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FOREWORD

ISSRA Papers is a new endeavor of Institute for Strategic Studies; Research and Analysis (ISSRA). It would be a six monthly publication of National Defence University based on the research essays written by the Research Associates of ISSRA. The papers provide a forum for discussion and debate on the current issues impacting the national security of Pakistan. The essays of this edition deal with global, regional and internal issues written by the young researchers in these fields.

The first article of Mr. Saeed-ur-Rahman “Soviet Legacy in Central Asian and Trans-Caucasian Region: A Future Perspective” undertakes an in-depth analysis of Soviet legacy in the region. The author covers its evolutionary process, highlights its geopolitical trends and the future prospects.

In the paper titled “Indian Quest for Strategic Ingress in Afghanistan and Its Implications for Pakistan”, Ms. Afifa Kiran has analysed and discussed the growing Indian quest in Afghanistan for strategic ingression. In the backdrop of this scenario, author has analyzed the implications for Pakistan.

“Contemporary Models of Conflict Resolution: Re-Visiting the Prospects of Unknotting the Kashmir Dispute” by Ms. Yusra Mushtaq analyzes the prospects of the resolution of Kashmir dispute in the light of contemporary models of conflict resolution. It further offers some parameters with a different perspective for the settlement of the issue.

“The Dilemma of National Integration in Pakistan: Challenges and Prospects” by Mr. Ijaz Hussain highlights the issues which have potentials to either strengthen or deteriorate the process of national integration in Pakistan.

Mr. Abdul Rauf Iqbal in his article, “Balochistan Crisis: Unveiling Internal and External Factors” has explored the major internal and external factors which are directly or indirectly surfacing violence in Balochistan along with suggesting some

suitable policy measures.

Ms. Mehvish Nigar Qureshi's article on "Energy Crisis in Pakistan: A Threat to National Security" gives an account of energy deficit in Pakistan. The author has discussed the challenges facing Pakistan's energy sector. The article argues that these crises are a threat to national security of Pakistan.

While providing an overview of the various topics selected for the "ISSRA Papers 2009" I also avail this opportunity to inform our readers that all articles published in the Journal are peer reviewed by the senior faculty of ISSRA. We look forward to receive valuable comments and suggestions for further improving our publications.

Major General Azhar Ali Shah
Director General
Institute for Strategic Studies; Research & Analysis

SOVIET LEGACY IN CENTRAL ASIAN AND TRANS-CAUCASIAN REGION: A FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

Saeed-ur-Rahman

Introduction

Soviet Union was not a colonial power in the traditional sense, but had many characteristics of the imperialists and dominated the Central Asian and Trans-Caucasian region for about seventy years. With the disintegration of Soviet Union in 1991, fifteen Republics declared their independence. Soon after independence the region, which in cultural terms is an area of Turko-Persian civilization, hub of different world orders¹ and rich in natural resources, attracted the major world players. The intervention of these powers supported reviving the oppressed Islamic, Turkic and anti communist sentiments of the people.

The paper aims to highlight the roles of various powers-Iran and Turkey, active in establishing their influences by using religious and nationalistic slogans, which had been suppressed during the long term Soviet rule.

In the Soviet era the socialist bearings were imposed with full thrust in all spheres of life and oppressive methods for the introduction of atheism were used. Castigatory campaigns were launched against all the religious forces, and Islam especially was beleaguered because it was thought, to be the more reactionary and conservative of all the religions. They viewed Islam as a Mullah force and suspected it to be supported and financed by the British Imperialists to counter socialism. In this socialist repression, mosques were closed and women were forbidden to dress up according to the Islamic traditions but Islam survived itself in “Muhallahs” smaller communities rather than in populous areas.

Similarly Soviet pursued a policy of territorialization and systematic ethnicization of the population which often led to ethnic and clan conflicts. Soviet’s policy of divide and rule” was “national in form, socialist in content and in accordance with the objectives of

the Soviet leadership to undermine the supra national Islamic and pan-Turkic sentiments of the people². The leadership considered the Marxist ideology, to be the more progressive than any other ideology and their policy used to impose an ethnic representation by the republic, supervised by a high culture in the form of Sovietism.

With the independence, the leaders of these republics who had come from Soviet “Nomenclatura” became the teachers and preachers of nationalism. They had a hostile towards Russia and open to the West. This achievement of independence was sudden but not necessarily unwanted, as historically there had not been any such movements of nationalism in the region except for Georgia and Armenia. The drawn out Soviet dominancy did not cause any identity crisis to the people as, soon after independence the pan-Islamic and pan-Turkic sentiments of the people started to revive.

Moreover the different legacies left by Soviet Union including the Soviet minorities which in some states is greater than the titular nationals³ posed various problems like bilingualism, dual nationality issues, cross border infiltration and core periphery relations etc. Russia for a few years just after the independence was silent, but in Putin era, the Russian involvement in the region became prominent. Russian interest in the region is motivated by, firstly Russia considers this area as its sphere of influence and secondly the area is rich in natural resources. Efforts are underway by these various actors to increase their influence over the area and thereby get control over its vast reservoirs of oil and gas, which is likely to pose challenges to the Russian interests.

Soviet legacies

The concept of nationality was unknown in Central Asia before the coming of Soviet rule. Ethnic groups were not identified with a particular territory but lived interspersed and intermixed. States based their legitimacy on dynastic and religious factors rather than on ethnic solidarity. It was the Soviet Union, who created the nations of Uzbek, Tajik, Turkmen, Kyrgyz, Kazakh and Azeri, and were completely artificial.⁴ Soviet policy was strategic and manipulative, designed to divide and rule the region by preventing its inhabitants from uniting in a single pan-Turkish or pan-Islamist

entity. All the Soviet institutions in Central Asia gave rise to genuine national consciousness by creating administrative culture and political habitus of nationhood⁵. Central Asian elites and population appreciated the practices of nationalism introduced by the Soviets and inflicted them with their own culture and social norms.

Similarly the Soviet's imperialistic characteristics made it a core country while the republics worked as periphery. These peripheries not only used to provide raw material for the core country but also market for the Russian goods. The whole administrative processes, resources and budget were determined by the Moscow.⁶ Different states were given a specific production task a specific quota and no attention to develop their regional economy. Most of the Central Asian republics relied on agriculture for their economic growth. In the Soviet era, the pattern of agricultural development was determined by the consumption and export needs of the centre rather than by those individual republics, leading to over reliance on a single crop as the mainstay of the economy.⁷

In Soviet era, all the skilled workers and industrial managers were Russians, after Soviet withdrawal, inadequate untrained workforce remained in these republics. It caused many social and political effects like a dualistic society made up of better non indigenous population and the poor unskilled indigenous people, and a type of dependency on the non- indigenous population. Similarly Soviet economic system was self contained,⁸ and left inadequate trade links among Central Asian republics and with neighboring countries.

Soviet era was characterized by a colonial attitude, secularization, Russification and the establishment of ethnic borders that left ethnic groups divided. Russian minorities since independence have very little mixed with ethnic people. Titular nationals were divided among lingual and regional lines. Russians in these republics, support dual nationalities, two state languages and often foment separatist movements.

Seeds of Pan-Turkic Revival

The term “pan-Turkism” is used to describe the idea of political, cultural and ethnic unity of all the Turkic speaking people. The disintegration of Soviet Union resulted in the creation of new Muslim Turkic speaking states in Central Asia and Trans-Caucasia, as well as an increased activism of Muslim population within the Russian federation. In all there were fifty four million Muslims in the former Soviet Union, more than ninety percent of whom were Turkish and organized in different sub ethnic groups like Volga, Tatars, Crimea Tatars, Kazakhs, Turkmen, Uzbeks, Kyrgyz and Azeri.⁹

At the time of independence of CARs, Turkey’s relations with these republics were less harmonious, despite the linguistic and cultural similarities between them. These newly independent republics did not want to import a new ideology, but rather to develop the broadest cultural and economic infrastructural ties with the world at large. The independence move in CARs raised hopes for Turkey, the Turkish politician who were only vaguely aware of the existence of the other Turks in the Soviet Union, rediscovered the world of about one hundred and twenty million Turkish people.¹⁰ Turkey at the time was trying to extend its model as a secular state in the Islamic world, and strengthen its economic position as a bridgehead between the East and the West. It was also making its efforts to get a leading role in the region, extending from the Adriatic Sea to China, including the Central Asian republics, the Caucasus region, the Black Sea and the Balkans.¹¹

Turkey’s long borders with Soviet Union, neighbor of Iran and Syria-enemies of Israel, important position in the Gulf War, gave it a strategic and reliable position in the western camp. During the independence years of the Central Asian Republics, the Turkish economy was heading for crisis, therefore it did not provide the economic aid in the desired quantity. However in the cultural sphere, when Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel visited Central Asia, he announced to support a program of expanded cultural contacts, including satellite T.V broadcasts and scholarships for Central Asian and Caucasian students to study in Turkey. The Turko-Soviet successor states regarded Turkey as one of the best economic partners. From the very start Azerbaijan had intense

relations with Turkey to get technical and cultural assistance to counter Russia.¹²

A meeting in Antalya-Turkey was held in which the deputy Parliamentary Speakers of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey signed a protocol to create an inter-parliamentary assembly of the Turkish speaking people. Moreover Turkish cabinet of ministers decided to lift visa requirements for post Soviet states.¹³ Ankara's decision to lift visa requirements aims to pursue its expansive intentions¹⁴ and gather all the Turkic speaking people on one platform.

The present day Russia has significant Russian minorities within its borders and an upsurge in pan-Turkism could lead certain regions like Tataristan, Baskirdistan and Yakuistan to seek independence.¹⁵ Russia was angered by the pro-Turkish stance, which the Azeri government adopted in its policy following independence. Russia provided encouragement and finances to ethnic communities inside Azerbaijan to resist the government's policy of Turkification and pursue its policy of "divide and conquer."

Turkey, working in close collaboration with the European Union and a long outstanding ally of the United States, makes efforts to create a natural gas pipeline running from Central Asia across the Caspian Sea, through Azerbaijan and Turkey into the Mediterranean and reduce the EU's dependence on Russian energy pipelines.¹⁶ In response, Russian government devised plans with the governments of Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan to construct a pipeline that will pump gas from Turkmenistan through Kazakhstan to Russia, which will not only increase Russia's control over Turkmen gas reserves but Russia would also export its gas to Europe more profitably. In the region as a whole but particularly in the Caucasus, Russia, Iran and Turkey use ethnic tensions as a mean to impede their competitor's ability to gain a solid handle on energy resources.¹⁷

Islamic Renaissance vs. Secular Approaches

Historically speaking, in Soviet era when Stalin was in power, restrictions against religious practices had been a central aspect of government policies. Stalin disbanded the Islamic revolutionists to suppress any unrest in the region.¹⁸ Many Islamists fled to Afghanistan along with their followers and Stalin re-drew the borders to divide the region into many socialist republics. This demarcation of borders was not in accordance with the geographical or ethnic consideration of the people but “to consolidate the Russian rule and suppress any kind of opposition in the region.”¹⁹

The Sovietization of the region involved a massive assault on Islam. Religious properties were confiscated: mosques and Madrassas were closed and destroyed, the Ulema were persecuted²⁰ and the Soviet Muslims were isolated from contacts with the rest of the Muslim world. The years around the breaking of the Soviet Union are characterized by a sense among the Muslims that seventy years of Soviet rule and repression of religion had made them forget, what it means to be a Muslim.²¹

Perestroika and Glasnost, in which the liberalization of social and political policies took place, allowed the Muslims to reestablish their organizational framework. This trend intensified with the collapse of Soviet Union, and resulted in a huge number of Madrassas across Central Asia. In Afghan Soviet war, those Central Asian people, who had been recruited in the Red Army to fight for their communist masters against their co-religionists,²² were taken as war prisoners in Afghanistan. Those prisoners of war were indoctrinated and got impressed with Mujahideen ideology. Soon after disintegration of the Soviet, the elites in the newly independent states were looking towards the Russian model while the dissatisfied youth having conservative and aggressive nature towards the un-Islamic practices looked at the Muslim states as model. They strengthened the ethnic and anti Russian sentiments in the region. Similarly some external factors like the long border with the war ravaged Afghanistan helped the insurgents move freely across the borders. Opposition within the state or in exile used Islam as a “campaign winning slogan” to get popular support. Moreover Iran

and Turkey are also likely to use religion for expanding their influence in the region.

After independence of these CARs and TCRs, religious schools were opened, religious literature became available, programs on religion Islam broadcasted on Radio and Television, republics recognized Islam as one of the foundations of the national culture and laws on religious associations were passed. Hizb-ul-Tahrir- an international organization, having the vision of establishing the caliphate system and unifying the whole Muslim Ummah became active. Similarly Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, which is a militant organization and having close links with Taliban and Al-Qaeda started insurgencies and hostages. Similarly, in Tajikistan the Islamic Renaissance Party contributed in the outbreak of civil war and opposed the continuation of the former communist regimes. Other militant groups also got influence and power in the region, who wanted to overthrow all the secular regimes.

The Iranian support of Shia community in Azerbaijan raised the Islamists there. Dozens of Iranian preachers and organizations actively engaged in various religious activities. Dozens of mosques and Madrassas were opened. This growing militancy in the region poses serious threats to the interests of the secular regimes. On the one hand the communist minded ruling elites of Central Asia and Transcaucasia can best serve the Russian interests but on the other hand the growing radical Islamism is totally antagonistic to the Russian secular appraisal. The Islamists not only try to contain the Russian interests but also struggle to overthrow the secular regimes in the region. The American intervention in Afghanistan further escalated the insurgent movements across the Central Asian borders, which is a serious security threat to Russia or any power in the region.

Central Asia's Openness to the West and Russia Centric Compulsions

For Russia, relations with the Central Asian and Trans-Caucasian Republics is not a part of the new Great Game, as this region has been under Soviet dominancy for about seventy years.

The decade of 1990,s was an era of lack of influence of Russia and especially after the U.S intervention in Afghanistan attracted the other powers to intervene in the region. In the mid 1990's, Russian policy started taking a greater stance, and in 2000 when Putin came into power he focused his policy objectives towards his neighbors. The clear policy objectives were never defined but Russia called it near abroad and the area was a top priority of Moscow.

Russia constructed its policy on two bases that is “security and economy.”²³ Both these policy objectives could be pursued by geographical, cultural, social and economical heritages, left by the Soviet Union. Central Asian and Trans-Caucasian republics have authoritarian leadership, which often receive criticism from the west for their lack of democratic credentials. And the Russian policy “not to criticize the leaders”²⁴ get grooming to pursue its goals. Similarly Russian policy of youth education, Russian language channels and buying up Central Asian companies further raise its profile. These are some resources which the other intervening actors lack.

The EU is a new actor with growing interests in the region. It seeks stability in the area out of fear of overspill effects of war in Afghanistan and an access to the oil and gas reserves. The EU's strategy for Central Asia is welcomed in the region, where countries look for alternatives to Russia's economic and security dominance. Its interests are less likely to collide in Central Asia but in Caucasia there are some policy implications for EU. It is because its access to Central Asia is geographically and economically blocked by Russia. In security realm, Central Asia works as a buffer zone for Russia. The Kremlin is of the view that stability can be obtained by supportive, healthy and non critical relations with Central Asia and by making a variety of regional organization like CSTO and SCO.

NATO is another competitor of Russia in Central Asia. NATO needs these republics for access to Afghanistan. The NATO forces in Afghanistan if become unable to control the situation, it would have bad consequences for Russian security. Because the militants movements, which already have roots in these republics can expand to CARs and TCRs, and would affect the Russian security interests in the region. Russia signaled an interest in

discussing Afghanistan in NATO-Russian Council (NRC), but this move suspended when Russia invaded NATO partner Georgia for its tilt towards the European Union. The Russian aggression on Georgia revealed the fact that any intervention by the external actor for its influence building in the Russian sphere of influence would never be tolerated.²⁵

A three sided diplomatic scrum is intensifying in Central Asia. U.S.A, Russian and Chinese officials are stepping up their efforts to make energy export deals with the regional leaders. Russia seems to be the most aggressive diplomatic actor, engaged in efforts to maintain its influence, while Washington is interested to maintain its position in Caspian Basin and China is quietly, but persistently making economic inroads in Central Asia with the main aim of securing the energy, the country needs to keep its economy growing.

The Uzbekistan's move to evict the U.S troops from its base is a proof of how the Russian influence nourishes in the region. After that the Kyrgyz government declared to evacuate the Manas airbase from the U.S forces. Soon after this declaration a meeting was held in Moscow in which the Russian President Dmitry Medvedev promised an aid package to Kyrgyzstan worth 2 billion dollars.²⁶ The decision to close the Manas base is driven by Moscow's opposition to the U.S military presence in a region that it has for centuries regarded at its sphere of influence. The Russian ruling elites clearly see the reestablishment of Moscow's influence in the former Soviet republics and if the Central Asian leaders draw their hand of co-operation, it can increase Washington's dependency on Moscow.

Conclusion

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of independent states in Central Asia and Caucasia provided an opportunity for the new powers to intervene in the region. Turkey and Iran are trying to avail this opportunity and explore new political and economic roles in the region. Turkey shares ethnic and linguistic ties with the Turkic states of Central Asia while Iran shares a common language with Tajikistan and the same religion Islam with

all the Central Asian Republics. Both Turkey and Iran are making efforts to pursue their interests by raising the slogans of pan-Turkism and Islamism. Islam and nationalism, which had been suppressed during the Soviet era, started reviving. The Central Asian states borders with the war ravaged Afghanistan, allow movements of Islamists across the borders. Similarly Islam is used as a campaign winning slogan by opposition within and outside the country. This growing militant Islam not only produces instability in the region but also poses serious threats to the Russian interests in the region. Similarly most of these republics have a Turkic speaking origin, which is used by Turkey as a slogan of nationalism to gather the people of these republics under Turkish nationalism.

Central Asia is a hub of different world orders and many world players struggle to build their influence in the region. China, U.S.A, E.U, Russia and NATO, all are stepping up their efforts to get an access to the energy reserves of these republics. Both Russia and U.S.A are the most aggressive diplomatic actors while China is quietly, but persistently making its economic inroads in the region. The Central Asian leaders wish an outreach to the West, and the Russia which perceives the growing influence of these external players as a threat to its interests, makes efforts to rebuild its influence by its legacies, left in the region. The Iranian and Turkish intervention in the region could easily be facilitated by their slogans of pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism. On the other hand the Russian influence in the region would also try to survive and its future prospects would depend on, how much Russia tries to curtail influence building of external powers in these republics.

Notes

¹ Tahir Amin, "World Orders in Central Asia" A research paper pp-1

² Mehwish Hassan, Sara. "Resurgence of Islam in Central Asia: A case study of Uzbekistan." http://www.issi.org.pk/journal/2006_files/no_2/article/a7.htm

³ Shireen T. Hunter, *Central Asia since Independence* (Washington: The Centre for Strategic and International studies Publisher, 1996), pp.3-4.

⁴ Oliver Roy, "The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations," London (2000) xvii.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Shireen T. Hunter, *Central Asia since Independence* (Washington: The Centre for Strategic and International studies Publisher, 1996), p.66.

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- ⁷ Ibid. p.67
- ⁸ Ibid. p.70
- ⁹ John C.K.Daly, “ Pan-Turkism takes step forward in Eurasia, Publication: Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume:5 Issue: 39.
- ⁷ Freddy De. Pauw, “Turkey’s policies in Transcaucasia” available on, www.poli.vub.ac.be/publi/ContBorders/eng/ch0801.htm, retrieved on 15th April 2009.
- ⁸ Gordon, Feller “ Turkey’s new government looking again to the Caucasus and Central asia” Oct.2005.
- ¹² John C.K.Daly, “ The Rebirth of Pan-Turkism” Eurasia Daily Monitor, DC. Jan, 2008.
- ¹⁰ Gulnoza, Saidazimova, “Central Asia: Turkey lifts visa requirements for post Soviet states” Huliq News. July 31, 2007.
- ¹⁴ Freddy De. Pauw, “Turkey’s policies in Transcaucasia” available on, www.poli.vub.ac.be/publi/ContBorders/eng/ch0801.htm, retrieved on 15th April 2009
- ¹¹ John C.K.Daly, “ Pan-Turkism takes step forward in Eurasia, Publication: Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume:5 Issue: 39
- ¹² Jos Boonstra, “Russia and Central Asia: From Disinterest to Eager Leadership,” EUCAM Project. Madrid
- ¹⁷ “The Great Game”,available on <http://homepage.ntlworld.com>. Retrieved on, 20th April 2009.
- ¹⁸ Ahmed Rashid, The Resurgence of Central Asia: Islam or Nationalism, Oxford University Press, 1994, p.36
- ¹⁵ Mehwish Hassan, Sara. “Resurgence of Islam in Central Asia: A case study of Uzbekistan.” http://www.issi.org.pk/journal/2006_files/no_2/article/a7.htm
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Ibid.
- ²² Ahmed Rashid, The Resurgence of Central Asia: Islam or Nationalism, Oxford University Press, 1994, p.78.
- ¹⁹ Jos Boonstra, “Russia and Central Asia: From Disinterest to Eager Leadership,” EUCAM Project. Madrid
- ²⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁶ Taiwan News, “Russia makes its move, U.S loses Kyrgyzstan Airbase.” 9 February 2009.

INDIAN QUEST FOR STRATEGIC INGRESS IN AFGHANISTAN AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR PAKISTAN

Afifa Kiran

Introduction

Indian foreign policy interests in her immediate neighborhood, particularly in Afghanistan have been analyzed in conventional paradigm or mostly from Indian perspective. While studying Indian foreign policy postures in last eight years, it is evident that from exercising covert and overt use of hard power, she has adopted the use of soft power as a foreign policy means to expand her area of influence in the regional politics. For India, Afghanistan's geo-strategic importance is manifold in terms of political, strategic and economic gains in the presence of major players in the country. Indian policy makers know that strategic presence and foothold in country like Afghanistan would give impetus to the Indian strategic objectives and affix a stamp over Indian claim of being a major global power.

Historically, India and Afghanistan have maintained close and cordial relations except for the Taliban era. India had totally backed Afghanistan to continue propaganda against Pakistan to serve her own interests. At the time of Russian invasion of Afghanistan, India and her intelligence agencies provided full support to the USSR against the Taliban. Again 9/11 provided an opportunity to India to make inroads in Afghanistan particularly after the Bonn Agreement 2001. Since then, India has followed a policy of high-level engagement with Afghanistan.

Presently, India is one of the primary donors towards Afghanistan's reconstruction. Apart from providing aircraft to Afghan Ariana Airlines, India has been active in building roads, schools, hospitals, power and communication networks, besides training Afghan military and police. Here, the question arises whether Pakistan should also accept these developments as India projects? Apparently, India is pursuing such power projection tools for becoming a great power, and has been or is developing all the

tools for achieving that status but the focus of these developments directly or indirectly is to outflank Pakistan at domestic, regional and eventually at international levels. India's such foreign policy postures pose serious challenges to Pakistan's security, which cannot be ignored while dealing with the perilous situation against the militants within the country.

Why Afghanistan is Important for India?

Before analyzing Indian foreign policy tools for power projection, it is important to understand Indian quest to get foothold in Afghanistan. Ostensibly, India claims that her increased involvement in Afghanistan is aimed at bringing stability in the country; however, the real drives behind her strategic pursuits are yet to be known to the world. On the contrary, Dr Subhash Kapila argued that Afghanistan is not the exclusive strategic preserve of the Pakistan Army and Pakistan. Besides, India's strategic stakes in Afghanistan's stability, similar strategic stakes emanate from Iran, Russia, and Central Asian Republics.¹ The following factors clearly draw the outline of the vested economic interests of India in Afghanistan:-

- **Economic Interests**
 - For India, Afghanistan is a potential route for access to Central Asian energy.
 - India is looking Afghanistan as a base to counter China's growing influence in Central Asian economic and energy sectors.
 - India is building a port in Chabahar in Iran, which could connect to the Iranian hinterland, and thereby transport Indian goods to Afghanistan, bypassing Pakistan completely.
 - Afghanistan is potential market for Indian goods and business. Bilateral trade between India and Afghanistan has been on the rise, reaching \$216 million for the fiscal year of April 2006 to March 2007.

- Ensure her presence and influence in any oil/gas pipeline project, which runs through Afghanistan's territory to Pakistan.
- **Indian Economic Policy in Afghanistan.** India has reinforced her economic interests in Afghanistan through adopting following means:-
 - Use of political levers to capture market in Afghanistan.
 - Creation of economic dependency through control of capital and investments.
 - Participation in agriculture/water power plants projects jointly and exclusively.
 - Building resilience through calibrated engagement in Afghan politics.
 - Proactively defending her interests through providing full support to Indian business community to invest in small and mega projects.
- **Strategic Interests.** Sitting right at the defining moment of Central and South Asia, called 'Afghanistan', India's objective is clear: to control and influence Afghan nation with a view to winning friendship, investment and political support against Pakistan. Strategic interests can be enumerated as under:-
 - Deny Pakistan any political/strategic, or economic influence in Afghanistan.
 - Maintain maximum presence of Indians in all sectors of Afghanistan, particularly in security and economic establishments.
 - Have pro India Afghan govt.
 - Establish a counter front against China's economic and political ingress in CARs .
 - Provide alternate land route against Gawader/ Karachi sea port to CARs and Afghanistan.

Indian Foreign Policy Tools for Power Projection in South Asia. India with sizeable hard power assets has so far been able to exert limited regional influence; therefore, she has adopted means of soft power to effectively project her power in regional politics during the recent years.

Indian Soft Power Image - Sphere of Influence.

Soft power, as described by Joseph Nye, “is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. When our policies are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, our soft power is enhanced”.² Going by with this definition, India is astutely expanding her area of influence in South/Central Asia. Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru once remarked about Indian relations with Afghanistan:

‘Ever since India’s independence, we have grown closer to each other, for a variety of reasons. The long memory of our past was there, and the moment it was possible to renew them, we renewed them. And then came mutual interest, (our common hostility towards Pakistan) which is a powerful factor.’

The smart illustration of India's efforts to use soft power as a tool of foreign policy came recently in Afghanistan. With the end of Taliban era in Afghanistan, India has been active on more fronts than Pakistan, partly owing to its closer ties with the former Northern Alliance members of Karzai’s government³. Indian development projects and humanitarian aid has changed the public perception regarding Indian nefarious designs in Afghanistan. Through such investments, viz building of some cultural, educational, and scientific institutions, she is making the people of Afghanistan culturally more close to India. Major development projects, having direct or indirect implications for Pakistan, carried out by Indians are as follows:-

- India's most prominent investment is building of road network from the town of Delaram in Herat province on the Kandahar–Herat highway to Zaranj town on the Afghanistan–Iran border.
- Hydel project, the Salma Dam, on the Hari Rud river at Chisht-e-Sharif. (This is in Herat province in western Afghanistan.)
- Infrastructure project in Northern Afghanistan for building transmission lines and sub-stations, to bring Uzbek electricity to Kabul and intermediate cities.
- Built the 220 KV line over the Salang pass, over 4,000 metres high,
- Cold storage facility in Kandahar, Southern Afghanistan (Kandahar is a huge fruits production centre. It produces over 35,000 tons of pomegranates of which India is the major importer.
- Since January 2009, India has begun construction of the Afghan parliament building.
- 500 Afghan students go to India every year on ICCR (*Indian Council for Cultural Relations*) scholarships for undergraduate and graduate studies.
- India also trains 500 Afghan public servants each year in India (Both the scholarships and training slots are being expanded significantly in 2009).
- Air links between Afghanistan and India have been established.

Capacity-building of Afghan Armed Forces. India has offered security assistance and provided training for the Afghan national army. India has been regularly training Afghan officers and other ranks at her military training institutions, ranging from the National Defence Academy at Khadakwasla to the School of Artillery at Devlali. India has also posted some army officers in Afghanistan to teach basic military fieldcraft and English skills to the Afghan army, apart from sending several military doctors to help at hospitals in Kandahar.

Indian Paramilitary troops in Afghanistan. India has sent a company of paramilitary troops to protect the engineers working on

the road construction projects. This placement of Indian troops is close to the western frontier of Pakistan. India is increasing the number of its military personnel in Afghanistan on the pretext of providing security to the Border Roads Organization, indicating that the strength of Indian troops had reached almost a company size.⁴

Indian Tools for Power Projection in Afghanistan

- **The Indian Lobby.** Indian diaspora in Afghanistan has enabled two countries to work together and changed Afghan foreign policy in favour of Indian interests in the region. The political partnership in general, and the huge investment in specific, between the two countries is the culmination of many years of efforts by the India lobby. Currently, Indian diplomats have been penetrated deep into Afghan politics and exert considerable influence in Afghan decision-making process.
- **Indian Cultural Diplomacy.** India supports the Afghan government through economic aid, public diplomacy and non-military assistance. It has established various cultural centers in Kabul, which provides vocational trainings to the Afghans.
- **Developmental Aid.** India has committed aid to Afghanistan in the 2002-09 period amounting to \$750 million, making it the fifth largest bilateral donor after the United States, Britain, Japan and Germany. Pakistan in turn has committed \$200 million in the same period and is still hosting over 2 million Afghan refugees.
- **Indian Embassy/ Consulates.**
 - There are approximately 3,000-4,000 Indian nationals working on several such projects across Afghanistan. India has two consulates in the south near Pakistan's two provinces:
 - Balochistan
 - NWFP/ Tribal belt.
 - One Indian consulate is located in Kandahar. The other one is located close to the airport in Lashkar Gah, capital of the Helmand

province. Besides its embassy in Kabul and consulate in Mazare- Sharif (both in Northern Afghanistan), India has reopened its consulates in cities of Kandahar (Southern Afghanistan), Herat, (Western Afghanistan) and Jalalabad (Eastern Afghanistan).⁵ (Map Attached)

- **Indian Media.** Soft power is “India's greatest asset” in Afghanistan, writes Shashi Tharoor, former Under-Secretary-General at the United Nations. The local as well as international media has vocally supported the India’s growing role and presence in Afghanistan. On the other hand, Pakistan’s media has an embittered view of its involvement, saying that its aid is wasted on an ungrateful Afghanistan, which has become the root of Pakistan’s national security problems.⁶
- **RAW in Afghanistan.** During the Soviet war in Afghanistan, Pakistan became a front-line state in thwarting the Soviet invasion. At that time, India aided the Soviets through RAW and provided full assistance to KGB and Afghan spy agency Khad against Pakistan through sabotage, sedition, subversion and acts of terrorism. The seeds of rebellion were sown in Balochistan, the fires of which are now again being stoked by Indian spy agency RAW⁷. Sarobi is the nerve centre headed by an Indian General officer, who also commands the Border Road Organisation (BRO). Dissidents from Pakistan are trained at Sarobi for missions inside NWFP. Kandahar has its forward bases at Lashkargah and Nawah Their target area is our province of Balochistan. The dissidents from Balochistan are trained at Lashkargah for undertaking missions in Balochistan as well as in support of the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA).⁸ Approximately 600 *ferraris*, or Baluchi tribal dissidents, are getting specialized training to handle explosives, engineer bomb blasts, and use sophisticated weapons in these camps.⁹

The Foreign Policy magazine has also recently confirmed that the Indians were neck deep in supporting the TTP in Pakistan:

“While the U.S. media has frequently reported on Pakistani ties to jihadi elements launching attacks in Afghanistan, it has less often mentioned that India supports insurgent forces attacking Pakistan. “The Indians are up to their necks in supporting the Taliban against the Pakistani government in Afghanistan and Pakistan,” a former intelligence official who served in both countries said. “The same anti-Pakistani forces in Afghanistan also shooting at American soldiers are getting support from India. India should close its diplomatic establishments in Afghanistan and get the Christ out of there.”¹⁰

Afghan officials have also confirmed that India is using Afghanistan to stir trouble in Pakistan. Afghan Government’s Advisor, Ehsanullah Aryanazai said on the sidelines of Pak-Afghan Parliamentary Jirga at a Pakistani hotel on April 2, 2009 that:-

“India is using Afghan soil to destabilize Pakistan and Afghan security agencies are unable to stop Indian intervention due to absence of centralized government mechanism.”

Working with Power Players in Afghanistan

US. Post 9/11 American game plans in Afghanistan brought pro Indian forces in Kabul with unparalleled accumulation of power in the hands of Northern Alliance.¹¹ Afghan Govt’s support to India for using its soil as a base of operations against Pakistan clearly reflects that the US is aware of the cooperation and the input of substantial quantity of direct and indirect weapons and financial support to the jihad, criminal and terrorist movements operating inside Pakistan.

Convergence of Indo-US Interests in Afghanistan. US and India are working closely for protecting their interests in Afghanistan beside collaboration on range of regional and global issues. It includes following:- .

- Monitor Pakistan's activities regarding its strategic assets including nuclear deterrence capabilities.
- To control Afghanistan for access to the Central Asian oil and gas reserves.
- To counter China's growing political and economic ingress in Central Asia through maintaining and increasing their military presence in Afghanistan.
- Have friendly Afghan Government to support their common interests in the region.
- Deny Pakistan any strategic depth in Afghanistan through supporting Northern Alliance.
- Use Afghanistan as a base to control any oil/gas and energy projects initiated in the region through controlling power politics in Afghanistan.
- Closely influence Pakistan's internal issues according to their own interest like FATA, Balochistan, Water issue, etc.
- India though subversive activities wants China to abandon the huge development projects inside the Pakistani province of Balochistan.

Despite Pakistan's serious demur against Indian growing involvement in Afghanistan, United States has in turn encouraged Indian trade, investment, and assistance to the Central Asian States and Afghanistan. Afghanistan's entry into SAARC and signing of Indo-Afghan free trade area are clear reflection of this support. Although some US officials have realized as State Department adviser Lisa Curtis urged that it is in India's interest to ensure that its involvement in Afghanistan is transparent to Pakistan, and the US has a role to play in ensuring this.¹² Such statements become relevant in context to the announcements made by the Obama Administration, which call for "regional diplomacy" with key players in order to solve the Afghanistan issue. As Richard Holbrooke, in a press conference (April 8, 2009) in New Delhi,

pointed out that India, Pakistan, and the US face a common challenge and that India's full involvement in "settling issues like Afghanistan" is indispensable. T.C.A. Raghavan, a senior Indian diplomat overseeing the Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran division in the External Affairs Ministry, recently welcomed the 'Af-Pak' approach of developing a "coordinated policy" on Afghanistan and Pakistan. "We have always seen [the region] as a single issue," he said during a seminar on March 18 2009, organized by the Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad Institute for Asian Studies.

Iran. Iran enjoys considerable influence in Afghan politics. Since long, India has been exploiting anti-Taliban approach of Iran to forge closer relations with Afghanistan and secure her economic interests. Currently, India and Iran are facing cold relations due to India's support to IAEA and providing Iran specific satellite for Israel. However, Iran, India, and Afghanistan had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in January 2003, to improve Afghanistan's access to the coast. Under this agreement, Iran is building a new transit route to connect Milak in the southeast of the country to Zaranj in Afghanistan, and has already completed an important bridge over the Helmand River.¹³

Russia. Russia also share its due interest in building Zarang-Dilaram route as this would link Afghanistan's Garland Road under India- Iran –Russia, north-south trade corridor. In this context, both the countries are working closely to deny the re-emergence of the Taliban to protect the trade route between India, Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan. Consequently, as past, both India and Russia would keep the Northern Alliance strengthen through providing support militarily and politically.

Pakistan's Apprehensions towards Indians Expanding Role

Some Indian analysts mistakenly contend that India should commit itself militarily to Afghanistan and see Indian's contribution as essential for the security and stability of the region. Recently, US President, Obama in his new policy towards Afghanistan and Pakistan, released in March 2009, has named India for greater role in Afghanistan. In response to all these developments, Pakistan has

openly expressed her apprehensions that India is using Afghanistan as a base to create unrest in Balochistan and Waziristan.

India spends around \$1.2 billion plus in Afghanistan. India itself is a poor country. Is it worth it? Such huge investment by India clearly indicates her ambitious goals in the region and beyond. On the other hand, India has successfully managed to acquire a facility in Farkhor, Tajikistan, which may house MI-17 helicopter gunships. Till date, air base follows up on a hospital and logistics depot constructed by the Indians. Sushant K Singh, in his article titled, 'Indian presence essential in Afghanistan' comments that Pakistani state will be denied the strategic depth it seeks by installing a favorable dispensation in Afghanistan. The Pakistani establishment will be compelled to divert its energies from their eastern to their northern borders. Loud protests can be anticipated from Pakistan against India's active military involvement in the region, but the involvement of the United States will restrict Pakistani antipathy to voluble complaints."¹⁴

Implications for Pakistan. The flow of massive aid under the guise of humanitarian relief, building of infrastructure, training of public sector human resources by the Indians, are the serious indicators of the future prospects for large scale economic, political and military cooperation aiming at marginalizing Pakistan's future role in Afghanistan¹⁵. Such scenario presents following economic and security implications for Pakistan:-

➤ **Economic**

- Through establishing road links to Iranian port of Chahbhar, India is attempting to undermine strategic importance of Gawader port for Afghanistan and CARs. Although, Indian participation in the construction of Chabahar and a road linking it to Afghanistan is more of a propaganda than a real strategic deal. The only feasible and shortest trade route for Indian trade with Central Asian countries is the land route that passes through Pakistan. Chabahar route is an impossible

dream for Indian trade due to its length, increased taxation and duties, and sea/land switch-overs.

- Pakistani goods/ and business is directly affected when it comes in direct comparison of Indian goods and would have a long- term impact on Pakistan economy.

➤ **Security**

- It is said that India-Afghanistan relations have been a classical case of Kautilyan's theory, that is an 'enemy's enemy is (a) friend'. India, in case of a war between Pakistan and Afghanistan, would be able to open the second front against Pakistan on the North-West Frontier.
- India has financed the construction of a road in Afghans' Nimroz province linked to the Iranian border, which has its own long-term implications due to following reasons :-
 - Firstly, demographically the province is dominated by the Baloch and the Pushtuns.
 - Secondly, it is the only border province that shares a border with both Pakistan and Iran.
 - Thirdly, the project was expected to provide a major impetus to trade links with Afghanistan and extend it to Central Asia as it would not only shorten the trade route, via the port of Chabahar (Iran) and then by road into Afghanistan, by over 1400 kms, but it would also free Indo-Afghan trade from being constrained by Pakistan.
- Indian arms/weapons are being flooded through Afghanistan to Pakistan's security prone areas.
- Through active participation and collaboration with other power players in

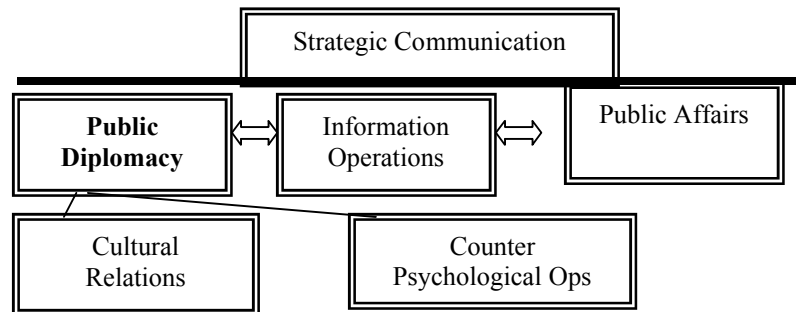
Afghanistan, India is becoming successful to eradicate Pakistani influence in major sector of the country.

- Pakistan's internal security is under threat particularly, security of FATA and Balochistan.

Recommendations

- Pakistan should deepen its engagement in reform and capacity building of Afghanistan's social sector through organizing training programmes and sharing expertise in various fields.
- Pakistan's diplomatic diaspora should engage in back channel dialogue with reconcilable elements in the Afghan politics, if Pakistan is to retain and build upon its hard won influence in the country. In this way, supporting pro Pakistan elements in the political mainstream could have a moderating effect in future Afghan-Pak relations.
- Pakistan must have an active contribution in any policy initiative or strategy on countering terror or addressing the issue of narco trafficking and support to existing programmes run by international collaboration in Afghanistan.
- Pakistan also needs to work on her government policy tools for countering Indian influence in Afghan politics through public diplomacy as defined by Nye, "Public diplomacy includes, daily communications, which involves explaining the context of domestic and foreign policy decisions...strategic communications, in which a set of simple themes is developed, much like what occurs in a political or advertising campaign...the development of lasting relationships with key individuals over many years through scholarships, exchanges, training, seminars, conferences, and access to media channels".¹⁶

- Pakistani government should exploit public-to-public contact through common language and culture., especially in the realms of increased educational exchanges.
- Deployment of Pakistani doctors, teachers, technicians and social workers can have deep effects on Afghan society. Government should encourage such deployment in all sectors of the country.
- India is attempting robustly to isolate Pakistan in her own neighborhood, therefore Pakistan needs to closely monitor and engage with regional and extra regional actors jointly especially US, Iran, China and CARs in Afghanistan.
- Pakistan must build its strategic communication in Afghanistan to increase its visibility in Afghanistan based on following:-



- In this way, Pakistan would be able to achieve the following:-
 - **Long term.** Establishment and maintenance of credibility and mutual trust through cultural and educational exchanges between the two countries.
 - **Short term.** Ingress in Afghan society through credible information dissemination having all available media on board.
 - **Counter Psychological Operations.** Public Affairs and media operations for domestic audiences prepared by India through her cultural centres can be countered by

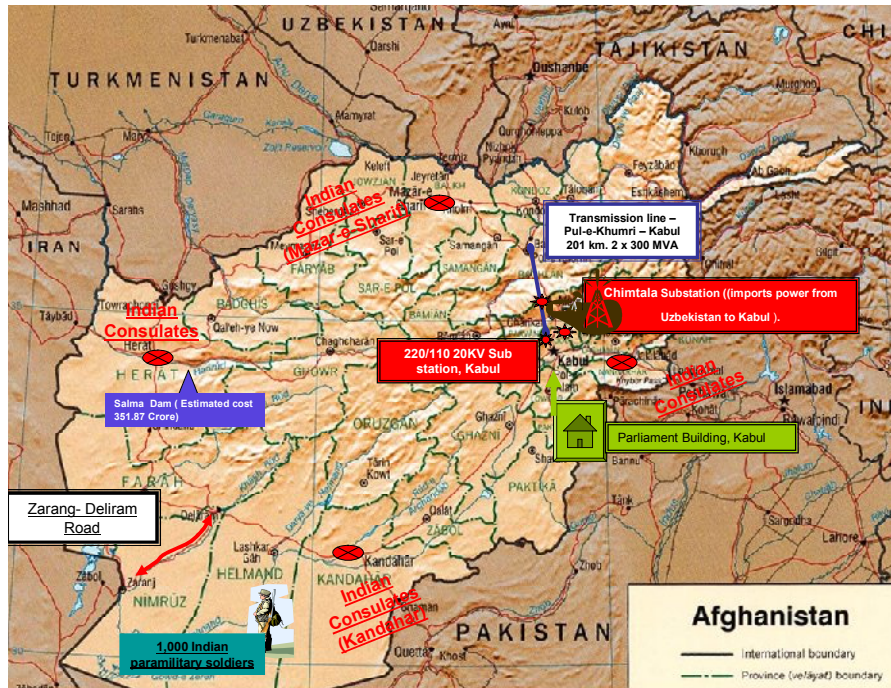
- formulating psychological operational strategy.
- Media's role in protecting Pakistan's interests within and outside has been ruled out since long. Nevertheless, comprehensive media policy backed by proactive foreign policy towards Afghanistan would change the local and regional approaches/public opinion in favour of Pakistan dramatically.
 - Pakistan should proactively pursue the proposed project, called the "Trans-Afghan Pipeline," going from the Daulatabad gas fields in Turkmenistan to Multan/Gwadar, through Afghanistan.
 - Afghanistan's population is heavily dependent upon Pakistan for the import of wheat, rice, grains; Pakistan must exploit such economic levers against Indians in Afghanistan through regulating these imports under sustainable government policy.

Conclusion

Many Afghans say that India and Pakistan are fighting a proxy war in their war-ravaged country. However, Afghanistan is facilitating India towards her expansionist designs and she is utilizing a two-pronged policy: Hard Power and diplomatic cum soft power tools. The former entails military cohesion, economic interaction and aid packages etc. The latter calls for cultural exports, public relations campaigns and cinema to make Indian culture/society more tempting and appealing. Moreover, these developments are fully supported by other regional players like US, Russia, Iran and to some extent Central Asian Republics. However, it is said that India's greater participation in Afghanistan depends on to what extent the Americans are willing to accommodate India's strategic interests. At this stage, Pakistan should make Western scholars and many important players of President Barack Obama's administration understand our concerns, vis-à-vis India, if they want Pakistan to fight against Al Qaeda and the Taliban. But at the same time, while looking into Pakistan's counter policy against Indian growing influence in Afghanistan, the result can be drawn that measures taken by Intelligence services or Pakistani Army are not enough.

Pakistan needs comprehensive and proactive counter policy backed by our political elites against Indians strategic quest in Afghanistan. Our foreign policy makers should have a vision to view these developments, which are taking place dramatically in regional politics, affecting Pakistan's national security interests within and without quite adversely.

In view of the foregoing, it has become evident that Indian interests revolve around her desire for political and military hegemony, obsessive drive for control of natural resources and expansion of military bases, encircling Pakistan. There is no reason to doubt that Indian strategic quest in Afghanistan is motivated by her self-interest and not to stabilize Afghanistan as they project. There is also convincing evidence that geo political and geo strategic location of Afghanistan is an important motivational factor for India to gain pro Afghan govt through huge investment in the country. It is not wrong to assume that if prevailing Indian imperialistic designs are allowed to continue, then Pakistan should be ready to see Indian presence on both of its eastern and western borders.



Notes

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