

# Behind the Screens of Taliban in Afghanistan: An Analysis

G. R. Lakshmi

(RAJYA LAKSHMI MEKA) scholar

Department of Political Science

and Public Administration

Sri Krishnadevaraya University,

Anantapuram - 515003, AP, INDIA.

## **Abstract:**

The purpose of this article was to study the history of Taliban, and its finances from the trade of drugs and natural resources. In this article, three aspects of Taliban's rise, fall and re-grouping were studied. While recent studies highlighted terrorism, drug trade, control of natural resources of Taliban, the other variables and the root causes like political and economic grievances of the major tribe of Pashtuns, their displacement, military support of Pakistani army were neglected. This study remedies this omission by examining variables related to domestic politics of Pakistan, while unrelated issues like foreign involvement, militarization, economic turmoil and how they influenced the growth and threat levels posed by Taliban. In the wake of the instability in the region, the options and strategic interests of the India were discussed and threat levels posed by the combination of Taliban and Drug trafficking were also addressed. This article was concluded by suggesting result-driven routes for further research on the complex links between theories of democracy and shifts of foreign policies of several nation-states, in several cases, resulting in more unstable and complex situations. The researcher compiled a set of policy recommendations that helps to resolve the long standing issues in South Asian region.

## **Introduction:**

Afghanistan is a land locked country and its strategic geographic location makes it vulnerable to invasion by foreigners from time to time. It has great culture and history. Afghanistan has a long way to go. It is slowly recovering after decades of war and foreign intervention from all sides. According to the account given by The World Factbook (2015) "Ahmad Shah Durrani unified the Pashtun tribes and founded Afghanistan in 1747. The country served as a buffer between the British

and Russian Empires until it won independence from notional British control in 1919. A brief experiment in democracy ended in a 1973 coup and a 1978 communist counter-coup. The Soviet Union (USSR) invaded in 1979 to support the tottering Afghan communist regime, touching off a long and destructive war. The USSR withdrew in 1989 under relentless pressure by internationally supported anti-communist mujahedin rebels. A series of subsequent civil wars saw Kabul finally fall in 1996 to the Taliban, a hardline Pakistani-sponsored movement that emerged in 1994 to end the country's civil war and anarchy. Following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks, a United States (US), allied, and anti-Taliban, Northern Alliance military action toppled the Taliban for sheltering Osama Bin Ladin, leader of Al Qaida terrorist group. A United Nations (UN)-sponsored Bonn Conference in 2001 established a process for political reconstruction that included the adoption of a new constitution, a presidential election in 2004, and National Assembly elections in 2005." Since then several elections and coalitions of the Government of National Unity under the leadership of Abdullah Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani, later on Hamid Karzai, struggled to put Afghanistan on track towards success with the help of Allied Forces. Nation-Building in Afghanistan, during and after the conflict, was attempted by the United States, its allies, and the North American Treaty Organization (NATO) forces, and to some extent India.

The answer to the question whether the attempts of nation- building were successful or not depends on what one expects. The main reason for the people to lose confidence in the state is due to corruption and the failure of the international community to invest in justice sector reform which led many worst actors to sneak into judiciary, the police, and the Ministries. Drug lords, militiamen took the seats of Parliament. This undermined the legitimacy or the respect for the present Hamid Karzai's government in people's eyes. The central threat is not just the strength of the Taliban – it is weakness of Afghanistan's government, at any given point of time, in the presence of strong Islamic jihadi tribal socio political economy, in Afghanistan.

Researcher of this paper tries to find out the answers for the following Research questions. What is behind the screens of the Taliban? How can the Taliban become a threat to democracies like the United States, Pakistan, and India? The Taliban's involvement in drug trafficking, exploitation of natural resources, and the involvement of other countries, that is nation-states' sponsorship, tends to have had hampered the nation-building efforts of the allied forces of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United States. This paper contributes to the vast literature available on the models and foreign policy issues of India and its strategic interests in South Asia.

**Research Objectives:** The purpose of and the Objectives are as follows. To study in depth of the origins of Taliban and its belief in Islamic Fundamentalism, in contrast with Western Concept of Democracy.

1. History of Taliban and the study of the involvement of Taliban in terrorism
2. Illicit trade and drug trafficking,
3. Exploiting natural resources
4. Receiving indirect support of nation-states on one side and sponsorship from some governments and countries like Pakistan, on the other side. It starts with the history of Taliban, Islamic fundamentalism, finances from the trade of drugs and natural resources.

This paper examines three aspects of Taliban's rise, fall and re-grouping. While recent studies highlighted terrorism, drug trade, control of natural resources of Taliban, the other variables and the root causes like political and economic grievances of the major tribe of Pashtuns, their displacement, military support of Pakistani army were neglected. This study remedies this omission by examining variables related to domestic politics of Pakistan, while unrelated issues like foreign involvement, militarization, economic turmoil and how they have influenced the growth of and threats posed by Taliban.

In the wake of the instability in the region, the options and strategic interests of India are discussed and threat levels posed by the combination of Taliban and Drug Trafficking were also addressed. The researcher in this article compiled a set of policy recommendations that helps to resolve the long standing issues in South Asian region, involving the regional players in the equation. This paper concludes by suggesting result-driven routes for further research on the complex links between theories of democracy and shifts of foreign policies of several nation-states, in several cases, resulting in more unstable and complex situations.

**Relevance and Significance:** It is relevant now than any other time in the history of India when we look back and it is significant to the present and future generations of citizens that live in South Asian sub-continent to live a healthy, happy and peaceful lives. It was mainly to look for possibilities to end conflicts, to find answers and solutions, to attain peace in South Asian region. India has literally no choice but to practice environmental diplomacy in its own interest and its citizens. It is also important to make Pakistan and Afghanistan understand the importance and pull them along to attain this objective of Peace, Health and sustainable living together in the interest of

all the citizens of the Region. Hence, it is relevant and significant to do this research on Diplomacy, Peace, Conflict, and find the strategies that could work better for India, in the interest of the mankind, in general.

## **Research Methodology/Strategy:**

Research Methodology or strategy is crucial to articulate and address the research questions and hypothesis to comprehend the depth into which the research should dwell on. It is vital furthermore, to demonstrate, that the method selected, should be sufficient to assure the reliability and validity of the collected data, on which the results, findings and analysis depends on.

At every stage of the research in this paper, 'how' and 'why' questions were asked by the researcher, as a part of the Explanatory and Exploratory Case Study method, to bring clarity in thinking not only to the researcher but also to the reader. The questions and answers or arguments and solutions were supported by the views of various experts, authors, speakers and writers on the subject to provide validity to this research, on the relevant topic of this thesis to show its relevance, and to show as evidence in support of the argument or the claim, in this thesis, made by the researcher of this paper.

One cannot simply write one's own opinions and call it research, without researching and quoting as evidence, the original and summative writings of eminent experts, authors, organizations and governments on various subjects related to the topic, to test as per the explanatory and exploratory research of this thesis, show them as evidence, and also, to justify the objectives and the hypothesis. The researcher consciously, used those quotations, summaries, paraphrases and data, collected, written or analyzed by different sources and by recognizing and giving credit to the sources, directly, using their references, from Books, Articles from International Journals, United Nations Research Reports, News papers, News websites like British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Government issued publications. It is nothing, but connecting the dots that leads to the analyses of the historical, theoretical and data driven, problems and solutions, for the research, of the researcher for this thesis.

This research is an extensive in-depth analysis, while projecting the earlier historical research of several experts as well, at various angles, and contradictory opinions. It is not a high school essay where the researcher's own opinions and chatter, fills up the pages, but it is a serious attempt to

showcase the various ideas, analyses and conclusions by various academic researchers, in several fields, to justify as evidence, at every stage, to prove the hypothesis, for or against the claims, in support of the argument or against the argument of the researcher of this paper. At every stage, in all the sections of this thesis, the researcher made an honest effort to fulfill that necessity.

**Hypothesis:** The Taliban's persistent terrorist attacks, illicit trade in drug trafficking, exploitation of natural resources and the involvement of Nation-states like Pakistan tend to have had hampered the nation-building efforts, eventually leading to the failure of the allied forces of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United States, in the 'War on Terror'. While regrouping of Taliban's insurgency, they made sure that they prolonged it to a very long period of fight for approximately 20 years, starting in August 2001, without giving up their cause, that led to taking over full control of the country Afghanistan, in August 2021.

**Sections:** This research paper was divided into six sections. Section I- Literature Review (a) Democracy, (b) Cultural importance of Pashtuns divided and integrated between Pakistan and Afghanistan (c) Theory of Symbolic Politics of Ethnic war, (d) Nation-Building and American involvement. The Section II - History of Taliban explains about the origins, Section III- Drug Trafficking and Flow from Afghanistan to other countries was explained. Section IV- Nation States' involvement and its impact on Afghanistan was analyzed. Section V - Natural Resources like Emerald Mines, Timber and Marble – explains how Taliban raised funds. Section VI – Conclusion, summarizes the research and the results of the study of this paper and makes some recommendations and finally suggests for some more areas of further research study in future, about Afghanistan.

Who created the Taliban and planted them in the seat of power in Afghanistan before September 11, 2001 and ironically after about 20 years again in August 2021? How did it all start? It is interesting to see the age of Taliban, as it is not too old. Cogan (2008-155) claimed that despite the propaganda that Osama bin Laden and his Arab volunteers trained by American intelligence, and Taliban, "the war against the Soviets in the 1980s was won by the Afghans themselves. The Taliban, a postwar phenomenon, was created initially as wholly owned subsidiary of the Pakistani ISI in 1992, with the purpose of having a friendly regime in Afghanistan and thereby assuring Pakistan's strategic depth."

Al Qaeda staged attacks on American soil giving America the reason to declare, "War on Terrorism". How did Al Qaeda rise to the global map? The dramatic rise of Al Qaeda, and their mobilization from Afghanistan while planning and launching an attack on the United States on September 11, 2001

with the help of Taliban has its roots and the reasons in Afghanistan's civil war. "The immediate background to the rise of Al-Qaeda was the civil war in Afghanistan. The rise to power of the pro-Soviet People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) in 1978 provoked a civil war as significant elements of the Muslim society resisted its secularizing and socialist measures, specifically its policies of compulsory female education and land reform. The decision of the United States to arm the Mujahedin was taken, according to President Carter's National Security Adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, in the summer of 1979, in order to "induce a Soviet military intervention." Brzezinski later .....wrote to President Carter ..... 'We now have the opportunity of giving to the USSR its Vietnam War'." (Bromley, 2007-97). According to this Soviets were lured to Afghanistan and mujahedin were armed and financed to provide Afghan resistance more strength with the support of Pakistan, and its military leader, General Zia. It looks like Osama bin Laden, leader of Al Qaeda used similar tactic to lure United States into Afghanistan. Pakistan was worried that Kabul's communist government might enlighten Pashtun independence movement along Afghan-Pakistan border. Bromley (2007-97) further gave an account, "In 1979, Hafizullah Amin, the Afghan prime minister, had explicitly stated his desire for a "Greater Afghanistan", declaring that the Durand line- the line the British had drawn through Pashtun lands to divide Afghanistan from its empire on the subcontinent- 'tore us apart'". This is the underlying fear of Pakistan's strategic war game and border threat that lead Pakistan to tear Afghanistan apart. To make itself stronger Pakistan helped to plant a friendly party in the powerful seat in Afghanistan leading to Talibani government in later years.

Why did winning Taliban become such a hazardous and prolonged battle to the United States and its allies? Cogan (2008, pg.153) wrote, "The basic problem in that of the world since 9/11 is that we are, in general, up against the predominant ethnic group in Afghanistan: the Pashtuns, who also exist in vast numbers on the other side of the Pakistani border, thanks to the artificial Durand line drawn by the British in 1893. The Pashtuns comprise roughly 40-45 percent of the population of Afghanistan, and they have traditionally considered themselves, and themselves alone, the "real" Afghans. The Taliban are overwhelmingly Pashtun." Considering this the United States and its NATO allies are fighting the war against the ethnic tribe "Pashtuns" that comprises half of the population of Afghanistan and considerable number of people from the same tribe on the other side of the border in Pakistan, where the Pashtuns take shelter. Although not all Pashtuns support the Taliban, there is considerable support for them in Afghanistan and Pakistan as loyalty to the tribe comes first. Hamid Karzai the present President of Afghanistan also belongs to the Pashtun tribe



but is not from a very prominent Pashtun family. He is a leader with a weak and corrupt government, as many in the West see it, struggling in the newly established democratic form of government that was elected recently, once again. As Cogan called the Afghanistan war as a “just and rational war” and has a “strategic face” to it.

Is the Taliban a threat to democracies like United States, Pakistan, and India? Initially, when one looks at the regional context, from the context of the United States, Cogan (2008-154) wrote, “the best, accomplishment of the Bush foreign policy is the long overdue strategic relationship with India which, apart from any repercussions vis-à-vis China, is a thumb in the eye of radical Islam. Indian involvement in Afghanistan is already considerable, in terms of infrastructure assistance and diplomatic presence”. He further said, “India is a stable democracy” and by suggesting, “now is the time to tilt towards India”. This shows the tendency of the banding of democracies together, like the United States and India in the region, as Taliban is a proven threat to both democratic countries. They are working hard to bring in the aspect of political transformation towards a strong democracy, while attending to the demands of Nation-Building, in Afghanistan. The threat of the Taliban to United States was already proved on September 11, 2001 as it encourages radical Islam and harbors most dangerous transnational terrorists group like Al Qaeda. For India, also this is a dangerous situation as it has already been fighting terrorism from decades emanating from radical Islamic groups supported by Pakistan and promoted them as proxies including Taliban under the banner of various groups like Lashkar e Toiba (LET) and so on. These same radical Islamic groups including the Taliban are becoming a threat to democracy in Pakistan, staging various terrorist attacks in recent times in major cities in Pakistan, against the present democratic government headed by President Zardari in Pakistan. In Afghanistan, once again Taliban regrouped even after the American led invasion in 2001, and became stronger, lashing back, and fighting against the allied and NATO troops and the democratic government headed by the present President Hamid Karzai. This proves that Taliban is a threat to democracies in the region of South Asia.

## **Section I: Literature Review**

### **(a) Democracy:**

Can democracy be replicated or imported to a nation that lived for centuries following tribalism, like in the case of Afghanistan? Let us understand what democracy is in the context of this research paper. The word ‘democracy’ in the present day, as people in the United States witnessed this, during Presidential elections 2020 in the United States, it reminds about the candidates running for positions, elections, speeches, ballots, voting, campaigns, competition, confusion, expenditure of

millions of dollars, political games and gamble, of course, freedom of speech with blaring slogans of parties and agendas. This is part of the big picture. The researcher's definition of the word 'Democracy' is as follows: "Democracy is a form of government in which people govern themselves directly, or through their elected representatives."

Democracy may be defined by its inherent nature. The Greek philosopher and politician Aristotle defined democracy as rule by the people (Greek *demokratia*: *demos*, people + *-kratia*, -cracy), and this idea that in some way the people govern themselves is still the core meaning of democracy. But around this idea several related themes have developed that are now thought integral to what democracy means. One is that the people govern themselves by regular elections through which their highest leaders are periodically determined (representative democracy like Canada, Australia) or policies governing them are chosen (direct democracy as in Switzerland). A second is that the right to vote includes virtually all adults. Rummel further reiterated that this was an entirely modern addition. Not so long ago governments were called democratic that excluded from the franchise all slaves, women, and free males that did not meet certain property or literacy requirements. A third is the acceptance of certain so-called democratic rights, particularly the right to vote, the right to have one's vote count equally, the right to run for the highest office, and the right to organize political groups or parties. And finally, there is above the state a law to which all authorities adhere, that provides the framework for democratic rule, and that protects democratic rights. Democracy, therefore, now generally means that a people rule themselves through periodic elections of their highest leaders in which nearly all adults can participate, for which offices they are eligible, and under the rule of law.

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, "The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government". In the report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session, of the United Nations, the Secretary-General noted, "the word 'democracy' does not appear in the Charter. However, with the opening words of that document 'We the Peoples of the United Nations', the founders invoked the most fundamental principle of democracy, rooting the sovereign authority of the Member States, and thus the legitimacy of the Organization which they were to compose, in the will of their peoples." Their commitment to democracy was further reflected in the stated "Purposes" of the United Nations which include: to respect the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction.



According to the Stanford Encyclopedia, "Direct participation of the members of a society in deciding on the laws and policies of the society or it may involve the participation of those members in selecting representatives to make the decisions." It further explains that democracy is thought to be the best decision-making method on the grounds that it is generally more reliable in helping participants discover the right decisions. Since democracy brings a lot of people into the process of decision making, it can take advantage of many sources of information and critical assessment of laws and policies. Democratic decision-making tends to be more informed than other forms about the interests of citizens and the causal mechanisms necessary to advance those interests. Furthermore, the broad based discussion typical of democracy enhances the critical assessment of the different moral ideas that guide decision-makers.

Supporting democracy, as per the U.S. Department of State website, not only promotes such fundamental American values as religious freedom and worker rights, but also helps create a more secure, stable, and prosperous global arena in which the United States can advance its national interests. In addition, democracy is the one national interest that helps to secure all the others. Democratically governed nations are more likely to secure the peace, deter aggression, expand open markets, promote economic development, protect American citizens, combat international terrorism and crime, uphold human and worker rights, avoid humanitarian crises and refugee flows, improve the global environment, and protect human health.

The focus on Democracy in International Development reflects an effort to take a global perspective on the origins and evolutionary development of human civilization. In recent years, many countries have established or reestablished institutions of direct and representative democracy. Meanwhile, the international community of research scholars studying international relations rediscovered the importance of democracy by demonstrating that democratic governments have rarely, if ever, fought wars with other democracies. Scholarly consensus on this empirical regularity has been used to justify practical efforts to expand this "democratic zone of peace." National and international aid agencies prefer to help the countries with the establishment of democratic institutions as a precondition for continued support as it is continuously becoming an issue of their security and survival. Still, the Western understanding of democracy remains a challenge, particularly by governments and peoples from the Islamic and Confucian civilizations. In most of the discussions, the term "democracy" has been equated with a limited range of electoral, legislative, bureaucratic,

and judicial institutions found in the advanced industrial areas of North America and Western Europe. A more global perspective is necessary if we are to understand the ways in which impulses towards better governance will manifest themselves in diverse cultural settings, although I personally believe that democracy is the best form of government and it has to spread quickly. Democratic way of life will happen in phases in any country and it works well when majority of the citizens are literate. In case of Afghanistan, it might take very long time as the education and standard of living conditions are so far very poor.

**(b) Cultural importance of Pashtuns divided and integrated between Pakistan and Afghanistan:**

Cultural issues play a dominant role in many societies in the East as in Japan, China, India, Afghanistan and many other Arab/Muslim countries, and they consider it to be important. Human beings are social animals and they feel the primitive need to belong. They feel proud of their heritage, family, language, religion and culture. They want to preserve that and would like to be respected for who and what they are. Culture plays very important role in society and thereby politics as well. People want to represent their interests and their groups' interests at all costs. If they are suppressed their automatic reaction would be to revolt eventually and fight for their cultural rights as a group. There are two major issues that had complicated and will complicate in future are the political aspects of nation-building arising solely out of cultural differences. It could be due to integration of different tribes or ethnic groups with drawn borders, and the division of the tribe as seen in the case of Afghanistan where Pashtuns were divided between Afghanistan and Pakistan, divided during the British colonial era, that gave birth to violent group that named themselves 'Taliban' in both the countries.

When one looks closely at the emergence of nation-states in Europe, there were many factors that played a vital role and took hundreds of years to emerge. As discussed by Stephenson, the evolution of the Italian city-states into a nation, the German city-states into the Zollverein customs union and later a nation, the multiple languages and cultural groups in France into the nation of France, the development of China from the warring kingdoms, took a very long time, and were the result, not only of political leadership, but of changes in technology and economic processes, that is the agricultural and then industrial revolutions, as well as communication, culture and civil society, and many other factors. One of the reasons for the difficulties of what many consider "failed states" is that some peoples who had been integrated were taken apart by European colonialism, while others who were separate peoples were integrated together in new states not based in common

identities. Particularly in Africa as seen in the case of Nigeria and many other countries and the Middle East as seen in Iraq, new political borders paid little attention to national identities in the creation of new states. While in Europe nation-building historically preceded state-building, in post-colonial states, state-building preceded nation-building. The aftermath of colonialism led to the need for nation-building. Consider the case of the United States, at first 13 colonies with diverse origins, came together to form a new nation and state. That state, like so many in contemporary times, faced the prospect of secession and disintegration in 1865, and it took another 100 years for the integration of black and white, North and South, East and West. This was a new type of nation-state, because its people were not all of the same ethnicity, culture, and language, as had been thought to be the case in the early defining of the concept of nation-state.

When there are issues of minorities versus majorities and when people are discriminated without proper cultural, economical and political inclusion in the society mainly through political process, those groups will be dissatisfied and that leads into protests and revolts, or eventually civil wars, as seen in the case of minority Tamils engaged in a civil war for their rights, in Sri Lanka. Kymlicka, gave examples and wrote about groups like the Jews in early modern Europe, or the Lebanese today in West Africa, have a dominant role in trade (though typically not in manufacture or agriculture), yet they are defined as cultural outsiders whose language, culture and religion are systematically excluded from public space. So economic privilege can go hand-in-hand with cultural exclusion. There are cases where minority groups have a comparable or even privileged standard of living, and are not excluded from the political process, yet remain strongly mobilized to fight what they view as cultural exclusion. For all of these groups, achieving economic equality and political rights has not eliminated the cultural/status inequality, although it has helped reduce it, and hence has not eliminated the need to mobilize for a politics of recognition. This potential for cultural exclusion to endure despite the diminishing of economic and political exclusion helps to explain the surprising strength of movements for cultural rights in consolidated Western democracies with strong anti-discrimination provisions cultural exclusion does not always track economic exclusion: it remains a powerful source of political mobilization and possibly ethnic violence even when the minority is not economically disadvantaged. On the other hand, issues of cultural policy are always linked to issues of economic and political policy, because they all form components of larger strategies for the management of the country.

If one tends to ignore the cultures and identities under the cover of nation-state, without allowing them to vent their opinions and to form their polity and rule their own country in future with proper political representation, we are inviting trouble very soon. Gomez explained about identity in regards to cultures in Asia and Africa and stressed that national identity must take into account the demand for increased political participation as well as cultural difference as features of modern societies. The term national identity can no longer be treated as static and one-dimensional. The political aspect is as important as the cultural one for the region. Linked to 18<sup>th</sup>-century European nationalism, two ideas are important in a definition of national identity. Political leaders employed the Eurocentric view that national identity was something homogenous, fixed and overarching. The accepted wisdom of the times was that a properly managed nation-building program would over time facilitate the emergence of a common cultural identity. The emphasis on “culture”, however, disregards the politics conveniently. For instance, border clashes between government troops and minority groups in Myanmar, Thailand and the Philippines are seen in ethnic terms when, in reality, minority groups for greater political representation or autonomy in a majority-dominated political environment connect such aggressive acts to demands. Without political involvement, these groups become less committed to political authority and a fixed boundary.

### **(c) Theory of Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War:**

The definition, according to Kaufman, “A symbol is an emotionally charged shorthand reference to a myth.” (p.16). Kaufman linked all the major three phrases asked in the question – “power of symbols”, “symbolic politics”, “ethnic war”. The “why” of ethnic war is basically myths justifying hostility, the essential “how” is symbolic politics: leaders manipulating symbols that tap into nationalist myths to mobilize people for war (p. 210). Kaufman linked them further, by stating that the function of myths and symbols was to harness those emotions and use them to formulate political demands. For example, in the Nagorno- Karabagh conflict, this happened at the local level. Hostility was so high that mobs were easily mobilized, even, if national leaders tried to restrain them. However, another important aspect of how “prejudiced” symbolic politics and “insecurity” feed each other. For example, nine of the 15 former Soviet republics avoided ethnic war, though all are multiethnic and all were affected by the collapse of the Soviet Union. One of the 15, Chechnya, experienced the war due to the common elements of ethnic symbolism, shaped by myths justifying hostility against other groups. Those hostile myths and extreme goals, not the mere fact of anarchy, created the fears that set off a “security dilemma” and motivated the drive to war (p.12). Symbolic

politics approach suggests a useful way to rethink the concept of security dilemma in international relations. Here is the further analysis of this aspect of security dilemma in symbolic politics. It is interesting to know, in Kaufman's book, he argues this concept of security dilemma does not apply. The dilemma in preventing was not in finding a way to enforce a desirable compromise but in finding a way to convince the sides that compromise would be a good idea: insecurity comes from hostility and fear, not uncertainty (p.220). And underpinning the hostility among Karabagh Armenians, Abkhaz, Cossacks in Transnistria, and Krajina Serbs was a martial tradition equating self-defence with military action. "Opportunity" plays an important role, a very important aspect of symbolic politics and ethnic wars – opportunity requires a "territorial base" (p. 33). If one side has no base, either inside the disputed area or across a friendly border, where it can organize its army, it cannot fight. If one side, usually the state, has an overwhelming military advantage, the result is ethnic cleansing, genocide, or more limited riots rather than war. For example, Rwanda's Hutu government in 1994 illustrates the point. If the result is to be ethnic war, however, both sides must have the opportunity to organize and arm themselves and that opportunity requires a geographic, territorial base. (Stuart J. Kaufman, *Modern Hatreds, The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War*.) In the case of Afghanistan this theory of symbolic politics can be applied as the state of Pakistan and the United States took advantage of this to raise an ethnic divide of Pashtuns in both countries moulding them towards their heritage and ethnicity and then slowly towards, Islamic fundamentalism. This can be seen in the slow transformation of Pashtuns to mujahideens fighting the Soviets and then converting themselves into Taliban taking over the government with the help of Pakistan in 1992.

#### **(d) Nation-Building and American involvement:**

What is nation-building? Nation-building is not principally about economic reconstruction; rather, it is about political transformation. The economic pillar is also central to nation/state building. The spread of democracy in Latin America, Asia, and parts of Africa suggests that this form of government is not unique to Western culture or to advanced industrial economies: Democracy can, indeed, take root in circumstances where neither exists. The post-World War II occupations of Germany and Japan were America's first experiences with the use of military force in the aftermath of a conflict to underpin rapid and fundamental societal transformation. What principally distinguishes Germany, Japan, Bosnia, and Kosovo from Somalia, Haiti, and Afghanistan are not their levels of Western culture, economic development, or cultural homogeneity. Rather it is the level of effort the United States and the international community put into their democratic transformations. Nation-building, is a time- and resource-consuming effort. The United States and its allies have put 25 times more money and 50 times

more troops, on a per capita basis, into post-conflict Kosovo than into post-conflict Afghanistan. This higher level of input accounts in significant measure for the higher level of output measured in the development of democratic institutions and economic growth (Dobbins et al., 2003, pg. xiii - xix).

Another trend that comes into the way of nation-building exercise is the cultural landscape of Afghanistan. Monsutti, 2007 writes, "Migration is part of the Afghan social and cultural landscape. In spite of the unprecedented wave of returns following the fall of the Taliban regime and the establishment of a government backed by the international community, multidirectional cross-border movements will not come to an end." This explains the fall and rise of insurgency of Talibani movement moving and shifting from Afghanistan to Pakistan and sometimes towards Iran. But the persistent belief in Taliban's ideology and their strategy of constant terrorist attacks on the allied forces, weakening them and defeating them finally, in August 2021 put them back in power in Afghanistan.

## **Section II - History of Taliban:**

Who are the Taliban? The Taliban emerged in the early 1990s in northern Pakistan following the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. A predominantly Pashtun movement, the Taliban came to prominence in Afghanistan in the autumn of 1994. Pakistan has repeatedly denied that it is the architect of the Taliban enterprise. But there is little doubt that many Afghans who initially joined the movement were educated in madrassas (religious schools) in Pakistan. It is commonly believed that they first appeared in religious seminaries - mostly paid for by money from Saudi Arabia - which preached a hard line form of Sunni Islam (BBC web site 1). But to understand the depth of the various issues of the land, one has to dig in more deeply into the History.

The two allied empires Russia and Britain tried to avoid clash over these remote tribal lands and established in Afghanistan a formally independent kingdom in 1881, with a Pashtun monarch. The borders of the nation cut through the ancestral territories of almost all the ethnic groups concerned. The ground work for endless ethnic strife and porous borders was thus set up from the beginning (Maletta, 2007-14). The question of legitimacy of Durand Line agreement is the root cause of the fears about borders in both Pakistan and Afghanistan. The resolution of the border and Pashtunistan disputes will significantly help the campaign against Taliban terrorism in as much as it would reduce Pakistan's vested interest in the promotion of Islamic radicalism as a counterpoise to Pashtun nationalism. Taliban are inspired by religious figures and institutions in Pakistan. They do not look up to the tribal leaders or institutions such as the proposed jirga for inspiration and guidance (Qassen, 2007-79).



The Pashtun nation is divided between the two states, Afghanistan and Pakistan as per historical account given by Parenti (2008-96). He further explained that the foundation was laid in 1893, when Afghanistan was separated from British India by a Durand Line, drawn up by Morimer Drand and forced upon Abdur Rahman Khan, the “Iron Emir” of Afghnistan. The Durand Line’s main political impact was to divide “Pashtunistan” and thus give it an imaginary life in the minds of the Pashtun nationalists. In Afghanistan Pashtuns were ruling ethnicity while on the other side of the border, in Pakistan, Pashtuns are minority about 16% of the population. The last thing for Pakistan was to see the linkage of Pakistani minority Pashtuns with strong Afghani Pashtun rulers, as Pakistan always wanted Afghanistan to remain weak to dominate Afghan consumer markets and to receive water from Kabul and Kunar rivers of Afghanistan. Since the early 1970s Pakistan has funded Pashtun insurgents in Afghanistan, including Hekmatyar, head of Hezb-i-Islami, which has allied with the resurgent Taliban, thus converting Pakistan’s Pashtun problem into Jihad problem to fight against Afghan communist coup of 1978, and the Soviet invasion of 1979. Parenti, reiterated that, Taliban evicted the warring factions from Kabul in 1996, then Pakistan played its cards again to back the Taliban.

Taliban, a Sunni Islamist, predominately Pashtun movement that governed Afghanistan from 1996 until 2001, when its leaders were removed from power by Northern Alliance and NATO forces has regrouped and since 2004 revived as a strong insurgency movement fighting a guerilla war against the Karzai government of Afghanistan, also against the United States and allied NATO forces.

Mullah Mohammed Omar was the head of the Taliban movement. Mullah Omar’s original commanders were “a mixture of former small-unit military commanders and Madrasah teachers,” according to Masud (2009), and the rank and file made up mostly of Afghan refugees who had studied at Islamic religious schools in Pakistan. The overwhelming majority of the Taliban movement were ethnic Pashtuns from southern Afghanistan and western Pakistan, along with a smaller number of volunteers from Islamic countries or regions in North Africa, the Middle East and the former Soviet Union. The Taliban received valuable training, supplies and arms from the Pakistani government, particularly the intelligence wing of the Pakistan army-ISI and many recruits from Madrasas for Afghan refugees in Pakistan, primarily, ones established by the Jamatul Ulema-e-Islam(JUI). The ultraviolent Lashkar-e-Jhangvi based in Punjab had strong ties with the Taliban and operated in Afghanistan and Indian Kashmir. The emergence and consolidation of Pakistani Taliban in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas ( FATA) happened when the Pakistani forces were fighting the “foreign” Taliban elements and in the process ignored the transition of the indigenous elements from Taliban sympathizers to a force fully subscribing to the Taliban ideology. The disparate Taliban elements banded together under the banner of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

TTP has announced a program of defensive jihad against Pakistan army, enforcement of Sharia laws, and to unitedly fight against NATO forces in Afghanistan. The question, however, remains is about the extent of transnational connection the different groups have (Masud, 2009).

The Taliban's promise - in Pashtun areas straddling Pakistan and Afghanistan - was to restore peace and security and enforce their own austere version of Sharia, or Islamic law, once in power. In both countries they introduced or supported Islamic punishments - such as public executions of convicted murderers and adulterers and amputations of those found guilty of theft. This goes against the rule of law, human rights, secular and democratic principles. Afghanistan is a country that has become a challenge after the Russian intervention and then later American and their allies' intervention, both internally and externally.

**Section III - Drug Trafficking and Flow from Afghanistan to other countries:** Afghanistan entered this trade in this century. Kreutzmann (2007-605) writes that, "during the last quarter century, Afghanistan has become the leading producer of poppy (*Papaver somniferum*) and exporter of opium and heroin. Innovative and driving forces in this process were the Mujaheddin and Taliban, both of which can claim that they brought Afghanistan from a negligible position prior to the 1980s into its present position as the world's prime producer." This supports the economic principle of supply and demand that means when there is demand in the world market there will ways to meet the demand by trying to supply from different sources. That is how Afghanistan entered the market as there is profit motive in the globalized market.

Much of the heroin trafficked is controlled by tribes on either side of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border that move the heroin into Pakistan. Pakistan receives over a third of the heroin trafficked through Nangarhar. Most of the opiates are trafficked through the north-east region into Central Asia due to proximity and strong cross-border ethnic links. There were no reports of heroin being routed directly from the northern provinces across the short border with Uzbekistan (137 km). It is likely that the majority of opiates found in Uzbekistan come indirectly from Afghanistan through Tajikistan. Almost three quarters of the southern region's heroin is exported to the western provinces. From there, most of the heroin goes to Iran where there is a significant domestic drug market and where some of the Afghan opiates are consumed. There remains a significant portion that travels through Turkey to Europe, with lesser amounts shipped to the Caucasus and Iraq. Despite the fact that four of the southern provinces share a common border with Pakistan, less of the southern region's heroin seems to be routed to Pakistan in 2008. However, there is evidence that some southern opiates travel into Iran through Pakistan's Baluchistan areas (Survey 2008).

The Opium Winter Assessment Survey 2008 (implemented in January/February 2008) anticipated a slight reduction in opium cultivation (UNODC, Afghanistan Opium Winter Rapid Assessment Report, February 2008). The full opium survey shows that cultivation reduced more than expected thanks to successful counter-narcotic efforts in the northern and eastern provinces of Afghanistan.

The two main reasons given in the report for the reduction in the amount of land used for opium cultivation are “successful counter-narcotics efforts in the northern and eastern provinces of Afghanistan” and “unfavorable weather conditions that caused extreme drought and crop failures in some provinces”, mostly in northern Afghanistan, where the Taliban have little or no presence. The implications that the Taliban group itself grows the crop and is involved in trafficking are also misleading. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Taliban’s profits from the trade come principally from ushr, a 10 percent tax on all agricultural crops, and from offering protection for traffickers involved in moving the opium (Hammond, 2008).

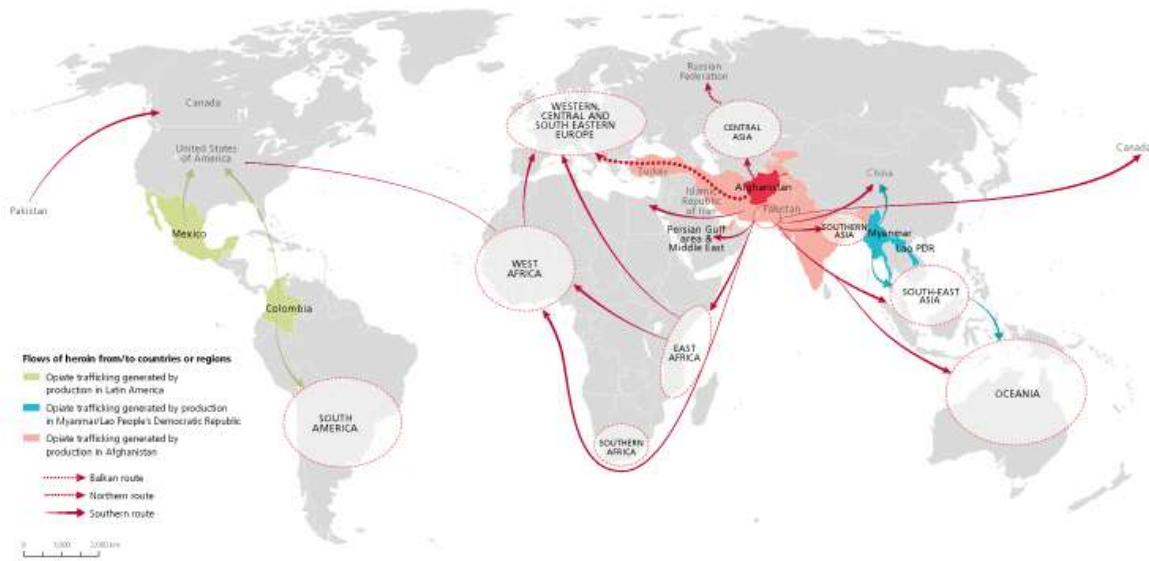
The methodology of the Afghanistan Opium Survey in 2008 covered various aspects, such as estimations of the extent of opium cultivation, yield and production, verification of opium poppy eradication, prices and the opium growth calendar. It also included socio-economic indicators the number of families involved in opium cultivation, the number of opium addicts in Afghanistan and the income from opium to farmers and traffickers. The survey methodology was based on a sampling approach that combined the use of satellite imagery and extensive field visits. In 2008, high-resolution satellite images were acquired for 118 sample locations covering 21 provinces. All locations were covered at two different growth stages: the flowering or capsule stage and after the lancing of the opium poppy capsules. These images covered 7% of all agricultural land (4,530 km<sup>2</sup> out of 62,217 km<sup>2</sup>) in the 21 provinces. A similar number of images were collected in 2007 for 24 provinces, covering 11% of agricultural land, and in 2006, 210 images collected at 105 locations were processed to provide coverage of 16% of agricultural land in 19 provinces. In the remaining 13 provinces, opium cultivation was estimated by surveyors on the basis of assessments of the extent of opium cultivation in sampled villages. The distribution of satellite images was based on the number of cells in the sampling frame and total arable land in each province. A group of 49 surveyors was engaged to collect the ground truth reference required to assist satellite image interpretations. Additionally, some 134 surveyors visited 1,529 villages in 34 provinces to collect data on socioeconomic indicators opium cultivation. Villages were stratified according to their elevation, and using systematic random selection methods in each group did selection. Selected villages were geographically and statistically well distributed in all 34 provinces. Surveyors conducted interviews with 3,050 farmers and 1,529 headmen. Traditionally poppy-free provinces – for example, Logar, Bayman and

Pakya of the central region – were monitored for their poppy-free status through annual village surveys. In 2008, opium cultivation was estimated using satellite images, except for in Kabul province, where cultivation was estimated through the annual village survey. For yield estimation, the field survey was conducted on 569 fields in 198 villages. A total of 17,541 capsules were measured from 1,707 plots to collect the data required for the calculation of per hectare opium yield. 131 surveyors/verification inspectors who visited every field that was eradicated by GLE forces and PEF implemented the eradication verification survey separately.

In 2008 (including the Rapid Assessment Survey, the Eradication Verification Survey and the Annual Opium Survey), over 350 surveyors collected ground data/information on opium cultivation, yield, eradication and socio-economic variables in Afghanistan. For all of the surveys, experienced surveyors were selected from the UNODC surveyor pool, as in previous years, based on a written test, interviews and their previous performance. As part of the capacity building in the Afghan Government, trainings for surveyors were delivered jointly by MCN/UNODC local staff. MCN/UNODC survey coordinators monitored and supervised the surveys in their assigned regions.

According to United Nations Report on, The Afghan Opiate Trade Project (AOTP) 2022, “The opiates produced in Afghanistan continue to pose a threat to public health, governance and security in South-West Asia and beyond at global level. Trafficked to almost every continent worldwide, income from opiates in Afghanistan amounted to some \$1.8-\$2.7 billion in 2021 and was worth between 6 and 11 per cent of Afghanistan’s GDP<sup>1</sup>, exceeding the value of the country’s officially recorded licit exports of goods and services.” The Picture 1.1 shows the origin and the Global Afghan Opiate Trade Routes across the continents.

Picture 1.1 Afghan Opiate Trade Project (AOTP )(2022) –Drug Trade Routes - United Nations –Office on Drugs and Crime .



After the Taliban took control of the country on August 15, 2021, they rolled back human rights, women’s rights and many more educational developmental policies in the country and brought many changes in its governance. The impact of these changes will have lasting impact on the region and international community. Time will tell, if Taliban is an organization that highly benefits from illicit markets or legitimate government that takes governance and progress of its own Afghani people seriously, without harboring terrorist organizations like Islamic State or Al Qaida. Depending on that assessment and outcome, relationship with international community might take a positive curve in Taliban led Afghanistan, to establish normal trade relations and cooperation may happen smoothly, including India, in future.

**Section IV - Nation-States’ Involvement:** There are several nation-states that are involved and play a vital role involving in the affairs of Afghanistan. All these nation-states or countries change the dynamic of the Afghan politics from time to time. The reasons for growing narco-economy is comparatively a young phenomenon as power games, internal struggles of central dominance, external invasion and supply of arms, ammunition and landmines has created an environment of ideological confrontation, regionalism, and personal insecurity in Afghanistan. Political fragmentation of the nation-state and a lack of functioning of civil society, ineffective institutions provide conducive environment and Afghanistan provides one (Kreutzmann, 2007-620). During 1980s in fight against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan during Cold War, the American and Pakistani intelligence agencies that is CIA and ISI respectively, played a direct role in funneling weapons and money to the Afghan freedom fighters the ‘mujahideen’. Pashtun leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and his Hezb-i-Islami fundamentalist party delivered

weapons to Afghanistan and brought opium back to Pakistan. His involvement started only after 1989 after the American funding stopped( Kreutzmann, 2007-609). According to Hammond (2008), by overemphasizing the role of the Taliban, the Times serves to obfuscate the apparent role of local leaders and, more importantly, government and law enforcement officials in the drug trade. With regard to corruption within the Afghan government and police force, some raise the question as to who makes more money from the opium economy. Mr. Pietschmann also acknowledged that “Corruption is indeed a problem and there are indications that it may go to rather high levels.” He added, “It is, however, difficult to estimate to what extent the trade is controlled by major players within the government. We do not have any indications that the bulk is being controlled by some of these individuals. There seems to be more of a problem with parliament where drug lords have strong influence over individuals and/or are even personally involved.”

It is interesting to note the other side of the coin of state involvement depending on their strengths and the weaknesses. As per Kreutzmann (2007-613), “During the last quarter century, only the Taliban rule, when they were in power in Afghanistan managed to reduce the cultivation to zero during one year in 2001.” This shows that the strong central and oppressive governments can implement the ban of growing poppy. He further compares with the present government in Afghanistan and its failure to control or eradicate the poppy cultivation by writing, “the government of Hamid Karzai declared a poppy cultivation ban in January 2002. Nevertheless, all harvests since then have been higher than the preceding bumper harvest of the year 2000..... and peak was reached in 2006 with 6,100tons.”

A United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) study done in 2006 concluded that there may be 35 major criminal groups in Afghanistan, of which 15 are located in southern Afghanistan (Helmand/Kandahar) controlling much of the business. None of them had its criminal head in government. But they seem to influence politics, including who gets the job as police chief at the regional level.” And while much of the United States led effort to combat the trade in Afghanistan has involved eradication of poppy fields, most experts seem to concur, including in reports from both the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the World Bank, that at best eradication has had only very limited success and is at worst counterproductive because it targets the farmers, most of whom grow the crop only in an effort to alleviate poverty, rather than the big players who control the actual trade in the drug. And yet U.S. policy on counter-narcotics in Afghanistan seems to focus largely, if not predominantly, upon eradication. This may actually help increase the profit margin of the major players, and may actually be used by warlords and drug lords with strong influence in the government either at the state or local level to target competitors in the trade. Similarly, a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)



Assessment of Organized Crime in Central Asia noted that “The leaders themselves usually belong to the leading clans and occupy positions of high status in a family. In addition, the leaders are usually well connected to the apparatus of government power, whether in the political leadership or local administration.” When it comes to leaders, Parenti (2008-94) writes, “with warlords, running the government, a number of subsequent problems followed: corruption and drug dealing became part of the state’s activities and undermined development. Now, stunningly corrupt warlords-like Rashid Dostum, Abu Syaff, and Mohammad Mohqeq – bathe in the flow of drug lucre and aid money.” When one looks at the big picture it shows that Afghanistan is surviving on foreign aid, opium poppy cultivation and remittances sent home by five million Afghans living abroad. This proves the fragility of the economy of Afghanistan and it should find a way to make itself sustainable.

The assessment also notes that while there is often cooperation amongst criminal groups or organizations, there is also a great deal of competition, and that “What is perhaps most interesting here is the degree to which state actors are often involved. This can be illustrated through examining government crackdowns on competing clans. It is highly probable that at least some of the crackdowns on organized crime by government and law-enforcement agencies are carefully targeted against rival clans, while criminal organizations that are linked to the dominant clan obtain ‘preferential impunity’ and are able to continue to accumulate wealth from their criminal activities.” The role of the Taliban in the opium trade is often greatly exaggerated by the U.S. corporate media. But even if one was to accept accounts like those the New York Times gives of the Taliban’s role, it nevertheless still remains self-evident that the Taliban’s cut is “trivial” if one considers the bigger picture. The question still remains of who is really responsible for the lion’s share of the highly profitable Afghan opium trade. Mr. Pietschmann suggested a role of Kurdish groups in trafficking the drug from Iran into Turkey (Hammond, 2008).

In Turkey, some have suggested the existence of a shadow government, or what is termed the “deep state”, that really controls things behind the scenes. Even a former president and seven-time prime minister of Turkey, Suleyman Demirel, has said, “It is fundamental principle that there is one state. In our country there are two.” He added, “There is one deep state and one other state. The state that should be real is the spare one, the one that should be spare is the real one.” (Hammond, 2008)

Writing in the Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, John Gorvett (2006), a free-lanced journalist based in Istanbul, said: “Defining the ‘deep state’ is not so easy, however. Some argue that it is a hangover from the Cold War, when Western powers sought to establish a network of armed groups that would stay behind in countries that might have fallen to the Soviet bloc. While these groups were then abolished in most countries when the Soviet Union collapsed, the theory is that in Turkey this never happened. Instead,

the group continues to operate, an unofficial underground army tied to organized crime and a bevy of corrupt politicians, police and bureaucrats.” In his report Gorvett further emphasized that corruption extends to the United States, according to former FBI translator Sibel Edmonds. National Security Whistleblowers Coalition, which includes as a member Daniel Ellsberg, the former special assistant to the Secretary of Defense who leaked the Pentagon Papers. Mr. Ellsberg has said, with regard to Ms. Edmonds, “Al Qaeda, she’s been saying to congress, ... is financed 95% by drug money – drug traffic to which the US government shows a blind eye, has been ignoring, because it very heavily involves allies and assets of ours – such as Turkey, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Pakistan, Afghanistan – all the ‘Stans’ – in a drug traffic where the opium originates in Afghanistan, is processed in Turkey, and delivered to Europe where it furnishes 96% of Europe’s heroin”. If such allegations are correct – and Ms. Edmonds is not alone in making them – then it might perhaps explain why the U.S. government is so keen on solely blaming the Taliban for the production of opium in Afghanistan and the lucrative drug trade. As per these allegations there could be a possibility of high level of corruption involved in several countries involving several intelligence officials, military, state government officials at federal, regional, and local levels. Their negative influence and selfish involvement in the national and local affairs of Afghanistan is hampering the nation-building efforts, affecting the progress and slowing down the success of the innocent Afghani people in their own land.

## **Section V - Natural Resources- Emerald Mines, Timber and Marble - Taliban:**

Natural resources are widely used by the Taliban to raise revenue for their cause. The Taliban in Pakistan's strife-torn district of Swat have taken over operations in its emerald mines. The mines, which produce emeralds of international quality, were previously controlled by the Pakistani government. They were taken over by the Taliban for few months following a ceasefire between militants and the government. Until then, Swat was the scene of 18 months of conflict between the security forces and Taliban militants fighting to implement Islamic Sharia law. The mines, along with the Panjshir mines in Afghanistan, hold the largest known deposits of emeralds in South Asia (Hasan, 2009).

Swat's emerald mines are located in the mountains that ring the district's main town of Mingora. The mines cover an area of nearly 8km (5 miles). When fully operational, they yielded a quarter of a million carats of emeralds between 1978 and 1988, according to official statistics. The last official estimate put the projected yield at about 13.2m carats. Gemstone dealers say that most emeralds range from just under one carat to just over five. Prices range from \$1,000 to more than \$100,000 for a cut stone, depending on the quality. According to the terms of the deal, the Taliban take one-third of the yield of each set of miners. The costs are shared equally by the Taliban and the miners. The Taliban say they are not directly

involved in the operations themselves. But the rules, which include amputation for theft and strict adherence to Sharia rules, mean only those with strong the Taliban sympathies are allowed to operate (Hasan, 2009).

Natural resources like gemstones, timber and marble helps sustain the activities of the Taliban and other extremist groups. 'It is not possible to put a definitive figure on how much the Taliban are making from their excursion into economic activity, but the government estimates that it is losing Rs 65 billion (\$800 million) annually from the illegal timber trade and indiscriminate deforestation alone,' The News said in an editorial headlined 'Funding terror'. Marble was the Taliban's first target, beginning April 2008 when they took over the Ziarat quarry in the Mohmand Agency of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Around a million tonnes of marble a year are mined in FATA every year, and prior to the Taliban takeover, the government had hoped to increase marble and granite exports to \$500m by 2013, 'a hope now not to be realized with the profit now going into other pocke's', The News said. The emerald mines of Swat were next. By late March, reports began to be confirmed that militants had taken control of the government's emerald mines located in the mountains of Mingora, the largest city of the district. The occupation of the Mingora mine apparently took place sometime in February 2009, following the controversial peace deal between the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) administration and Taliban-backed radical cleric Sufi Muhammad, the newspaper said. Taliban forces then seized the nearby Shamozaï and Gujjar Killi mines and started mining and trading gems 'probably at below market rates'. 'Local people were reportedly happy with the takeover as it was said that the Taliban were sharing up to one-third of the profit with them,' the editorial of The Economic Times, 2009 pointed out. It further stated that Swat is rich in timber, 'and a partnership between the long-established timber mafia in Swat and Dir has been rapidly established'. A further 'income steam' is being established via the non-commercial route of the jaziya tax, the levying of which has forced some 35 Sikh families, who have resided for long in FATA's Orakzai Agency, to flee the area. The Taliban has appropriated their property and houses.

The strategies that were followed by the allied forces and the United States to tackle the issues of terrorism, drug trafficking, exploitation of natural resources and corruption by the state governments did not show any results. As Roi, (2008-290) wrote in his article, "Strategy must evolve as circumstances change. As government policy objectives shift, the availability of forces and resources fluctuates and the enemy's strength and disposition changes, strategies must be reassessed".

When it comes to the corruption of the government in Afghanistan, flaws can be seen in its establishment in the first place. Suhrke (2008-630) wrote, "Afghanistan has had six constitutions between 1923 and 1990". They have provided elections and national assemblies in some form or another with heavy degree

of foreign involvement. As Suhrke further said, “ The heavy foreign hand contradicted the promise of national autonomy, representation, and fair process held out by the democratization agenda.....Western governments simultaneously created a state so dependent on external support that it deprived the critical institution of liberal democracy – the legislature – of its meaning.” Involvement of drug lords and war lords in the government also contributed to the problems and corruption issues. Judiciary that is Department of Justice should be made more stronger and the punishment for organized crime should be more stringent. Law and order should be maintained with a stronger home grown force.

When it comes to Drug trafficking and crime immediate measures have to be taken and agreements have to be entered with several countries to cut down crime and the flow of the drugs. The World Drug Report 2009, launched today by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), shows that global markets for cocaine, opiates and cannabis are steady or in decline, while production and use of synthetic drugs is feared to be increasing in the developing world. The 314-page Report, prepared for World Drug Day on 26 June, was launched in Washington D.C. by UNODC Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa, and the newly appointed Director of the US Office of National Drug Control Policy, Gil Kerlikowske. The Report provides a number of recommendations on how to improve drug control. First, drug use should be treated as an illness. "People who take drugs need medical help, not criminal retribution," said Mr. Costa. He appealed for universal access to drug treatment. Since people with serious drug problems provide the bulk of drug demand, treating this problem is one of the best ways of shrinking the market. Second, he called for "an end to the tragedy of cities out of control." In the same way that most illicit cultivation takes place in regions out of government control, most drugs are sold in city neighborhoods where public order has broken down. "Housing, jobs, education, public services, and recreation can make communities less vulnerable to drugs and crime," said Mr. Costa. Third, governments must enforce international agreements against organized crime. International crime-fighting instruments like the United Nations Conventions against organized crime and corruption are not being used. "Therefore, too many states have crime problems of their own making," said the head of UNODC. In particular, he said "current instruments to tackle money laundering and cyber-crime are inadequate." Fourth, he called for greater efficiency in law enforcement. He encouraged police to focus on the small number of high profile, high volume, and violent criminals instead of the large volumes of petty offenders. In some countries, the ratio of people imprisoned for drug use compared to drug trafficking is "This is a waste of money for the police, and a waste of lives for those thrown in jail. Go after the piranhas, not the minnows," said Mr. Costa. In an effort to improve transparency and the quality of drug data, this year UNODC has introduced ranges into country-level estimates used in the World Drug Report. For many regions and for some drugs (like ATS and cannabis) the ranges are relatively wide since information is more limited. "I urge

governments to gather more information. This will provide a clearer picture of drug trends, and, as a result, improve drug control," said Mr. Costa.

There is also a sharpening of exclusive, regional sub-identities under way that makes the development of allegiance to Kabul problematic, according to Jennings(2007), if this continues, the important advantages the capital may eventually offer in the rule of law, human rights protections, and economic benefits to the provinces will go unrecognized. Of additional concern is the inability of the international community to effectively contain the spread of opium poppy cultivation and the cycles of debt, coercion, and impoverishment it creates. He further recommends the following: Demonstrate a peace dividend. Reject notions of collective guilt. Commit to transition rather than to half measures. Take the time to win a just peace. Reform, assist, and collaborate with local institutions. Encourage an ethic of public participation to sustain democratic development. Avoid displaying arrogance of purpose and creating caste systems, which foster cynicism and disillusionment. Achieve international legitimacy and deal with factionalism. Understand that actions may have unintended consequences. Make use of social capital to temper the timing and character of transitions. Minimize the effect of external political events, which can undercut the best-laid plans.

The security requirements of these post–Cold War operations, especially after September 11 terrorist attack on the United States, also expanded. As per the report of Dobbins (2003), no longer were peacekeepers simply monitoring truces and policing ceasefire lines. Now they were disarming combatants; demobilizing armies; building new military, police, and judicial establishments; holding elections; and helping to rebuild economies. American troops while continuing to hunt down al Qaeda and Taliban remnants, assume no responsibility for public safety, which came under heavy scrutiny in recent times, as the reports of escalated violence and killings of innocent people done by the military forces of the United States and NATO in Afghanistan. Security for the Afghan population was to be the exclusive responsibility of Afghan war-lords and tribal militia, given that the country had no national army or police force. Economic assistance was equally stunted. Bosnia had received \$800 per inhabitant per year in foreign aid during the initial stages of its reconstruction. Afghanistan, in contrast, received only \$50 per person, of which perhaps \$20 came from the United States. As the world is experiencing a new kind of international threats coming from the failing or failed states, the security requirements are drastically changing. There are many weak nations that are posing a threat and are on the verge of becoming failing or failed states. Countries around the world should come up with a definitive plan of training the police, paramilitary forces and the military forces to attend to the demands of internal security during the process of the reconstruction of a nation or a state.

## **Section VI – Conclusion:**

The strategies followed by the allied forces and the United States to tackle the issues of terrorism, drug trafficking, exploitation of natural resources and corruption by the various governments in different countries failed miserably. It takes more time to see any kind of positive results in Afghanistan. There should be constant effort and consistency for years to come. With Taliban in power from 2021, any development that may have happened from the past 20 years will take steep dive down and one should watch where it will heading in near future.

Revisiting the hypothesis of this paper helps one to have a clear picture, once again. Taliban's involvement in drug trafficking and exploitation of natural resources and the involvement of foreign state sponsorship tends to have hampered the nation-building efforts of the allies, forces of North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the United States, resulting in Taliban's victory and taking control over the country Afghanistan in August 2021. After studying and analyzing the various factors and the results of the data as discussed in the previous sections, it proves that Taliban is indeed a threat and its involvement in drug trafficking, exploitation of natural resources and the help it is getting through the indirect sponsorship of other countries and their involvement in several ways by using the religion Islam. With their jihadi ideology, posing strong resistance, Taliban is indeed a threat to the neighbouring countries in Asia, especially India.

Taliban was a 'more dangerous element because it has roots in the people' unlike Al Qaeda was 'more organized' ” according to General Pervez Musharraf, former President of Pakistan, admitted on 15 September 2006, as written in the article of Behuria, (2007- 529). He further wrote referring to Pashtuns and their rise of minority group in Pakistan while including the Pashtuns of Afghanistan, “Afghanistan faced a great danger in the shape of fringe groups, a small minority that preaches hate, violence and backwardness.” He clearly emphasized on the danger of Taliban becoming a social concept with a possibility of converting it into a threat to global economy.

Allies can be found at every level and in more areas than the traditional ones especially in other tribes like Sindhis, Baluchis, Shias and so on in Pakistan and some in Afghanistan might even want to help India, and might want to bring peace and security to the region. United States should not be in further denial, and should recognize the lack of intentions of Pakistani army and intelligence agencies and their proxies, to get to the bottom line to resolve these issues of terrorism emanating from Islamic fundamentalism and Taliban. Expecting help to curtail terrorism from recognized “State Sponsor of Terrorism” in the region,



that is Pakistan, is sort of ironical. But there is hardly any other choice left for India, the United States and the world. They should bring more pressure on Pakistan and Taliban in Afghanistan, from time to time, to keep them in check, so that they do not use terrorism as a backdoor tactic. India should also continue to have a dialogue and go ahead with the peace initiative with Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The threat to Pakistan was never India as Pakistani Ex-President Zardari in his words said, "Well, I am already on record. I have never considered India a threat," said in an interview on the PBS news channel's popular show "Newshour With Jim Lehrer"(. PTI, May 10, 2009). It is in fact Karachi that holds a real threat to Pakistan, where there is stronghold of Pashtuns and components of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) which may use it to their advantage using terrorism as its tool against their own country Pakistan. Karachi is already a hot spot due to its trade hub along with its ethnic challenges. Pakistan and Afghanistan has to commit to deal more effectively and clear the pockets and sanctuaries for the terrorist groups like Al Qaeda, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi(LEJ), Lashkar-e-Toiba(LET), the Islamic Jihad Union, the 313 Brigade of Ilyas Kashmiri and the Serajuddin Haqqani group of Pashtuns in Waziristan and other territories in both countries. All the countries in the region together should fight terrorism with the same intensity and rigor. Stronger stance has to be taken at the source of the problem. Any country that harbors terrorism will fall as a prey to the same.

The danger is not only terrorism but also nuclear proliferation as well from the same volatile region, mainly from Pakistan. That means, the leadership of Taliban in Pakistan taking control of the nuclear weapons or technology is a possibility and it is highly at risk in Pakistan. This may be possible due to a chance of a highly ranked person of the Pakistani army or scientific community who could be sympathizers and could have been recruited or influenced by the terrorist network or jihadi ideology. This was already proved before as in the case of Dr. Khan, a nuclear scientist, used as a pawn/scapegoat in the scandal was blamed to have been involved in nuclear proliferation case along with other top working and retired top ranking personnel and generals of Pakistani army.

It is not too complicated to understand the complexity and the connections of networks that are coming in the way of successful nation-building efforts of the allies and the United States in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Arquilla (2007-45) explains, "If nations are to have any hope of ultimately defeating terrorism, they must understand networks as a distinct organizational form, not just a handy labeling device. In practical terms, that means, targeting network nodes, not simply trying to thwart them by invading or bombarding nations suspected of supporting them. You cannot attack a network with a field army. Instead, it takes a willingness to field a nimble, networked force of your own. Ironically, the U.S.

militarily actually started the war on terror in a networked way when just 11 Special Forces “A teams” – fewer than 200 troops overall –toppled the Taliban and put Al Qaeda on the run. Engaging the Taliban in talks may be the preliminary step towards peace.

Offering deals and power sharing agreements with the Taliban leadership will not work as the former President of United States, George W. Bush declared “War on Terrorism” mainly because the Taliban harbored Al Qaeda group that used terrorism as its main tool and they refused to hand over the members of Al Qaeda after September 11, 2001 attacks on the mainland of United States. It was in fact a war against the extremist jihadi ideology that uses terrorism as its tool. Taliban and Al Qaeda share the same ‘jihadi ideology’.

India and most of the Western countries are all about promoting democracy and human rights in Afghanistan. Democracy and Talibani jihadi ideology cannot coexist. It has to be one or another, as it is a matter of freedom or suppression of human rights. Taliban strongly believes in suppressing half the human population in Afghanistan that is women, as they do not allow them to have decent education or career options and also believe in establishing Islamic caliphate. This is fundamentally against the principles of democracy. If the Taliban in Afghanistan is allowed to exist with its strong principles and ideology, then the next will be Pakistan, followed by many others in the Middle East and Africa. Keeping this in mind, one has to be very careful while engaging in talks with the leadership of Taliban.

Pakistan’s commitment in fighting against the terrorism should be watched more closely. Pakistan provides the illusion of cooperation as they had done several times before. After the departure of the allied troops Pakistan and its army along with Afghanistan should have the strong commitment to fight insurgency and terrorism emanating from several terrorist groups.

The involvement of Non-governmental Organizations and their help in the fields of education and health is presently bringing some relief to the local population although it is still the beginning. There is a long way to go for Afghans, the allies and the United States with the help of its neighbors, to make the country stable. While referring to the defeat of Soviets in Afghanistan with the help of the West, Norchi (2006 - 25) wrote, “The West had helped the resistance win a war, but it failed to help the people win the peace.”

More research has to be done in the context of Afghanistan, in the areas of Conflict and Peace studies, Education, Human rights and Womens’ rights, Trade strategies, Curtailing Illicit global trade of Illegal drugs and Terrorism.

Keeping this in mind, the goal has to be to win peace in the region and not just the war. It is hard to think of importing peace, as it has to come from within Aghani community, therefore their ownership in the process is crucial. In the long term, bad governance and corrupt government, drug-trafficking, scarce resources, global warming, water problems; increase in population, lack of healthy, literate work force might lead to a new civil war in Afghanistan. Therefore, it is important to take measures to control insurgency and terrorism while continuing to engage in dialogue, to bring security and peace in Afghanistan and South Asian region using multiple approaches, as this is still, just the beginning.

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