



Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

## **Changing Dynamics of Terrorism in Afghanistan and its Impact on Socio-Political and Economic Milieu: A Critical Analysis**

Sheher Bano Kazmi

M.Phil Research Scholar, Department of International Relations, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan

Shahjahan Sarfraz Raja

CEO, Khushal Dastkaar, Rawalpindi, Pakistan.

Email: shahjahansarfrazraja@gmail.com

Shahnawaz Sarfraz Raja

Project Manager, Khushal Dastkaar, Rawalpindi, Pakistan

Email: rajashahnawaz6@gmail.com

Dr. Adnan Nawaz (Corresponding Author)

Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan. Email: adnannawaz@gcuf.edu.pk

### **Abstract**

Afghanistan has been a battle ground for various super powers and it has transformed the socio-political landscape of the Afghan soil. The Russian invasion in Afghanistan and later on the War on Terror in Afghanistan has engaged the people of Afghanistan into a continuous struggle for survival and stability. It has a deep rooted impact on the socio-political and economic sphere of Afghan people. Afghanistan has been plunged into menace of terrorism and different groups has been working for their supremacy. No doubt, the recent Afghan government has taken up certain steps towards security of their people but various human right violations have been observed which are putting the regional stability at risk. This research is a qualitative study that analyses the key factors behind the socio-political and economic crisis in Afghanistan with an objective to understand the ground realities in the changing dynamics of Afghanistan.

Key Words: Afghanistan, Terrorism, United States, Militancy, Pakistan, Socio-Political, Economic

### **Introduction**

A complex web of events feeds the plague of terrorism in Afghanistan's harsh terrain, where battle echoes are heard throughout the history. To really grasp the core reasons of terrorism in Afghanistan, one must first look at the country's turbulent past, deeply rooted grievances, and complex dynamics that shape the Afghan geography. Afghanistan's strategic position has made it a battlefield for regional and global countries striving for influence. Foreign involvement, particularly military and proxy battles have increased instability and strengthened extremist groups. Particularly, after the 9/11 attacks on United



## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

States have led to presence of foreign military which exacerbated the security situation in Afghanistan. The initial phases of the conflict and subsequent instability in Afghanistan can be marked back to the period before the Soviet intervention.

Afghanistan is a home to variety of ethnic groupings. Mainly there are 14 ethnic groups in which demographically Pashtuns make about 40 to 50 percent of the population, followed by Tajiks (approximately 25 percent) and Hazaras and Uzbeks (around 9 percent). Competition for resources, historical grudges, and political marginalization have all contributed to intercommunal tensions and bloodshed. Previous civil conflicts in Afghanistan worsened ethnic differences. Afghans frequently mobilised along community lines to fight the Soviets in the 1980s and then each other in the 1990s. Furthermore, ethno-tribal power struggles, as well as Pushtun supremacy in the political arena, have historically been critical in maintaining political equilibrium. Ethnic struggle under governmental control causes turbulence in Afghanistan, allowing other regional and global powers to directly meddle in domestic affairs (Khan et al., 2023). Poverty, a lack of access to education and basic necessities, high unemployment rates, and economic inequality all exacerbate community dissatisfaction and contribute to radicalization. Economic misery renders many people receptive to extremist speech and recruiting activities.

### **Roots of Militancy and Terrorism**

The roots of terrorism in Afghanistan can be traced back to a variety of circumstances. Internal and external factors encouraged the rise of fundamentalism in Afghanistan, including the Soviet occupation, US, Saudi, and Pakistani funding for mujahideen groups, and the establishment of terrorist organisations such as al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Furthermore, the growth of radical Islamist ideology, notably Salafism and Wahhabism, contributed significantly to the region's extremist activities, resulting in the use of complete terror techniques and the distortion of Islamic teachings.

Ethnic and tribal strife, external influence, economical restraints, and the drug trade factors contribute to instability. Furthermore, historical wars, such as the Soviet war in Afghanistan, led to the transformation of the nation as a breeding ground for terrorism, eventually giving rise to groups like the Taliban and al-Qaeda. To address these complicated issues, comprehensive solutions must be developed that promote inclusive government, economic growth, and reconciliation efforts.

### **The United States' Role in Combating Terrorism in Afghanistan**

One of the significant events that appeared to have altered the global security scene was the September 11, 2001 attack on the United States by an Afghan-based terrorist cell. Following the terrorist attacks in the United States, the US-led coalition in Afghanistan was motivated by bigger national goals rather than humanitarian concerns. The motivation and legal grounds for the US-led intervention were self-defense. However, the coalition's aims were vastly different from those of most previous interventions: the dismantling of a worldwide terrorist network and the overthrow of the dictatorship that had provided assistance to that network. Even though the US was reluctant to



## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

participate in "nation building," the US-led intervention soon resulted in a parallel international effort to maintain and build peace in Afghanistan. This effort was driven by both humanitarian concerns and the apprehension that instability in the state could easily recreate the conditions that allowed it to become a hotbed of international terrorism (Mbaeze, 2022).

The US War on Terror (WOT) in Afghanistan has lasted almost two decades, beginning on October 7, 2001 and ending on August 31, 2021. Since the early twenty-first century, Afghanistan has been among the top three nations affected by terrorism. The WOT against the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks inflicted irreversible harm to Afghanistan. Surprisingly, none of the culprits were from Afghanistan, and the attacker Al-Qaeda had no connection to the Afghan people. The collapse of Afghanistan began in Washington, when President Donald Trump reached an agreement with the Taliban and announced the unconditional departure of US soldiers. This boosted the Taliban while demoralising the Afghan government and security forces. The United States' withdrawal from Iraq in 2011 provided lessons for its pullout from Afghanistan in 2021, but they were not clear since Washington's mistakes in 2011 were not publicly recognized. The pullout from Afghanistan demonstrated that the United States had failed to learn from its withdrawal from Iraq in 2011 (Snyder, 2023). The United States' exit from Iraq dealt damage to its almost decade-long counterterrorism operations and weakened its geopolitical position in the Middle East. Despite the United States spending more than a trillion dollars and losing more than 2,000 soldiers—a figure dwarfed by the deaths of over 40,000 Afghan civilians and 60,000 Afghan military and police officers—the Taliban's control over Afghanistan is solidifying, its ranks are swelling, and its legitimacy at home and abroad is growing. The West attempted to establish a modern liberal democratic state in Afghanistan that prioritized human rights. While some of the population embraced these ideas, they were insufficient to transform the country's power vacuum, chaos, and corruption into a compelling vision for the future. Afghanistan lacked inclusive institutions and genuine rule of law under Taliban control, and Western-backed administrations have not significantly improved the situation after 2001 (Rahman, 2023). Western power and funding built new enclaves, but without continued assistance, they were unable to withstand Taliban pressure.

Yet another reason for the decline of US protracted nation-building mission was US's troops were unaware of the demographic ethnicities influence and their narratives in different regions. Despite decades of conflict, traditional power remained robust and durable, reviving itself rather than fading away. Communities across the country began to demand more from their traditional leaders, who in turn evolved to meet citizen expectations. Faith in customary authority was highest, and surpassed faith in other authorities in the country, at the apex of US state-building efforts (Murtazashvili, 2022).

### **Impact of Terrorism on Economic Security of Afghanistan**

As terrorism strengthens its hold on the country, Afghanistan's economic security confronts a critical crossroads, throwing uncertainty over the nation's future. Terrorist operations have a negative impact on both infrastructural and financial well-being, since they bring instability and uncertainty. Foreign investors lose trust in the economy, leading to a decrease in investments.



## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

According to the World Investment Reports of 2008 and 2016, global Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) inflows have decreased by 14% from a record high of \$1,979 billion in 2007 to \$1,697 billion in 2008. In 2008, Afghanistan received 0.2% of worldwide FDI inflows, but by 2016 it had decreased to 0.005%, with a global FDI inflow of \$1.75 trillion. Afghanistan's ability to attract foreign direct investment is hindered by persistent terrorism in the region, which has expanded rapidly over time (Wani, 2018).

Historically, Afghans have not relied on government or formal markets for welfare. Limited state capacity and geographic reach contribute to a fragmented society. Before 1979, Afghanistan's private sector was primarily informal, rural, and subsistence-based. During the conflict, official institutions failed, the social fabric was destroyed, and illegal crops and cross-border criminal operations were rooted in the country's economy. International assistance for state restoration and economic growth began in 2001, against a difficult context and low baseline. In 2014, Afghanistan placed 169th out of 187 countries in terms of human development, making it the lowest in Asia. Foreign interference, weak state capacity, protracted conflict, destruction of infrastructure and institutions, and reliance on external aid have led to an unsustainable 'conflict economy'. The economy combines both illegal and informal activities. Afghanistan's private sector lacks freedom, productivity, and competitiveness. The Afghan aristocracy maintains control over economic resources through patronage networks and coercion.

In August 2021, the Taliban took over a country plagued by nearly 40 years of violence and is now dealing with humanitarian, economic, and financial issues. External aid, which used to account for about half of the country's GDP, has now decreased significantly. Meanwhile the vacuum left by USA seems to be filled with China. China's involvement in the Afghan consumer market is minimal, but they have made economic concessions such as erasing 98% of tariffs and resuming visa issuing for Afghan businesspersons. In April 2022, the Taliban re-approved a \$216 million Chinese investment plan for an industrial park in Kabul that will accommodate 150 enterprises. (Zhou et al., 2022).

Whereas some other impacts that terrorism causes include brain drain, as competent professionals, entrepreneurs, and educated people flee safer areas elsewhere. The talent migration depletes Afghanistan's human capital, which is critical for economic growth, innovation, and capacity building. Persistent terrorism undermines public trust in the government's capacity to maintain security and stability, hence reducing investment confidence and consumer spending. This lack of trust adds to the atmosphere of uncertainty, increasing economic issues.

### **Impact of Terrorism on Political and Social Milieu of Afghanistan**

As the nation grapples with the visible scars of terrorism, its hidden repercussions penetrate the very fabric of Afghan society, leaving lasting marks on its political landscape. Afghanistan is located in the center of Asia, and more than 99% of the population is Muslim, with the majority being conservative and fundamentalist. From history until the twentieth century, Islam influenced Afghan government and politics, and religion was an essential component of politics. During the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, there was a significant





## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

increase in the number of religious schools for Afghan youth (İnaç & Asefi, 2021). Fundamentalist publications by various Mujahedin parties and institutions were circulated extensively and supplied free of cost. Ideological books and treatises were also widely printed and distributed. The experiences of Arab and Pakistani fundamentalist groups were also systematically transferred to the Afghan youth. The situation gave rise to the radicals that fought more civil wars instead of fighting against Soviet invasion.

Terrorism and radicalism has significantly impacted the fabric of governance and democracy. A sequence of interconnected errors began after the fall of Taliban in 2001 with the implementation of a faulty election system, with insufficient emphasis on a transparent voter registration, a deficiency of effective polling oversight, and a lack of support for the establishment of reformist political parties and other functioning civil society institutions. The US did not consider this as a "nation-building" effort from the start, but US officials made key judgements about the nature of Afghan democracy (Loyn, 2019). These were severely flawed, and the voting system itself worked against the establishment of robust democratic institutions. In the absence of newer political parties, strong elites have taken control of the system, and democracy failed to replace ancient feudal base of authority. The religious organizations, coalitions of warriors who had fought the battle, registered as political parties, and the system that evolved was both contemporary and traditional, with the benefits of neither.

Terrorist attacks worsen the preexisting ethnic and sectarian tensions in Afghan culture. Extremist organizations frequently use these differences to recruit members and inspire violence, exacerbating societal rifts and impeding attempts towards national reconciliation and togetherness. Terrorist organizations' actions, such as mass assaults on people and the implementation of harsh laws, lead to extensive violations of human rights. Civilians, particularly women and minorities, suffer the burden of these abuses, which undermine social cohesiveness and trust.

### **Displacement and Refugee Crisis in Afghanistan**

During this process, there has been a brain drain with the departure of the professional and educated individuals that the country most needs. Despite receiving significant foreign funding after 2001, the newly constituted administration was unable to conduct effective programmes to safeguard people's safety and enhance the economy owing to corruption and governance issues. However, after the Fall of Kabul in August 2021 and the Taliban regained power, leading to further immigration (Dashti, 2022).

Since the refugee crisis is transnational issue and produced internal security challenges in the whole South Asian Region. Afghan refugees introduced a culture of violence, narcotics, and unregulated firearms. Refugees from Afghanistan, the world's largest producer of opium, often carry heroin and other narcotics. Therefore, states started reverse exodus of refugees to Afghanistan. In 2016, the International Organisation for Migration recorded the largest number of conflict-induced internally displaced persons (IDPs) at 630,000, with over one million Afghans returning from adjacent countries. Afghanistan is one of the world's worst-hit countries, affecting around 250,000 people annually due to natural and man-made risks (McAuliffe & Ruhs, 2017: "World Migration Report



## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

2018," 2018).

Approximately 3 million Afghan refugees have been staying in Pakistan till 2020. Since the 1980s, Pakistan has had the world's second-biggest refugee population and the most sustained displacement. The security, economic, educational, and health support infrastructures for refugees have worsened. In recent years, refugees have faced socio-economic challenges due to inadequate aid. Refugees in camps handle their own food, education, health, and water supply services. Since 9/11, the UNHCR, Pakistani government, and Afghan government have neglected Afghan refugees. Following 2014, Afghan refugees were forced to return to Afghanistan by the Pakistani government due to deteriorating living conditions. The terrorist attack on a school in Peshawar, carried out by TTP and Afghan militants, but not refugees, was a contributing factor (Khan et al., 2023). This mindset has led to harassment and extortion of migrants by Pakistani security personnel. Refugee males endured physical abuse and imprisonment, while women are particularly vulnerable to such situations.

### **Impact of Violence on Psychological Mindset of People in Society**

The persistent danger of terrorist strikes generates a culture of dread and anxiety amongst the Afghan people. People live with the awareness that they or their loved ones may be victims of violence at any time, resulting in increased stress and hypervigilance in daily life. Four decades of conflict, political turmoil, economic distress, and forced relocation have deeply affected both in-country and refugee Afghan communities. Women, ethnic minorities, people with impairments, and young people are at greater danger for mental health problems and psychological distress. Suicidality and consumption of drugs are emerging issues that are overlooked. Almost half of the population struggle with mental diseases such as depression, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicide, substance abuse, and others (Shoib et al, 2024). It has been challenging to offer adequate mental health services as the country works to rebuild its base (Dunleavy & Hasson, 2023). Terrorism in Afghanistan have claimed thousands of lives, leaving devastated families and communities. The unexpected and brutal nature of these fatalities exacerbates the sadness felt by survivors, who may struggle to cope with the loss of loved ones and the broken feeling of security in their life. This is the most important component for developing and intensifying radicalism and revenge. Political changes are necessary to foster accountability and minimize injustice across society. When entrenched interests are curtailed and politics is conducted for betterment of citizens, radical groups will lose their strength and influence in community.

Considering the enormous obstacles created by terrorism, many Afghans have shown great endurance in the face of hardship. Using cultural and religious traditions, as well as social support networks, people discover methods to cope with trauma and reconstruct their lives, exhibiting a spirit of tenacity and optimism for the future. Based on the nature of society and the prevalence of violence and threats, individuals adopt different coping strategies to overcome or combat the prevailing situation of threats such as they used a variety of coping mechanisms, including welcome, resistance, acceptance, submission, and escape stages. Similarly, some people used a variety of coping and resilience tactics to counteract the effects of socioeconomic, emotional, and mental communal



## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

instability, rehabilitation, and education. In addition, students and youngsters continued their academic pursuits at home and moved to hostels to achieve higher grades. However, the citizens' resistance proved to be a "wall of sand" in the face of the more powerful and coordinated militant organisations, and several tribes succumbed before them. Still, on the side, some tribes people began social support to halt the militant organisations, and they psychologically centred on supporting their own regulations in the region, which was an admirable coping method.

Terrorism-related trauma can cause social retreat and isolation as people deal with feelings of dread, humiliation, and survivor guilt. Those who have lost family members or been directly impacted by assaults may suffer stigma or prejudice from others who may not understand or empathise with their situation. According to World Health Organisation Wellbeing 43% of Afghan refugees report having low psychological well-being (Rehman et al., 2023). The creation of mental health screening facilities at border entry points and refugee hosting zones is crucial for timely identification and an efficient recommendation system. young people growing up in Afghanistan are especially susceptible to the psychological consequences of terrorism (Karaağaçlı & Camilleri, 2022). Experience to brutality at an early age can have serious and long-term consequences for their mental health, impairing their capacity to study, build social relationships, and foresee a better future.

### **Sense of Protection and Security among the People**

Terrorism instills dread and worry in Afghans, who face a continual danger of chaos and violence. Terrorist incidents, such as bombings, murders, and suicide attacks, instill a sense of insecurity and instability, resulting in increased stress and hypervigilance in everyday activities. Terrorism limits the atmosphere in which individuals can exercise their fundamental liberties and rights. Ashrafiyan (2023) addressed in his article that according to Tedd Gurr, when people sense a disparity between their value expectations and what they are able to obtain, the result may be alienation, destitution, and disappointment (Ashrafiyan, 2023)." If individuals of a community suffer this relative grief concurrently, the possibility of political violence rises. Several structural factors are thought to contribute to the sense of grievance such as civil war or deeply ingrained conflicts, invasions and takeover by foreign armed forces, industrial underdevelopment, ineffective leadership and nepotism at all levels of government, quick modernization or technology advancements such as the expansion of internet access and social media. Therefore, to secure their basic needs, people tend to bring a collective change with a desire to achieve a social change and correct the wrong and political violence is viewed as an extreme version of this collective action. Resultantly it gives the now radicalized people a sense of heroism and elitism.

Meanwhile the victims of the collective social change accompanied with violence, chaos and attacks make them vulnerable to the environment and pushing them to move towards safer dwellings. The number of Afghan refugees has skyrocketed, with over 2 million in neighboring countries and another 3.5 million internally displaced as of September 2021. Around 5.5 million Afghans were internally or internationally displaced. The very fact of being displaced puts nearly 5.5 million Afghans' fundamental freedoms at jeopardy. Without a doubt,



## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

Afghan human rights are jeopardized, and this is worsened by climate change dynamics that aggravate their predicament. In July 2021, about 18.5 million people, or almost half of the Afghan population, need humanitarian assistance, with one-third of the country experiencing starvation and extreme poverty (Rajmil et al., 2022). Furthermore, there is a higher incidence of sexual abuse as a result of displaced people having to walk long distances or queue for water or firewood pickup, both of which are often performed by women and young girls. During this procedure, they become targets for attacks by locals, authorities, police, and other refugees. Furthermore, when girls are forced to spend hours collecting water or wood, they are robbed of their already limited access to education. The ladies interviewed had travelled to Australia from Afghanistan via transition countries such as Pakistan or Iran as part of their migratory route (Kavian et al., 2020). The conflict in Afghanistan Individuals or families thought to be affiliated with terrorist organizations or sympathizers may endure social shame and marginalization from their communities. This can lead to exclusion, discrimination, and isolation, further undermining feelings of safety and identity among afflicted individuals and their relatives (Khan et al., 2022). Despite the obstacles faced by terrorism, Afghan people have shown extraordinary endurance and adaptation in the face of tragedy. They use ancient values such as hospitality, unity, and communal responsibility to help one another, restore social networks, and reduce the impact of violence on their feeling of security and well-being.

### **Violence, Terrorism and Identity Politics in Afghanistan**

The Afghan state has had to deal with a variety of challenging factors, including Islamic influence, tribal politics, ethnic disputes, socioeconomic underdevelopment, and successive foreign invasions. The intersection of violence, terrorism, and identity politics not merely affects the country's turbulent terrain, but also radically transforms its internal security dynamics. As ethnic conflicts, extremist ideologies, and geopolitical manoeuvres collide, the Afghan people traverse a perilous landscape in which security is a temporary idea. These interlocking forces have far-reaching consequences, reshaping the basic fabric of Afghan society and calling into question established concepts of stability. Understanding the delicate interaction between violence, terrorism, and identity politics is critical in this dynamic context for decoding the changing dimensions of internal security and mapping a route towards long-term peace and sustainability.

### **Political Disintegration and Power Struggle**

When political leaders like presidents and prime ministers exploit nationalism to gain authority, they endanger the survival of marginalised minority groups. As a result, these ethnic groups become more prone to carry out terrorist actions (Choi, 2022). While both ethno-nationalist and radical Islamist impulses exist in Afghanistan's socioeconomic structure, the Taliban has established a hybrid kind of extremism based on widespread Pashtun ethnic nationalism and the Taliban's extreme Fundamentalism (Wafayezada, 2023). While both ethno-nationalist and radical Islamist impulses exist in Afghanistan's socioeconomic structure, the Taliban has established a hybrid kind of extremism based on widespread Pashtun ethnic nationalism and the Taliban's extreme Fundamentalism.





## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

Afghanistan's political landscape is fragmented, with rival groups, warlords, and regional power players fighting for authority and influence. Identity politics frequently interacts with power conflicts, as various ethnic and tribal groups strive to promote their interests and maintain their positions of control. This power struggle has resulted to political instability, poor governance, and a lack of faith in state institutions, aggravating the Afghan population's insecurity and vulnerability. Afghanistan's political institutions have historically been dominated by Pashtuns, resulting in a lack of representation of diversity. As a result, the Pashtun ethnocentric philosophy has been formally implemented ever since. Non-Pashtun people, notably Hazaras and Uzbeks living in distant areas, have faced isolation (Ashrafian, 2023). Persistent inequality creates disparities between people and groups, leading to antagonistic interactions. Discriminatory architecture of governmental institutions prevents effective involvement for all ethnic groups. The country's interaction with minority communities is characterised by repression and submissiveness. Disadvantaged groups have security gaps due to a lack of shared interests.

### **Gender Dynamics**

Gender serves a crucial part in Afghanistan's identity politics, with women and girls being marginalised and barred from participating in politics and decision-making. The Taliban's rigorous formulation of Islamic law has resulted in severe limitations on women's liberties and rights, including as possibilities for school, work, and healthcare. Women who question these standards or campaign for gender equality frequently suffer threats, abuse, and intimidation, continuing a cycle of tyranny and insecurity. Women have not been actively participating in the country's growth or decision-making procedures over the previous 75 years. As a result, Afghanistan has never had a representative government that reflects the demographics of society, particularly women (Mosamim & Villeneuve, 2024). Foreign invasions, wars, frequent regime changes, and cultural aspects, which include a strong traditional society, distinct religious and patriarchal attitudes, and a general disregard for gender concerns are the major factors led to gender inequality and the underrepresentation of Afghan women in public administration.

According to a UNICEF estimate, 25 million children aged 6-15 are deprived of school in war zones across 22 countries. Afghanistan's society is dominated by men, with 49% of the overall population being female. Afghan women have faced significant challenges throughout their history. Decades of fighting have left 90% of Afghan women lack schooling. (Mazhar & Goraya, 2021). These limits are rationalised in the name of defending women's honour, yet they essentially limit their individual rights and prospects for growth. Terrorist attacks against schools, particularly those that educate females, are a method used to prevent women from receiving an education and becoming empowered. Fear of violence prevents numerous households from enrolling their girls to public schools, continuing patterns of illiteracy and reliance. Armed wars may harm young people's ambitions and motives by using educational institutions and kids to facilitate war, as shown in Afghanistan. Therefore, schools can serve as a barrier against potential disputes, protecting students from political and social injustices and crises.



## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

Women's movement, attire, education, and work are severely restricted under Taliban rule and in their controlled areas. Since August 2021, women and girls in Afghanistan have seen tremendous transformations in their social, political, and economic lives. Things couldn't be more distinct or dreadful. Women's legal and constitutional rights were revoked, along with the modest achievements of the preceding two decades, in a matter of days and months. The Taliban's rule began with a restriction on women's participation in public affairs and personhood under their interpretation of Sharia law. While no new constitution or official regulations have been implemented, orders after orders have been issued to reinstate gender discrimination in education, work, and public spaces. As a symbol and practical evidence of this revolutionary movement, the Taliban replaced the former "Ministry of Women," which handled abuses of women's rights, including violence against women, with the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue.

### **Terrorism as a Challenge to Good Governance in Afghanistan**

The pervasive shadow of terrorism hangs over Afghanistan, casting a long and dark fog over efforts to construct efficient administration. With repeated assaults interrupting political processes, undermining security, and dissolving societal cohesiveness, the Afghan government confronts a difficult task in creating a secure and successful society. Terrorist actions exacerbate political instability by questioning the legitimacy and legitimacy of the Afghan administration. Frequent assaults on institutions of government, political figures, and law enforcement officials diminish public trust in the government's capacity to provide security and preserve order (Partaw, 2023).

Terrorists use violence and extortion to instill terror in the general population and intimidate authorities, organisations, and people. Terrorists employ violence to achieve political aims, pressure governments, win public support, and draw emphasis to their cause. On numerous cases, elections itself have generated fear and violence, not just through Taliban threats, but also through candidates or their influential supporters using the insurgency as a cover for their use of aggression to harm their rival's campaigns. The Taliban, on the other hand, continuously condemned elections, claiming that each succeeding administration was a entertainer of the United States and NATO nations. The Taliban's terrorist actions have had a significant impact on Afghanistan's development, posing a complex issue that threatens stability and progress. The Taliban's comeback, following the withdrawal of international forces in 2021, has raised fears about the country's future. The surge of violence and political unrest worsens preexisting developmental obstacles, including financial stagnation and social division. The Taliban's rigid comprehension of Islamic law contradicts modern development ideas like as freedom of speech, equal rights for women, and education. Taliban's governing approach, which lacks democratic procedures and suppresses opposition, hinders the formation of durable political institutions. Lack of inclusive leadership and the rule of law creates instability and uncertainty, undermining growth attempts. Violence and intimidating can disrupt law and order, aggravate human rights violations, and create public worry and dread. Terrorist violence can trigger retaliatory assaults and radicalization, perpetuating the vicious cycle of violence. Violence and coercion



## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

can undermine public faith in the government and the rule of law. Terrorists attack individuals, government leaders, and infrastructure to spread terror and destroy society. Citizens may lose faith in the government's ability to protect them, leading to suspicious behaviour such as avoiding public areas or speaking out against the government. This can erode public trust in government and harm a nation's social fabric. Terrorism may have long-term consequences for individuals and civilizations, requiring them to deal with the repercussions of the terrible incident.

### Conclusion

Terrorism has had a significant and diverse influence on Afghan government, putting the country's peace, security, and prosperity under threat. The chronic threat weakens governmental authority, strains law enforcement, hinders economic growth, widens social divides, violates human rights, and causes humanitarian catastrophes. To address these difficulties, Afghanistan must take a holistic strategy that improves security, encourages governmental reconciliation, encourages economic growth, involves communities, and improves international collaboration. Only by a concerted and continuous effort can Afghanistan expect to create a peaceful, successful, and inclusive country free of the shadows of terrorism.

### References

- Ashrafian, A. Z. (2023). Hazaras Persecution in Afghanistan: A case study through the lens of protracted social conflicts and relative deprivation. <https://www.diva-ortal.org/smash/get/diva2:1760650/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Choi, S.W. (2022). Leader nationalism, ethnic identity, and terrorist violence. *British Journal of Political Science*, 52(3), 1151-1167. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123421000144>
- Dashti, Z. (2022). Afghan external migration movements in the historical process. *Asya Studies*, 6(20), 301-314. <https://doi.org/10.31455/asya.1055791>
- Dunleavy, J., & Hasson, J. (2023). *Kabul: The Untold Story of Biden's Fiasco and the American Warriors who Fought to the End*. Center Street.
- Edney-Browne, A. (2019). The psychosocial effects of drone violence: Social isolation, self-objectification, and depoliticization. *Political Psychology*, 40(6), 1341-1356. <https://www.amazon.com/-/he/Jerry-Dunleavy/dp/1668636549>
- İnaç, H., & Asefi, J. (2021). The discussion of political Islam and democracy in Afghanistan. *Türkiye Politik Çalışmalar Dergisi*, 1(1), 1-12. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/ulusam/issue/68756/1081908>
- Karaağaçlı, A., & Camilleri, M. J. (2022). A child in Afghanistan: The Afghani child experience. In *Being a child in a global world: Childhood in an environment of violence, terror, migration and rapid change* (pp. 85-99). Emerald Publishing Limited. [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-22934-3\\_11](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-22934-3_11)
- Kavian, F., Mehta, K., Willis, E., Mwanri, L., Ward, P., & Booth, S. (2020). Migration, stress, and the challenges of accessing food: An exploratory study of the experience of recent Afghan women refugees in Adelaide,



## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

- Australia. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(4), 1379. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17041379>
- Khan, D., Ullah, A., Alim, W., & Haq, I. U. (2022). Does terrorism affect the stock market returns and volatility? Evidence from Pakistan's stock exchange. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 22(1), e2304. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.2304>
- Khan, M. F., Hassan, A., & Raza, A. (2023). Humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan: Changing global dynamics and Pakistan's policy choices. *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics*, 8(2), 516-528. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20578911221148520>
- Loyn, D. (2019). Politics without parties: Afghanistan's long road to democracy. *Asian Affairs*, 50(1), 40-59. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03068374.2019.1567101>
- Mazhar, P. D. M. S., & Goraya, D. N. S. (2021). Afghan women education: Bottlenecks & future. *South Asian Studies*, 1(35). <http://111.68.103.26/journals/index.php/IJSAS/article/viewFile/4104/2008>
- Mbaeze, N. (2022). The role of USA in combating terrorism in Afghanistan, 2016-2020. *ESUT Journal of Social Sciences*, 7(1). <https://www.esutjss.com/index.php/ESUTJSS/article/view/158>
- McAuliffe, M., & Ruhs, M. (2017). World migration report 2018. Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 1-32. [https://publications.iom.int/fr/system/files/pdf/wmr\\_2018\\_en\\_chapter7.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/fr/system/files/pdf/wmr_2018_en_chapter7.pdf)
- Mosamim, P., & Villeneuve, J. P. (2024). 75 years of women representation in Afghanistan: Looking back to look forward. *Public Administration and Development*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.2043>
- Murtazashvili, J. (2022). The collapse of Afghanistan. *Journal of Democracy*, 33(1), 40-54. <https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/1/article/843611/>
- Partaw, M.A. (2023). The failure of democracy in Afghanistan. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2022.2164480>
- Rahman, H., Sadiq, A., & Shah, S. A. (2023). Resurgence and Response: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Pakistan's Counter-Terrorism Strategies amidst Rising Terrorism Threats. *Pakistan Journal of Social Research*, 5(04), 24-37. <https://doi.org/10.1192/S1749367600003192>
- Rajmil, D., Morales, L., Aira, T., & Cardona Valles, M. (2022). Afghanistan: A multidimensional crisis. *Peace Review*, 34(1), 41-50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10402659.2022.2023428>
- Rahimi, Y. A., & Azimi, S. (2012). War and the crisis of mental health in Afghanistan. *International Psychiatry*, 9(3), 55-57. <https://doi.org/10.1192n/S1749367600003192>
- Rehman, A. U., Zakar, R., & Hani, U. (2023). Psychological well-being assessment of Afghan refugees in Pakistan. *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, 7(3), 310-321.
- Shoib, S., Hussaini, S. S., Nazari, S. K., & Saeed, F. (2024). Mental healthcare in Afghanistan. In S. M. Y. Arafat & S. K. Kar (Eds.), *Access to mental health care in South Asia: Current status, potential challenges, and ways out* (pp. 17-27). Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore.





## Vol. 2 No. 5 (December) (2024)

- Snyder, R. S. (2023). The fall of Afghanistan: An American tragedy. *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 34(4), 747-758. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592318.2022.2159738>
- Wafayezada, M. Q. (2023). Hybrid extremism: Ethnonationalism and territorialized Islamic fundamentalism in Afghanistan. *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, 21(3), 7-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15570274.2023.2235834>
- Zhou, J., Su, F., & Yuan, J. (2022). Treading Lightly: China's Footprint in a Taliban-led Afghanistan. <https://policycommons.net/artifacts/3179865/treading-lightly/3978346/>