandums of understanding (MOUs) were signed for strengthening support in the areas of education, rural development, and standardization between the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and Afghan National Standardization Authority (ANSA). In the same year, a contract offering \$50 million to advance bilateral businesses was signed and India raised her help to Afghanistan by \$150 million to \$750 million. President Manmohan Singh gave further aid for the ongoing and forthcoming projects.

In 2008, Indian embassy bombing in Kabul killed 58 and injured 141 persons, "the Afghan Foreign Ministry quoted India as a 'brother country and the relationship between the two as one which no enemy can hamper'" (India Afghanistan Relations, 2011). In 2009, Indian embassy in Kabul was once again attacked in Kabul, killing at least 17 people. Another attack took place on the guesthouse where the Indian doctors were staying, killing 18 people. By May 2011, Indian aid increased and reached to a total of US\$ 2 billion and India became the largest regional aid provider.

The snuff of ex-President of Afghanistan Burhanuddin Rabbani in 2011 was condemned by the External Affairs Minister, Krishna said, "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" (Powerful Voice of Peace Silenced: India on Burhanuddin Rabbani Killing 2011), and restated the firm help of the citizens and government of India in Afghanistan's 'quest for peace and efforts to strengthen the roots of democracy.

Ties between Afghanistan and India saw a major boost up in 2011, signing a strategic partnership contract. Afghanistan signed her first strategic pact with India in October 2011 since Soviet invasion of 1979. Along with the socio-economic support, the agreement will also include training of Afghan security personnel. During the visit to India, Karzai told the media '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." Adding that, "However, our engagement with Islamabad has unfortunately not yet yielded the result that we want. Both sides will launch Partnership Council, topmost body to implement the Strategic Partnership Pact in May, 2012" (Dhar, 2011). In May 2014, three insurgents fortified with AK-47s, RPGs, hand grenades and suicide vests hit the Indian consulate in Herat. Indian Ambassador to Kabul Amar Sinha said, "Our premises have been repeatedly attacked by those who do not support India's development work in Afghanistan. The attack will not dilute India's development assistance and its contribution to rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan" (India Gazette, 2014).

Thus, India does not want the US military's complete drawdown to create a vacuum that can enable the extremists to regroup. As Indian scholar observes, "The war in Afghanistan is crucial from the point of view of Indian national security. If the Americans withdraw and jihadists emerge with a sense of triumphalism, India will face increasing onslaught of terrorism" (Hanauer & Chalk, 2012). Further, despite Indian denial, it is a fact that behind Indian involvement in Afghanistan there is a latent objective to minimize and curtail the

role of Pakistan in Afghanistan. India considers anything that benefits Pakistan as loss for India. Pakistan has been repeatedly blaming India for supporting separatism in the Pakistani province of Baluchistan and also training militants to launch terrorist activities in Sind, Baluchistan and KPK provinces of Pakistan. In such a situation, "Pakistan sees India as its primary national security threat even as internal instability appears increasingly likely to lead to state's collapse" (Hanauer & Chalk, 2012). The Indian apprehensions on the other hand are that its security apparatus may be attacked on its territory by so-called, Pakistani-backed extremists. However, there are also some long standing unresolved issues between the two states that hindered both of them to live in peace like two good neighbors and work for the development of their people.

Thus, perusing a strategy of strong alliance with states like Afghanistan etc., India wants to boost her status as a regional power and confine its archrival Pakistan, and limit the rising economic power [China]. India is ready to play a major role as soft power in Afghanistan and ready to face severe challenges after the retreat of foreign troops, which is likely to happen by the end of 2016.

### **Indian Soft Investment in Afghanistan**

India strategically invested her soft presence in Afghanistan vis-à-vis Pakistan's hard presence. Therefore, she expanded her partnership with Afghanistan in multi-sectorial socio-economic activities. India is often described as acting as a soft power in Afghanistan (Shah, 2015). "India has already invested US\$10.8 billion in Afghanistan as of 2012. More such projects are likely to come up after NATO's withdrawal" (Dahiya, 2014). Indian socio-economic, security and infrastructural developmental involvement are as follows,

1. She is one of the largest providers of aid [humanitarian assistance].
2. She undertook some US \$ 2 billion on different socio-economic projects.
3. She participated in reconstruction efforts, rebuilding of air links, roads and power plants.
4. She extended her collaboration to health, capacity building, communications, education sectors, and women empowerment.
5. She helped to train Afghan civil servants, diplomats and police.
6. India also assisted in the exploring oil and natural gas in Afghanistan (Bajoria, 2007).

In 2009, a major road constructed by The Indian Army's Border Roads Organization in the remote Afghan region of Nimroz, linking Delaram to Zaranj (Pant, 2011) and the Salma Dam power project in the Herat province. Moreover, more than US\$100 million investment by the Indian government, in the development of the Chabahar port in southeastern Iran. This will serve as a center for the transportation of transit goods. Iran and India are set to ink a transit agreement on transporting goods to landlocked Afghanistan through bypassing Pakistan.

Further, as a gesture of support, India constructed the new Parliament complex for the Afghan government at cost of INR 710 crores [USD 115 million].

India is expanding the national television network of Afghanistan. She also gave a gift of 400 buses to Afghanistan supplemented by 200 mini buses and 105 utility vehicles (India and Afghanistan a Developmental Partnership). Indian training to Afghan National Army or Afghan Police involved greater Indian presence there. In the past, America lost interest after pulling out the Soviets. This time, the US reassured Pakistan that she would not leave Afghanistan unattended at one hand and on the other hand giving full opportunity to India to enjoy full might in Afghanistan. Moreover, the TAPI gas pipeline in 2008 is considered one of the important developments with far-reaching geo-strategic implications in South Asia. The TAPI agreements details are as follows,

“It is sponsored by the Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB) at a cost of approximately \$ 10 billion, the proposed 1,700-km-long pipeline will transport 33 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually. The pipeline commences from Daulatabad gas field in Turkmenistan, through Herat in northwest Afghanistan to Kandahar, further to Quetta and Multan in Pakistan and, finally, terminating at Fazilka in India. Successful completion of the project would require enhanced inter-tribal cooperation and efforts to maintain stability and security in Afghanistan” (Nair, 2015).

Pakistan, India and China also signed an Afghan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA) that would allow Afghan products to be carried out in trucks to China and India through Karachi and Gwadar ports. On the other hand, India and Afghanistan also held meetings about different projects to facilitate trade. The Prime Minister of India reassured India's pledges with Afghanistan, saying: “India will continue to assist Afghanistan in building its capacity; in governance, security and economic development. These projects include: 1) opening the Kunar River hydroelectric dam, 2) Central Asia South Asia Electricity Transmission and Trade Project (CASA-1000) for transmission of electricity from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to Afghanistan and Pakistan, 3) the Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India Pipeline (TAPI), 4) extension of Pakistan Motorway to Afghanistan, from Peshawar to Jalalabad and from Chaman to Spin Boldak, and 5) the 32-country Asian Highway Network project in collaboration with the EU to facilitate trade etc”. The prerequisite of the monetary trade is the security between the states (Akhtar & Sarkar, 2015).

### **US Strategy in Afghanistan**

The US have two main objectives in Afghanistan; 1) to eradicate and uproot terrorism to save the world in general and the west and America in particular, and 2) to develop democratic process and bring stability in Afghanistan so that when American forces would leave the country Afghanistan's own administration should replace them. Actually, America does not want to repeat the previous mistake to leave the country unattended for the terrorists to prosper. There are some other latent objectives of the US as to contain China, the rising power as well as a prospected global power.

So far as the US efforts are concerned to bring stability and develop and strengthen democratic process and institutions in Afghanistan, she is not very successful. The US considers India, also a rising power, capable of contributing to bring stability in Afghanistan, play a major in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and counter growing influence of China to safeguard her interests. US wants to make it sure that after her departure from Afghanistan, India will fill up the vacuum as well as continue the reconstruction process and Indian involvement in Afghanistan will ensure to promote objectives of both US and India.

The Enduring Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) in 2012 is a formally binding executive agreement between the US and Afghanistan. The agreement aimed at assuring US cooperation to provide a peaceful alteration in Afghanistan and pursuing the full abandonment of US security forces. “Accordingly, the SPA, state parties are agreed to the agreement, that are; a) protecting and promoting shared democratic values, b) advancing long-term security, c) reinforcing regional security and cooperation, d) social and economic development, and e) strengthening Afghan institutions and governance” (Akhtar & Sarkar, 2015).

In September 2014, a Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) was signed by the new Afghan establishment, President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah, brokered by US. The agreement will remain active unless defunct by any of parties with two year period notice. Brack Obama, the US president declared the withdrawal of last American troops from Afghanistan is likely to happen by the end of 2016. A Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) would permit some 9,800 US troops to remain in the country after 2014, with half of them scheduled to exit in 2015. From 2015 onward, the residual troops will guide the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) for two more years, finally departing only an indication force to guard the American embassy in Kabul (Shear & Mazzetti, 2015). Ancillary provisions of the BSA allowed the US to continue a long-term presence in the region to assure security by maintaining operations.

“Counter-terrorism training and operations against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban in the coming years will demand extensive intelligence sharing between the US, Afghanistan, and Pakistan will likely to continue U.S. reliance on drone warfare inside Pakistan’s tribal belt. Pakistan herself has been pursuing domestic counter-terrorism operations since June 2014 through Operation Zarb-e-Azb to combat local and foreign Taliban forces operating from North Waziristan. Pakistan welcomed the formation of new Afghan establishment and signed the BSA with Afghanistan” (Akhtar & Sarkar, 015).

All the powerful players are waiting, what will be the fate of Afghanistan after the US and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) withdrawal from the war torn-country. India, Russia, China, Iran and other neighbouring states with the changing geopolitical circumstances in the region are prepared to deal with the

impending situation after the departure of western forces. All the neighbouring states and Pakistan as well have their objectives in Afghanistan and to guard their interests and retain peace in the region.

### **China vis-a-vis India in Afghanistan**

Economic development in China is associated with stability in neighbouring states. China is disinclined to involve militarily in Afghanistan in spite of requests from NATO countries. After the US forces withdrawal from Afghanistan, China has assured increased economic and development assistance to Afghanistan post-transition and promoting political settlement there. China established her footings in Afghanistan; largely due to her all weather friendship with Pakistan. Akin to India, China has managed the lead in investment with almost 3 billion dollar, with India's 2 billion dollar. Chinese view that in presence of Taliban, the business development deal cannot be affective, on the one hand and on the other hand, extremism in her Xinjiang province has roots in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and China can't afford to have the risk of cross border terrorism, development of unrest inside her soil. India and China are competing for securing tenders and deals in Afghanistan (Shrivatava, 2013).

“China views Afghanistan as a bridge for increased economic influence in the Central Asian region and has planned to develop the Silk Road Economic Belt linking China to Europe through Central Asia and the Middle East. The New Silk Road initiative could expand China's economic footprint in Afghanistan beyond its current investments in mining and raw materials” (Pakistan, India, and China after the U.S. Drawdown from Afghanistan, 2015).

According to the newly appointed Special Envoy for Afghan Affairs, Sun Yuxi, Chinese aid for Afghanistan in future will be “split into two parts—one for the government and the other for competitive enterprises, and China will invest in commercial ventures to help them develop.” China's security depends on Afghanistan's stability (Pakistan, India, and China after the U.S. Drawdown from Afghanistan, 2015).

### **Pakistan's Concerns in Afghanistan**

Pakistan and Afghanistan possess cultural, religious and similarity and traditional relations across the porous border. “It is the common sayings that you can change the friends but you can't change your neighbor. 'Pakistan has the long border Durand line containing 2560 km and both countries also having common cultural, religious, historical lingual and racial” (Rais, 1993). Since 1947 both countries have scratchy relationship, Afghanistan is the only country that opposed the recognition of Pakistan in United Nations in 1947 due to the issue of Pushtunistan. Nonetheless, Islamabad, aspires for client regime in Afghanistan along with peaceful circumstances, in favor of Pakistan, but, to some extent, she also wanted to have some contacts with Jihadist who sometimes had strong working relationship with her agencies.

In January 2010, Shah Mehmood Qureshi, ex-Foreign Minister of Pakistan fervidly contested India's role in London Conference [in Afghanistan]. He was successful in limiting India's influence saying that a joint Af-Pak policy was not pertinent to Pakistan. "He expressed his fears in an interview earlier, in Los Angeles Times on October 3, 2009, he emphasized, If you want Pakistan focused more on the [threat from Afghanistan] west, then we have to feel more secure on the east. There is a linkage there" (Bukhari, 2013). Qureshi also questioned Indian objectives in Afghanistan. He told Bruce Wallace in the same interview, "If there is no massive reconstruction, if there are no long queues in Delhi waiting for visas to travel to Kabul, why do you have such a large presence in Afghanistan? At times it concerns us," (Bukhari, 2013). India should remain sideline in the international efforts in Afghanistan and should not threaten the stability in Pakistan.

According to Budihas, Pakistan's policy is focused on the following components, 1) in-house security challenges, 2) external security complexities, 3) dynamics of domestic Pakistani politics, 4) the pursuit for fiscal resources and 5) need of strategic depth are interwoven in Af-Pak ties. In the recent past, Pakistan sought to have a 'strategic depth' in Afghanistan, with the notion of a client regime in Afghanistan that would let the Pak-armed forces to install military assets in Afghanistan [in the case of war with India]. On the other side, Indian presence in Afghanistan is perceived as 'antinational' element by Pakistan. Pakistan perceives Indian influence in Afghanistan as strategic encirclement vis-à-vis her strategic depth. India's eagerness to have a greater role in Afghanistan may not be put out of place but Delhi should also consider Pakistan's deep connected strategic ties with Afghanistan. India enjoyed comfy relations in Karzai, s regime,

"New Delhi has also done its best to restore the balance in its engagement with a range of different ethnic groups and political affiliations in Afghanistan and has used its vocal support for President Hamid Karzai, an ethnic Pashtun educated in India, to demonstrate its keenness to revive its close ties with the Pashtuns, on the one hand, and to support the Afghan government and the country's economic and political restructuring on the other" (Pant, 2011).

India's role has been for long viewed suspicious by nature by Pakistan. According to a leaked US embassy cable, in 2010, the Pakistani Prime Minister Gilani told US Senator John Kerry that "India had to decrease its footprint in Afghanistan and stop interfering in Baluchistan" in order to achieve confidence. Pakistan has regularly been vocal about RAW, the Indian military intelligence agency, of sending intelligence personnel into Afghanistan in the pretext of engineers and doctors, and of providing armed support to a militant group, the Baluchistan Liberation Army (BLA), involved in conducting many attacks on Pakistani civilians and security personnel (India's Role in Afghanistan, 2011).

Without giving much attention, India overtly supports in several construction projects, providing huge regional humanitarian and reconstruction

aid, as rebuilding efforts in Afghanistan. Covertly, the Indian intelligence agency, RAW is working to slander Pakistan and train and support insurgent elements in Pakistan under the following concerns [for Pakistan], 1) RAW provides arms and support extremist and anti-state elements in Pakistan as Baluchi militants and others, 2) Indian elements carry out subversive acts and covert operations to destabilize internal circumstances of Pakistan, and lastly, 3) Deeper Indian involvement would stoke Pakistan's ire. Indian military's presence and influence in Afghanistan exterminates Pakistan's influence as an important neighbor.

National Security and Foreign Affairs Adviser Sartaj Aziz to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said that "India is using Afghan soil to carry out attacks on Pakistan, however, adding that Indian involvement had decreased since the adoption of a joint Pak-Afghan policy to not to let their soils be used against each other". He further said, "Pakistan still wanted to establish good ties with India and when the PML-N government rose to power, following the May 2013 elections, bettering national security and relations with neighbouring states were prime agendas of the government" (Attacks from Afghan soil have Indian Involvement: Sartaj Aziz, 2015).

At a recent high level Track-II dialogue on India and Pakistan facilitated by German think tank Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, "Pakistani participants were clear in their thinking that Pakistan had a lead role in Afghanistan and they also expressed concerns about what they call India's sinister support to certain separatist groups across the border in Pakistan" (Bukhari, 2013). Indian participants strongly refuted the charge. The silent war in Afghanistan has been going on for long. While, India is spending more than \$2 billion in the preceding several years on the "reconstruction process" in Afghanistan, Pakistan is concerned about it.

The Afghan President Afshraf Ghani after being in power courted the Pakistanis with expectations that Pakistan will convince the Taliban on negotiation table and will bring stability in Afghanistan. As Pakistan launched a major military offensive in North Waziristan, with influx of terrorist outfits in Afghanistan, insurgency rose there. Due to rise in bomb explosions and insurgency, the security situation is getting worse. Afghan President Ashraf Ghani denounced neighbouring Pakistan over a topical wave of insurgency in the capital Kabul, killing more than 56 people. The attack followed by deadly bombings struck near an army complex, a police academy and a US Special Force base. Due to the bombing campaigns, Afghan President accused Pakistan for insurgents training camps and factories producing explosive previously functioning in Pakistan, killing their people with vital force than in Pakistan before. Ashraf Ghani in a news conference told, "we hoped for peace but we are receiving messages of war from Pakistan". Afghanistan accused Pakistan for supporting the Taliban outfits and many accuse her for fostering militant safe refuges on her terrain in the anticipation of preserving influence in Afghanistan. Afghan President Ashraf Ghani said, referring to Pakistan president Nawaz Sharif, "in my telephone call with Pakistan prime minister, I told Pakistan to see terrorism in Afghanistan the same way it sees terrorism in Pakistan" (Afghan President Ashraf Ghani Slams Pakistan over recent Kabul attacks, 2015). Mr. Ghani also wrote a letter to the

Pakistan authorities urging them to take action against Taliban leadership based in Pakistan (Masood, 2015).

Pakistan at present, countering terrorism from her soil and is supporting the Afghan peace process, is playing a role of a facilitator, facilitating contacts between the Afghan establishment and the Taliban leadership. "Back channel contacts between the Taliban and Afghan government appear to have gathered enabling critical mass to shed the denial mode and turn into formal intra-Afghan political dialogue" (Iqbal, 2015) but with the death of TTP commander Mullah Umar and blockage of negotiations, peace efforts have been suppressed and insurgency with bloodshed are at rise. Afghanistan accuses Pakistan for the circumstances and demands to control the bloody insurgency in Afghanistan.

The present military leadership has very sagaciously resolved this dilemma making no difference between 'good Taliban and bad Taliban' and launching indiscriminately military action against them. Pakistan has waged a gigantic military offensive Zarb-e-Azb in North Waziristan Agency to flush out all the militant outfits from their last stranglehold in Pakistan. Pakistan armed forces are deployed on their eastern frontier; some troops are fighting off terrorist activities in North Waziristan and some are controlling the security hazards in metropolitan areas of Pakistan. Pakistan, right from the outset has tried to achieve stability and peace in Afghanistan. Pakistan also wants a substantial role in the reconstruction and development programs in Afghanistan. She is of the view that Afghan peace process should be Afghan owned and Afghan led by involving the Taliban outfits. Pakistan views that Afghanistan herself should address her security dilemma but Afghanistan wants Pakistan to battle down the terrorism in Afghanistan too.

### **Conclusion**

Although, Pakistan and Afghanistan have centuries old cultural, historical, linguistic, religious and traditional relations with each other yet the two brotherly states have complex relations on diplomatic front. Since long they possess uneven relations, due to border issue, influx of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and insurgency by Taliban outfits in Pakistan and Afghanistan. However, in spite of tense diplomatic stance, the people of two countries are very close to each other. Pakistan considers that a strong Afghanistan along brotherly relations with peaceful circumstances is in favor of Pakistan. Therefore, she wants a major role in reconstruction and development of Afghanistan. Moreover, Pakistan perceives the Indian presence in Afghanistan as antinational elements and her role is viewed as suspicious by nature by Pakistan, while on the other hand, India also wants a major role as soft power in Afghanistan and wants to continue her support and socio-economic developments. However, both India and Pakistan are trying to curtail and check each other's role, supremacy and influence of each other. Pakistan should concentrate on her internal issues and maintain law and order and peace in the country. She should also try to help Afghanistan come out of her critical situation without using her influence bring all stake holders to table and resolve their complexity by talk. In the existing circumstances, if the Afghanistan is left to herself, the matters will not improve. Too many rival power centers are found in the state and in the region as well. The present nature of this tension is

such that any power vacuum would hastily be filled by an array of non-state actors subscribing to changing degrees of aggression.

However, peace efforts are required in the region that includes, Pakistan and India are required the active cooperation in Afghanistan by putting aside their clashes. The trilateral rendezvous will become helpful in creating a peaceful regional environment. US, Iran, China and Central Asian States should also help a way forward in Afghanistan. US can do more rather obliquely promoting collaboration. She should encourage Indian and Pakistani efforts in Afghanistan by addressing their concerns and offering resolution to Kashmir issue and other conflicts of both countries. Good bilateral ties between India and Pakistan can serve the trilateral collaboration between India, Pakistan and Afghanistan to boost trade and access to Central Asian resources etc. For the long-term cooperation in Afghanistan's reconstruction and help in building up her economy, transparency and confidence building measures are required between India and Pakistan.

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