

The Resurgent Taliban: Implications for the Geo-Strategic Scenario in South Asia

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Abstract:

The seizure of power by the Taliban and its ally, the ill-famed Haqqani Network, directly brought to the fore the face of the real masters of the Taliban - the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). As the newly established Islamic Emirate – which is what the Taliban prefers to call the state of Afghanistan – was taking its first steps, it faced the stubborn resistance from the very same place where the Taliban had failed to establish its control in the past too – the region of Panjshir. At the same time, reports grew about the deepening of internal conflicts between the Taliban and Haqqani Network, prompting the ISI chief Lieutenant Gen. Faiz Hameed to fly to Kabul in order to set the house in order. The catastrophic implications of the rise of a narco-terrorist state in India's neighbourhood can hardly be overlooked. The link between organised crime and narco-terrorism is well established and even countries with the best of intentions and abilities fail to turn the tide, which is fuelled by such an unholy nexus. Afghanistan, where the cash strapped Islamic Emirate is still looking to establish a semblance of order in the country, it neither has the intention nor the ability to disrupt the trade. Therefore, Afghanistan under the Taliban is emerging as a major narco-empire.

Keywords: Taliban, Narco-Terrorism, SAARC, strategic depth, China

Introduction:

On August 15, 2021, as India was celebrating its 75th Independence Day, the Taliban took over “Arg” – the Presidential Palace of Afghanistan, sending shockwaves around the world. Despite spending more than \$2 trillion and sending hundreds of thousands of boots on the ground, the USA appeared to be no more than a mere spectator as the regressive group of extremists wreaked havoc through the very heart of Afghanistan. The world watched as another superpower fell from grace in a country that has long been known as the graveyard of empires, and a terror outfit captured an entire country in its wake.

Soon enough, the Pakistani Air Force and Army bombed the Panjshir valley to bring the last remaining holdout of Afghan resistance under the control of the self-styled Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. Not only this, it seems that the ISI has also taught the Taliban some much needed skills of diplomacy, which has, in turn, unleashed a Herculean propaganda campaign on social media and print media, heralding the dawn of a ‘changed’ and ‘progressive’ Taliban. It must be mentioned here that Pakistan has revelled in the chaos and disorder prevailing within Afghanistan and has sought to use Taliban and other assorted terror groups to advance its geopolitical ambitions.

Pakistan's two-decade old double game of taking funds from the US in the name of fighting the Taliban and then using those same funds to resuscitate the Quetta Shura (composed of the hitherto exiled Taliban leaders), train mujahedeen fighters through madrassahs like Dar al-Uloom Haqqania and then using

those fighters in Afghanistan and Kashmir stands exposed to the entire world. The whole of South Asia and a greater part of Central Asia are facing the consequences of this vicious double game.

Quite like in Kashmir, Islamabad's compulsive disposition of stoking fundamentalist flames in Afghanistan is no secret today. It can be traced back to Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's proxy war in the mid-1970s against the regime of Mohammad Daoud Khan, the first President of the Afghan republic, much before Soviet tanks could enter Kabul. Bhutto's man for the task, Major-General Naseerullah Khan Babar, who was elevated as Interior Minister by his daughter Benazir in 1993, is known to have prided the Taliban as 'his boys'. When a sizable chunk of these *mujahids* (guerrillas) dialled their primordialism several notches higher and repackaged themselves as *talibs* (students) by the mid-1990s, Pakistan's state agents continued to generously suckle them. Most *talibs*, after all, were moulded at radicalization schools run by Pakistan along its porous frontiers with Afghanistan. A fallout of the US' War on Terror after 9/11 was the regrouping of the militants fleeing Afghanistan under the banner of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which quickly began biting the hand that fed them.

Hence, in view of the troubles that are currently brewing in our immediate neighbourhood, this paper focuses on India's approach as a regional power in countering these challenges not through military means but through its ancient philosophies of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (he world is one family) and *Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinaha* (may everyone be happy) and the more recently enunciated political principle of *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas* (together, for everyone's growth, with everyone's trust).

The Rise of the Taliban

To analyze the rise of the Taliban, one has to first understand the socio-geopolitical situation of Afghanistan in which they emerged. The 1970s were a turbulent decade not only for the Afghans but for entire West Asia. The first incident that upset the tranquility prevailing in the landlocked Kingdom of Afghanistan was the 1973 coup d'état by Mohammad Daoud Khan who deposed his cousin King Mohammad Zahir Shah. Zahir Shah's four-decade long, peaceful reign, which witnessed a slew of progressive reforms, sought to modernise the Afghan society through a number of egalitarian measures aimed at the socio-economic empowerment of women by promotion of female literacy and vocational training. Daoud Khan started enthusiastically championing the issue of Pashtunistan – an irredentist concept which claimed Pakistani territories inhabited by the Pashtuns – North West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) to be part of Afghanistan. After the loss of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in 1971 and Pakistan took steps to counter a perceived threat from India and growing Pashtun nationalism. This was reflected in the increased Islamization of the society through the rapid proliferation of madrassas and increased assistance for Islamist groups that could be used as proxies in Kashmir and Afghanistan. The ISI still looks at Afghanistan from the outdated prism of a potential Afghan-Indian pincer movement. (Sirrs,2016) The issue of Pashtunistan and the dispute over the Durand line made Pakistan take note of the Afghan situation more seriously that it did before. After suffering one of the most humiliating defeats ever inflicted in the history of warfare at the hands of its arch-nemesis India in the 1971 – Bangladesh Liberation war in which it lost half of its territory (which included one of the most fertile soil in the world in the form of East Pakistan) and in which 93,000 of its soldiers surrendered before the Indian Army and were taken in as Prisoners of War – Pakistan started perceiving itself as being surrounded by enemies on both sides – on the East by India

and on the West by a irredentist Afghanistan which was the only country in the world which had refused to even recognize the very existence of Pakistan at the UN in 1947 and was now passionately advocating for the irredentist Pashtun ethno nationalist cause of Greater Afghanistan which threatened to cause a second partition of Pakistan.

Perceiving itself to be surrounded by enemies on both sides Pakistan became obsessed with the idea of acquiring *strategic depth* - to a territory where it could fall back in case of attack by India, which it sought to acquire in the form of Afghanistan.(Arni and Tandon,2014) The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the US entry in Afghanistan gave Pakistan the perfect opportunity to fulfil its long cherished dream of acquiring strategic depth vis-à-vis India and opened up a bonanza of military and economic aid for the newly established Zia regime and in order to wage a proxy war via Pakistan. The US propagated Pakistan as a frontline state, agreeing to provide the Zia-ul-Haq led military junta with a massive USD 3.2 billion aid package and a lifting of the embargo on arms supplies. Zia-ul-Haq reaped maximum benefits from United States' strategic compulsions.

The US also started funding the anti-Communist mujahideen in Afghanistan through Pakistan and after 1982 the Zia regime received assistance worth USD 5 billion, including advanced weapon systems to train the mujahideen in Afghanistan. The Islamic Revolution in Iran led to the US losing one of its most important bases in the Middle-East and also led to a rise in Sunni-Wahhabi radicalism as a response to radicalism. The Red Army's invasion of Kabul (apparently to stabilize the newly established and faltering Communist regime) resulted in millions of Afghan civilians fleeing to Pakistan through the pervious Durand line. Hundreds of madrassahs sprang up in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border areas which were funded by the CIA and Saudi Oil sheikhs.

Wahhabism, as mentioned above, is an ultraconservative movement within Sunni Islam, named for the 18th-century Saudi theologian Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab and is the version of Islam enshrined in Saudi law and practiced there today. After the Iranian Revolution in 1979, Saudi Arabia was worried that the Muslim world would be dominated by a Shia country – Iran. So they started funding Sunni majority Pakistan to run these madrassas on their Afghan border and slowly the Wahhabi culture claim into Deobandi Islam. In these madrassahs the Afghan refugees were radicalised and an extreme form of Wahhabi Islam which was radically different from the syncretic Sufi Islam they had hitherto practiced, was indoctrinated into them.

Dar al-Uloom Haqqania in Akora Khattak became the most prominent of such madrassahs where little children were taught a deliberately distorted form of Radical Wahhabi Islam and were exhorted to engage in warfare (jihad) against the non-believers. Wahhabi influence grew in Pakistan and Afghanistan throughout the 1980s, when the CIA and Saudi Arabia both funnelled arms to mujahideen guerrilla groups fighting the Soviet occupation, during the Cold War. Over time, different strains of Deobandi Islam were influenced by the different politics of Afghanistan and Pakistan and the Wahhabi-infused strain, practiced by the Taliban, started attacking more moderate Muslims and people of other faiths, and the original Deobandi strain, Thus the true Quranic meaning of jihad which is concerned more with inner spiritual salvation was entirely misappropriated to propagate a Wahhabi petrodollar Islam which had serious implications on the entire world in the years to come.

Taliban's rise: Threat to Global Peace and our National Security

Taliban's comeback to power has led to the mushrooming of radical Islamic terrorist organisations in the region and has rejuvenated the morale of beleaguered jihadists from Bosnia to Bangladesh. A few days

after retaking Kabul, Taliban spokesperson, Suhail Shaheen, said that his organisation intends to ‘raise voice for Muslims’ in *Indian-administered* Kashmir. Is it just a coincidence that since the regime change in Afghanistan, Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a spate of brutal terrorist attacks specifically targeting the non-Kashmiris working population in the state? The number of infiltration attempts have also increased manifold times along with attacks on our security forces.

The Taliban regime, therefore, poses a huge challenge to Indian national security as visible in the sudden increase in insurgency in the Valley. The ISI seems to be following the same strategy of using Afghan mujahideen belonging to different organisations to promote insurgency in Kashmir through proxies such as Hizbul Mujahideen and JeM. No one can forget the catastrophic consequences of the Pakistan backed insurgency in the 1990s which led to the genocide and expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Kashmiri Pandits from the valley many of whom are still living as *refugees in their own country*.

To prevent a recurrence of that catastrophe, firstly we need to be aware of the true nature of the Taliban led Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. Despite claiming to have changed and pretending to adopt a more progressive outlook with regards to subjects such as female education, the Taliban in reality remains the same herd of regressive *mullahs* hell bent on taking Afghanistan back to the stone ages. Since Taliban’s ascent to power, multiple incidents of public executions of the regime’s dissidents and then putting them on public display by hanging the corpses on cranes and using helicopters, have been reported. These are done to instil terror in the minds of the common people to coerce them into following the *Pashtunwali* laws that the Taliban has imposed on the entire Afghan people. No civilized regime can condone such brutality and the fact that such incidents are order of the day in the *new Afghanistan* further expose the true face of the Taliban and establish the fact that they have not changed at all. Only their public relations skills have enhanced thanks to the ISI’s training.

Another threat emanating from Afghanistan is the resurgence of the Islamic State through its regional wing Islamic State-Khorasan (IS-K). The IS-K is an amalgamation of former Taliban, al-Qaeda, Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan and other smaller jihadist group fighters coming together under the established brand-name of the Islamic State, challenging the Taliban on their home turf. The Haqqani Network, a loyal proxy of Pakistan’s ISI, have been allies of the Taliban with the group’s founder’s son Siraj Haqqani now serving as the interior minister in the Taliban government. However, the Haqqanis have also in the past partnered with the Islamic State, providing technical assistance to them for carrying out attacks, including the brutal attack on the *Gurudwara Har Rai Sahib* which killed 25 in Kabul in March 2020. While the Haqqani Network remains extremely close to the Taliban, who in turn are at odds with the Islamic State, the rationale for the Haqqanis assisting the Islamic State has been to provide cover to the Taliban, as the chosen counter-terrorism experts and “keepers of the peace”. Pakistan has reportedly encouraged the Haqqani Network to build on its ties with the IS-K in order to retain its leverage in Afghanistan and ensure that the IS-K can front attacks for the Haqqanis or LeT while Pakistan can claim plausible deniability. This complicated dynamic between Taliban, IS-K and Haqqani Network ensures that whatever the situation, the Pakistani deep state maintains a strong degree of influence in Afghanistan. (Pant and Shah, 2021)

The very fact that the Pakistani deep state wields enormous influence on the newly re-established Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan should be a cause of concern for India. The Haqqani Network’s links with the Islamic State-Khorasan and the fact that they form a significant part of the Taliban regime is a cause of concern not only for South Asia but for the world at large. The conflict between the Islamic State-Khorasan and the Taliban also reflects the deep divides within Sunni Islam in

Afghanistan. The Taliban, which considers Shia Muslims as heretics, worthy of being persecuted and has carried out massacres of the Hazara Shias residing in the country, is now locked in a bloody conflict with the Islamic State-Khorasan, another Sunni group competing for power. The rise of the Islamic State-Khorasan poses new security challenges for India. That India is very much within the radar of the IS-K is reflected by the cover of the Voice of Hind magazine of the Islamic State's newly established regional wing 'Wilayah of Hind' or Islamic State Hind Province (ISHP). The cover shows 'beheaded' Shiva idol of *Murdeshwara* in Karnataka and says, "It's time to break false Gods". Apart from a distorted image of the Shiva idol, an ISIS flag was also placed hovering at the apex. The Islamic State is also active in the Kashmir insurgency and has even issued life threats to Members of the Indian Parliament for daring to speak against it.

Despite the Taliban's repeated assurances of not letting global terrorist organisations use Afghan soil for plotting attacks against India, the dependence of the newly established cash strapped regime on Pakistan for both weapons and financial assistance renders it helpless to the diktats of Islamabad which wants to use Afghanistan as a base for training and recruiting anti-India mujahideen fighters which it would then use to wage asymmetric guerrilla warfare against India to fulfil its long cherished dream of occupying Kashmir which its founding father Mohammad Ali Jinnah had described as the jugular vein of Pakistan. The availability of terrorist safe havens may significantly complicate Indian counterinsurgency operations in Kashmir and Indian security officials fear that the emergence of new sanctuaries could embolden indigenous terrorist groups currently operating in the disputed region. With the connivance of Pakistan's ISI, which has long been involved in the *Kashmir insurgency*, these groups may also gain access to safe havens in Afghanistan. Such staging grounds could lead to increased violence in Kashmir as evident with the recent rise in violent attacks in the Valley.

China's Role

China's conspicuous romance with the Taliban also poses significant threats to Indian strategic interests in the region. China has compelling reasons to work with the Taliban. Firstly, it does not want the newly established Islamic Emirate to provide safe havens or propaganda support to the East Turkestan separatists claiming to represent the persecuted Uyghur Muslim population of China's Xinjiang province. Secondly, it has plans to extend its ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to Afghanistan by constructing a passage linking Afghanistan to Pakistan through the Wakhan corridor. In the long term, China also wants to ensure its own access to Afghanistan's significant mineral resources, including its vast copper deposits. What perturbs India the most is Beijing's ability to expand its political and diplomatic footprint in Afghanistan with the return of a Taliban regime. (Grossman,2021)

China remains intractably hostile toward India and is closely allied with its adversary Pakistan. Through symmetric and asymmetric means China has been relentlessly trying to occupy Indian territory in Ladakh, Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh. It is already occupying more than 38,000 sq.km of Indian territory in Aksai Chin and has been trying to infiltrate through Depsang Plains and Gogra Valley Ladakh and Arunachal (where it has even built an entire village in Upper Subansiri district) in recent times using *salami slicing strategy*. With its deep pockets, China will actively work to limit any Indian influence in a Taliban-run Afghanistan; the Taliban's own reservations about India will only help facilitate Beijing's ability to keep New Delhi at bay.

Rise of a Narco-Terrorist State

Taliban is gradually turning Afghanistan into a narco-terrorist state as narcotics kingpins now occupy senior positions in the Afghan government. Afghanistan accounts for 85% of the global acreage under opium cultivation making the Pakistan-reared Taliban the world's largest drug cartel. It controls and taxes opioid production, oversees exports and shields smuggling networks. This is essential to their survival. So reliant are the Taliban on narcotics trafficking that their leaders have at times fought among themselves over revenue-sharing. In India – which is located between the world's two main opium producing centers, the Pakistan-Afghanistan-Iran “Golden Crescent” and the Myanmar-Thailand-Laos “Golden Triangle” – seizures of Afghan-origin heroin have increased. In recent years, with the resurrection of the Taliban, Afghanistan has drastically expanded its production of methamphetamine. The Taliban uses several smuggling routes to move opiates, the most prominent among them being the south-eastern route, which snakes through Pakistan and is enabled by Pakistani security officials, who cooperate with the Taliban and smuggling syndicates, known locally as *tanzeems*, in exchange for bribes. (Chellaney,2021)

According to United Nations officials, the group likely earned more than USD400 million between 2018-19 from the drug trade. A report by the United States Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction(SIGAR) estimated that the Taliban derive up to 60% of their annual revenue from illicit narcotics. With the Taliban channelling profits from drug sales directly into their terror machine, the connection between Islamist violence and drug trafficking could not be more evident. There is a global consensus that narcotics itself can devastate societies and money derived from the narco trade can fuel organised crime and terror activities. (Berry,Curtis,Hudson and Kollars,2002) However, in today's Afghanistan, the Taliban seem to be taking advantage of the vacuum and detached attitude of the international community.

The US, the European Union, international narcotics control organizations along with South Asian nations have all failed to recognize the complex but clear links between drug trafficking and Islamist terrorism. The US, after overthrowing the Taliban regime in 2001, did nothing to prosecute Taliban leaders for their narcotics-trafficking activities, which could have diminished the group's appeal among fundamentalist Sunni Muslims. (Sopko,2021) By allowing the Taliban to enrich and sustain themselves with drug profit during the two decades long war in Afghanistan, the US contributed to its own humiliating defeat at the hands of a narco-terrorist organization. It is not too late for the US, the EU and other international bodies such as the International Narcotics Control Board of the UN, to start targeting the Taliban and its allies as drug cartels through its federal courts. The global community needs to understand that the rise of a narco-terrorist state will have serious consequences for the US, Europe and the region. After all, Afghan-origin opioids have resulted in high rates of drug addiction and deaths around the world, from the US and Europe to Africa and Asia.

The South Asian region and especially India and has been at the receiving end of this catastrophe, which has ruined the lives of the future generations in India's border states such as Punjab where Afghan-origin opioids are smuggled in large quantities through Pakistan. Given the fact that Afghanistan's economy is in dire straits, the Taliban has a strong incentive to ramp-up production and trafficking. The Sunni Pashtun narco-terrorist organisation ruling Afghanistan has also signed a deal with an Australian company to set up a cannabis processing plant. All these pose serious threats to not only India's national security but to the entire South Asian region and the world as the smuggling of narcotics across the region has increased by leaps and bounds since the Fall of Kabul on the 15th of August this year. A lucid

understanding of the nexus between Islamist terrorism and the global narcotics trade holds the key to crush the Islamabad backed Taliban's primary source of income, such as blocking shipments and seizing illicit profits, often parked in banks and real-estate investments abroad. Multilateral cooperation will play a crucial role in this process.

India's Response

The rise to power of the of the Taliban in Afghanistan poses serious threats to not only the regional security of South Asia but to the entire world. Despite the Taliban's promise of not letting its territory to be used by terrorist organisations, Afghanistan under the Islamic Emirate can easily become a safe haven for radical Wahhabi jihadists who can pose a serious threat to our national security as well as global security. India through its civilizational values of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* which considers the entire world as a family can provide a counterpoise to this rising tide of Islamic radicalism. India has pursued a "soft power" strategy towards Afghanistan, sticking to civilian rather than military matters. Indian assistance has focused on building human capital and physical infrastructure, improving security and helping the agricultural and other important sectors of the country's economy. India is building roads, proving medical facilities and helping with educational programs in an effort to develop and enhance long-term local Afghan capabilities. India's involvement in multifarious infrastructure development projects to assisting the Afghan people with necessary medicines and vaccine to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic to training Afghan National Army troops to providing food grains via Iran's Chabahar port has earned India immense goodwill and respect across all sections of the Afghan political and social spectrum.

India's response to countering terrorism in Afghanistan as well as inside its own territory has been through development. India's invaluable contribution in rebuilding its war torn neighbour can hardly be overlooked. From constructing the Salma dam with a water storage capacity of 640 million cubic irrigating 2,00,000 acres of farm land to building the Afghan parliament to building multiple hospitals such as the largest pediatric hospital in Afghanistan - Indira Gandhi Institute for Child Health, India has always played a significant role in the reconstruction and rehabilitation process in Afghanistan. The Zaranj-Delaram highway built by the Border Roads Organisation which is located close to the Afghanistan-Iran border, is of strategic importance to India as it connects Delaram to the northeast of Zaranj with all major regions such as Kandahar, Ghazni, Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif, and Herat. This highway provides India alternative access into landlocked Afghanistan from Iran's Chabahar port as Pakistan denies overland access for trade to India. (Shashikumar,2011)

However, with the return of the Taliban in Kabul, India is most likely to lose access to this strategically significant highway. India has played a vital role in the construction of the Afghan Parliament building, helping in the expansion of the Afghan national television network, and several smaller projects in agriculture, rural development, education, health, energy, and vocational training. (Deshmukh,2021) The preferential trade agreement signed by India and Afghanistan gives substantial duty concessions to certain categories of Afghan dry fruits when entering India with Afghanistan allowing reciprocal concessions to Indian products such as sugar, tea, and pharmaceuticals. India also piloted the move to make Afghanistan a member of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) with the hope that with the entry of Afghanistan into the SAARC, issues relating to the transit and free flow

of goods across borders in the region can be addressed, thereby leading to greater economic development of Afghanistan and the region as a whole. India has played an important role by laying the foundations for sustainable economic development in its northwestern neighbour. (Pant,2012)

As a consequence, India has come to enjoy considerable soft power in Afghanistan. Indeed, ordinary Afghans appear to have welcomed Indian involvement in development projects in their country. Indian films and television programs are extremely popular among the local Afghan populace. Despite being aware of the national security threats emanating from the Taliban regime and the Taliban's barbarity towards its own people, India once again proved that it is committed towards tackling extremism through development through its all-encompassing policy of *Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah* by agreeing to send 50,000 metric tonnes of wheat through Pakistan to Afghanistan to help its people tackle one of the worst food shortages the country has ever faced.

India has a fundamental interest in ensuring that Afghanistan emerges as a stable and economically integrated state in the region. New Delhi has from time to time reiterated its commitment towards an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace calling for the formation of a truly inclusive government that represents all the major ethnic and political groups of Afghanistan. India has also been a vocal advocate for a peaceful, secure, united, sovereign, stable and prosperous inclusive Afghanistan that exists in harmony with its neighbors. According to UN reports, one in two Afghans faces emergency levels of acute food insecurity and more than 3 million under 5-year-olds are expected to face acute malnutrition by the end of the year. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic along with the humanitarian crisis have wreaked havoc across the country, as a direct result of the Taliban and US policy decisions. With each side quick to blame the other, the onus falls on regional nations, including India to attempt to mitigate a worsening disaster. Given that a politically and economically stable Afghanistan is a strategic priority for India, India maintains that the ongoing effort to help Afghanistan emerge from war, strife and privation is its responsibility as a regional power.

Conclusion

The only possible solution to the Afghan catastrophe lies in a legitimate, responsible, empowered, and inclusive government in Kabul. The economic collapse of the Afghan state and the evolving humanitarian crisis must be prevented at all costs. Reaching out to the Afghans and amplifying their voices in having a government that is legitimate and acceptable to them would be first step in the right direction. While the Delhi Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan did try to reach out to the regional countries, India should look for new alliances in Central, West, and South Asia to stitch a coalition of the willing. It is time for New Delhi to step up and reach out to the larger sections of Afghan society including women and civil society groups, political leaders and business groups, who are looking for assistance in having a legitimate, representative and inclusive leadership in their country.

A failed state in the neighbourhood combined with narco-terrorism cannot be ignored as it will have serious consequences for India's security in the days to come. The Indian government as part of its policy of "*Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas*" has successfully shown through socio-economic development in Jammu and Kashmir that how terrorism can be encountered through inclusive development. India's response to the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan in which the Indian Air Force rescued thousands of desperate Afghans irrespective of their religious affiliations providing them safe refuge in India has further enhanced India's global image as a responsible power and a net security

provider for the entire South Asian region. The world needs to take a leaf or two from India's book if it wants to seriously counter global extremism.

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