

# A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF INDO-AFGHANISTAN GROWING PARTNERSHIP

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## **Abstract**

Afghanistan is a country which always remains the part of international politics. Due to its Geo-strategic location and importance it will remain always a high targeted goal for Indian policy makers to connect India with this state and typically to Central Asian as well. The relations between India and Afghanistan divided into several phases according to the circumstances of regional politics. The geo-economic and geo-strategic importance of Afghanistan lie with her placement as it is situated among the three significant regions of the world namely, South Asia, Central Asia and West Asia. The importance of this land for the South Asian states in general and India in particular has been enhanced with her accession to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The concept of security underwent a shift. The new concept of security includes threats like global violence, extremism, militancy, fundamentalism, weapons trafficking, drug smuggling and aggressive patriotism. These curses forced the nation-states to bring transformation in the foreign policy making. India being the biggest democracy of the world also brought shift in the foreign policy domain. The issues like trade, energy security, investment, global warming and technological advancement replaced traditional concept of security based on military power or power politics. India has been pursuing strategic policies in business and others affairs with the regional states and other states of the world. She has been trying to become a major regional state so that the issues of South Asia can be managed under the role of it. In order to become a regional strong state, she has been trying to engage itself in the strategic relations with other states of the world. Afghanistan also comes under the category of those countries with which India has been making efforts to develop strategic links.

**Key Words:** Indian hegemonic design, Afghanistan, Strategic partnership, bilateral relations

## **India's involvements in Afghanistan: Brief Historical Perspective**

A landlocked country, Afghanistan has an Area of 647,497 sq km. Due to her locality; Afghanistan has a great importance in this region. Afghanistan is a crossway among the states of the sub-continent and central Asian states that connect east to the west. Afghanistan shares her borders with Pakistan, Iran, China and Central Asian States. The land of

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these three regions is called “a region at the cross road of history”. Due to the position of Afghanistan, great powers have taken great interest in this country. On the basis of its position, Dr. Mondra Dutta said that “a measure of control over Afghanistan will automatically lead to a measure of control over south Asia” (Laruelle, 2013). In historical prospective, this country has seen many invaders, wars and complete instability. Afghanistan is a country that always remained the subject of internal and external forces. It faced war and terror from the British colonialism including Anglo-Afghan wars.

The effects of British imperialism and Russian aggression made Afghanistan a buffer state. From 1918-1978, it was a peaceful era. After this period, approximately from 1970's, Afghanistan has been facing a lot of issues regarding security and especially foreign invasion. Soviet Union attacked Afghanistan on December 1979 (Webster, 2006). However, that adventure did not prove successful due to the resistance from Muslim *mujahedeen*. Pakistan played an important role against the soviet troops. Religious conservatism and waging of war by lords are some of the results of the Soviet adventurous occupation. The USSR knew the complexity of the situation in this region. She withdrew its troops from the state. This withdrawal brought about civil war in Afghanistan. Because of unplanned withdrawal, the vacuum of power provided opportunity to Taliban to establish their rule in Afghanistan (Rasanayagam, 2005).

After the cold war, independence of central Asian republics and the presence of vital mineral resources in Middle East, India modified the geo-strategic policy. Due to direct boundary links with central Asian, Afghanistan gained critical importance as land bridge for oil and gas pipeline and trade route. As a result of wars and foreign involvement, the country was damaged a lot and the extremist elements were grown up. There was a security problem for Afghanistan and her neighbors. There always remained mutual interests of major powers against terrorism, radicalism and drug trafficking. These elements reflect that great powers have potential to affect the countries beyond their borders. Today, security is the main threat being faced by Afghanistan and its neighbors (Singh, 2005).

The event of 9/11 provided a chance to the USA to intervene Afghanistan. So, the US and NATO launched a war against Taliban under the umbrella of “operation enduring freedom”. International community took interests in the maintenance of the governance system in the country. The distraction of Taliban rule and the built of new government under the supervision of international community committed new infrastructure and improvement of economy of Afghanistan.

The conclusion from the meeting of Loya Jirga is that it is a proof of a significant move and Bone agreement is likely outcome as the Loya Jirga met after 23 years on 12 June 2002. When the constitution was showed for public comments on 4<sup>th</sup> of November 2003; the Loya Jirga approved the same in 2004 (Mattoo, 2014). Now Afghanistan is on the rout of democracy. Geo strategic location also helps for the purpose of trade transit and energy supplies. All of the inter-regional, intra-regional and extra regional significance are important. The goals of Afghanistan are permanent. These include internal stability, coordination with neighbors, acting as a trade and transit link for the Asian countries and stability of the Middle East.

After the fall Taliban government, political and economic adventures were grown up. Physically, it is very important due to location and it is a trade and business hub between three strategic regions. China’s “greater central Asia “is the concept for the enhancement of economic growth and prosperity. It is the combination of the central and south Asia. Both regions have common concerns such as peace, security and economic cooperation (Singh, 2005).Afghanistan is a land bridge connecting central Asia to the huge market of south Asia. Her location is important for brighter economic cooperation and future prospects. Mineral resources are huge and it is estimated at the rate of US 3 trillion dollars (Sammadar, 2010). Afghanistan has potential to change itself from aid- dependent to a great economy due to her natural resources and geo-strategic location. However, the influence from outer countries, reemergence of Taliban and US aggression result in the constant instability of the country. At this stage, there is also a security concern for neighboring countries but a war-torn country has no capacity to overcome these problems. Suffering such as air strikes, bomb blasts and kidnaping all factors contribute to this phenomenon and have become the cause of regional instability. Thus, NATO and the US

withdrawal have raised concerns for the international community and the regional countries (Singh, 2005).

After the state setup changed, war of the USA in 2001 provided a new dimension. The activities of the international community in the post 9/11 phase made Afghanistan active in the global politics. All regional countries like India, Pakistan, China, Russia and Iran are trying to achieve their strategic goals. For this purpose, all regional countries strengthen their relations with this war-torn state. In the post-9/11 era, India strengthened effort to re-organize her hold in that country. So, the relations between the two nations have moved to the development of partnership. As expressed by Indian former foreign secretary Nirupama Rao "India is engaged in development and humanitarian work to assist the Afghan people as they built a peaceful, stable, inclusive, democratic and pluralistic Afghanistan". India took part in every field of life and provided US 2 billion dollars for the war-torn nation (Laruelle, 2013). The geo-economic and geo-strategic importance of Afghanistan lies with her placement as it is situated among the three significant regions of the world namely, South Asia, Central Asia and West Asia (sharp, 2002). The importance of this land for the South Asian states in general and India in particular has been enhanced with her accession to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The change in India's Foreign Policy demands refined tools to march on the ways of managing the issues of the globalization, economic liberalization, and security threats. It is also a major demand of the time for Indian foreign policy pundits to wage concerted efforts to handle the challenges terrorism, religious extremism, and energy needs.

The energy needs of India can plainly be stated that these have been for the achievement of energy security. Energy security is the central part of the Indian foreign policy orientation. The concerns on the issues of energy security have vehemently been expressed by senior state leaders. On the occasion of conference held under the topic of "Cooperative Development, Peace and Security in South and Central Asia" incumbent president of India Mr. Parnab Mukarjee stated, "In the era of hydrocarbons, there is meshing of interests between India and other countries of South Asia as consumer and countries such as Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan as supplier" (Gunduc, 2012).

India wants stability, democratic form of government and peace in Afghanistan. The purpose behind these objectives moves around energy related projects. At present, India needs 170 million cubic meters of gas per day to meet its requirement (Cohen, Curtis & Graham, 2008). This requirement of India can be fulfilled only if the essence of regional and global security is maintained. The initiative of peace and stability will enhance development, trade and prosperity. Hence, India has invested billions of dollars since the overthrow of Taliban. (V.Pant, 2010). However, before examining the Indo-Afghan dealings since 9/11, it is necessary to have a short description of their relations in the historical context.

### **Indo-Afghanistan Relations: 1947-1979**

The existence of Pakistan in 1947 disjointed the dominion of Hindustan with that of Afghanistan. However, despite all this, both of the states maintained their friendly relations and in 1950 they signed 'Indo-Afghan Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation'. Indian films and songs became popular among the people of Afghanistan and Indian movies earned vital part of the Afghan traditions and culture. Whereas, Afghan goods like shawls, dry fruits, and other things, got special attraction of Indian merchants. They maintained their market consistency in post-British India. Based on Rabindra Nath Tagore's short story, Indian film "Kabuliwallah" justifies the position of Pathan dry fruit sellers in the memories of Indian people (Jafri, 1976).

Another important aspect of their close ties in post-1947 period was the access of the both states towards the alliance systems of Cold war. Both the superpowers (The USA and The USSR) spent great amount in Afghanistan during 1950s. However, Afghanistan played the role of missing link to the anti-Soviet chain of the USA that moved from Europe to Pakistan through Turkey, Iraq and Iran. Contrary to it, another missing link of the chain was Hindustan, which adopted the policy of non- alignment to keep itself out of Cold War controversy. This decision also brought Afghanistan and India closer to one another. However, the US equipping of Pakistan and denial to provide military support to Afghanistan pushed both the states towards the USSR. In reaction to this, the President of Soviet Union Mr. Khrushchev came to conclusion to reorganize the Afghan Army should be supplied economic aid. It was

estimated that an amount of US \$ 2.25 billion was provided to the Afghan army up to 1979 (Coll, 2004).

The enhancing dependence of Afghanistan army on the Soviet economic and military aid further increased the friendly relations between India and Afghanistan. In that same period, India signed a number of agreements with Afghan governments during the tenures of Mohammad Daoud to Nur Mohamed Tarakki to increase her influence. India also made fruitful attempts to promote peace, stability as well as cooperation between the two states. However, uprisings broke away across the country owing to the conflict between the pro-Communist and anti-Communist factions. These conflicts affected the relations between the two countries and the 'Indo-Afghan Joint Commission', which was signed in 1976 to provide economic and technical assistance plans, remained non-functional up to 1978. These uprisings also became the cause of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 (Coll, 2004).

### **India-Afghanistan Relations: 1979-1989**

The Soviet attack on Afghanistan offered a chance to India to re-engage and increase the bilateral relations. However, at the same period, it was the tough job for her to construct foreign policy. The attack put India in a complicated situation impacting her prestige and credibility at the world level. As it seized her situation in between the NAM (Non-alignment Movement) of which it was an initial member and the cordial relation treaty was signed between India and USSR in 1971 (Horn, 1983). Despite this, the present government of that period strongly opposed the Soviet act of intervening and requested for an immediate withdrawal of the Soviet forces. The Prime Minister, Charan Singh, stated deep concerns over the conflicts and summoned the Soviet Ambassador to find out the solution of the situation of country that the presence of the USSR forces in Afghanistan has inauspicious consequences for the whole region (Pant, 2014).

However, when Indira Gandhi came back to power in 1980 the decision was reversed. The change was indicative with the reality that its Ambassador to the UNO, B.C. Mishra proved himself the first non-Soviet bloc envoy to address basically for the Soviet position in the UN-

General Assembly. India selected to stop on key issue of UN resolutions request for Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. The country was among the first non-aligned nations to recognize the government in Afghanistan established after the Soviet attack. There were primarily four factors conditioning India's reaction to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. First, the US aid to Pakistan that was for economic aid was being used to get a supply of advanced arms and F-16 fighter aircrafts. Secondly, Washington's reconciliation with Beijing in which Islamabad had played a vital role. Thirdly, a US naval set-up in the Indian Ocean region was also raising alarms in the circle of Indian analysts. Fourthly, a threat of Mujahedeen victory was giving Pakistan an unclouded strategic leverage in Afghanistan (Qassem, 2013).

India's worries were borne out by the Washington's National Security Adviser Brzezinski's suggestion that "Washington should work to reinforce the resilience against Soviet advances by providing more aid to Pakistan" and that it should "keep the Afghan issue alive by sustaining the resistance" (IBP, 2009). Her interests deepened with the US engagement in Afghan matter. As such, the ISI-CIA link moved Pakistan towards Islamic fundamentalism that successively spread to Afghanistan. The condition was more harmful as it led to the arms race not only in Afghanistan as well as in the region. India took the move of arming Pakistan by the US as a threat. This coerced her to look the Soviet attack in a different angle to accommodate her own concerns. The country sought to increase economic ties with the Soviet Union and for the first-time import oil from the USSR (Ganguly, 2002).

The Soviet Union emerged as her great provider of defense equipment and space technology. India also enhanced her investment funds in Afghanistan for the sake of development of irrigational, industrial, and hydroelectric projects. When the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan Mr. Shah Mohammad Dost visited New Delhi, Indira Gandhi showed her willingness to reactivate the 'Indo-Afghan Joint Commission'. The initial meeting of the Commission took place in Afghanistan at Kabul in May 1982, and India agreed to enhance the quantity of exports to Afghanistan. Thus, India started a direct deal with Afghanistan and the Soviet Union assessed her realistic approach towards Afghanistan. However, India's official was in the favor of the principal of non-intervention. After a meeting with Britain's Foreign

Secretary Lord Carrington, Indira Gandhi declared, “No country is justified in entering another country” (Maley, 1989). She again clarified her position in a by-election speech while reminding that Soviet troops were sent into Afghanistan only after Pakistan started training the Afghan rebels and sending them to topple the Government. Nevertheless, India was opposed to the USSR's presence in Afghanistan.

### **Indo-Afghanistan Relations: 1989-2001**

After withdrawal of the Soviet Union forces, Najibullah strengthened his position and formed his government in Kabul and India strongly supported this regime. However, within a short span of time, Mujahidin reorganized themselves and they made coalition of Mujahedeen forces. Later on, that was headed by Burhan ud din Rabbani. So, this coalition of Mujahedeen forces replaced the Najibullah government in 1992. India continued its support while providing humanitarian and technical aid. However, the Rabbani government became weak because of its internal crises and barbaric civil war had been started in Afghanistan. During this civil war, Taliban reorganized their groups and replaced the government of Rabbani in 1996 (Saighal, 2000).

When Taliban came to power in Afghanistan, the relations between India and Afghanistan became worse. The Taliban rule was very antithetic for Indian concerns and directed her to break off all the relations with that state. India shut down her Kabul Embassy in September 1996 and showed unwillingness to recognize the Taliban government. India stated that the government of Afghanistan emerged under the extremist regime of Taliban as what Dr. Najibullah said, “A center of world smuggling for narcotic drugs.... Afghanistan will turn into a center for terrorism” (Adamec, 2012). Taliban cut off links with Pakistan to utilize Afghan territory as a center of anti-India militant actions. These policies further deteriorated the relations. India considered that in cooperation with Pakistan, Taliban government permitted Kashmiri Mujahidin to train them within the territory of Afghanistan. Thus, the militant actions of Afghan Mujahedeen in Kashmir valley by the Taliban became a great security threat for India.

These years observed some 80,000 energetic students from the Madrassas of Pakistan who were given training in Afghanistan and later



on they participated in belligerent activities in the region including Afghanistan, Central Asian States and Kashmir valley (Adamec, 2012). A number of militants were arrested in Jammu & Kashmir either was from Afghanistan or had got training in that state. Another setback of relations between India and Afghanistan was the Kandahar Hijacking when five hijackers of Harkat-ul-Jihad-Islami (HUJI) hijacked the Indian Airlines flight IC 814 from Kathmandu and landed at Kandahar Airport. The Taliban government supported the hijackers and kept away the Indian Commandos to start their action against them. This forced the Government of India to deal with the Taliban and the then External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh handed over three terrorists in exchange for 155 passengers and the crew (Rashid, 2002).

In addition, at the behest of Pakistan's Army, many Afghan militants reportedly fought against India during the Kargil War in 1999. Some 200 Taliban forces participated with Pakistan during this War. Thus, the activities of Taliban closed all possibilities for India to accommodate with the extremist regime in Afghanistan. Anti-Indian activities of the Taliban forced India to support the anti-Taliban, Northern Alliance (NA). Thus, India supported and established links with the Northern Alliance to check the Taliban activities and maintained her influence. Besides the technical advice by Indian defense advisors, the country provided high-altitude weapons worth of US \$ 10 million to the NA, and extended humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people in the form of medicine, vegetable oil, tea and emergency relief material. India also established a hospital in Farkhor province of Tajikistan and provided medical assistance to the NA. India, throughout the Taliban rule (1996-2001), aimed at marginalizing the Taliban influence that brought her close to Iran and Russia who were the other supporters of the NA (Misdaq, 2006).

Thus, from 1992 until the removal of Taliban in 2001, Afghanistan act as a ground for proxy war between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia on one side, and Iran, India, and Russia on the other side. The relations during the Taliban rule are apparent in the words of Mr. M. H. Ansari, India's former Ambassador to Afghanistan, as, "A relationship with the Taliban was not attempted... as result of the treatment meted out to the Afghan Hindus and Sikhs. Much more serious in Indian eyes was the Taliban pronouncements on Kashmir, the training of Kashmiris,

Pakistanis, and foreign militants in camps in Afghanistan... these touched the core of India's vital interests and compelled New Delhi to strengthen (her) support and assistance to the predominantly non-Pashtun Rabbani forces" (Rashid, 2002).

### **Indo-Afghan Post 9/11 Relations**

India is the world's biggest democracy. It is much populated and the seventh largest country in terms of physical size. Bangladesh and Myanmar are located in its East. Bhutan, China and Nepal are situated in its northern part while Pakistan exists in its west. Alongside it, Indian Ocean is located in the south and Arabian Sea is situated in the southwest. The famous Bay of Bengal is present in its southeast side. Sri Lanka and Maldives are also its neighbors and she also shares sea border with Thailand and Indonesia via Andaman & Nicobar Island. India has great role to play in this region due to her size, locality, technological advancement, economic, progress and military capability (Crook, 2007).

The event of 9/11 provided space for the United States to attack Afghanistan in October 2001. It resulted in the fall of Taliban government. This provided India an opportunity to move back strongly into that country and regain her position. Since then, India has made extensive efforts in the reconstruction of this war torn nation. India has become the fifth international and largest regional donor to Afghanistan in post-Taliban era (Lind, 2009). Changes occurred in the old concept of security. The modern concept of security included threats like religious extremism, global violence, weapons trafficking, drug smuggling and aggressive patriotism. These curses forced the nation states to change their foreign policy according to new circumstances. India also had to reshape its foreign policy due to these threats and extended its assistance to its neighbors to curb these evils in buds. India tried to introduce new tools and tactics in its foreign policy. She had been trying to get the status of international economic power for previous two decades (Mansingh, 2008).

In these days, motivating forces in the changes of foreign policies are trade, industry, energy, naval security and technological advancement in internal as well as external security. These are the driving forces of foreign policy for any country. Thus, countries adopted

new coordinated economic dealings with other states of the world. On the basis of these ground realities, it is necessary for the countries that they should mold their existing patterns of policies according to the requirements of dynamics of world politics. Since the last twenty years, India has been on way to take new steps in the foreign policy with intention to achieve highly status on the map of global politics (Mansingh, 2008).

India is tacking new steps in the domain of foreign policy making. She is pursuing strategic policies in business and other affairs with the states of the world. To proceed with these policies, some basic restriction supports it to reset the basic policies proposal once again. These issues include economic crises of early 1990s. After the cold war, worldwide terrorism, revolution in the field of economics and information compelled India to change her foreign policy. In south Asia, India is bearing adventurous and new challenges. In this scenario, indo-Pakistan conflicts, loss of local economic coordination, permanent instability and lack of cooperation among regional states are the main hurdles in this regard. On the other hand, new challenges are gaining ground in the form of china's involvement in the regional affairs, expanding developmental gap between India and other south Asian nations and lack of effective integration of south Asian countries with the global economy. India has to seek out ways to establish her relations with regional countries on the platform of SAARC (Lind, 2009).

Indo-Afghan relations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century have transformed from the historical and cultural relations and have lifted up the level of broad-based engagement. India, after the debacle of Taliban regime, is truly committed to the rebuilding of Afghanistan. The 9/11 attack and the resultant US campaign against 'Global War on Terror' at the international level and 'Operation Enduring Freedom' against the Taliban government in Afghanistan gave India an opportunity to take up her foreign policy agenda in the changing environment. Thus, India got opportunity to promote her 'Afghan Policy' in post-9/11 era. Agreeing with the agenda of a peaceful, stable and secure Afghanistan with the US, India agreed to provide services for the US-led war against terrorism and provided logistical support to normalize Afghanistan. Since then, India has carried out extensive efforts in rebuilding the war-torn nation

which has sustained and enhanced over the last twelve years. (mekenkamp, tongeren , & veen, 2003).

The post-9/11 era saw global acknowledgement of India's principled stand to counter terrorism and cooperation against war on terror. India has obtained the status of one of the principled donors with her promise to the process of Afghanistan reconstruction reaching US \$ two billion. Her efforts of capacity building and skill development in Afghanistan covered from "seeing to school children to technical skill building" (Meher, 2008). Immediately after the Taliban government fell, India's the then External Affairs Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh went to Kabul to attend the ceremony when Prof. Burhan ud din Rabbani handed over power to the new temporary administration on 22<sup>nd</sup> of December 2001.

Grabbing this opportunity to re-engage Afghanistan, India willfully offered the support to the temporary administration headed by Mr. Hamid Karzai. After reopening the Kabul Embassy during the similar visit, Jaswant Singh referred to the close ties between the two countries. The country declared to establishing ties with the new regime on the account of having good relations with most of the leaders of Northern Alliance. (Trividi, 2008) Thus, the support to the NA during 1990s improved her standing in Kabul after 9/11. India started its engagement and since then, both the nations maintained close political friendship. Apart from the reopening of Kabul Embassy, the country reopened her consulates in Kandahar and Jalalabad and established two new consulates in Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif. Many Afghan leaders, who got education in Indian Universities, welcomed and supported the bilateral engagements. Hamid Karzai also received most of education from India. This allowed for the opportunity to the two-way visits by the high personages of both the nations (Mills, 2007).

India has achieved considerable progress as per development in Afghanistan. The country has finished different projects uplifting to the social & economic progress, technical trained capacity building, and science & technology up gradation. The assistance also contributed in abundance of civil infrastructure and human resource. The infrastructure development covered building structures from public sanitation units including toilets to power transmission lines and India appeared to be the

biggest regional and fifth international donor in the re-building process. The interesting aspect of this aid is that most of the aid of India is unconditional, as it expanded to multi-sectored activities and gave full respect to the priorities of Afghan people (Pant, 2014).

The basic object of such aid is the appreciation that socio-economic progress is essential for the stability in Afghanistan as well as the whole region and thus, India maintained regular top-level official engagement with that country. The long and short-term projects covered a wide range of fields in all parts of Afghanistan and all the projects are under construction in partnership with the regime of Afghanistan and in alliance with the Afghanistan National Development Strategy. Notwithstanding assaults on her projects and personnel in Afghanistan, India has not dragged its feet from providing generous aid to the war-torn country. India's aid to Afghanistan covered the basic amenities. India is considering margins of development including civil aviation, irrigation, power generation, industry and rural development. This will indeed boost building strong economic ties between the two countries. (Mariet, 2009). The aid and development partnership covers following broad areas:

India has also tried to improve the condition of masses by bringing development and creating friendly environment. She has taken three steps like peaceful coexistence, formulation of good relations with economic powers and addressing the issues like food security, water security energy security etc. Since 21<sup>st</sup> century, foreign policy of India adopted intermediate steps in regional and global viewpoints. This country is also pursuing and acknowledging the significance of regional economic cooperation. The regional countries are in the framework of neighborhood policy. India also has been pursuing to develop good relations with central Asian state and emphasizes on the policy of Connect Central Asian Policy from the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century (Chopra, 2006).

Due to the interruption of the international states, such as the US and China, she has increased the planning policies of the state. Major concerns of India on the issue of Afghanistan includes security of the state, economic progress, regional stability prosperity maintenance of law and order situation and his presence in Afghanistan for achieving her desired goals. In order to do so, India is including the cooperation in

economic strategies in region. But the basic desires of the state matter of defense and peace which are depending upon peaceful and economically flourishing region (Hester, 2013). This entire range of factors contributes in Indian foreign policy regarding neighboring states and relations with them. This policy work gives a sufficient space for political, economic and cultural links with all its neighbors. Due to her geo-political and geo-economics importance, Afghanistan is the only country that is essential to India for CCAP. So Indian foreign policy towards post-9/11Afghanistan is the part of neighborhood policy (Chopra, 2006).

### **Conclusion**

Indo-Afghan Relations in the South Asian region has transformed tremendously as the trends of regional politics has shifted along with the global needs. Afghanistan remained under such leaders who were having fundamental differences as for as their ideological orientation is concerned. The pro-Indian governments in Afghanistan and the anti-Indian and pro-Pakistan governments in Afghanistan seemed to provide such an interesting case for analysts to probe into the complexities of foreign policies of a land locked state having practically no unity for the state sovereignty as being divided into tribal factions who were fighting for their vested interests throughout the annals of history. The tribal loyalties surpassed the national needs and this culminated into a gulf at the state level where no comprehensive measures were taken to ameliorate the menaces which were weakening the state. The era of Cold War witnessed the increasing influence of Russia in Afghanistan and India though remained a non-aligned state; came closer to Afghanistan. India signed a number of agreements with Afghanistan and the heydays remained till the Afghan war of 1979 and the end of war a pro-Pakistan government was installed in Afghanistan as these Mujahiddin were backed by Pakistan during Afghan War. The relations of India with the Afghan government strained as these Afghan Muhaddin groups supported the Kashmiri freedom fighters and thus Indian policy makers were annoyed by these events. The incident of 9/11 became a turning point and the Taliban government was toppled and again the groups who were pro-Indian were installed and again the history witnessed a regional shift of policies. The Indo-Afghan relations cannot be studied alone but a

changing regional political dynamics must be kept in mind while analyzing the foreign policy behaviours of the two states. Indian investment in Afghanistan in social, economic and military matters provided useful links which are enhancing the ties between the two states. Afghanistan needs investment but it must maintain its sovereignty so that it may not remain as a pawn in the hands of bigger states of the region. Indian involvement and relations with Afghanistan must not be used against any other regional state so that regional peace may be maintained.

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