

# India and Pakistan Rivalry in Afghanistan: A new Imperialism in the Making?

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## Abstract

Since the independence of India and Pakistan in 1947, they have been striving for gaining power in Afghanistan. The losses of Pakistan in Afghanistan are considered by India as a victory and vice versa. The adversaries of both countries have been so strong and deep rooted that both India and Pakistan miss no chance to ‘checkmate’ each other on the soil of Afghanistan. This paper looks in to the factors of Indo-Pak rivalry in Afghanistan. It also sheds light on the Indo-Afghan relations in geo-political and geo-strategic perspectives in Afghanistan. Moreover, the paper tends to evaluate interests of India and Pakistan and impact of Indo-Pak rivalry in Afghanistan.

**Keywords:** India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Indo-Pak Rivalry, Imperialism

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## Introduction

The Indo-Afghan relations can be traced back to the Indus Valley Civilization<sup>1</sup>, 2000 years ago.<sup>2</sup> Which was once the kingdom of Gandhara<sup>3</sup>, what is now known as Kabul, and they have enjoyed cordial relations with most of the Afghan governments throughout the history except the Taliban Regime.<sup>4</sup>

After the independence of India and Pakistan from British Empire in 1947, Pakistan is the only nation state, which still have issues with Afghanistan over Durand Line. Afghanistan did not recognize Pakistan until 1948 and that was deemed by the later as an act of hostility. Following the anti-Pakistan speech of Afghan envoy to India, Sardar Najibullah Khan, and the neutral stance on Kashmir issue made India and Afghanistan closer, and formally established diplomatic relations in 1950 by signing first friendship treaty between the two nations, and India also allowed Pakhtunistan Jirga to be held in Delhi.<sup>5</sup>

There is no relationship on a straight and upward trajectory in international relations, India and Pakistan relations with Afghanistan faced with ups and downs throughout the history. Afghanistan relations with India reached to its high peak in 1960s and 1970s; India was the only US backed state who recognized the pro-Soviet Communist government of Afghanistan, and provided technical and humanitarian support the government of Najibullah against Mujahideen.<sup>6</sup> Contrary Pakistan, which was also US bloc member state, supported Mujahideen against the pro-soviet government of Afghanistan, and reached its relations to the high

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<sup>1</sup> Indus valley civilization is also known as the Harappan Civilization, which flourished approximately 2500 BC, in the western part of South Asia, which is currently Western India and Pakistan (borders with Afghanistan in the west). It was the largest civilization among Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and china. See for details: Indian History, "Indus Valley Civilization," Drishti, <<https://www.drishtiias.com/to-the-points/paper1/indus-valley-civilization/>> (Last accessed: June 1, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Saleem Mazhar, et al, "Post 2014-Afghanistan," *South Asian Studies*, 28:01 (2013), 71.

<sup>3</sup> The kingdom of Gandhara was installed by the Buddhist Kushan Kings in 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, and later it is Conquered by Mahmood Ghaznavi in 11<sup>th</sup> century and from that time its name was disappeared. Gandhara was the eastern province of Achaemined Empire of Persia which was pushkalavati currently known as Charsadda and Taxila of north Pakistan and the east of Afghanistan which is Jalalabad and the south east belt of Afghanistan is adjoining those areas including Kandahar. See for details: Global security, "Gandhara (500 BC to 10 AD)," *Global Security*, <<https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/pakistan/gandhara.htm/>> (Last accessed: June 1, 2020).

<sup>4</sup> Zahid Shahab Ahmad and Stuti Batnagar, (2007), "Pakistan-Afghnaistan Relations and the India Factor," *Pakistan Horizon*, 60:0:, 159-174.

<sup>5</sup> Hanifur Rehman and Faheem Ullah Khan, "Indo-Pakistan Zero-Sum Rivalry and Afghanistan," *Journal of Contemporary Studies*, 03:02 (2014): 17.

<sup>6</sup> Avinandan Choudhury, "India in Afghanistan after the Soviet Withdrawal," *The Diplomat*, May 14, 2019, <<https://thediplomat.com/2019/05/india-in-afghanistan-after-the-soviet-withdrawal/>> (Last accessed: June 17, 2020).

peak with Mujahideen and the government of Taliban. Following the 9/11 attack on US twin towers, India and Afghanistan Relations are stronger than ever before.<sup>7</sup>

India has always tried to preserve its interest in Afghanistan. The last three decades of civil war and foreign intervention in Afghanistan, this country is in dreadful need of peace and development. Since last decade, the relationship between India and Afghanistan has become stronger than ever before, India has invested in immense amount of money for the development in Afghanistan in different sectors such as power generation, education, infrastructure, transport, health, defense and diplomacy.<sup>8</sup> Many Indian citizens and NGO's<sup>9</sup> currently live and work in development activities in Afghanistan. However, Pakistan views India's growing influence in Afghanistan as a threat to its own interest in the region. This paper looks in to the factors of India and Pakistan factors of rivalry in Afghanistan. In addition, the interest and challenges of both countries in Afghanistan.

## 2. The Indian Interest and challenges

India and Afghanistan have shared close cultural and political ties. India supported successive governments in Afghanistan, except the Taliban regime. The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, known as the Taliban, emerged in 1994 and captured Kabul in 1996, where they were recognized by Pakistan as a legitimate government of Afghanistan, while India refused to do so. In fact, they supported the Northern Alliance—the anti-Taliban forces of Afghanistan.<sup>10</sup> However, following the 9/11 attacks, which was followed by the regime change in Afghanistan, India and Afghanistan grew strong relations once again. Afghanistan has strategic importance for India, since they were interested in accessing Central Asia through Afghanistan to meet their agenda of becoming a regional hegemonic power. To strengthen relations, India invests hugely in Afghanistan. It has pledged and spent approximately \$3 billion for Afghanistan reconstruction.<sup>11</sup> Trade between India and Afghanistan has been on the rise and Chabahar is the only hope for India that can fulfill its agenda to have access to Afghanistan, bypassing Pakistan.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Gareth Price, "India's Policy towards Afghanistan," Chatham House, (London: 2013).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Thomas Withington, "The Early anti-Taliban team," *SAGE Journal* 57, 6 (2001): 13-15, <<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2968/057006004>> (Last accessed: June 17, 2020).

<sup>11</sup> For details see: Department of Defense United States of America, "Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan," Department of Defense United States of America, June 27, 2019.

<sup>12</sup> Shoib Rahim, "Chabahar-- The gains for Afghanistan from Strategic Competition," Research Gate, July, 2016, <<http://www.researchgate.net/publication/305722521>> (Last accessed: June 16, 2020).

India is engaged in Afghanistan through different ways, India heavily invested in Afghanistan to renew and strengthen its relations with Afghanistan, which is the largest regional donor to Afghanistan's reconstruction and capacity-building project. India's policy toward Afghanistan is the manifestation of soft power to attract people and make them happy, in which India is successful in this regard, and her popularity is justified by the history as well.<sup>13</sup> Pakistan's concern is that India will create trouble for Pakistan from Afghanistan, but India's main target is economic progress as a responsible regional power, for this purpose India will not be stunned to find barrier for her objectives by creating disturbance for Pakistan.<sup>14</sup>

This way, India is always trying to impress the people of Afghanistan, to have good image in hearts and minds of the people. Their purpose is to have long lasting relations with Afghan nation, while on the other hand India might have another agenda of limiting the influence China along Pakistan.<sup>15</sup>

Afghanistan holds strategic importance for India, because it is a gateway for energy rich Central Asian states such as Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan.<sup>16</sup> India perhaps looking to ensure that other countries in the region favor or at least neutral on its conflict with Pakistan in Afghanistan.

India is very interested in keeping its political, economic, and security presence in Afghanistan, it would benefit in development, people-to-people contact, trade, security, and natural resources, in many aspects of these areas India and Pakistan are competitors.<sup>17</sup> Many observers view the idea of Indian and Pakistani cooperation in Afghanistan with skepticism and doubt. Both India and Pakistan are the biggest rivals and opponents in the region. The cooperation of each India and Pakistan with Afghanistan may not increase very well and will face challenges because of the two rival countries' mutual distrust and varying economic and security interests.<sup>18</sup> Their collaboration and competition have been treated as zero-sum game.

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<sup>13</sup> Azizullah Khan, "Analysis: India in Afghanistan," *Daily Times*, May 22, 2012, via *daily times*, <<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk>> (Last accessed: June 15, 2020).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Nicholas Howenstein and Sumit Ganguly, "India and Pakistan Rivalry in Afghanistan," *Journal of International Affairs*, March 25, 2010, <<https://jia.sipa.columbia.edu/india-pakistan-rivalry-afghanistan>> (Last accessed: June 11, 2020).

<sup>16</sup> Gareth Price, "India's Policy towards Afghanistan," Chatham House, London, August, 2013.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *The Economic Times*, "New Delhi, Kabul agree to create a joint Air Corridor Despite Pak reluctance," *The Economic Times*, July 12, 2018, <<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/new-delhi-kabul-agree-to-create-a-joint-air-corridor-despite-pak-reluctance/articleshow/55799136.cms?from=mdr>> (Last accessed: June 14, 2020).

Apart from them, India and Afghanistan also inaugurated the aerial corridor to boost connectivity to increase trade volume.<sup>19</sup>

The strategic agreement between India and Afghanistan is intended to develop relations across a range of areas. The agreement suggests a regional approach by developing Afghanistan as a center for south and central Asia, on the other hand, Pakistan's disturbed ties with Afghanistan and closer ties between New Delhi and Kabul, especially training of security personnel, which will not be tolerated by Pakistan, the strategic agreement is viewed with suspicion by Islamabad.<sup>20</sup> The security concern about the October 2011 India-Afghanistan strategic partnership agreement, that India will train Afghan security forces and will provide military equipment, and it also include security, economic, and cultural cooperation, and it is a worrying factor for Pakistan.

In response to the personal security concerns to the worker of India in Afghanistan, India has sent paramilitary force with the permission of Afghanistan to safeguard its workers; this has been a controversial issue and challenge to Pakistan.<sup>21</sup> Pakistan is also concerned about the Indian consulates in Jalalabad, Kandahar, Mazar-i-Sharif, and Herat as threatening Pakistan; they argue that India uses consulates to encourage the Baloch separatists and insurgency in Pakistan.<sup>22</sup>

## 2.1 The Challenges for India in Afghanistan

The recent concern of India raised when US peace talks with the Taliban got momentum, with this India is feeling sideline in the peace process of Afghanistan where as its longtime political rival Pakistan is directly involve in facilitating peace talks between the US and Taliban.<sup>23</sup> India emphasis, that Afghan peace process should be Afghan-led, Afghan-owned, and Afghan-controlled with the participation of Afghan government.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Sajjad Ashraf, (2011), "India-Afghanistan Strategic Agreement: Opportunities for Peace and for Pakistan," ISAS, , <<http://www.isas.nus.edu.sg>> (Last accessed: June 15, 2020).

<sup>21</sup> Tom Wright and Margherita Stancati, "Karzai Sets Closer Ties With India on Visit," *The Wall Street Journal*, October 5, 2011, <<https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052970203791904576610923980017098>> (Last accessed: June 16, 2020)

<sup>22</sup> Nicole Waintraub, "India-Pakistan Relations and the Impact on Afghanistan," *ploughshares*, 31:04 (2010). *The ploughshares monitor*, via *ploughshares*, <[http://ploughshares.ca/pl\\_publications/india-pakistan-relations-and-the-impact-on-afghanistan/](http://ploughshares.ca/pl_publications/india-pakistan-relations-and-the-impact-on-afghanistan/)> (Last accessed: June 15, 2020).

<sup>23</sup> Shafeeq Rahman, "India Must be Included in Afghan Peace process," *Fair Observer*, 07.08.2019).

<sup>24</sup> Zeenat Saberin and Shereena Qazi, "Afghan Peace Conference: India shares table with Taliban," *Aljazeera*, November 09, 2018, <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/11/afghan-peace-conference-india-shares-table-taliban-181109092419577>> (Last accessed: June 13, 2020).

India perceives the same scenario when they failed to protect its close ally Dr. Najibullah in 1992 to remain in power. This time they do not want to be disengaged from the political changes and peace process in Afghanistan.<sup>25</sup> But, analysts in Kabul and even in US are of the opinion that the Taliban are changed than in 1990s, they want to have cordial relations with all countries even with Russia and the US, there is no need for India to be worried about the Taliban to be part of the Afghan Government.

### **3. Pakistan Interest and Challenges**

India is increasing its soft power in Afghanistan while Pakistan is losing its position. Pakistan sees Indian presence in Afghanistan as a threat, especially their consular presence. Pakistan is thinking that India has been using this consulate as intelligence agencies to carry out operations and to support Baloch separatist in Pakistan.<sup>26</sup>

While the Baloch separatist issue is there since the formation of Pakistan as a new state in the world, this could not be the reason that India is supporting Baloch from Afghanistan where as they are movement of people for getting emancipation from a country to whom they are different with them in terms language and culture.

Pakistani Army feels that Afghanistan is its backyard, they consider it as its strategic resource, and Afghanistan is strategically important for Pakistan in its contest with India.<sup>27</sup>

Pakistan will never allow to form a regime in Afghanistan, which is loyal to India, because it will be in a hostile encirclement, so ultimately Pakistan will try to eliminate the Indian influence in Afghanistan.<sup>28</sup> This is the fundamental right of every country to have relations with any country where their interests are fully served, no state can force any other state to have or have not relations with one another.

Pakistani authority told to US that India had to decrease its influence in Afghanistan and to stop interfering in Balochistan, and they have accused

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<sup>25</sup> Harsh V. Pan and Avinash Paliwal, "India's Afghan Dilemma is Tougher than ever," *Foreign Policy*, February 10, 2019, <<https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/02/19/indias-afghan-dilemma-is-tougher-than-ever/>> (Last accessed: June 14, 2020).

<sup>26</sup> Nicole Waintraub, "India-Pakistan Relations and the Impact on Afghanistan," *ploughshares*, 31:04 (2010). *The ploughshares monitor*, via *ploughshares*, <[http://ploughshares.ca/pl\\_publications/india-pakistan-relations-and-the-impact-on-afghanistan/](http://ploughshares.ca/pl_publications/india-pakistan-relations-and-the-impact-on-afghanistan/)> (Last accessed: June 13, 2020).

<sup>27</sup> Darya Savchenko, "India and Pakistan struggle for the influence on Afghanistan," *Afghanistan.ru*, January 4, 2011, via *afghanistan.ru*, <<http://en.afghanistan.ru/doc/228.html>> (Last accessed: June 10, 2020).

<sup>28</sup> Darya Savchenko, "India and Pakistan struggle for the influence on Afghanistan," *Afghanistan.ru*, January 4, 2011, via *afghanistan.ru*, <<http://en.afghanistan.ru/doc/228.html>> (Last accessed: June 10, 2020).

RAW of sending spy to Afghanistan, and supplying arms to Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA).<sup>29</sup> The issue of BLA is at global stage, not only rely on India, this region is emphasized by the US and Iran who supported clearly that this region should be free.<sup>30</sup> India's role in Afghanistan may increase tension to Pakistan, and it could lead to violence by certain groups.<sup>31</sup>

On July 7, 2008, a suicide car bomb was exploded near Indian embassy in Kabul, which killed four Indian officials, so the US intelligence sources accused that the attack was directorate, by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to threaten India to minimize its activities in Afghanistan.<sup>32</sup> Since the creation of Pakistan, their government and military have concerns about India as a threat to their country's survival, which can be traced in several wars between India and Pakistan. India and Pakistan hostility is spilling over in to another country, which is Afghanistan, where the two countries engaged in an unappreciated offer for supremacy in their bilateral relationship with Afghanistan.<sup>33</sup>

Pakistan has fear about relations between India and Afghanistan based on ideology and strategy. Pakistan strategists have always feared that if India and Afghanistan became closer in ties that have been seen extremely dangerous to Pakistan's survival.<sup>34</sup>

Pakistan observes the activities of India in Afghanistan as a tactic against Pakistan, even if it is economic investment, infrastructure, or any other related scheme, as a result Pakistan has ensured that the interest of India would be blocked whenever and wherever possible.<sup>35</sup>

After the independence in 1947, Pakistan has had changeable reciprocal relationship with its neighbor Afghanistan because of the border disputes, and Afghanistan has always opposed Durand Line<sup>36</sup> as the official border and claim this disputed land as its own territory. Pakistani strategist feared

<sup>29</sup> Umbreen Javed and Javeria Jahangir, "Balochistan: A key Factor in Global Politics," *A Research Journal in Global Politics*, 30:02, (2015): 91-105.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid* 94.

<sup>31</sup> Michael Scheure, "India's Role in Afghanistan: Past Relations and Future Prospects," *Foreign Policy Journal*, <<http://www.foreignpolicyjournal.com/2012/11/30>> (Last accessed: June 8, 2020).

<sup>32</sup> Mark Mazzetti and Eric Schmitt, "Pakistanis Aided Attack in Kabul, US Officials Say," *The New York Times*, August 1, 2008, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/01/world/asia/01pstan.html>> (Last accessed: June 8, 2020).

<sup>33</sup> Michael Scheure, "India's Strategic Challenge in Pakistan's Afghan Hinterland," *Terrorism Focus*, 05:30, (2008). The Jamestown Foundation, <<http://www.jamestown.org>> (Last accessed: June 9, 2020).

<sup>34</sup> Aparna Pande, "India-Afghanistan-Pakistan Triangle," Hudson Institute, August 22, 2012, via Hudson, <<http://www.hudson.org>> (Last accessed: June 9, 2020).

<sup>35</sup> Frederic Grare, (2010), "Is a Regional Strategy Viable in Afghanistan?" *Pakistan*, edited by Ashley J. Tellis and Aroop Mukharji, (Washington D.C: Carniage Endowment for International Peace, 2010), 21.

<sup>36</sup> See for more details: Brad La. Brasseur, "Recognizing Durand Line: A way forward for Afghanistan and Pakistan," EastWest Institute, (New York: 2001).

that a hostile and unfriendly Afghan government on the western border and on the eastern border with traditional enemy India has been increasing fear for Pakistan.<sup>37</sup>

Most of the time Pakistan seen Afghanistan as part of the Indian pence movement, which is backing Pashtun separatist inside Pakistan, and the Taliban era same Pashtun were used as “strategic depth” against Indian threat, so these mutual mistrust make difficult to get Afghanistan’s neighbors to stabilize the country.<sup>38</sup>

The building of port of Chabahar in Iran by India for Afghanistan through which India will transport goods to Afghanistan bypassing Pakistan is also very critical and rival for Pakistan that could drain away business from Pakistan’s new port of Gawadar, which can be economic lost for Pakistan.<sup>39</sup> Chabahar port which is constructing by India with the cooperation of Iran, in which India insist that its interest in Chabahar are purely economic, but on the other hand China and Pakistan suspect that Chabahar will be used as a base of Indian navy. Although developments were also influenced by the people of India to fulfill its energy and economic needs.<sup>40</sup>

India wants to move onto the world stage and the Pakistan’s Policies about India are focused on the real and sensed threat, which is flowing out from India. Pakistani accusation toward India’s involvement from across the border in Afghanistan, which is instabilities in Balochistan and Federal Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), is a challenging for Islamabad’s authority. Pakistan feels that Indian presence in Afghanistan is to enclose Pakistan with consulates, commandos, and financing militant organization in FATA, and providing funds to Balochistan Liberation Army. India want to move away from being permanent state of hostility with Pakistan for the purpose to move on to the world stage, India also wish to decrease Pakistan’s danger and threat which could lead to a military conflict between the two nuclear-weapon states.<sup>41</sup> Here the Indian eyes are on how to get regional and international influence on not only Afghanistan and Pakistan. whereas

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<sup>37</sup> Raza Rumi, “Afghanistan: no cooperation, no stability,” Jinnah Institute, May 18, 2013, <<http://www.jinnah-institute.org>> (Last accessed: June 7, 2020).

<sup>38</sup> Mueed Yusuf, “Decoding Pakistan’s ‘Strategic Shift’ In Afghanistan,” Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, May, 2013, <<https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/files/misc/SIPRI13wcaMY.pdf>> (Last accessed: June 14, 2020)

<sup>39</sup> Raja Karthikeya Gundu, (2008) “South Asia Monitor: India and Pakistan in Afghanistan: Hostile Sport,” CSIS, Aprile 3, 2008, <<http://csis.org/publication/south-asia-monitor-india-and-pakistan-afghanistan-hostile-sports-april-03-2008>> (Last accessed: June 11, 2020).

<sup>40</sup> Sadika Hameed, *Prospect for Indian-Pakistani Cooperation in Pakistan* (Washington D.C: CSIS, 2012), 28.

<sup>41</sup> Ameen Tarzi, “Afghanistan: Kabul India’s Ties worry Pakistan,” Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty, April 16, 2006, <<http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1067690.html>> (Last accessed: June 10, 2020)



Pakistan views only on Indian movements, they are in a scenario of Security Dilemma.<sup>42</sup>

India and Afghanistan's strategic partnership Agreement, which was signed on 4 October 2011, has implications for Pak-Afghan relations. Pakistan perceives the aforementioned agreement with doubts and insists the Indian presence in Afghanistan as a threat to them, and Islamabad has expressed an immediate reaction, whose stance is that in such an agreement the basic principle of ensuring the stability must be taken into account.<sup>43</sup>

The Agreement includes the training of Afghan National Security and Police Force as a matter of concern for Pakistan. Pakistan sees this move by India as a new great game against herself and her all-weather friend namely China. Also Pakistan views the pact as a major obstacle to her vision of the establishment of a bloc, which consists of Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey and Pakistan rightfully patronized by China to counterbalance India's rise and contain US hegemony.<sup>44</sup>

The treaty between India and Afghanistan, which is intended to develop relations across a range of areas and the agreement, suggests a regional approach by developing Afghanistan as a center for south and central Asia.

On the other hand Pakistan's disturbed ties with Afghanistan and closer ties between New Delhi and Kabul, especially training of security personnel, which is poison and destruction for Pakistan, will be viewed with suspicion by Islamabad.<sup>45</sup>

Pakistan's defense budget is influenced by its perceived threat from India. In the current years, Pakistan's consideration has been diverted to deal with the growing internal security challenges, including military operations in areas bordering Afghanistan.<sup>46</sup>

The Foreign Policy of Pakistan that last few years have been years of jolt and self-analysis for Pakistan. The big shock was the US attack on Osama bin Laden's safe house in Abbottabad without informing Pakistan. Another

<sup>42</sup> Syed Shuja Uddin, "Existence of External Forces in Afghanistan: Pakistan's Security Dilemma Since 9/11," *International Journal of Asian Social Science*, (2017) 311-319.

<sup>43</sup> Mohsin Tausif, "India-Afghanistan Relation and its Impact on Pakistan," *SSPC*, November 4, 2011, <<http://www.sspconline.org>> (Last accessed 14.09.2019).

<sup>44</sup> S.D. Muni and Vivek Chandha, (ed.), *Asian Strategic Review* (New Delhi: Pentagon press, 2013), 24.

<sup>45</sup> Yow Peter Raiphea, "India-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership: An Analysis of India, Afghanistan and Pakistan Perspectives," *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, vol.3, no. 4 (2013). <<http://www.ijsrp.org/>> (Last accessed: June 16, 2020).

<sup>46</sup> Sumita Kumar, (2012), "Pakistan's Foreign Policy" *Pakistan on the Edge*, 80 (New Delhi: Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis).

blow was Afghanistan Strategic Partnership with India.<sup>47</sup> Pakistan's foreign Policy toward India in Afghanistan is that to limit Indian impact in Afghanistan.

The actual clash between India and Pakistan arising from disputes over Kashmir issue, about which they fought three wars,<sup>48</sup> and so far they have not seen any improvement in their relations. India hopes to defeat militancy by using its better military without crossing Pakistan, and Pakistan feels that it can force India into negotiations about Kashmir by insisting its low cost provocation of violence. Pakistan says, that "start discussions for the settlement of Kashmir and normal cooperative relations will follow",<sup>49</sup> on the other hand India responds to Pakistan is to "start normalization relation, and option regarding Kashmir, unthinkable today, can become achievable."<sup>50</sup> The Pakistani viewpoint that Kashmir is the basic problem in Indo-Pakistani relations, which really needs a comprehensive assessment.<sup>51</sup> Following the Pulwama incident, which took place on February 14, 2019 and killed 40 armed Indian personal by Pakistan-based militant group Jaish-e-Mohammad, tension remains high between the two nuclear states.<sup>52</sup>

Afghanistan is aware of Pakistan's concerns about Indian influence in Afghanistan, that Pakistan believes India is not concerned about development effort but to create instability in Pakistan.<sup>53</sup> It is believed, that in present time Pakistan has revisited its policy towards Afghanistan that there is no more option to use Afghanistan as strategic depth against India and they have committed itself noninterference.<sup>54</sup>

Pakistan Thinks that a stable Afghanistan is not in the interest of Pakistan stability,<sup>55</sup> because it will re-energize the issue of Pashtun separatism and for this reason Afghanistan is trying to establish an Alliance with India, which

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<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> Stephanie Flamenbaum, "Optimism and Obstacles in India-Pakistan Peace Talks," *United States Institutes of Peace*, July 15, 2011, <<https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/resources/PB98.pdf>> (Last accessed: June 17, 2020).

<sup>49</sup> Sayed Hussain Shaheed Soherwordi, Reena Abbasi, and Tabassum Javed, "Structuralism and the Indo-Pak Rivalry: Responsible Politico-Economic Factors and Policy Analysis," *A Research Journal of South Asian Studies*, 30, no.2 (2015): 38.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> K. Shankar Bajpai, (2003), "Untangling India and Pakistan," *Council on Foreign Relations*, 82:03 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20033582>> (Last accessed: June 17, 2020).

<sup>52</sup> K. Alan Kronstadt, (2019), "Kashmir: Background, Recent Developments, and U.S. Policy," *Congressional Research Service*, August 16, 2019, <<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R45877.pdf>> (Last accessed: June 17, 2020).

<sup>53</sup> Safdar Sial, "Pak-Afghan Relations Emerging Trends and Future Prospect," *Pak Institute for Peace Studies*, Jan-March 2011.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Fredric Grare, (2006), "Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations in the Post 9/11 Era," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*,.

is why Pakistan is time to time trying to pressurize the Afghan Government and is waiting for the day that the US and its European and Australian Allies will leave to interfere.<sup>56</sup>

One another major issue between Pakistan and Afghanistan is the water issue, which is still unsolved. There are nine share rivers between Afghanistan and Pakistan that have no single treaty about how to govern and manage the water resources, which may affect the flow of water degradation, if the power projects are made on Kabul river basin (KRB).<sup>57</sup> Afghanistan claim that neighboring countries are using more of its water, they have plan to build 12 hydro-power projects of KRB to store its water to meet their needs, on the other hand Afghanistan is one of the lowest water storage country.<sup>58</sup> The construction of dams is a major concern for Pakistan, which they perceive will cause drought and will affect agriculture production in Khayber Pakhtunkhwa, and will eventually cause food insecurity.<sup>59</sup> While on the other hand, Afghanistan need to launch such projects fulfill their requirements, in the past many tribes were displaced because of the water shortages and environmental damages and the loss of millions of livelihoods, also 50% of Afghanistan GDP is comprised of Agricultural Sector.<sup>60</sup> In this case, the Pakistani side blames India for motivating Afghanistan to launch projects on share water between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan fears that Afghanistan may use water as a non-traditional security threat for Pakistan. Afghanistan having upstream position and may bargain with Pakistan over trade, access to seaports, refugees, Taliban and the border security issues.

### 3. Conclusion

Indo-Afghan increasing friendship is unbearable to Pakistan, Which Pakistan consider it a threat for its survival. India's growing involvement in Afghanistan is motivated by economic competition in the region especially with China, through which India wants to have a network of trade throughout Asia, in which they are successful to achieve the goal by making Chabahar port in Iran for Afghanistan to deliver their commodities through Afghanistan to Central Asia.

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> Tasleem Malik, "Pak-Afghan Water Issue: a Case for Benefit-Sharing," *Institute of Policy Studies*, 16:01 (2019): 78.

<sup>58</sup> Ms Iffat Parvaz and M. Sheharyar Khan., "Bewing Conflict over Kabul River: Policy Options for Legal Framework," *ISSRA Paper*, (2014): 17-38.

<sup>59</sup> Suliman Yousaf, "Kabul River and Pak-Afghan Relations," *Central Asia Journal*, no.80, (2017): 97-112.

<sup>60</sup> Tasleem Malik, "Pak-Afghan Water Issue: a Case for Benefit-Sharing," *Institute of Policy Studies*, 16:01 (2019): 91.

On the other hand, Pakistan accuse both India and Afghanistan for limiting their economic activities in the region. There is an increasing recognition of the damaging influence of competition between India and Pakistan.

States involved in rivalry behave differently, where each issue of conflict fused in to the broader rivalry relationship. For India, Influence in Afghanistan is a component of its regional strategy, designed to maintain dominance over Pakistan in South Asia. While for Pakistan, influence in Afghanistan is sought primarily for the opportunity to confront, damage, and frustrate Indian aims. And the consequences of these rivalries between India and Afghanistan are vivid which is continued violence and instability in Afghanistan

The water issue is also a matter of concern for Afghanistan and Pakistan. So far, Afghanistan have not utilized its rivers flowing to Pakistan to fulfill its energy and for irrigation as they did between Afghanistan and Iran Water treaty. Afghanistan need to resettle the water issue, both countries should conclude sign the agreement about the water flow to fulfill its energy crisis and to use it for irrigating purposes.

Lastly, the rivalry of these two states is a burden on Afghanistan, where these both countries compete with each other to increase its own economy and boost its military, with the expense of loses of Afghanistan.