

**Impact of Religious Extremism on
Hindu and Sikh Minorities in Afghanistan, 1989-2014**

*Thesis submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of*

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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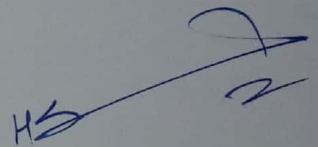
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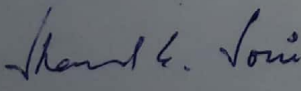
DECLARATION


I declare that the thesis entitled "Impact of Religious Extremism on Hindu and Sikh Minorities in Afghanistan, 1989-2014" submitted by me to Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi for the award of Doctor of Philosophy is my original work and has not been submitted so far, in part or in full, for any other degree or diploma of any other University/ Institution.

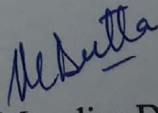

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CERTIFICATE

We recommend that this thesis may be placed before the examiners for the evaluation and award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy**.


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*Dedicated to my Parents
and
beloved Brother and Sister.....*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIHRC	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANSF	Afghan National Security Force
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSO	Afghanistan NGO Safety Office
APRP	Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program
AU	African Union
BAFIA	Bureau of Aliens and Foreign Immigrant Affairs
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IED	Impoverished Explosive Device
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDS	National Directorate of Security
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PDPA	Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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Chapter-I

Introduction

I.1 Background

The geostrategic location of Afghanistan is such that it lies in the heart of South Asia, Central Asia and West Asia. Afghanistan is at the intersection of major north-south and east-west trade routes. Afghanistan's Hindus and Sikhs have a long history in the country; they came through the trading routes via Kandhar and Kabul and settled here. After the Soviet withdrawal in 1989 both the minority communities faced the worst discrimination at the hands of the majority Muslim community. This discrimination started with restrictions on their religious freedom, exclusion from government jobs, kidnappings, murder, illegal seizure of property and vandalizing their religious places. All this led to the process of mass migration of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan to other parts of the world such as India, Germany, U.K, Canada, Australia, Belgium and Netherlands. Before 1990 the Hindu and Sikh population was estimated to be around 50,000 (UNHCR, 2010).

The overwhelming majority of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs recognized themselves with the Indian subcontinent and mostly were of Indian origin. Afghanistan's Hindus and Sikhs came to Afghanistan as traders and later on settled there. During Zahir Shah's period Afghanistan made a substantial economic progress. Zahir Shah while taking advantage of both Russians and Americans build the Afghan infrastructure, industry and tried to modernize Afghanistan. At that time the Hindus and Sikhs were well educated and gained professional qualifications contributing to the economic development of the country. As a result they gained high positions in the administration due to their capabilities. Post Zahir Shah, the pro-Soviet regimes led by Daoud, Karmal and Najibullah opened up business opportunities for Hindu and Sikh traders. At the same time the enrolment of Hindus and Sikhs in the professional courses enhanced gradually. This reflected the secular character of the Soviet backed regimes which didn't encourage hostility and discrimination towards the Non-Muslim minorities (Ballard, 2011:8).

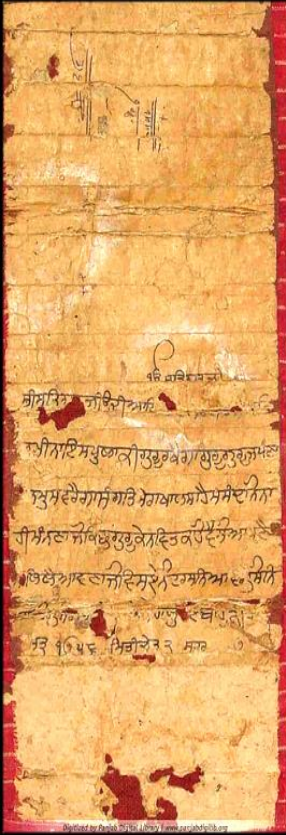
The mass exodus of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan started with the coming into power of the Mujahidin forces. These American backed Mujahidin's came to power and started a war against Russians and Afghanistan's ruling class. The origin of Mujahidin (warriors of God) can be outlined to 1979, after the Saur Revolution when the Soviet Union marched into Afghanistan. The entry of Soviet Union prompted United States, China Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan to support the rebellious groups fighting against Soviet forces. It was then the Arab rich Osama-Bin-Laden

moved to Afghanistan and helped to organize the Arab Mujahidin's in order to resist the Soviet forces under the supervision of Ayman-al-Zawahiri. The collapse of Soviet-backed regime had left Afghanistan's Hindus and Sikhs in a vulnerable position. Religious Intolerance was at peak during the Mujahidin era. Eventually Hindus and Sikhs were deprived from the state protection and the process of migration got started (UNHCR, 2014).

I.1.1 Origin of Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan

Guru Nanak the first guru of Sikhs visited the present country of Afghanistan in 1521. He went there during his fourth Udasi (journey). He visited Afghanistan twice. According to the Bhai Bala Janamsakhi, the Guru visited Baghdad, Karbala & Basrah (Iraq), Bushehar, Khorram Shahr (Iran) to Kandahar, Ghazni & Kabul (Afghanistan). From Kabul, the Guru advanced to Jalalabad, Sultanpur and conceded through Khyber Pass to reach Peshawar. In Kabul there is a Sikh temple at Gharuka (35 km from Kabul) is a tribute to the visit of Guru Nanak Dev. The Sikh vicars were stationed there to spread the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev. In Kandhar there is also a Sikh temple in memory of Guru Sahib, according to historical records Guru Nanak met a peer here. In Jalalabad, two more Sikh Gurudwaras were there associated with the visit of Guru Sahib. Gurudwara Choha Sahib, Patshahi Pehli was built as a tribute to the visit of Guru Sahib. The other Gurudwara Guru Nanak Chashma (spring) is about 8km from Jalalabad, on Jalalabad-Kabul road. There are springs of water connected with Guru Sahib's stopover in Hazara and the disciples of the Guru Nanak in the area were known as Mureed Nanki. There are narratives which show that the Sikhs from Afghanistan travelled all the way to India to come and visit the 5th guru of Sikhs (Guru Hargobind Sahib) in the 16th century. Soon after 10th guru Guru Gobind Singh forwarded Official proclamation called Hukumnama to the Sikhs of Afghanistan. In this Hukumnama there is a complete draft of instructions and the code of conduct which the Sikhs of Afghanistan should follow. The original copy of this Hukamnama is attached below. In the extreme right side the original copy of Hukamnama duly signed by 10th guru Guru Gobind Singh is attached (www.sikhnet.com).

Guru Gobind Singh's Official proclamation called Hukumnama to the Sikhs of Afghanistan

	<p>ਸਰਬਤ ਸੰਗਤ ਕਾਬੁਲ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਖੇ ਗਾ ॥ ਤੁਸਾ ਉਤੇ ਅਸਾਡੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਹੈ ॥ ਤੁਸੀ ਖੰਡੇ ਦਾ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਪੰਜਾਂ ਤੋ ਲੈਣਾ ॥ ਕੇਸ਼ ਰਖਣੇ ... ਇਹ ਅਸਾਡੀ ਮੋਹਰ ਹੈ ॥</p> <p>ਕਛ, ਕਿਰਪਾਣ ਦਾ ਵਿਸਾਹ ਨਹੀ ਕਰਨਾ ॥</p> <p>ਸਰਬ ਲੋਹ ਦਾ ਕਤਾ ਹਬ ਰਖਣਾ ॥</p> <p>ਦੋਨੋ ਵਕਤ ਕੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੀ ਪਾਲਣਾ ਕਰਨੀ ॥</p> <p>ਸਰਬਤ ਸੰਗਤ ਅਭਾਖਿਆ ਦਾ ਕੁਠਾ ਖਾਵੇ ਨਹੀ ॥</p> <p>ਤਮਾਕੂ ਨਾ ਵਰਤਣਾ ॥</p> <p>ਭਦਨੀ ਤਬਾ ਕਨਿਆ-ਮਾਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਸੋ ਮੇਲ ਨਾ ਰਖੇ ॥</p> <p>ਮੀਨੋ, ਮਸੰਦੈ, ਰਾਮਰਾਈਯੋ ਕੀ ਸੰਗਤ ਨਾ ਬੈਸੋ ॥</p> <p>ਗੁਰਬਾਨੀ ਪੜਨੀ ... ਵਾਹੋਗੁਰੂ, ਵਾਹੋਗੁਰੂ ਜਪਣਾ ॥</p> <p>ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀ ਰਹਤ ਰਖਣੀ ॥</p> <p>ਸਰਬਤ ਸੰਗਤ ਉਪਰ ਮੇਰੀ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਹੈ ॥</p> <p>-ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਦਸਵੀਂ ॥</p> <p>ਜੇਠ ੨੬, ਸੰਵਤ ੧੭੫੬ ॥</p>	<p>The Guru will protect the entire sangat of Kabul. I am pleased with all of you. Take Amrit of the sword from the Five Beloved. Keep your Kaes (hair) uncut, for this is our identity-seal. Do not ignore the Kachh (knickers) and Kirpaan (sword). Always wear the wrought-iron Karraa (wristlet) on your hand. Take care of your Kaes (hair) twice a day (referring to the Kangaa). The entire sangat shall not eat inedible Halal meat. Do not use tobacco in any form. Have no connection with those who cut their hair (Kaes) or kill their daughters. Do not associate with Meenaas, Massands and Ramraiyaas (anti-Sikh cults). Read the Guru's Baanee (Word); meditate deeply on Waheguru, Waheguru. Follow the Guru's code of conduct. I am pleased with the entire sangat. - 10th Emperor (Guru Gobind Singh's signature) Jeth 26, 1756 Bikrami; May 23, 1699 CE</p>
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(Source www.sikhnet.com)

Picture No. I.1

In the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, When the Sikh Empire was at its zenith and Sikh settlements reached up to Kandahar. Hari Singh Nalwa the able commander and administrator of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, was in charge for expanding the frontiers of Sikh empire away from the Indus River right up to the Khyber Pass. At that time great number of Khatri voluntarily migrated to Afghanistan and established a thriving trade in Afghanistan. Even the Haripur Tehsil in Hazara in the North Western frontier province is named by the name of Hari Singh Nalwa. So, in the 19th century during the Sikh empire, trade and exchange prospered in the area which saw a huge influx of Khatri community and Hindus and Sikhs to Kabul (Dutt, 1977: 81-89). These communities flourished and contributed massively to the local economy and they became part and parcel of the culture and heritage of Afghanistan. Some Hindus and Sikhs came to Afghanistan at the time of partition when there was a communal frenzy in the NWFP (North

West Frontier Province). The Hindu and Sikh residents of the Potohar¹ region, West Punjab and Baluchistan abandoned their homelands and fled towards India in a reverse direction and finally they landed in Afghanistan. (Ballard, 2011)

The archaeological evidences from excavations in the region suggests the existence of Vedic people in present day area of Afghanistan, who later on known by the name of Hindus by Persian invaders. The Hindus were a small religious minority in Afghanistan, who settled mainly in Kandahar, Khost, Ghazni, Jalalabad, and Kabul. At one time Kabul was the centre of Vedic culture and the capital of the great Hindu Shahi kings and various communities of different religious and ethnic backgrounds lived peacefully in the south of Hindu Kush and ruled by Hindu rulers (Newell, 1972:97). The Hindu temples are found in Khair-Khan in Kabul, Gardez, Kunar valley (in Eastern Afghanistan) and in Tapa Sikander which lies to the north of Kabul. It is projected that a Hindu tribe 'Dassa' occupied the region in the 3rd century B.C. Archaeological and historical evidences highlighted that the Hindu kings ruled the Eastern and Southern parts of Afghanistan until 12th century A.D. But the radical shift came in 712 A.D when Arabs invaded the area and transported Islam along with their invasion. In the 11th century A.D Mahmud of Ghazni overpowered the last Hindu king Jayapala. It is likely assumed that at this time many Hindus escaped southward from Kabul. (Pathak, 1999)

(Chandra, 2002: 15) traced the roots of several Punjabi surnames in Afghanistan; the Hindu community known as Lohana's residing in Afghanistan defended their kingdom against Muslim invaders in 7th and 8th century. During the 11th century, as the raiders advanced, some of the Lohanas converted to Islam faith, while others moved southward towards Gujarat in India and later settled there. This provides further evidences that Hindus lived in the Afghanistan long before the advent of Islam in Afghanistan. Archaeological and historical evidences shows that the Hindus were also brought from India to Afghanistan under the command of Mahmud of Ghazni as captives of war. Ghazni with his formidable army attacked India 17 times and in all of his attacks he succeeded in conquering the northern parts. In these attacks he is said to have taken war captives. In his time under the command of Mahmud of Ghazni most of the Hindu temples were destroyed and converted into mosques. In Afghanistan the Hindus which practice

¹ Potohar region is a Plateau in north-eastern Pakistan. It borders the Western parts of North India and the Southern parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This region is also known as Panjistan and once this region was the home of the ancient Soanian culture.

Hinduism today were basically the Punjabis and Sindhis. (Singh, 2014) According to UNHCR report 2011 there were several thousand Hindus living in the country before Soviet withdrawal, but today their number is only about 3,000. Most of this minority community group migrated to India, the European Union, North America, UK and seeking asylum there.

Map of Afghanistan



(Source: <http://www.mapsopensource.com/afghanistan-map.html>)

Map No. I.1

I.1.2 Minorities During Soviet Period

Afghanistan enjoyed considerable degree of stability and prosperity during the reign of Zahir Shah 1933-73, Afghanistan made substantial economic progress. Zahir Shah in 1950s-60s was very much successful in promoting rivalry between US and Russians in his effort to implement developmental projects throughout the country. It is due to his ambitious plans Afghanistan made a significant growth in Afghanistan's relations with the international community. Afghanistan received a formal recognition from the United States. Afghanistan also joined the League of Nations, Zahir Shah realized the need of modernization for Afghanistan and he engaged a number of foreign counselors to assist him for his developmental agenda. Zahir Shah pioneered the creation of new constitution for Afghanistan in the year 1964, which brings modern democratic reforms in Afghanistan by initiating women rights, liberty, civil rights universal suffrage and free elections (Hyman, 1986: 64).

(Usha, 2004:47) explicitly mentions about the minority communities in Afghanistan, Hindus and Sikhs, they were well educated and gained professional qualifications. They contributed in the economic development of the country at that time. In a result they gained high positions in the administration due to their capabilities. This boosted the trading activities of the business classes among the Hindus and Sikhs and both these communities prospered. In the year 1973, Zahir Shah went to Italy for his eye surgery, in the mean time his cousin Daoud Khan overthrew him and established his rule in the country. Zahir Shah then resolved to spent the rest of his life in exile Italy for decades. Mohammed Daoud, launched a thriving coup against King Zahir Shah this coup was reliant on the active Soviet political advice and millitary help. In addition to this, Daoud enjoyed the strength and support of the PDPA ² (People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan) in his anti Zahir Shah campaign. PDPA was established in the year 1965, based on Marxist ideology and loyalty to Moscow. In 1967 the PDPA split into two major factions due to internal rivalry; the Khalq and Parcham. The Parcham faction was headed by Babrak Karmal (who supported Daoud), and the "Khalqis" escorted by Noor Muhammad Taraki. In the coming five years, Daoud endeavored to make hold over the Afghanistan's tribal dominated belts. But the fundamental Khalq faction never fully accepted Daoud's leadership. Karmal sighted this

² PDPA was basically a communist party, established on 1 January 1965. This party helped the Daoud khan to overthrow his cousin Zahir Shah and established the Republic of Afghanistan. The Republic lasted until 1992 under the leadership of Najibullah and acting President for the last twelve days.

coup largely as a means to unite his own power. In rejoinder, Daoud anticipated to ease both these intimidations by taking Afghanistan away from Russian pressure. In his this project of countering Soviet threat he improved the Afghanistan's relations with the U.S. He received all the help and power from U.S but Soviet clouds were already on his head, and the military intervention of Soviets had already taken place. In this hostile atmosphere an intense opposition in both the factions of PDPA emerged. Under the Daoud's repressive regime the death of a PDPA's stalwart member, Mir Akbar Khyber sparked the anti-Daoud's demonstrations in Afghanistan. It resulted in the arrest of all the leading members of PDPA. On April 27, 1978 the Afghan army with the support of Soviet Union overthrew Daoud and executed him along with all his family members. Now Noor Muhammad Taraki secretary general of PDPA emerged as the new Prime Minister of Afghanistan. All this took place in the month of Saur, the Afghan month of April so, that's why it is also known as Saur Revolution (Usha, 2004:55)

In Taraki-Amin's rule under the supervision of Soviet advisers, the resistance forces increased their attacks on government forces and the government was unable to suppress the resistance forces due to their increased strength. In the mean time Amin became President in the year 1979, and his repressive policies continued with mass scale migration of peoples from Afghanistan and taking asylum in Pakistan, Iran and other neighboring countries. In retaliation to this resistance, the Soviet Union move to increase its involvement in Afghanistan aimed at defeating the "Jihad against Communism" which developed into a full-fledged military intervention. On 27 December 1979 Soviet forces seized the Kabul airport; it opened the massive airlift for the rest of the division and the paratroopers. Several squadrons of Mig-21 and Mig-23 aircrafts landed in Afghanistan (Mukarji 2003: 163).

(Hyman, 1986: 166) points out that the preparation of Soviet military intervention was going on even much earlier. The soviet claimed three grounds for the intervention:

1. First, a request from Afghan government headed by Amin for military assistance.
2. Secondly, according to 1978 treaty the Soviet Union's commitment to provide military help to Afghan government in the time of requirement.
3. Thirdly, self defense against foreign armed aggression.

The resistance against the Soviet forces in Afghanistan by the important resistance groups, it includes 'Peshawar Seven'³ under Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and the 'Tehran Eight'⁴ under Karim Khalili. These resistance groups got help from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and U.S.A. All these parties were fighting against their common enemy the Soviet Union. The war between Soviet forces and the Mujahidin's went through several phases from 1979-86 and in all these years active support provided by U.S.A. In the year 1980 Carter administration and other governments around the world denounced the Soviet intervention and Carter administration started the covert actions against Soviets. The CIA of U.S.A signed an agreement with the tribal resistance groups collectively known as 'Mujahidin's' for keeping U.S involvement secret in this operation and U.S will equip them with weapons through Pakistan's intelligence Agency, the decision of USA to provide the covert and overt aid to Pakistan on a massive scale from 1986 onwards was to support these Mujahidin groups. U.S used Pakistan as a conduit state to offer resources to the Mujahidin's fighting within the Afghanistan. By the year 1981, the 'Reagen Administration' increased the funding of Mujahidin's with more sophisticated weapons and this funding reached its climax of \$60 Million in the year 1984. This included to supply the Mujahidin's with Stinger missiles, which facilitates the Mujahidin's to gun down the helicopters and low-flying aircrafts that had wreaked huge damage to the Soviets (Marsden, 1998:35).

(Nair, 1988:13) explicitly mentions about the Soviet withdrawal from 1987 onwards, Soviet Union demonstrated its commitment towards the UN-sponsored peace negotiations. This led to the signing of 'Geneva Accord'⁵ on 14 April 1988 between Soviet Union, United Nations,

³ Peshawar Seven is an Alliance of seven partners of Mujahidin's Islamic Unity of Afghanistan. It was formed in the year 1981 by the seven Afghan Mujahidin parties fighting against the Soviet installed Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. Its alliance partners are Khalis Faction, Hezbi Islami, Jamiat-i-Islami, and Islamic Union for the liberation of Afghanistan, National Islamic front of Afghanistan, Afghanistan National liberal front and Revolutionary Islamic Movement.(Sunni group)

⁴ Tehran Eight was a political union of Shia faction of Mujahidin's mainly of the Hazara ethnic group having the support of Iran against the Soviets. Its alliance partners are Afghan Hezbollah, Nasr Party, Guardians of Afghanistan, Islamic Movement of Afghanistan, Committee of Islamic Agreement, Islamic Revolution Movement, Union of Islamic Fighters and RAAD (Thunder) Party.

⁵ Geneva Accord is the settlement of the situation relating to Afghanistan signed by United Nations, between Afghanistan and Pakistan with the United States and Soviet Union. It is based on the principles of mutual relations, in particular on non-interference and non-intervention; a declaration on international guarantees, signed by the USSR and the USA; a bilateral agreement between Pakistan and Afghanistan on the voluntary return of Afghan refugees; and an agreement on the interrelationships for the settlement of the situation relating to Afghanistan, signed by Pakistan and Afghanistan and witnessed by the Soviet Union and the United States. This agreement is also based on the timetable for the Soviet troop's withdrawal from Afghanistan by 15 February 1989.

Afghanistan and Pakistan, which emphasized that Soviet troops need to vacate from Afghanistan by 15 February 1989. This puts to an end in the 9 year long extended Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. In this 'Geneva Accord' the Mujahidin forces, were neither a party to the negotiations and accordingly refused to acknowledge the provisions of the agreement. As a consequence of it, the civil war started in Afghanistan following the Soviet departure and American sponsored Mujahidin's came into power. The collapse of Soviet-backed regime had left Afghanistan's Hindus and Sikhs in a vulnerable position. The religious intolerance towards them thus started in Afghanistan in the Mujahidin era. Eventually Hindus and Sikhs were deprived from the state protection and the process of migration got flip. (Marsden, 1998:55)

I.1.3 Minorities in Post Soviet Period

The post Soviet period in Afghanistan invited chaos for Hindus and Sikhs minorities of Afghanistan, they both found themselves in severe difficulties. The economic misery and the religious intolerance towards them were at peak. The untrimmed beards and the turban wearing Sikhs were easily identifiable and become the target of hate crimes and harassment. The business community of Afghan Hindu and Sikh traders, which stretched from Afghan cities to India, was perceived as wealthy and this perception made them a key target of kidnappings for ransom. In this way the religious intolerance towards Hindus and Sikhs started in Afghanistan in the Mujahidin's era deprived them from the state protection and the process of migration started, subsequently with these episodes. In the mean time, the CIA keep on pumping the Mujahidin's with supply of sophisticated arms and aid. The Mujahidin fighters received aid from Saudi Arabia and Gulf countries, which contributed them with billions of dollars to their coffers, and thousands of Arabs act in response to Mujahidin's call for Jihad (Ballard, 2011).

I.1.3.1 First Wave of Mass Exodus 1989-1996

The Mujahidin faction's internal rivalry increased day by day. The Mujahidin factions started fighting as much with themselves then with the PDPA forces, resulting in the increased suffering and bloodshed for the local masses and especially for Hindus and Sikhs. Afghanistan is now a battleground among different Mujahidin warlords; they engaged in empire building in different pockets of the country. The Northern Alliance warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum, holds a formidable position and was commanding the city of Mazar-e-Sharif over which he ruled from

1992 to until his ouster in 1997. Burhanuddin Rabbani, another Northern Alliance warlord ruled over Kabul from 1992-96, during his period of influence over 60,000 people were slaughtered and thousands of women's were raped. The another warlord Ismail Khan rules over city of Herat, over which he ruled from 1992 to 1995. The warlord Yunis Khalis ruled over Jalalabad up to 1994. The mujahidin warlord's internal rivalry brings continuous bereavement and devastation over the country. They fought over the spoils, and wanted to enlarge their new annexations at the cost of their neighboring contenders. In all this tussle the ethnicity becomes the important issue because all these leaders were from different ethnic origins. The fall of Najibullah government in April 1992, served as the legitimate end to the Jihad and provoked the huge return for the refugees from Pakistan and to a lesser extent from Iran. In the mean time Taliban forces gained its roots, it appears that in the midst of all these discussions, the Taliban movement appeared, and the Pakistan's Intelligence agency aided in the creation of this new Islamic fundamentalist association. The 'Taliban' a movement was born in the Islamic schools that had sprung up inside the Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan. Its leadership was primarily motivated by the bulk of religious students, primarily Pashtuns who wants to create a theocratic state according to Sharia law. (Rubin, 1992:77)

The ideological underpinnings of the Taliban movemen have been further a cause of concern. This Taliban cadre was basically the orphanages operated in the refugee camps, with funding from Saudi Arabia, the Mujahidin parties and the Gulf States. These students were the strong adherents of Islam and are basically trained in Pakistan based training camps and Madrassas. There is a debate as to whether this Taliban movement is basically a Pashtun one or not, given that an overpowering number of its supporters have been Pashtuns. This led to the speculation, that this movement had been supported in an effort to reassert the Pashtuns dominance in Afghanistan. The absolute leader of the Taliban was Mullah Muhammad Omar, a Pashtun from South-Western Afghanistan. These Taliban forces came to power in the year 1994 the Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan faced the worst discrimination in this phase. The Taliban sought to craft a theocratic state based on the interpretations of Koran. (Usha, 2004:111)

The plight of Afghanistan's women got even shoddier under the new command. The veil became the law of the land, and women were not allowed to attend the schools. They are not even allowed to hold employment outside their home. The broadcasting of Television was banned and

an attempt was made to remove the remnants of secularism and western influence from Afghanistan society (AIHRC, 2008). The country is converted into politically and diplomatically isolated place, the arrival of Taliban was welcomed by some sections of Afghanistan's population. In all this Taliban movement the radical forces wants to replace the period of warlordism with strictly Sharia law in combination with the Pashtun tribal code. They imposed Wahabhi and Deobandi interpretations of Islamic tradition and openly declared that idolaters had no place in the "Islamic Paradise" which they had constructed (Rashid, 2001: 92).

The Taliban decree to the members of Hindu and Sikh minority was to wear a yellow star and arm bands. They also needed to hang yellow color flags over the top of their homes and shops. During the Mujahidin period Hindus and Sikhs were barred from government posts. Now, efforts were made to persuade them to adopt Islam. Such persuasions soon took an extreme form and open verbal threats were given to Hindus and Sikhs, they were even required to make financial assistance for "Jihad" and if they failed to pay they were kidnapped and murdered. The religious minorities also faced worst discrimination on the grounds of cremation. Cremation, the last ritual of the Hindu and Sikh faiths, has been silently experienced in Qalacha the eastern district of Kabul. The Sikh community in Kabul started cremation in the backyard of Gurudwara Sahib. The residents of Qalacha complained the smell of cremation. The extensive restrictions on religious freedom by the Taliban have displaced large number of Hindus and Sikhs to other parts of the world for their safety (Singh, 2014).

I.1.3.2 Second Wave of Migration 1996 onwards

The September, 9/11 terrorist attacks on America, led to the American battle for combating terrorism, which beleaguered Afghanistan as a dissemination ground for terrorism. The United States started bombing and along with it provided active support to the 'Northern Alliance' that created havoc for the local masses in Afghanistan. On the other side 'Osama Bin Laden' waged war against America with the support of Taliban, the American forces intervened in Afghanistan on the pretext of eliminating this anti-American terrorist. America declared war on terror in Afghanistan on 7th of October 2001. Following weeks of heavy and destructive bombing, with several failed attempts, the 'Northern Alliance' finally succeeded in flushing out the Taliban from its northern territory, they seized the city of Mazar-e-Sharif, and then moved forward on to make hold over the Kabul. This resulted in a series of attacks on temples and houses of Hindus

and Sikhs from both sides and their houses were devastated in these attacks including seven Sikh temples and several schools destroyed by the rocket fires. The attack on religious places of Hindus and Sikhs were a common feature now. Kabul was once the home to eight Sikh Gurudwaras, but only one remains today. According to UNHCR, 2011, the migration of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan to other parts of the world has left behind with only 3000 in Afghanistan (Singh, 2014). The drive of United States and the coalition forces against Taliban brought enormous sufferings for the local masses and the minorities faced the worst scenario. The main aim of U.S led NATO forces is to destroy Bin Laden's training camps and to target the Taliban, with their assumed goal of obliterating their morale. The US led NATO forces destroyed the training camps of Al-Qaeda and great number of Al-Qaeda members fled to neighboring states Pakistan and Iran (Karzai, 2007: 56).

The migration of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs is a continuous phenomenon around 400 Hindus and Sikhs families had left in Afghanistan with their combined population of around 3,000 (UNHCR, 2014). A large number of Afghan Hindu and Sikh refugees want to settle in India, Delhi is the most favorite destination for the migrants. It has been estimated that in the capital of India around 18000 Afghan Hindus and Sikhs are residing. The children of these Afghan Hindu and Sikh refugees were provided with education and vocational training by Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society. This society was established in the year 1992, and is working for the Afghan refugees staying in India. At present 'Khalsa Diwan Welfare society' is taking care of the education of 750 children's in old Mahavir Nagar Delhi. The expenditure of the society in promoting the agenda of education is funded by the Afghan community residing in India and across the globe. According to UNHCR report 2010, the Afghan Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan are lingering for their rights and they also want to migrate but they don't have money. The prominent Hindu and Sikh leaders anticipated their collective population at one time was more than 1 lakh in number. In the year 1992, more than 16,000 Hindu and Sikh families migrated to other countries, leaving with only 3,000 Hindu and Sikh families in Afghanistan. The migration of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs is a continuous process from 1992 onwards; the latest detection of 35 men, women and children's in a shipping container at Tilbury docks (Essex in London) is outrageous news for the entire world. One of the major tribulations faced by Hindus and Sikhs in

Afghanistan is that whenever they were trying to avow their rights, Afghans regularly inspect them as immigrants from India (Singh, 2014).

I.2 Review of Literature:

The literature review has been thematically studied under the following three sub-heads.

I.2.1 Era of Mass Migration

The withdrawal of Soviet troops changed the political balance in Afghanistan. Najibullah dropped all non PDPA members from the council and emergency was declared. With the fall of Najibullah government the sufferings of the local masses in Afghanistan, especially of the religious minorities group increased. This discrimination started with restrictions on their religious freedom, exclusion from government jobs, kidnappings, murder, illegal seizure of their property and destruction of their religious places (Rubin, 1992:77). The Afghans who took up arms adjacent to the PDPA (People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan) and the Soviet forces, observed themselves as engaged in Jihad, but were Mujahidin fighters in the real sense. Mujahidin's basically consisted of those who moved to Pakistan and Iran and engaged in fighting against the Soviet forces. Scholars (Marsden, 1998:27) mention that the decision of USA to provide the covert and overt aid to Pakistan on a massive scale from 1986 onwards was to support these Mujahidin groups. U.S used Pakistan as a conduit state to offer resources to the Mujahidin's fighting within the Afghanistan. The 'Seven Party Mujahidin Alliance or Peshawar Seven', were Islamist in their approach and they sought to create a political movement by adopting Islam as their ideological base. The process of migration started from Afghanistan due to religious intolerance and insecurity among the minorities. Afghan Hindu and Sikh minorities faced severe setback after 1989, when the PDPA government and the Mujahidin factions started fighting among themselves, resulting in tremendous sufferings and bloodshed. Different Mujahidin warlords engaged in extending their fiefdoms at the expense of others (Dorransoro, 2005: 235).

Burhanuddin Rabbani, the ferocious warlord of Northern Alliance who had taken over Kabul from the Taliban with his superior military tactics, he ruled over the city from 1992 to 1996.

During his command around sixty thousand peoples were murdered and thousands of women's were raped. The leading authority and the commander of Northern Alliance Abdul Rashid Dostum who was in control of the city of Mazar-e-Sharif also ruled over the city from 1992 until his expulsion in 1997. Likewise the warlord Ismail Khan ruled the city of Herat, from 1992 to 1995, and warlord Yunis Khalis was back in control of Jalalabad, over which he had his full control from 1992 to 1996. The crumble of the PDPA government did not end the Afghanistan's civil war. The Mujahidin warlords fought continuously over the territories and sought to enlarge their new territories at the expense of their neighboring rivals (Marsden, 1998).

The open confrontation among the various warlords for control of power led to the weakening of the unifying forces, to name them the main actors were Hekmatyar, Mujdadi, Rabbani, Ahmed Shah Masood, Dostum and Malik. The consequence of weak leadership led to the rise of Taliban. Gradually the number of players in Afghanistan's politics stood reduced with Taliban on one side and the Shia political groups on the other what used to be called as the 'Northern Alliance' (Dixit, 2000: 464). The struggle between these forces which was likely to continue for at least another 3 to 4 years aimed at eliminating the weakest military and political groups. A mass exodus of migration started to several countries and the migration of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan to India and other parts of the world. The Taliban took advantage of this conflict and its emergence as a dominant force in Afghanistan supported by political instability and ethnic tension. The impact of these violent uncertainties was not only restricted in Afghanistan but spreads across Central Asia, Iran and India. Afghanistan soon became the base camp for international terrorism (Reuveny and Prakash, 1995).

A shift in power came in late 1994 from Mujahedeen to Taliban, making this period as one of the worst periods in the history of Afghanistan. Taliban has an anti-modern ideology based on strict interpretations of Sharia or the Islamic law. In this period public executions and punishments became a regular feature. Hindus and Sikh minorities were deprived from their basic rights and were tortured and brutalized. The religious places of these minorities were demolished by the Afghan majority groups. Earlier the war with Soviet Union had left Afghanistan with severe economic, political and ecological problems. These problems enhanced manifold bringing in hardship and insecurity for the religious minorities (Latifi, 2014).

A detailed account on the plight of Hindus and Sikhs and their migration from Afghanistan, (UNHCR, 2011) estimates around 50,000 Hindus and Sikhs that lived in Afghanistan 10 years ago, was mostly forced to leave. Only about 3,000 Hindus and Sikhs remained in the country today and half of them concentrated in the Nangarhar province. The mass exodus of Hindus and Sikhs started, after the Hindu extremist forces demolished Babri Masjid in India during December 1992. Following this there were mass level plundering and looting of Hindu and Sikh temples all over Afghanistan. Their material goods and assets were looted; they were tormented and treated brutally, particularly in Kabul, with women apparently being raped. The Hindus and Sikhs that had earlier established their business in Afghanistan were denied from having any stake in the economy. Their social status was gradually degraded and they were not allowed to be a ingredient of the military and civil services. Earlier some Hindus and Sikhs occupied high positions in banking and other sectors, but they are soon removed from high positions. It has been observed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) that 50% of Afghan Hindu and Sikh community left Afghanistan under a chaotic state of order. The degree of harassment of Hindu and Sikh children's is threatening; they were unable to attend government schools due to harassment from Muslim students and hence they demanded a separate school for their children's. On the other side the displaced Afghans in India are also lingering for citizenship rights as India is not a signatory to 1951 Convention of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, India does not have a national refugee protection framework. The asylum seekers from Afghanistan often live in poverty and face gender based violence in other parts of the world. Women's experience ranges from wages to sexual exploitation in the place of work and at home and have limited legal remedy (Dutta, 2009).

When the Taliban religious police came into power, they beat up men and women in public for not growing beard or for not wearing the Burkha. They banned women from wearing high heels which made a noise when they walked; they forbade women from using any cosmetics. Women were restricted to work in any western humanitarian agencies except for the medical sector (Rashid, 2001: 82). Education of children's was languishing in Kabul because most of the teachers were women, who were forbidden to work. Entire generations of Afghan children grew without education. Kite flying which used to be a one time favorite for Kabulis was banned, including all other sports. Thousands of families fled from Kabul to other parts of the world in order to provide their children with better education. The plight of the Afghan society and

Afghan women deteriorated day by day and infant mortality rate increased up to 163 deaths per 1,000 births (18%) the highest in the world. And the life expectancy for men and women was a mere 43-44 years, compared to 61 years for peoples in other developing countries. Only 12% of the population had access to safe drinking water and children's died of simple preventable diseases like Measles and Diarrhea because there were no health facilities available. Illiteracy was one of the major problems that appeared during the Taliban period affecting 90% of girls and 60% of boys. Within 3 months of the confinement of Kabul city the Taliban clogged 63 schools in the city distressing 104,500 girls, around 1, 50,000 boys and 11,000 teachers including male and female. They closed the Kabul University and sent back to home some 10,000 scholars of which 4,000 were women. Thus the plight of women and children's got much pathetic after the Taliban came into power in Kabul (Rashid, 2001: 92).

The physical and social structure in Afghanistan was completely uprooted by Taliban forces. Afghanistan is now facing political fragmentation. This fragmentation can be easily seen in the entire range of art, culture, literature, music and sports (AREU, 2015). The socio-cultural changes in Afghanistan came due to four main factors: the first is the development of the youth cadre of Mujahidin and Taliban, which replaced the old defunct pre-war elites. Secondly the proliferation of high technology weapons which transformed the nature of violence in Afghan society. Thirdly, the emergence of drug trafficking which badly affected the Afghan people and sustaining the religious extremists. Finally, the increased Islamization of Afghan society transported a radical change in the Afghan culture (Richardson, 2013: 45).

1.2.2 The Global War on Terror (GWOT) and its Impact

The September 9, 2011 terrorist attacks on America, led to the American campaign for combating terrorism, directly targeting Afghanistan as a breeding ground for terrorism. The United States began bombing and also started providing active support to Northern Alliance that created havoc for the local masses in Afghanistan. On the other side Osama Bin Laden started a war against America with the support of Taliban forces, America in turn intervened in Afghanistan on the pretext of eliminating the anti-American terrorists. America declared War on Terror in Afghanistan on 7, October 2001. Before the American invasion, the Taliban blew up the giant Buddha Statues in impudence of the international efforts to save them as heritage and cultural site. Following this, it ordered the religious minorities to put on tags in order to identify

themselves as non-Muslims. There was a strict code for all women's they need to veil themselves like other Afghan women (Pattanaik, 2004:122).

The drive of United States and the coalition forces against Taliban brought enormous sufferings for the local masses and the minorities faced the worst scenario. The main aim of U.S led NATO force was to destroy Bin Laden's training camp facilities. It was also to target the Taliban primarily to destroy their morale so that they get fragmented. The NATO forces started destroying the training camps of Al-Qaeda and large number of Al-Qaeda members fled to neighboring Pakistan and Iran (Karzai, 2007: 56). In this war the Taliban forces dispersed into the villages and the residential areas, where they disappeared like chameleon into the surroundings. Within a week of the launch of 'Operation Enduring Freedom' the major Afghan cities such as Mazar-e-Sharif and 'Herat' came under the control of U.S forces. Finally the U.S operation toppled the Taliban regime in 2002. Thousands of civilians were killed in this operation and many become homeless (Richardson, 2013: 45).

Under the Bonn Agreement state building process got impetus in Afghanistan with US allied forces assistance, it acknowledges the rights of the peoples of Afghanistan, their independence, territorial integrity and national sovereignty. One of the clauses of Bonn Agreement envisaged the creation of International Security Assistance Force (INSF) to train the Afghan National Forces. This agreement sought to establish an Independent judiciary, a new constitution in Afghanistan, a centralized security force, free and fair elections and the protection of rights of minorities in Afghanistan. With the continuous pushing of U.S, the Afghan Interim Authority was setup consists of 30 members, presided by a chairman; it was inaugurated on 22 December 2001. A schedule plan for holding the elections and national council i.e. Loya Jirga to be named as transitional administration, Under this plan the elections of president, drafting and approval of the constitution, elections of the members of provincial assemblies and district councils was decided. The Afghan Constitution Commission was established to draft the new constitution, after taking into the consideration of all Afghan citizens. The Loya Jirga elected Hamid Karzai as the interim head of the state in June 2002, Karzai constituted members of his own choice due to this the conflict erupted. The Vice President Haji Abdul Qadir was assassinated by gunmen in Kabul. The U.S air raid in retaliation killed 48 civilians of local area most of them were attending wedding party. In September 2002, an assassination attempt was made against Karzai

in his hometown in Kandahar, Karzai narrowly escaped the attack. Soon the clashes were reported to erupt between the Taliban fighters and the government forces in Kandahar leaving 49 people dead. All this deteriorated the security situation in Kabul and it got worse. Finally by August 2003, NATO took over the control of security in Kabul. During the same month the Taliban militants were suspected for the killings of local twenty peoples including one police chief and two aid workers. Although the Pashtun factions still welcomes the agenda of the new government and the new constitution. (UNODC, 2011)

The final constitution had been adopted by the Loya Jirga in January 2004; it provides that all the logistical support to the convening of emergency Loya Jirga and election of Hamid Karzai as the Interim President of Afghanistan. In January 2004 the Grand Assembly called Loya Jirga adopted a new constitution, which provides for strong presidency and president Karzai announced the first post Taliban elections in March 2004. The constitution approved by the Loya Jirga has full-fledged provisions of Islamic Republic with Islam as the sacred religion of Afghanistan. It put emphasis on the freedom of the religion, gender equality, allegiance to the law and respect to the beliefs and practices of Islam with Presidential form of government and so on. The constitution emphasized on the Presidential form of government which is directly elected by the Afghan peoples. The new constitution also provides for the two houses of the Afghan Parliament, the house of peoples or the Wolesi Jirga and the house of elders or the Meshrano Jirga. (Ballard, 2011)

In the post Taliban regime several political agreements signed between various Afghan factions, the international community organized the number of meetings on the Afghan reconstruction program the international community came forward and organized the number of meetings on Afghan reconstruction including the creation of steering group of donor governments especially the European Union, Saudi Arabia, Japan, and U.S. The national development program was initiated in the year 2002; it aims to focus on the three main pillars of development;

- (A) Rebuilding the physical infrastructure of Afghanistan including the Afghan Parliament,
- (B) To facilitate the creation of a private sector in Afghanistan which will prove in the long run as the engine of sustainable and comprehensive economic development,
- (C) Human development and security of the Afghan nationals.

The instability for civilians resurfaced in Afghanistan with the invasion of NATO forces because of civilian casualty in NATO attacks. The insurgent forces had unhurriedly regrouped and then started their tug of war against NATO troops, impacting the local masses tremendously. Additionally, Afghan government lost legitimacy. In the mean time the presidential elections of August 2009 were undermined by pervasive fraud and a decline in popular involvement. The Obama government came to realize about the pathetic condition of Afghan citizens and launched counter insurgency operation, which is designed to repeal the drift in NATO policy, they put insistence on to build the ANSF (Afghan National Security Force) (Dodge, 2011:69-97). Further the situation aggravated and a civilian surge was instigated that entirely paid attention on confidence building and steep improvement in government competence with reduction in corruption. All this went on to support President Hamid Karzai's objective of Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) which worked for the Afghan nationals for restoration of basic amenities of life. (Richardson, 2013: 45).

The prime objective of the US war on the Taliban i.e. GWOT (Global War on Terrorism) was the establishment of democratic model of government in Afghanistan. For the fulfillment of this objective US forces ousted the Taliban religious police and fixed Hamid Karzai as head of the state. In order to provide legitimacy to his headship Karzai organized the Loya-Jirgah (a grand assembly) in Kabul, where elected representatives from different sections of Afghan society debated on the sketch of a latest constitution, for the appeasement of minority community the Karzai government appointed two men from Hindu and Sikh communities, Ganga Ram and Awtar Singh. He also introduced the Anarkali Kour Honaryar a prominent Sikh woman to the Jirgah. Since the overthrowing of the Taliban U.S and the NATO forces were unsuccessful not only to improve the situation in country but also to protect the public and to large extent protect the civil liberties of the Hindu and Sikh minorities. In the 2010 parliamentary elections Karzai again appointed Honaryar to the Senate in Shura-e-milli the National Assembly of the Afghanistan (RAWA, 2015).

The Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan and other parts of the world welcomed the breakdown of Taliban, a new ray of hope emerged in their lives in exile. A good number of Hindu and Sikh refugees from Pakistan and India returned back to Afghanistan and took part in the reconstruction process of their mother country. Shankar Lal, 63 years old who lived in India for

two decades returned to repossess his ancestral property taken by some powerful men in the 1990's. In many cases Hindus and Sikhs who dislocated during the Taliban period returned back but were not able to regain their land and property as they encountered threats from the powerful men and sometimes government attitude was also hostile towards them. Hindus and Sikhs demanded the free electricity to the communities worshipping houses but the ministry denied their repeated requests although the government provides free electricity to the Mosques. The state treats Hindu and Sikh houses of worships as business entities subject to payment of higher fees. (Emadi, 2014)

The NATO operations in Afghanistan restructured the government and party politics. The NATO members worked under one umbrella to bring peace and democratic setup in Afghanistan. NATO is believed to be the most powerful alliance in the world and presently the best option in carrying out multilateral operation in any part of the world (Auerswald and Saideman, 2014). Bombing and air strikes in Afghanistan brought about several civilian casualties and left many homeless. The White House pointed out that the number of U.S forces in Afghanistan which reached at about 1, 00, 00 in the year 2011, was abridged to 34,000 in 2014.

The chances of Taliban resurgence were a constant threat. The basic objective of the extremist forces is to change the popular perception in order to make a distinction between Muslims and Non-Muslims which is one of the central elements in the political mobilization of masses including Hindus and Sikhs (Dorrnsoro, 2005: 315). There are significant changes taking place in the social balance of power in Afghanistan. Power seems to have been polarized among the dominant elite groups overthrowing the religious hierarchy marginalizing the various religious groups and faith based leaders (UNODC, 2011)

I.2.3 Displacement and Discrimination

The minority community in Afghanistan tolerated years of suppression and were thoroughly beleaguered. The civil war which erupted in the year 1992 in Afghanistan forced the majority of Hindu and Sikh population to immigrate and the huge number of Hindus and Sikhs migrated from Afghanistan for their safety to other countries. Under the Taliban's command, Hindus and Sikhs faced persistent bigotry and brutality. They were required to put on a distinguishing yellow strip on their arms. Even with the fall of Taliban regime and the establishment of a democratic

structure of government the members of Hindus and Sikh community continue to undergo social and political discrimination with legal inequalities and violence. They were required to hide their religious beliefs in order to avoid the religious persecution. In the post Soviet period the civil war erupted, and U.S backed Mujahidin's came into power. This brought severe difficulties for minorities and the process of migration starts. The mass exodus of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan started when Mujahidin's put restrictions on their religious freedom, excluded them from government jobs, illegal seizure of their property and destruction of their religious places. All this started the process of migration of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan to other parts of the world in India, Germany, U.K, Canada and Australia. This process of mobility from 1989 onwards brought a steep fall in their population leaving behind a mere 3,000 in Afghanistan. The 'religious intolerance' in Afghanistan persists through the various eras of Afghanistan's rulers. The ethno-sectarian quarrels between the Shias and Sunnis were a common phenomenon. The beginning of this ethno-sectarian strife takes its shape when Afghanistan gained independence in the year 1919. (UNHCR, 2010)

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2011) made an estimation of the returnees in Afghanistan in the post-Taliban period. The Afghanistan has experienced with more than three decades of conflict, political turmoil, and uncertainty with insecurity. Due to this entire repressive regime millions of Afghans fled to neighboring countries, mainly to Iran, Pakistan and India. Since 2002, around 5 million Afghan refugees returned back and UNHCR is providing active support to them for their resettlement. The returnees have not attained equivalence with that of their local counterparts in terms of education, access to basic services, livelihood, shelter and state protection. Some of the returnees are departed from their original habitation. Afghan government in order to attract the Hindu and Sikh returnees reserved a seat in the Afghan parliament. Anarkali Kour Honaryar was elected in Wolesi Jirga (lower house) from Kabul Province and senior Hindu Gangaram was appointed as a senator in Meshrano Jirga (upper house) (UNHCR, 2011).

The Hindus and Sikh refugees from Afghanistan were peeved at the lopsided citizenship norms of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs. The Indian government has not signed the 1951 convention on refugees and the 1967 protocol. Due to this the Indian government doesn't officially recognize the Afghan community as refugees. These refugees have crossed the

mandatory stay period of 14 years in India but are still living with the “Afghani Tag”. UNHCR is trying to expedite the cases of these displaced minorities. In India the naturalization process for getting Indian citizenship is a cumbersome process. Earlier the mandatory stay period was for 7 years, and then it became 10 years. Now it has again revised to 12 years or would have to marry an Indian for seven years (Ballard, 2011).

The displaced minority’s regime after the post Taliban period is proved to be a watershed for the international humanitarian regime and it affects the human rights of millions of refugees and asylum seekers across the world. The U.S strikes in Afghanistan brought out the volatile situation for minorities in Afghanistan, leaving hundreds and thousands of destitute Afghans with no option but opt for mass migration. The Afghan people have been suffering because of unending political turmoil in Afghanistan and the civil war characterized by serious human rights violation, mass murder, deteriorating economic conditions and the longest droughts in modern Afghanistan (Noor, 2006:59-78). Sometimes a reign of terror was unleashed on people belonging to certain group just because of their ethnic links. All these factors unleashed the mass migration of Afghans to escape a hostile condition and seek refuge in a foreign land. Now at present the Afghan refugee problem is the biggest cause of concern across the world and this problem needs a permanent solution. The main focus is to shed some light on the plight of the displaced refugees in post Taliban period (Noor, 2006).

Large scale refugee movements and forced migration pose a threat to human, state and societal security. The plight of Afghan refugees can be studied under the following four phases: phase one began after the Saur revolution in 1978 which brought a secular regime in Afghanistan that threatened the belief of Islamic forces. The migration in Phase two started in 1989 when the Soviet troops withdrew from Afghanistan and a war like situation began. The mass exodus in phase two started when the Mujahidin fighter’s conquest began in Kabul. The start of Phase three of migration started in 1996 when the Taliban cadre holds full control on Afghanistan. The Taliban after coming into power started installing the authoritarian regime based on elucidations of Sharia laws in their pursuit for a pure Islamic society. This constant conflict put the graph of human rights violation very high. The poppy cultivation in Afghanistan rose to alarming heights, which is financing the Taliban activities. All this led to forced migration. So, this phase is also called as phase of mass migration of minorities particularly of Hindus and Sikhs. The last phase

of migration began in post 9/11, when US invaded in Afghanistan in order to weed out terrorism from the Afghan soil and started operation enduring freedom in order to install liberal democracy model in Afghanistan (Dorrnsoro, 2005).

The international efforts have been taken to develop the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) through training, equipping and mentoring. It is for safeguarding the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan. The NATO Training Mission (NTM-A) was designed for Afghan National Security Force (ANSF's) professional training, equipping, education and for developmental activities. The training of the Afghan forces for protection of Afghanistan was supported by UK servicemen and they played a very important role in up gradation of these forces. The ANSF numbering is nearly 3, 50,000 soldiers of police and air force personnel they took responsibility of protection across Afghanistan for its 30 million citizens. The ANSF training basically constitutes the specialized skills impartation and strengthening of the training institutions structures and processes. The training is carried out by the Afghan educated officers in two regional languages Pashto and Dari, along with it the compulsory literacy training programme which will impart the professional skills in advanced level. After equipping these ANSF forces the NATO troops reduced their strength and combat operations. The sustainment of the ANSF forces in post 2014 period after the withdrawal of NATO forces is the cause of concern for Afghan Government but International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) took the responsibility in Chicago Summit of 2002, that they will work in future also for supporting and sustaining ANSF forces. (Barry, 2011)

The development agenda for Afghanistan was laid down in the Lisbon Summit of November 2010; it was the meeting of the heads of the government and head of the states of NATO member countries. It was held in Lisbon (Portugal) in November 2010; in this summit all the member countries reaffirm their obligation to the general vision and on the collective democratic standards under the United Nations charter. NATO remains with the structure for strong collective defense and the indispensable medium for protection and solidarity. In this Lisbon Summit of 2010 the NATO member countries adopted the 'Strategic Concept' which emphasized on to protect and defend the members against the full range of external and internal threats. In this address the alliance members chalked out the strategy to counter terrorism and attacks of militant organizations so that civilian causality should be avoided, the member

countries agreed to develop mutual missile defense system. The NATO member countries met with the Afghan President Hamid Karzai regarding the undertaking of group's operation in the country. They agreed to provide training and assistance to the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) and police. The NATO forces also planned to gradually withdraw from the Afghanistan with the deadline of 2014. According to the official analysis of NATO countries the year 2014 is of crucial importance as the security and economic impact of drawdown can resurface. (Nicoll, 2011)

Although there exists a well researched work on religious extremism in Afghanistan, but the impact of this religious extremism on Afghan Hindu and Sikh minorities in particular has been a slender collection from scholars such as Marsden (1998), Bose (2004), Rashid (2008), Richardson (2013), Rubin (1998), Usha (2004), Dixit (2000), Bergen (2013), Dorronsoro (2005) and others who have focused mostly on the conflict and violence in the post Soviet period and not much has been mentioned on the impact and present status of the displaced population other than (Dutta, 2009) which restricts its study on Delhi. The present study attempts to study the Afghan minorities, which seems to be the most neglected segment of research in the present times.

I.3 Definition, Rationale and Scope of the Study

The civil war in Afghanistan forced the majority of Hindu and Sikh population to immigrate and the large number of Hindus and Sikhs fled from Afghanistan for their safety to other countries. Under the Taliban's regime, Hindus and Sikhs of Afghanistan faced persistent intolerance and brutality. They were forced to wear a unique yellow color strip on their arm. Even with the fall of Taliban and the establishment of a democratic government, Hindus and Sikhs continuously facing hostility; social prejudice and legal unfairness. The mass exodus of Hindus and Sikhs started, after the Hindu extremist forces demolished Babri Masjid in India during December 1992. Following this there were large scale looting and plundering of Hindu and Sikh temples all over the Afghanistan. Their possessions were looted; they were tormented and treated mercilessly, particularly in Kabul. The Hindus and Sikhs that had earlier established factories in Afghanistan were denied having any stake in the economy with the oncoming of Taliban. Their social status was gradually degraded and they were not allowed to be the ingredient of the

military and civil services. They are forced to conceal their religious beliefs in order to avoid bullying. It is important to study the plight of Afghan minorities in Afghanistan as well as their status in India. The Afghan minorities were forced to other parts of the world. This study analyses the impact of religious extremism on Afghan minorities and their continued persistence both in Afghanistan and other parts of the world.

This study seeks to explore the prevailing discrimination in Afghan society towards these minorities who face extensive restrictions on their religious freedom from both the government and non-state actors even today. There is a dearth of studies on the problems and challenges faced by the Afghan minorities. After the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan in the year 1989 the civil war erupted, and U.S backed Mujahidin's came into power the post Soviet period in Afghanistan, which invite chaos for Hindus and Sikhs of Afghanistan, as they both found themselves in severe difficulties. The economic misery and the religious intolerance towards them were at peak. The untrimmed beards and the turban wearing Sikhs were easily identifiable and become the target of hate crimes and harassment. The business community of Afghan Hindu and Sikh traders, which stretched from Afghan cities to India, was perceived as wealthy and this perception made them a key target of kidnappings for ransom. In this way the "Religious Intolerance" towards Hindus and Sikhs started in Afghanistan in the Mujahidin's era deprived Hindus and Sikhs from the state protection and the process of migration started, subsequently with these episodes severe difficulties for minorities erupted and the process of migration began. The mass exodus of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan started when Mujahidin's put restrictions on their religious freedom, excluded them from government jobs, kidnappings, illegally seizing their property and vandalizing their religious places. All this started the process of migration of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan to other parts of the world in India, Germany, U.K, Canada and Australia. This process of mobility from 1989 brought about a steep fall in the population of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs, leaving behind a mere 3,000 in Afghanistan.

The Taliban along with other terrorist organizations persistently posing substantial insecurity to the masses and threaten the stability of Afghanistan. In this precarious situation the Afghan government works as a weak and shoddier government unable to shield its citizens from brutality of threats posed by the religious fanatics. This study delves into the situational analysis of the

displaced minorities and enquires into the new generation of Afghans in India. Are they Afghans or Indians? Further, this study also highlights different ways as to how these religious minorities could be resettled. The present study will focus on their current status as a citizen of Afghan vis-à-vis their displaced status in the host country. The scope of this study is limited to the period 1989, when Soviet troops withdrew from Afghanistan and Mujahidin's came to power up to 2014.

I.4 Research Questions

1. Who are the Afghanistan's Hindus and Sikhs?
2. Where are the Afghanistan's minorities such as Hindus and Sikhs located now?
3. Does the religious extremism and discriminatory practices towards the minorities exist today?
4. To what extent has UNHCR working towards their origin, development and commitment towards resettlement of Afghanistan's displaced population?
5. What are the possible options available in terms of laws and policy frameworks in India and Afghanistan for the displaced minorities?

I.5 Hypotheses

1. Discriminatory practices of religious intolerance results in the migration of Afghanistan's Hindus and Sikhs to India.
2. The representation of Afghanistan's minorities determined by Afghanistan government policies has positively impacted the return of Afghanistan's Hindus and Sikhs.

I.6 Research Methodology

The research methodology will involve a detailed thematically organized literature review and collection of data from the Ministry of External Affairs, UNHCR, AIHRC, AREU, Afghanistan Human Rights Commission and others. This study used both primary as well as secondary sources of information in addition to a few interviews of Afghanistan and Indian officials. This research is based on available primary resources such as government documents in the form of

various treaties, agreements, speeches, statements, reports and statistical data as well as secondary sources such as books, journals and newspapers etc. The study also analyzes various materials available like official speeches, statements and reports concerning the migration and displacement of the religious minorities from Afghanistan. It also studied the law and policies of Indian government towards the displaced minorities. Due to the paucity of literature the present research is undertaken through a sample survey with the help of questionnaire which focused on the younger generation of Afghan minorities in India along with the elderly and the women.

The data collected through sample survey is classified in a structured format and presented in the form of meaningful tables. Simple statistical techniques such as Coefficient of Correlation, Graphical and Diagrammatic Representation of data are used for studying the trends, patterns of migration and make comparative analysis. A pilot survey preceded the main survey in the areas of Afghan peoples concentration in Delhi was conducted, along with this a random survey was conducted to gain insights about Afghan refugees in Delhi in April-September 2016. The 90% concentration of the Afghan refugees is in Delhi, so therefore it is important to conduct sample survey in the maximum concentration area.

I.6.I Sample Surveyed

A sample survey is conducted on 1060 respondents, out of which after careful scrutiny 983 peoples interview were selected for the study. This sample survey is conducted on the head office of Khalsa Diwan Paigam, Afghan Sikh Gurudwaras, shops of Afghan Sikhs in Sarojini Nagar, Ghaffar Market and a complete interview was conducted with the head and religious leader of Afghan refugees. The task of collecting information from Afghan refugees is not an easy task most of them were unenthusiastic to share anything with us. A major chunk of these refugees were however contacted in the Gurudwara Sahib programme of Sunday and Wednesday in all the eight Kabuli Gurudwaras where a large chunk of population visited and the most difficult part is to reach the women for comments and obtaining their viewpoint. Most of the women's were skeptical and hesitant to speak. They have some kind of preconceived notion in their mind that, if they share anything with us relating to income and their living conditions in Delhi it will impact in their chances of getting Indian citizenship. The sample is thus gender biased where 95 percents of respondents are males.

Besides the survey on Afghan refugees, the study also undertook several visits to other offices for data collection, some of them are mentioned below:

1. Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society Office, Old Mahavir Nagar.
2. Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO), R.K Puram, New Delhi.
3. The UNHCR, Jorbagh, New Delhi.
4. Human Rights Law Network (HRNL), Jungpura, New Delhi.
5. The Afghan Desk, Ministry of External Affairs, South Block

Besides this the study also include the documentary evidences on Afghan Hindu and Sikhs “Mission Afghanistan” by Prithpal Singh a Dutch Afghan Sikh. The comprehensive study includes the interviews of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs via social networking. Those Afghan Hindus and Sikhs who are settled abroad also contacted through Emails, Whatsapp and Facebook.

I.7 Chapterization

The research consists of six chapters.

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter discusses the historical background of the region and the mass exodus patterns. It also deals with India’s cultural and religious affinities with Afghanistan. It discusses the detailed literature review, objectives, hypotheses and research questions. The research methodology will be spelt out along with the chapter scheme.

Chapter II: Historical Perspective of Minorities in Afghanistan

This chapter discusses and highlights the discriminatory policies towards the minorities. This chapter analyzes in detail about the 'religious intolerance' through the various eras of Afghanistan's rulers.

Chapter III: Spatio-Temporal Dispersal of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan

This chapter analyzed the magnitude of minorities in the post-Soviet period and the process of exodus of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan to other parts of the world.

Chapter IV: Status of Afghanistan's Hindus and Sikhs in Post 2001

This chapter attempts to study the current scenario and assess the status of minorities and their security in Afghanistan. Further this chapter also delves into the policies of Afghan government towards the religious minorities.

Chapter V: Political Processes and Policy Responses towards Afghanistan's Hindu and Sikhs

This chapter discusses the Afghan minorities in India and understands their present condition from the perspective of citizenship. This chapter also studied the present social, economic and political status of these displaced minorities. This chapter also presents the detailed policies of Afghan government towards these minorities.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

This chapter presents the major findings of the study.

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Chapter-II
Historical Perspective of
Minorities in Afghanistan

II.1 Ethnic Composition in Afghanistan

Afghanistan is one of the most impoverished and vulnerable nations of the world. It is the most devastated, war-torn, and beleaguered nation. Historically Afghanistan acts as the major civilization link between the Middle East and the Indian sub-continent. So Afghanistan is not a self-reliant ethnic unit, its national ethnicity is not uniform it is made up of many different nationalities because of the upshot of innumerable incursions and migrations. Afghanistan is a multiethnic society having the heterogeneous structure of its society. The geostrategic location of Afghanistan is as such it lies in the heart of Asia and its population is divided into a wide variety of ethno-linguistic groups.

The prominent ethnic groups of Afghanistan are as follows; Pashtun⁶ comprises (42%) of Afghans. The Tajiks are the second largest ethnic group with 27% of the population, followed by Hazaras (9%), Uzbeks (9%), Aimaq (4%), Turkmen (3%), Baloch (2%) and other groups like Pashai, Nuristani, Gujjar, Arab, Brahui and Pamiri comprised 4% of Afghan population (Dupree, 2010:55). The Pashtuns are the leading ethnic group in Afghanistan even today they are holding the largest enduring tribal society in the world. The Pashtuns are mostly residing in South-West, North-West and Eastern part of Afghanistan. Despite the dominance of Pashtun tribes there are numerous other significant minorities, these are the non-tribal minorities they speak Ural-Altaic language and having a combination of western and Central Asian physical traits. These include the Farsi speaking 'Tajik' group which constitutes the second largest ethnic population of Afghanistan. The National anthem of Afghanistan mentioned about all these 14 Ethnic groups. The Hindu and Sikh population is also residing in Afghanistan; they are mainly merchants in the cities and towns, writing in the Arabic script of Lahnda (western Punjabi) dialects. The largest number of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs are settled in Kandahar, Kabul and Jalalabad speaking Pashto, Dari, Hindi and Punjabi. The total population of this Hindu and Sikh ethnic minority is around 3,000 members now, which constitutes the combination of around 800 families. (Dupree, 2010:55)

⁶ Pashtun (also spelled Pushtun, Pakhtun, Pashtoon, Pathan) are a people who live in southeastern Afghanistan and the northwestern province of Pakistan. They are one of the largest ethnic groups in Afghanistan. The Pashtun peoples are generally classified as eastern Iranian who use Pashto language and follow Pashtunwali. In the Afghanistan politics this group plays a dominant role from the beginning and the estimate number of Pashtun tribes and clans range from about 350-400.

Ethnic Composition of Afghanistan

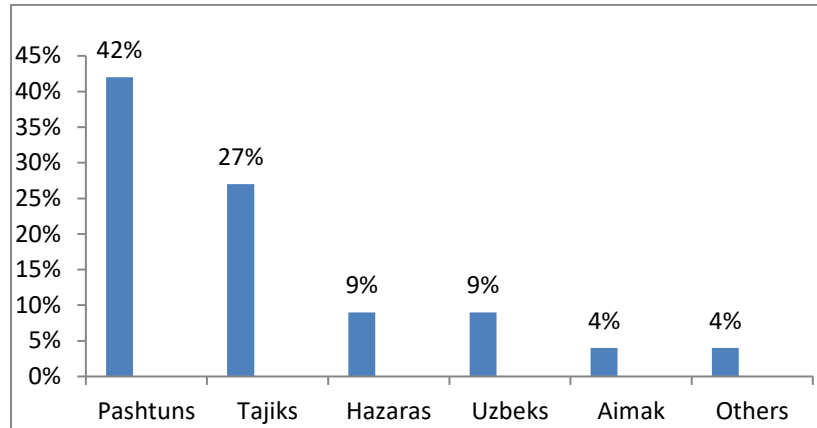


Figure No II.1

The Sikh community gained its roots in Afghanistan with the visit of Guru Nanak Dev the founder of Sikh religion, who visited Afghanistan in 1521 and preached his teachings in several parts of Afghanistan. Later on, under the leadership of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Sikhs expanded their influence up to Afghanistan. General Hari Singh Nalwa⁷ the able commander of Maharaja Ranjit Singh captured Multan, Peshawar, Qandhar and extend the territories of India up to Afghanistan. This Sikh rule came to an end after the British annexation of Punjab in India. The British invasion to Afghanistan makes the Afghanistan rulers loyal to the British. The trade between the British India and the Afghanistan compelled the traders and merchants to travel freely across the region. Hindus and Sikhs as a traders travel across Hindu Kush ranges and travel across Samarqand and Bukhara of Central Asia. These Hindu and Sikh traders of Afghanistan have familiarity with the Bazaars in the region and have good relations with the Muslim traders of the region. In this way the Hindu and Sikh communities of Afghanistan engaged in trade and they hold professions of currency exchange, farming, and small-scale businesses like stores of selling fabric, jewelry, medicines, and stables etc. The individuals with administrative skills worked as clerks and bookkeepers in government offices (Ballard, 2011:6).

Afghanistan is the microcosm of diverse tribes and ethnic groups, which makes this society as the society of tribal leaders and theologians, having the structure of traditional authority.

⁷ Hari Sikh Nalwa was Commander-in-chief of the Khalsa, the army of the Sikh empire. Hari Singh Nalwa was responsible for expanding the frontiers of Sikh empire to beyond the Indus river right up to the mouth of Khyber Pass. At the time of his death, the western boundary of the empire was Jamrud.

Throughout the history of Afghanistan, the religious fundamentalism shown its political manifestations, whenever attempts of modernization had taken place the religious Ulemmas' always react with the reforms, which were against the fundamentals of Islam. In the beginning of the 19th century Afghanistan's internal affairs became vividly provoked by the mounting interference of the two imperialist powers- the Czarist Russian Empire and the British Empire. The British wants to expand and consolidate their grand empire from the Indian continent to the Hindu Kush barrier of Afghanistan as a natural fence to prevent assault by contender Russian imperialists. On the other side the Czarist Russians were also busy in expanding their frontiers; they were busy in crushing up of several previously autonomous sultanates of the Central Asia. These two imperialist powers basically busy in a competition for a buffer zone Afghanistan, and their gruesome interference into the affairs of the autonomous states in the region became known as "the Great Game"⁸. (Rubin, 2002:55)

II.2 Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan from (1900-1933)

The present section deals with the various regimes in Afghanistan under the king Habibullah regime (1901-1919), King Amanullah regime (1919-1929), and King Nadir Shah regime (1929-1933). It dealt with the policies of various kings in different epochs towards the Hindu and Sikh minorities of Afghanistan. The seeds of discriminatory policies towards the Hindus and Sikhs of Afghanistan started in the period of King Habibullah. The policies of King Amanullah followed a rational reformist and anti-imperialist policy by implementing liberal, economic and political setup. The King Nadir Shah established a repressive regime in Afghanistan after seizing power in a coup in the year 1929.

II.2.1 Regime of King Habibullah (1901-1919)

The discriminatory policies towards the Hindus and Sikhs were put into practice by the king Habibullah, who ruled over Afghanistan from 1901-1919. He ordered the Hindus and Sikhs to wear yellow color badges in order to separate them from the mainstream Muslim population. The Hindu and Sikhs were also subjected to pay poll tax, and restrictions imposed on their religious observance of festivals and rituals, they need to perform the religious rituals in their residential

⁸ Strategic rivalry between the British and the Russians for supremacy over Central Asian region is named as the Great Game by Arthur Conolly. In the Second World War period the continued extension of boundaries between the Great Powers and regional powers for getting mileage in Central Asian Republics is known as Great Game.

compounds only. In order to promote the agenda of conversion he offered small amount of money and clothing to those Hindus and Sikhs, who accept Islam. The Hindus and Sikhs were not allowed to hold high dignitary posts. These Hindus and Sikhs received a new lease of life when Habibullah's successor Amanullah came to power and he revised his father's policies. He founded a new constitution that treated peoples of all faith equal before law and abolished poll tax on non-Muslim citizens. (Emadi, 2014)

During this time the British after consolidation of their rule in India persistently strove to make Afghanistan its protectorate. But the Afghan monarchy increasingly leaned towards Russia. The October Revolution of 1917⁹ brought a new dimension in Afghanistan-Russian relations. The Soviet Socialist Republic extended a hand of friendship and brotherhood to the Afghan peoples. After the assassination of King Habibullah Khan, in Jalalabad on 20 February 1919, his son Amanullah Khan became the king of Afghanistan. This starts the beginning of modern age and reforms in Afghanistan. King Amanullah immediately after holding power declared Afghanistan a Sovereign and independent nation. The Soviet's recognized the independence of Afghanistan (Usha, 2004:46).

II.2.2 Regime of King Amanullah (1919-29)

King Amanullah Khan, after assuming power repudiated the British control over Afghanistan and looked towards Soviet power in order to maintain the country's independence. In all these circumstances British government declared war on Afghanistan in May 16, 1919 and the Afghan army was able to defeat the British army with Soviet assistance. In Afghanistan the major concern of Russia was to maintain independence and territorial integrity with a large extent to put a vigil on the British advances to South and Central Asia for protecting their borders. The direct involvement of Russia in Afghanistan started with the signing of 1921 "Treaty of friendship". This treaty provided for the beginning of Soviet economic aid and assistance to Afghanistan. The Soviet Union provided support to develop the Royal Afghan Air Force. They

⁹ The October Revolution of 1917 was the uprising of Bolshevik Revolution and the seizure of state power instrumental in the larger Russian revolution. It took place with an armed insurrection in Petrograd. The October Revolution in Petrograd overthrew the Provisional government and gave the power to local Soviets. The great October revolution also commonly referred as Bolshevik Coup was a revolution led by the Bolsheviks and Vladimir Lenin, it took place with the armed insurrection which overthrew the Tzarist autocracy and established the provincial government. In this new left Socialist revolutionary state the establishment of the Soviet republic is the world's first Soviet proclaimed Socialist state.

presented Amanullah a gift of 13 airplanes with pilots, mechanics, telegraph operators and transportation specialists. Soviet Union also provided aid to king Amanullah with half a million dollars in a year from 1921- 1924. (Usha, 2004:55)

King Amanullah followed a rational reformist and anti-imperialist policy by implementing liberal, economic and political reforms. He created new sophisticated schools where both boys and girls can study. In these schools French, English and German were the major languages of education. He also overturned the centuries old strict dress code for women. His social reforms included a new dress code which allowed women in Kabul to go unveiled and encouraged officials to wear western dress. He created the new legal reforms like the confiscation of the properties of rich mullahs in order to curb their stronghold and create separate law courts etc. He advanced a modernist constitution that incorporated equal rights and individual freedom to all the Afghans. The Hindus and Sikhs were granted full citizenship status and were no longer required to wear special badges. Their children's were admitted to civil and military schools after completion of their graduation from these military schools they were commissioned as officers in armed forces. They can hold the high posts in civil and military affairs on the basis of merit. Amanullah also urged the citizens to refrain from compelling the Hindus and Sikhs to embrace Islam. (Emadi, 2010:21)

The reforms of Amanullah brought a setback to the power of clergy and these reforms bring resentment among the traditional elements of Afghan society. A tribal revolt called 'Khost Rebellion'¹⁰ broke out in 1924 against the Amanullah but it was suppressed. In this revolt Hindus and Sikhs rallied in the support of Amanullah. A graduate of the military school, Mihir Chand Dahoon participated in the suppression of revolt and other Hindu residents of Khost declared their readiness to provide food for the government soldiers. Amanullah suppressed the revolt and in the year 1925, he awarded Mir Chand Dahoon a medal of admiration in appreciation of his role in shielding country. The inclusive and the secular policy of Amanullah enabled Hindus and Sikhs to play an active role in the politics of Afghanistan. The Hindus and Sikhs elected representatives were the members of the provincial council of Afghanistan from Jalalabad,

¹⁰ The Khost Rebellion of 1924 was against the westernizing reforms of King Amanullah, it was an uprising by the Mangal Pashtun tribe; later on this tribe was joined by the Sulaiman Khel and Ali Khel tribes. This revolt is against the King Amanullah because he transformed the social and educational structure of Afghanistan; he discouraged the veiling and seclusion of women. He even introduced the solar calendar. King Amanullah encouraged the secular education where girls can also participate.

Kabul, Ghazni and Qandahar. “Niranjan Das a Hindu from Kabul awarded with the title of civil brigadier and appointed as minister of finance. He was the member of the delegation which signed the Rawalpindi peace treaty with British government on 8 August 1919. Niranjan Das was also appointed as the member of Afghanistan’s delegation to the Mussoorie Conference (17-18 July 1920) of India for restoring relations between Afghanistan and Britain” (Emadi, 2014).

Amanullah convened a grand assembly Loya Jirgah¹¹; the head of tribal leaders attended it from 29 August to 2 September 1928 in Kabul. This grand assembly gathered in order to ratify the modernization policies of Amanullah. In this assembly the delegates from the Hindu and the Sikh communities also invited and they attend it, that included Niranjan Das, Kishan Singh, Lachman Das, Shankar Das and Mangal Singh (a spiritual figure). In this assembly, when some radical elements opposed Hindus and Sikhs then Amanullah himself declared that Hindus and Sikhs are compatriots and reliable citizens who like Muslims, protected the country against the British antagonism towards Afghanistan. (Dass, 2007)

King Amanullah was forced to relinquish his throne in January 1929 and Habibullah Kalakani known by a derogatory name Bacha-e-saqaw, water carrier son, detained power in Kabul. A civil war broke out in the country and Hindus and Sikhs feared for their safety and security. On 7 July 1929 the Hindus and Sikhs of Afghanistan drafted a representation with a memorandum and sent it to Habibullah Kalakani for their representation and protection of their religious freedom. Kalakani in reply, assured the Hindus and Sikhs that their religious freedom will not be harmed in Afghanistan. Kalakani appreciated the traditional bonds of friendship between the Hindu and Sikh neighbors to the extent that when Mangal Singh (a prominent Sikh leader) married, Habibullah sent imperial music band to perform in his wedding party at his residence in Karte Parwan. (Dass, 2007)

II.2.3 Regime of King Nadir Shah (1929-1933)

Mohammud Nadir Shah (1929-33) seized power in the year 1929, in a coup and brought a repressive regime in Afghanistan again, the Hindus and Sikhs experienced a great setback in his

¹¹ Loya Jirga is a special type of assembly that is mainly organized for choosing a new head of state. In Afghanistan , Loya Jirgas have been reportedly organized since the early 18th century when the Hotaki and Durrani dynasties rose to power. In the beginning only Pashtuns were allowed to participate in Jirgas, later on ethnic groups like Tajiks and Hazaras were also allowed to participate.

rule from 1929-33. He was Afghanistan's envoy to France from 1924-26 and remained there after he reconciled from his post. He came back to Afghanistan in order to refurbish the Amanullah to power. In his mission he was successful to restore Amanullah to power; he captured and executed Habibullah and all his associates. In the mean time Nadir Shah asserted himself as ruler in October 1929. Most of the Hindus and Sikhs who were loyal to Amanullah became subject to prosecution and the repressive state apparatus brought disaster for the prominent Sikh figures like Niranjan Das, his property was seized as a combined and open punishment to his family. The government also launched a resentment campaign against the patriotic Sikh businessman, Moti Singh he was an adherent of the modern education and he donated his property for use of it as a school in Kabul, where Hindus and Sikhs attend classes. Nadir Shah transformed it into a state prison. Nadir Shah retaliated against another prominent Sikhs like Mitar Singh founder and owner of a coffee shop in Bagh-e-Omuni in Kabul he closed down the place, in order to deprive the pro-Amanullah liberals and radicals, who used it as a venue for political discussions, considering such activities as a threat to the stability of his rule. Nadir Shah holds power for a brief period of 4 years and he collected support of tribal and clergy. In September 1930 a council of tribal and religious leaders 'Loya Jirgah' was convened by Nadir Shah, which accorded him the title of the king and decreed that the Hanafi Sharia school¹² of Islam should be the existing code of Islam. In all this the constitution of 1931 created after this assembly. It was entirely in confusion with religious and secular legal systems to operate in parallel. In the November of 1933 Nadir Shah was assassinated and his 19 years old son Zahir Shah assumed the throne. (Emadi, 2014:316)

II.3 Rule of Zahir Shah (1933-1973)

Zahir Shah was an ethnic Pashtun and the member of Barakzai royal family and commander in chief of Afghan army under king Amanullah Khan. Zahir shah was educated in Kabul and France where his father was sent to diplomatic mission. When he returned to Afghanistan he helped his father and uncle to restore law and order situation in country by reasserting government. Zahir shah was fluent in French, Pashto and Persian. During the first thirty years of

¹² Hanafi School is the Sunni Islami School of Jurisprudence, it is one among the four religious schools of Sunni Islamic jurisprudence having the largest number of followers predominantly in the countries that once the part of historic Mughal empire and Ottoman empire. It is named after the schol Abu Hanifa whose legal views were preserved primarily by his two most important disciples Muhammad al-Shaybani and Abu Yusuf. They tried to adopt Qiyas as a method to derive Islamic law when the Quran and Hadith are silent or ambiguous in their guidance.

his rule he did not effectively rule because of ceding power to his paternal uncles Shah Mahmud Khan and Mohammad Hashim Khan. During the period of Second World War Afghanistan made strong relations with Germany, Italy and Japan. In the immediate post war period negotiations for the partition of India took place, Pakistan was born and the Afghanistan government favored the freedom of North West Frontier Province which held semi independent status to the British India since 1901. In the year 1947, riots broke out in the Potohar region in which the Local Khattris were the prime target and in this process the polarization between Punjabi Sikhs and Hindus on the one hand and Punjabi Muslims on the other hand occurred. The partition of the Potohar province brought setback to Hindus and Sikhs of the region and mutual ethnic cleansing occurred, all the Sikh and Hindu residents of the Potohar, Baluchistan, Sind and West Punjab abandoned their homelands and fled to the west of India in order to save their lives and landed in Afghanistan. In the NWFP (North West Frontier Province) the local Khattris stayed and developed good relations with their Pathan neighbors. Along with it the growing Islamic Pakistan Nationalism began to undermine their hope to back their abandoned homeland and they started to leave a new lease of life in Afghanistan under the Liberal and Secular policies of Zahir Shah. (Ballard, 2011)

During the time of Zahir Shah Afghanistan made a substantial economic progress. Zahir Shah while taking advantage of both Russian and American aid builds Afghan infrastructure, industry and endeavored to modernize Afghanistan. The Hindus and Sikhs were well educated, gained professional qualifications and contributed in the economic development of the country. They gained high positions in the administration due to their capabilities. This boosted the trading activities of the business class among the Hindus and Sikhs and both these communities flourished. The enrolment of Hindus and Sikhs in the professional courses increased. In this way the Soviet backed regimes were secular in character and hence didn't encouraged hostility and discrimination towards the Non-Muslim minorities. (Usha, 2004:72)

During one of the Official tours of Zahir Shah in abroad, his cousin Muhammad Daud staged a coup and established a republican government. Daoud Khan served as the Prime minister from 1953-1963 in this period he restarted the process of reforms, he and the senior members of the government appeared on a public platform with their wives and daughters unveiled. In opposed to this radical modernization, the protest by the religious Mullah's is inevitable which has been

crushed by Zahir Shah's army with Soviet assistance. In the year 1964 he promulgated a new constitution which excluded members of the royal family from certain government positions provided for a bicameral parliament, free elections, free press and the formation of political parties. This gave opportunity for the emergence of the Communist Party in Afghanistan in 1965 which was pro- Moscow and Daoud seized power with the help of underground party named as PDPA (Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan). In the year 1973, while Zahir Shah was in Italy for his eye surgery, his cousin and former Prime Minister Daoud staged a coup and established a republican form of government (Nair, 1988:7)

In post Zahir Shah's period the PDPA's Parcham faction gained the support of affluent families of Hindus and Sikhs and they became the members of this party. Mihir Chand Warma, an Afghan Hindu joined the PDPA during its formation in the year 1965. In the parliamentary elections of 1965 the PDPA candidates Babrak Karmal, Noor Ahmed and Anahita Ratebzd visited the homes of Sikhs and Hindu families, and assured them to defend their rights. After they won the seats in the House of Representatives their promises melted away. In the 1969 parliamentary elections Hindus and Sikhs nominated candidates from their own community Dahoon Chand and Fani Singh contested election and Fani Singh succeeded to win a seat in parliament. In the year 1973, when monarchy was overthrown in a coup and former minister Daoud came to power he declared Afghanistan a republic and convened a Loya Jirgah on 30 January 1977. In order to ratify the draft of new constitution he invited the handpicked delegates of Hindu and Sikh communities including Tara Singh Jawahari from Nangarhar and Shiyu Saran Sagar from Kabul, these delegates approve the new draft of new Afghan constitution and certified the Daoud's leadership. (Emadi, 2014:312)

II.4 The Saur Revolution and its Impact on Minorities

The Saur Revolution took place in the month of April 1978 due to mounting tensions and oppositions from communists and royalists. This revolution was led by the PDPA (Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan) against the rule of self declared Afghan president Mohammed Daoud Khan because of his independent policies on the one hand and the prevailing underdevelopment of the country on the other hand. Daoud's policy of neutrality and his disregard of Soviet instructions brought disaster for him. His revengeful attitude towards the PDPA compelled the Soviet Union to make hold over Afghanistan. The spark for revolution

gathered storm when Daoud ordered the arrest of PDPA leaders. It provoked a swift reaction with PDPA members on 27th April 1978 and with this the rule of Daoud came to an end. (Marsden, 1998:22)

In Afghanistan the Soviets were interested to form a Pro-Soviet government in order to consolidate it for Soviet advantage. The ruling PDPA has two main factions Parcham and Khalqi the Soviets and PDPA's Khalq faction started preparations for a coup to oust Daoud. This began with a series of political assassinations that plagued Kabul from 1977. When Mir Akbar Khyber, a PDPA ideologue was murdered on 17 April 1978, it sparked resentment among the PDPA leaders. They staged a protest demonstration against Daoud, this geared up Daoud's view of increasing alarm of resistance in Afghanistan's politics. In order to come out of this precarious situation Daoud ordered his security forces to make a midnight arrest of PDPA central committee members namely; Amin, Babrak Karmal, Taraki, Akbar Shahwali, Abdul Hakim Sharayee, Dastgir Panjsheri, and Jauzjani. After this order a military coup by the PDPA accomplices in the armed forces. Within a short period the PDPA revolutionaries arrived at the presidential palace and called upon the occupants to surrender. A severe fight took place between the PDPA and the Daoud's forces. In this fighting, Daoud and his family members were eliminated and PDPA seized power. After the revolution a new government under the firm guidance of Noor Muhammad Taraqi of Khalq faction came into power. It was in the month of September 1979, Taraqi and Amin hatched a conspiracy and imprisoned several cabinet members of PDPA including the military leaders of the Saur Revolution. In this plot Taraqi became a victim of the revolution and Amin overthrew and executed him. (Dixit, 2000:98)

II.5 Minorities during Soviet Intrusion

In PDPA regime few Hindus and Sikhs of Afghanistan who were loyal to PDPA joined PDPA party and the Individuals loyal to the party includes prominent figures like Mihir Chand Warma, he was imprisoned during the rule of Khalq faction of PDPA. But in the mean time when Soviet forces occupied the country he was released and in later period he was appointed in various highest regimes of the administration. Another Hindu Prakash Chand was appointed to the ministry of foreign affairs. The PDPA's repressive policies of socio-economic development forced many wealthy and aristocratic families to leave the country including number of prominent Hindu and Sikh families. With the communist intervention and takeover of

Afghanistan the bombardments, military assaults, imprisonments and executions of the masses was a common phenomenon. In the month of April a deliberate attempt by the Soviet forces to massacre the entire male population of the 'Kerala village' in the peripheral of 'Asadabad' in Afghanistan. For crushing the resistance forces steps were taken by government but the resistance forces increased their attacks on government forces and the government was unable to defeat and suppress these resistance forces because of the increased strength and support of US forces. There are complexities and contradictions on the assumption that Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan is on the pretext of the 1978 friendship treaty, but Soviet attempt to invade in Afghanistan is motivated by their own fear and insecurity. The Soviet policy of military intervention is also seen as a fear of Chinese and US dominance in Afghanistan which creates threat to the Soviet Central Asian republics. (Usha, 2004:133)

In the 1970's and 80's one of the most important aim of Soviet policy in Asia was the containment of Chinese power and counterbalancing the American influence. In order to fulfill this aim Brezhnev pursued a policy of creating a stable communist regime in Afghanistan, dependent on Soviet Union. In this way the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan raised doubts about their expansionist policies. But it seems that they had intervened in Afghanistan primarily to support the government of their own choice and to help the ruling elite of pro-Soviet orientations. On the other side the biggest problem was the increasing American presence in the Persian Gulf region, after the fall of Shah of Iran, the increased American presence worried the Soviets and they intervened to prevent a further US advancement towards Afghanistan. Soviet policy towards Afghanistan is motivated by the desire to control the resources of Afghanistan and Soviets spent great amount of aid for resource exploration and development. All this encouraged the exploration of resources in Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics, which was the source of development for the Soviet Central Asian Republics. Therefore, it was natural for the Soviet Union to prevent Afghanistan going into the hands of Western forces at any cost. (Marsden, 1998:26)

The Soviet Afghan War lasted for over nine years from December 1979 to February 1989. When Amin became president in the year 1979, his repressive policies made hundreds and thousands of people to flee from the country as refugees in Iran, Pakistan and the neighboring countries. The resistance to the Soviet back government had started much earlier during the time of Daoud,

when he received great help from Soviet Union which developed a long term dependency. When the communists assumed power in April 1978 (Saur Revolution), the resistance by the local groups assumed much significance and a local conflict turned into a war of national liberation. The important resistance groups were “Pak-Seven” under Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and the “Tehran Eight” under the Karim Khalili. The Pakistan based resistance parties got the support from USA, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. (Usha, 2003:135)

Among the Pakistan based fundamentalist parties Hekmatyar’s party stood for immediate armed revolt. The Iran based hidden groups also came out to help the resistance forces along with China and Egypt. The resistance by the peoples became more and more strengthened, now the peoples became sympathize with resistance groups and revolts increased drastically among the Soviet troops and resistance groups. When Soviet Union invaded and occupied the country, Najibullah tried to sympathize and appealed to the citizens to support the regime in its battle against U.S backed war factions. In order to gain support of Hindus and Sikhs he appointed Ganga Ram and Joginder Singh to the parliament but it is ineffective for the minority community because they both were not getting state funds and allocation for the respective development of their communities and areas like their predecessors. (Emadi, 2014:309)

After the Soviet intervention, Soviet Union wants to suppress the activities of the counter revolutionaries in Afghanistan. The Soviet manpower which was 85,000 in 1979 was increased by almost 115,000 in 1984 and they started their operations against the American backed Mujahidin forces with substantial combined air and ground operations. Several of such operations took place in 1984 and resulted in heavy loss of civilian’s life and destruction of property. The Soviet forces tried to weed out this insurgency by various tactics, but the guerrillas generally escaped from their attacks. The Soviet Union then adopted a radical measure to completely shun the Mujahidin attackers by depopulating and bombing the local areas. These tactics sparked the massive casualties of civilian population. In this atmosphere the Hindu and Sikh minorities felt insecure in Afghanistan, the process of migration to safer places and in other parts of the world started. It is estimated by UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) that around 2.8 million Afghans had sought asylum in Pakistan and other 1.5 million fled to Iran. The Mujahidin’s were able to counterbalance the Soviet air power with shoulder based anticraft missiles supplied by the United States. In the year 1983, at the international

Afghanistan hearing in Oslo, Mohammed Ayub Khan Assil revealed that according to the estimates, since the Communist takeover around 12,000 people had been tortured to death and around 10,000 were missing and several thousand were executed without trial. (Rubin, 1998:97)

The Mujahidin's resistance groups received financial aid and arms from Pakistan and U.S.A and from several other Muslim countries. The fighting between resistance forces and government intensified day-by-day and civilian casualties increased drastically from 8,50,000 to 1.5 million civilians were killed; U.S continued supply of arms to the resistance forces is the biggest cause of concern. The CIA¹³ kept on increasing and updating the Mujahidin's supply of weaponry by contributing billions of dollars to them. In March 1985, when Gorbachev assumed power in the Soviet Union, his government examines the expensive Soviet foreign policy in Afghanistan. It was very necessary for Gorbachev to improve its relations with the United States for this action from 1987 onwards Soviet Union demonstrated an increased commitment to the UN sponsored peace negotiations that had been going on between Pakistan, Afghanistan and USA, but excluding the Mujahidin forces. The signing of "Geneva Accord" in April 1988 is the biggest landmark in the Soviet history, which envisaged the Soviet withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan by February 1989. Under this Geneva Accord Pakistan and Afghanistan signed three principal agreements on mutual relations;

1. Non-interference and non-intervention in the domestic affairs of each other.
2. Voluntary return of Afghan refugees and agreement for their settlement.
3. A document of the interrelationship of the political settlement and an agreement establishing a verification mechanism.

This formal agreement was signed in Geneva and Soviet Union Agreed to the complete withdrawal of its troops within nine months starting from 15 may 1988. In the first three months after agreement, it was reported that some 50,183 soldiers had withdrawn and other 50,100 withdraw from August 1988 and February 1989. (Dixit, 2000:59)

¹³ CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) is an intelligence service of United States it is tasked with gathering, processing and analyzing the national security information from around the world. The CIA has no any law enforcement function; it is mainly focused on overseas intelligence gathering. The CIA has increasingly expanded its role including the covert military operations for the counter terrorism and cyber security concerns.

II.6 Minorities during Najibullah Regime (1989-94)

The withdrawal of Soviet troops changed the political balance in Afghanistan. Najibullah became autocratic and dropped all the non-PDPA members from the council of ministries an emergency was declared, a new supreme council for the defense of homeland was created. The rebels also continued their resistance for an Islamic state and coup attempts to topple Najibullah government were tried. In this chaos, Hindus and Sikhs of Afghanistan found themselves in the severe difficulties in socio-economic and political spheres of Afghanistan and migration became a last resort for them. Soviets withdraw from Afghanistan by leaving the PDPA government to defend for it. The CIA soon lost interest in its Afghan mission. On the other side the Mujahidin factions began fighting, as much with themselves as with the PDPA forces, resulting in increased suffering and bloodshed. In the year 1992, different Mujahidin warlords occupied different regions of the country; Burhanuddin Rabbani, the Northern Alliance warlord captured Kabul and ruled over the city from 1992-1996. During his reign over 60,000 people were murdered. The Northern Alliance warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum, a militia leader from the Uzbek area of Northern Afghanistan, Dostum forces are highly distinctive with their long hair and calf length trousers, had a reputation of ferocity controlled the city of Mazar-e-Sharif and ruled over it from 1992 until his ouster in 1997. The collapse of the PDPA government did not mark to an end of Afghanistan's civil war. (Crews & Tarzi, 2008)

II.7 Migration of Minorities during the Mujahidin Period

The Mujahidin warlord's continuously bring death and destruction upon the country as they fought over the spoils, and sought to enlarge their new fiefdoms at the expense of their neighboring rivals. Factionalism had resurfaced again and became one of the important challenges faced by the Najibullah government; the fall of Najibullah regime in April 1992 put an end to the communist era in Afghanistan. The takeover by Northern Alliance ends the Pashtun dominance more than half of the territory fall into the hands of Northern Alliance. In this atmosphere the relative peace and stability shunned and Islamic warriors engaged in the brutal battle to control the different regions, this embarked the Islamization of an already Islamic society based on their narrow understanding of Islam. In this war no any rules of engagement as men and women of rival groups being targeted with civilian hostages, raping, molestation and mutilation of their bodies became a common phenomenon. Hindus and Sikhs initially believe

that the rival groups and hostile forces will not bring problems for them, as they were not the part of any warring faction and did not want to leave the country. They paid a heavy price for this misconception because of their predominantly flourishing trade and business professions, Hindus and Sikhs became kidnapped for ransom.

Destruction of Gurudwara Mansa sahib in Shorbazar



(Source: <https://www.facebook.com/TheDutchSikh/>)

Picture No II.1

They were targeted in an organized way their belongings were looted and molestation of their wives and daughters. Even forcing them to embrace their faith and marry their daughters with them. All this political repression and religious bigotry convinced them to flee from the country and the mass migration of Hindus and Sikhs to other parts of the world, their population is declining drastically (Foschini, 2013). The religious places of Hindus and Sikhs like Mandirs and Gurudwaras were destroyed in this civil war. In some places religious centers were seized by

powerful armed men for combating the rival groups. Two houses of worship in Kabul including the Asamai Mandris at the foothills of Asamai Mountains and the Karte-e-Parwan Gurudwara captured by the Mujahidin forces (RAWA, 2015). In the above mentioned picture (II.1) the missile landed on the kitchen rooftop of Gurudwara Mansa Singh, Shorbazar in Kabul Afghanistan.

Hindus and Sikhs abandoned their homes in war torn areas and seek shelter in the Gurudwaras and Mandirs because there were continued raids on private houses by criminals and Mujahidin fighters. The Islamic fundamentalists became so rigid on the marginalized communities after a Hindu mob destroyed Babri Mosque in Ayodhya, India in December 1992. In relation to what happened in India, they brutalized Hindu and Sikh nationals in Afghanistan by destroying their temples and looting their property. In Kabul the Shia Muslim militant groups were responsible for brutalizing and prosecuting Hindus and Sikhs which were under the control of the Hizb-e Wahadat (Islamic unity party of Afghanistan). In May 1992, Hizb-e Wahadat group militants murdered Mohan Lal Bajaj, his wife, son and seized their house in Taimani area of Kabul. The armed militants in Karta-e Parwan area entered into the Hindu and Sikh residences, after molesting their family they forcibly circumcised the male members of the family. This armed conflict instigated the mass migration of Hindu and Sikhs from Kabul to other parts of the world (Emadi, 2013).

(Melwani, 1994) explains about the Hindu and Sikhs migration from Kabul in these words, “With the capital of Kabul totally swallowed in the fighting, Hindus can no longer get visas from the consulate there or fly to Delhi. The alternate route is overland through Pakistan, but Pakistan will not issue transit visas unless they already have visas to India. Since there are no distinguishing marks to separate them from other Afghans, who do not require visas, Hindus do slip into Pakistan without visas. However, the situation is encumbered with danger if their Hindu identity is discovered. Sikhs, because of their turbans and beards, have an even harder time entering Pakistan without a visa” (Melwani, 1994).

II.8 Mass Exodus of Minorities during the Taliban Period

The Taliban was born in the Islamic schools that sprung up in the Afghan refugee camps inside Pakistan. Taliban means “students” or “Talibs” drawn from the Islamic school of Madrassas. The

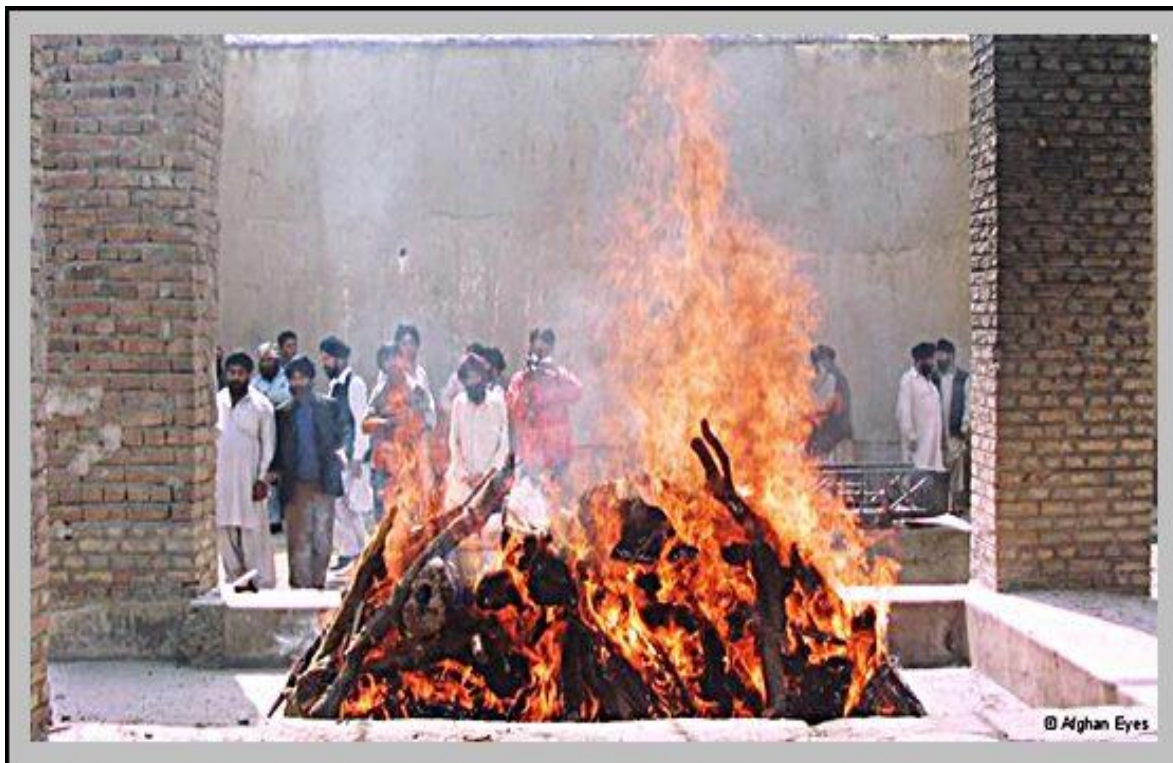
refugee camps inside Pakistan are the breeding grounds of Taliban. Pakistani intelligence agencies sustained their curiosity to end the civil war that endangered the stability of their own country. The Pakistani intelligence agency assisted in the creation of this radical Islamic fundamentalist movement, the Taliban. The ideological underpinnings of Islam on the basis of Jihad have proved to be a fertile ground for these Madrassa students to become Taliban. Most of these are orphanages studied in these refugee camps, with funding from the Gulf States, Saudi Arabia and the Mujahidin parties. They are produced in a manner to become strong adherents of Islam and are ready to pick arms in the name of Jihad. (Rashid, 2002:11)

The Taliban leadership is dominated by young religious students, primarily Pashtuns provoked by the enthusiasm of religion and the conviction that they will bring firmness back to their conflict ridden land. This movement is Pashtun dominated, as the overwhelming majority of its members were Pashtuns and it is an attempt to reassert the Pashtun dominance in Afghanistan that had existed before the Soviet Afghan war. The absolute leader of the Taliban was Mullah Muhammad Omar, a Pashtun from South-Western Afghanistan and was previously a member of Mujahidin party Hisb-e-Islami headed by Younis Khalis. Mullah Omar is a supreme religious leader and presides over the Kandahar Shura. This Kandahar Shura has authority over the other Shuras of Taliban-controlled areas. In the year 1996, the Taliban religious police captured the capital city of Kabul and compelled the lasting warlords to move towards small pockets in the far north of Afghanistan and here these warlords formed a self-protective alliance named as “Northern Alliance”. In the mean time the Taliban forces moved to Kandahar and took the city with almost no resistance. This remarkable success of Taliban brings popularity of Taliban forces in Afghanistan and other parts of the world. The Taliban openly announced that it was their task to free Afghanistan from the existing corrupt leadership. (William, 2014)

When the Taliban religious police came to power in the year 1994, the Hindu and Sikh minorities in Afghanistan faced a worst discrimination. The Taliban wanted to create a theocratic state based on Islamic elucidations of the Quran. They censored Hindus and Sikhs and recommended peoples to avoid buying objects from their shops and regular efforts were being made to change them into Islamic faith. The plight of Afghanistan’s women was quiet deplorable and it retards their growth to such an extent that the veil became the law of the land, and women were prohibited from attending schools. They were not allowed to hold employment outside their

home, the media was targeted and the Television was banned completely in an effort to remove the remnants of Western cultural influence. The country became politically and diplomatically secluded. Although the arrival of Taliban was welcomed by some sections of Afghan population because Taliban replaced the period of warlordism with strictly Islamic religious order. They imposed Wahabhi and Deobandi interpretations¹⁴ of Islamic tradition and they openly declared that idolaters have no place in this “Islamic Paradise” which they have constructed. There is a Taliban decree to the members of Hindu and Sikh minorities to wear yellow star and arm bands. They also need to hang yellow color flags on the top of their homes and shops. Not only this Hindus and Sikhs were also barred from government posts. (Emadi 2014, Singh, 2014)

Cremation in the Backyard of Gurudwara Sahib



(Source: <https://afghanhindu.wordpress.com/>)

Picture no. II.2

¹⁴ Deobandi and Wahabi are the revivalist movements within the Hanafi school of Islam. It is centered in Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. This movement derives its name from the Deoband in India, where the school Darul Uloom Deoband is situated. This movement was inspired by the Shah Waliullah Dehlawi and was founded in 1867 in the wake of the failed revolt of 1857 against the British rule in India by prominent Indian scholars Rashid Ahmed Gangohi, Muhammad Yaqub Nanautawi, Muhammad Qasim Nanaotvi.

The efforts were being made to persuade them to become Muslims. Such persuasions soon took the extreme form and open verbal threats were given to Hindus and Sikhs, now they required to make financial contributions in the name of “Jihad” and if they failed to pay they were kidnapped and murdered. The trading class especially Hindu and Sikh shopkeepers became marginalized and openly named as Kafirs (unbelievers). The religious minorities also faced the worst discrimination on the grounds of Cremation. Cremation, a tenet of the Hindu and Sikh faith, has been quietly practiced in Kabul's eastern district of Qalacha. The Sikh community in Kabul started Cremation in the backyard of Gurudwara sahib. As shown in the picture (II.2) .The residents of Qalacha in eastern Kabul began to complain of the smell of cremation. In recent years when some Hindus and Sikhs who carried out their religious rituals they were beaten up, stoned and otherwise blocked from doing this ritual, they were considered as infidels because Islam considers cremation as an offence. So in this way the ‘Religious Intolerance’ in Afghanistan put extensive restrictions on freedom of Hindu and Sikh minorities and displaced large number of Hindus and Sikhs for their safety to other parts of world (Singh, 2014).

The minority community in Afghanistan tolerated years of subjugation and were thoroughly targeted. The civil war in Afghanistan forced the majority of Hindu and Sikh population to immigrate. Under the Taliban’s regime, Hindus and Sikhs faced persistent discrimination and violence the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan in the year 1989 brought severe difficulties for minorities and the process of migration starts. The mass exodus of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan started when Mujahidin’s put restrictions on their religious freedom and excluded them from government jobs, illegal seizure of their property and destruction of their religious places were a common phenomenon. In all these episodes the process of migration of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan to other parts of the world in India, Germany, U.K, Canada and Australia started. This process of mobility from 1989 onwards brought a steep fall in their population leaving behind a mere 3,000 in Afghanistan. The 'religious intolerance' in Afghanistan persists through the various eras of Afghanistan's rulers. The ethno-sectarian conflicts between the Sunnis and Shias were a common phenomenon. The beginning of this ethno-sectarian strife takes its shape when Afghanistan gained independence in the year 1919. (UNHCR, 2010)

II.9 Plight of Minorities Post 9/11

The 9/11 attacks on the United States, directed by Al-Qaeda brought the retaliation attempt by U.S.A with the allied forces. U.S.A accused Osama Bin Laden for the crime. The U.S government demanded that the Taliban to hand over Bin Laden. The Taliban's answer was to forward proof of Bin Laden's culpability, and they didn't accept to hand him over. Within a few weeks of this episode the United States launched its GWOT (Global War on Terrorism Programme). This begins with bombings and bloodshed US has given active support to the Warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum of Northern Alliance.

Damages on the wall of Gurudwara Sahib Building due to Bullets



(Source: <https://www.facebook.com/TheDutchSikh/>)

Picture No. II.3

After the subsequent weeks of devastation with bombings and several failed attempts to capture the city, the Northern Alliance with its firm commitment finally succeeded in breaking out of its northern territory. They seized the city of Mazar-e-Sharif, and then held full control over Afghanistan. This set in movement a chain of attacks on Hindus and Sikhs from both sides and their houses were devastated and plundered in this catastrophe. Seven Sikh temples and many schools were damaged by rocket fires. The attack on the religious places of Hindus and Sikhs were a common phenomenon. Kabul was once the home to eight Sikh Gurudwaras, but only one remains today. The migration of Hindus and Sikhs were at peak and they fled to other parts of world (Ballard, 2011).

One of the stated objectives of the US war on the Taliban was the establishment of the democratic system of government in Afghanistan. For the fulfillment of this objective US forces oust the Taliban religious police and installed Hamid Karzai as head of the state. In order to legitimize his leadership Karzai convened the Loya-Jirgah a grand assembly in Kabul where elected representatives from different sections of Afghan society debated on the draft of a new constitution. In order to conciliate the human rights groups and international community Karzai appointed two men from Hindu and Sikh communities, Ganga Ram and Awtar Singh as well as he introduced Anarkali Kour Honaryar a prominent Sikh women to the Jirgah. Since the overthrowing of the Taliban U.S and the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) forces failed to stabilize the country. But they tried to establish the government that is accountable to the public and to large extent protect the rights of the Hindu and Sikh minorities. In the 2010 parliamentary elections Karzai Again appointed Honaryar to the Senate in Shura-e-milli the National Assembly in order to appease the members of minority communities. (RAWA, 2015)

Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan and other parts of the world welcomed the downfall of Taliban as a new and improved era in their lives in exile. Shankar Lal, 63 years old who lived in India for two decades returned back to repossess his ancestral property which he left during the turmoil, it was occupied by some dominant men in the 1990's. In many cases Hindus and Sikhs who dislocated during the Taliban period were returned back and not able to regain their land and property as they encountered threats from the powerful men and sometimes government attitude is also hostile towards them. Hindus and Sikhs demanded the free electricity to the communities worshipping houses but the ministry not paid any heed to their repeated requests although the

government provides free electricity to the Mosques. The state treats Hindu and Sikh houses of worships as business entities subject to payment of higher taxes. (Emadi, 2014)

Hindus and Sikhs were marginalized in social and political arena of Afghanistan. Hindus and Sikhs avoid sending their children's to the public schools because of the persistent mistreatment and nuisance by fellow students. They send their children's to private schools supported and framed by their own communities. There is only one school for Hindu and Sikh children's in Ghazni, and Nangarhar. After completing their schools these children's even faced problems in seeking employment in the government sectors and their representation in bureaucracy is nil. The Hindu and Sikh minorities were being beleaguered by the orthodox elements, whenever they celebrate their religious festivals they were harassed by local fundamentalists. The religious activities of Hindu and Sikh communities are scaled down in Kabul and other places, in order to avoid scuffle with fanatic Muslims. The Sikhs used to hold religious processions with fear, they commemorate the birthday of Guru Nanak Dev (founder of Sikhism) every year. The Hindus and Sikhs continue to fight for the assertion of their rights. When Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Kabul in 2011, the delegation of Afghan Hindu and Sikhs met him and appealed him to grant Indian citizenship to Hindus and Sikhs of Afghanistan as they are not safe in Afghanistan. (Singh, 2014)

According to UNHCR report 2010 the Afghan Hindus and Sikhs were left with only 3,000 in Afghanistan and this population is also lingering for their rights, they also want to leave the country but they don't have money. Hindu and Sikh leaders anticipated their shared population at one time was more than one lakh. But now they left with only 3,000 in Afghanistan. It is estimated by the Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society that not more than 400 Sikh families remained in the Afghanistan. One of the biggest problems faced by Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan is that whenever they were trying to assert their rights, Afghans regularly viewed them as immigrants from India (UNHCR, 2010, 2014).

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Chapter-III

Spatio-Temporal Dispersal of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan

III.1 Background

The withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan brought disaster for the minorities in Afghanistan. After the Soviet troops had gone the Najibullah government dropped all the PDPA members from the council and emergency was declared the opposition forces of Najibullah continued their resistance for an Islamic state, Coup attempts were tried in order to topple the Najibullah government. Though the rebels could win few territories only and all this invited the factionalism which is one of the important challenges for the Najibullah government. Coup attempt by General Shahnawas Tanai, the defense minister with the support of air force, in March 1990 was the most tactical threat faced by Najibullah. This threat came from within the government, from Khalq faction because of the Khalq-Parchm rivalry. In the meantime the Soviets retreat from Afghanistan resulted in a power vacuum and fighting broke out among the Mujahidin groups, all this invited the 'civil war' which made the country very unsafe for the Hindus and Sikhs of Afghanistan. In Kabul thousands of peoples were killed, most of the city was ruined and several Hindu and Sikh temples were destroyed (Ballard, 2011:8).

The fall of Najibullah regime in April 1992 put an end to the communist era in Afghanistan. The calm takeover of Kabul by the Northern Alliance forces served as the legitimate end to the jihad and prompted a large scale return of refugees from Pakistan and to a lesser extent from Iran. The armed entry of Rashid Dostum forces on 25 April 1992 was short lived because the Hekmatyar group got angry over the power sharing deal with Rashid Dostum and he resorted to armed conflict in order to strengthen his position and provoked a civil war in Kabul. For months there were road blocks on every street corner, Kabul was carved up into territories controlled by different groups in all this scenario the law and order virtually non-existent with armed conflict. The armed conflict and the rocket fire attack on Kabul in August 1992, killed more than 1,800 civilians and large group of peoples fled to Mazar-i- Sharif, because of heavy fighting in the months of January and February 1992 (Marsden, 1993).

The once flourishing capital of Afghanistan turned into a battlefield between the two opposing camps as the troops of President Brahnuddin Rabbani and the rebel fighters led by his opponents, Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar fight to occupy the hold. In this war the jet bombs were used and it cause huge destruction to the city and the local peoples flee the war zone with handful of belongings, moreover it left thousands homeless (Dorrnsoro, 2005).

In the year 1993, Rabbani had himself declared President and in his support a handpicked peoples of National Assembly came forward. This demonstrates a clear disregard for Dostum as well as other leaders and their relations got deteriorated over the years. Finally on 1 January 1994 rockets rained over Kabul as Dostum and Hekamatyar joined forces try to unseat Rabbani. The attempt failed, but it spread panic amongst the population that led to the exodus of over 65,000 people to Pakistan and other parts of Afghanistan. Hekmatyar continued to rocket the capital that led to the mass scale migration of the peoples reaching the numbers to 3, 00,000 but he was not able to make any progress in his efforts to take power (Barry, 2011).

The process of migration which started in the post Soviet withdrawal era is still going on in Afghanistan. According to UNHCR data the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan led to migration of around 6 million people from Afghanistan to other parts of the world. This present chapter would try to analyze the spatio -temporal dispersal of Afghan refugees in Delhi and other parts of the world on the basis of the sample survey conducted in Delhi. The sample size of 983 Afghan displaced peoples have been tabulated and classified for meaningful purpose.

III.2 Understanding Migration

Migration is the movement of peoples from one place to another with the intentions of settling permanently in a new place. A person, who moves in a new place because of insecurity and civil disturbance, may be described as a refugee. On the other hand if a displaced person seeks refuge from religious, political or other forms of persecution he may be usually described as asylum seeker. So, migration is a very complex phenomenon there are number of factors which influenced the migration from a set of social, political, and environmental factors. It is also decided by the behavior of concerned individuals. There are number of theories which deal with migration of Afghan Hindu and Sikh minorities from Afghanistan to other parts of the world. The minority category is the category of peoples distinguished by either a physical or a cultural difference with the mainstream culture. The minority group could be spotted on the basis of race, skin color, biological features, religion, language and culture. So the minority group usually faces less prestige, less representation in government and limited schooling etc. (UNHCR, 2002)

The migration of Afghan Hindu and Sikh ethnic minorities to India is because of shared cultural heritage with India. Afghan Hindu and Sikhs shared a common ancestry, common culture,

common language, common religion and ethnic traits with the peoples of India. The ethnicity and race are interlinked concepts, ethnicity is related to the cultural traits of the group based on shared culture, language, religion and ancestry whereas, race is strictly assumed to be the biological classification. In the ethnicity the primordial school of Cultural theory believes that ethnicity is deeply rooted in the historical experience and the individuals had usually been in a particular ethnic group because of certain inherent characteristics and ethnic traits that had given since they born. So, the primordial identity of one's group cannot be changed and it will remain for forever till the end of his life. The primordial identity of a person becomes the cause of a concern for a person in multi ethnic-societies like Afghanistan. The ethnic conflict remains a common phenomenon because of struggle for resources among the ethnic groups. Along with it, when a particular ethnic group tries to assert its identity then the majority ethnic group will subjugate it. (Persons, 1999)

In multiethnic societies, conflicts are usually channeled through non violent demonstrations like strikes, and controlled through the state apparatus like police, bureaucracies and assemblies. But in case of Afghanistan there is no as such strong state governing apparatus which caters the needs of minority ethnic groups, so in due course of time when the clashes with the majority cultural groups becomes intense the migration of minority ethnic groups to other parts of the world is evident, the authors like Will Kymlicka and Charles Taylor argues that individual is a cultural construct and state must recognize the ethnic identity of a group. It is the prior duty of the state to accommodate the particular needs of the ethnic groups within the boundaries of a nation state. (Smith, 2001)

The theories of international migration are essential because it will explain why peoples migrate; there are countless reasons to migrate from one country to another. The theories of international migration can be broadly classified into micro and macro in their level of analysis. The micro category of theories are those which focuses on the identification of the conditions under which large scale movements occur and it describes the economic, demographic and social traits of migration. In case of Afghanistan the pull factors of migration are responsible which includes the involuntary displacement of masses through factors such as state repression or fear of generalized violence or civil war. The forced displacement, repression and escalation of violence on a group triggers large scale displacement of masses, it is unleashed because of state's

weakness and lack of internal legitimacy including poor policy planning and implementation with unequal distribution and fundamental perception of state as unrepresentative. In this scenario of repressive regime the members of persecuted ethnic group may flee the regime in order to save their lives from persecution same is the case with Afghan Hindu and Sikhs. (UNHCR, 2002)

The 'New Classical Theory of Migration' states that the main reason for labor migration is the wage difference between the two geographic locations. The labor tends to migrate from the low wage areas to the high wage areas. The new classical theory illustrates the flow of labor from the low wage developing countries to the high wage developed countries. The new classical theory of migration views the migrant as a person, who not only aspires to increase his wages outside but also in the duration of his stay abroad try to achieve permanent settlement outside. The birth of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* in 1776, is considered as the foundation of classical theory, the central idea behind this theory is the tendency of market in self regulating and self sustaining. The new classical model dominated at the international level until the great depression of 1930's, however with the publication of John Maynard Keynes observations of 1936 in his book 'The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money' rejected the neoclassical notions. Keynesian economics model was developed by British economist John Maynard Keynes during the 1930's in an attempt to understand the great economic depression and he advocated that the increased government expenditures and lower tax structure pull the global economy for depression. The neo classical school emerged again in 1970s as a response to the failure of Keynesian model of economics and it explained the reasons for stagflation, it takes root in three diagnostic sources of fluctuations in growth: the capital wedge, the labor wedge and the productivity wedge. Globalization is one such factor which increased the demand of workers in other countries; the peoples from the developing countries are migrating in order to obtain sufficient income for survival. These peoples are also known as the economic migrants. However, peoples also forced to move because of violence, conflict, human rights violation and religious persecution. The Afghan Hindu and Sikh minorities' migration to the developed world because of all these forces are working (Frank, 1980)

The world system theory explains the interaction between different economies, it mentions that even after decolonization the economic dependence on the former economies still remains on

mother countries. This view of international trade emphasizes that free trade and free flow of technology across the borders. It argued that the developed countries import labor-intensive goods from the developing countries. It divides the world into the core countries and the semi-periphery countries and the periphery countries. The version of this world system approach was developed by Immanuel Wallerstein, after analyzing the world system he emphasized the set of mechanisms are working which are mobilizing the resources from the periphery to the core. In his viewpoint the core is industrialized and 'developed' part of the world like US, UK, Germany, Russia, etc. whereas, the periphery is 'underdeveloped' raw material supplier, exporting resources to the developed part of the world. The decreasing wages of the masses in Afghanistan led to the export of cheap labor from the developing country like Afghanistan which is periphery to the developed countries like US, UK, Germany and Russia etc (Frank, 1978).

III.3 Magnitude of Afghan Hindu and Sikh Refugees

The process of migration which started in the post soviet era is still going on and thousands of Afghan refugees have been living in India for more than a decade. The Indian government puts the official figures of Afghanistan refugees in India is 18,730 (MEA, 2014) and the government of India is providing LTV (long Term Visa) to the religious minorities such as Hindu, Sikhs, Jain's and Buddhists in order to save them from the religious persecution in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh. However, India is not the signatory of 1951 convention or its 1967 protocol on refugee's protection and provisions of citizenship. The government of India deals differently with various refugee groups. The lack of national refugee protection framework is a major hurdle in providing effective refugee protection to the Afghan minorities. According to the UNHCR estimates the population of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs in the year 1989 when Soviet Union back out from Afghanistan was 50,000. Thousands of Afghan Refugees Staying in Delhi from past 2 decades, Indian government still recognized them as political refugees and along with this UNHCR also slashed down its aid program which helped them for many years. There has been a continuous outflow and inflow of Afghan refugees, the trend of migration is not constant it entirely depends upon the prevailing situation in Afghanistan (Singh, 2016).

The process of migration started before the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan because violence was prevalent in some areas and Hindus and Sikhs were fearful for the future. In the year 1989-1992 around 30,000 Afghan Hindus and Sikhs migrated to Delhi. It was all started

when the Mujahidin's attacked the Guru Nanak Durbar Gurudwara in Jalalabad in the year 1989, and 35 Sikhs lost their lives in this attack; this led to start the process of migration from Afghanistan to India. Most of the Afghan Sikhs travel to Delhi via air and some through land routes via Afghanistan to Pakistan and then Pakistan to Attari via train. The Afghan Hindus and Sikhs choose Delhi as their first destination because some of their relatives were already present there and because of better business opportunities in Delhi. Some 300- 400 Afghan Sikhs settled down in Punjab, and nearly 1, 000 in Faridabad of U.P (Singh, 2016).

In Delhi Afghan Hindus and Sikhs were mostly concentrated in Old Mahavir Nagar, New Mahavir Nagar, Tilak Nagar Block 20-24, Krishna Park, Krishna Puri, Janakpuri, Fateh Nagar, Shiv Nagar, Varinder Nagar, Greater Kailash, Vikaspuri, Sarojini Nagar, Najafgarh, Netaji Nagar and Keshavpura etc. According to the Respondent, in Delhi Afghanistan's Sikhs established their own Gurudwaras, it was all started after 1990, when the Afghan community realized the importance of their own Gurudwaras, as they have traditional rituals associated with these temples. Whenever any person dies they bring his dead body in the premises of Gurudwara sahib all near and dear ones gathered and they paid reverence to the family. But in India it was not possible for them to carry out this ritual, so they decided to establish their own style of Gurudwaras. According to Manohar Singh Kabuli the head of Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society, at present in Delhi there are 8 Kabuli Gurudwaras established by the Afghan Hindu and Sikh community members these Gurudwaras are as: Gurudwara Guru Arjan Dev Ji Mahavir Nagar, Gurudwara Guru Nanak Dev Ji Manohar Nagar, Gurudwara Guru Har Rai Sahib Ji Palam Kakrola Morh, Gurudwara Guru Amardas Ji 14-Block Tilak Nagar, Gurudwara Guru Angad Dev Ji Karala, Gurudwara Guru Har Gobind Sahib Ji Karala, Gurudwara Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Chandravihar and Gurudwara Guru Ramdas Ji Chandravihar.

III.4 Characteristics of Afghan Minorities in India

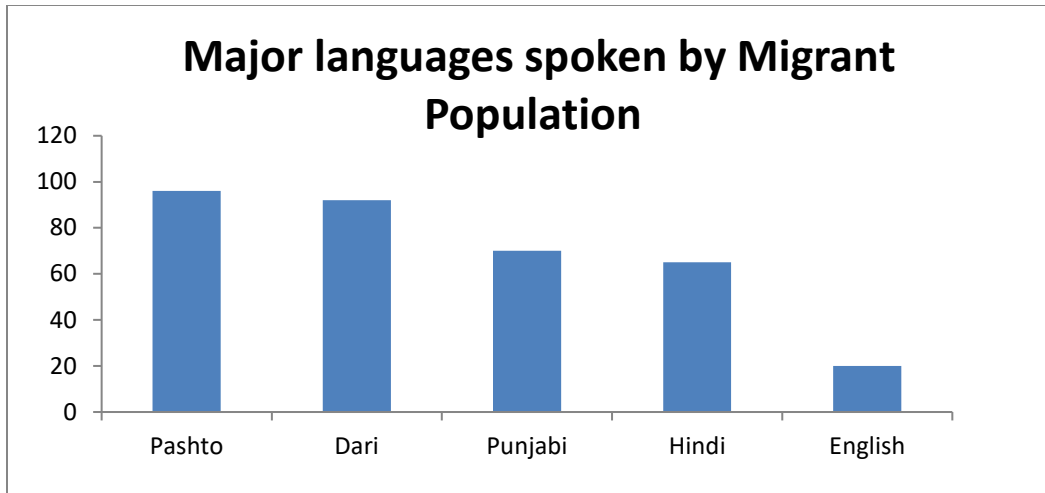
The Afghan Hindu and Sikhs distinguished their community from their Indian counterparts easily on the basis of their geographical identity. They are divided into distinct subgroups like Kandhari, Sindhi, Kabuli, Khosti, Gardezi it is based on the origination of their family. A large number of families have sought asylum in the capital and the adjacent areas of Delhi. The

wealthy ones among the Afghan Hindu and Sikhs have settled down in the posh colonies like Greater Kailash, Defence Colony and Lajpat Nagar. Many Hindus and Sikhs have settled down in Faridabad, an industrial township, the middle class and below middle class groups have purchased homes in the West and East Delhi. Delhi has attracted many Afghan Hindu and Sikhs because it is the trading hub and most of the Afghan Hindu and Sikhs are traders, so they preferred Delhi as their first destination.

III.4.1 Language

On the basis of our sample survey we came to know that the Afghan Hindus and Sikhs are being identified by their Indian counterparts on the basis of Lingua-Franka, it acts as a mark of their identity and because of this they were not able to intermingle with the Indian counterparts. The community is divided into distinct subgroups like Kabuli from Kabul, Kandharis and Sindhis from Kandahar, Jalalabadi, Khosti and Gardezi along with this Pashto speaking peoples from eastern parts of Afghanistan. Almost all the Afghan Hindus and Sikhs are fluent in Dari and Pashto language¹⁵. It added several layers of identity based on their place of residence. In Delhi all the Afghan respondents know Pashto, Dari, Hindi, Punjabi and English. (Singh, 2016)

¹⁵ The Pashto language is the South Central Asian language of the Pashtuns, it is known in the Urdu and Hindi literature as Pathani, the speakers of this language are called as Pakhtuns and Pashtuns and sometimes Pathans and Afghans. The Pashto language is basically the Eastern Iranian language belonging to the Indo-European family. The Pashto language is one of the two official languages of Afghanistan. It is the second largest regional language of Pakistan mainly spoken in the areas of northwest of the country. The Pakistan's FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Area) is the largest Pashto language speaking area, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and the northern districts of Balochistan. Pashto is the main language among the Pashtun Diaspora around the world. The Pashtun's are of Iranian origin having the intermixing of foreign armies, races and south Asian royalty has made it difficult to determine their true origin. The total number of Pashto-speakers is estimated to be around 45-60 million people worldwide. Pashto is the national language of Afghanistan and it is primarily spoken in the South, East, and Southwest of Afghanistan. Apart from the Afghanistan the Pashto speakers are found in Tajikistan. There are also the Hindu and Muslim communities of Pashtun descent in India. In the Bollywood of Indian cinema the Khan's and Kapoor's are also related to this Pashtun community. The Pashtun's in India hold mixed races and ethnicity.



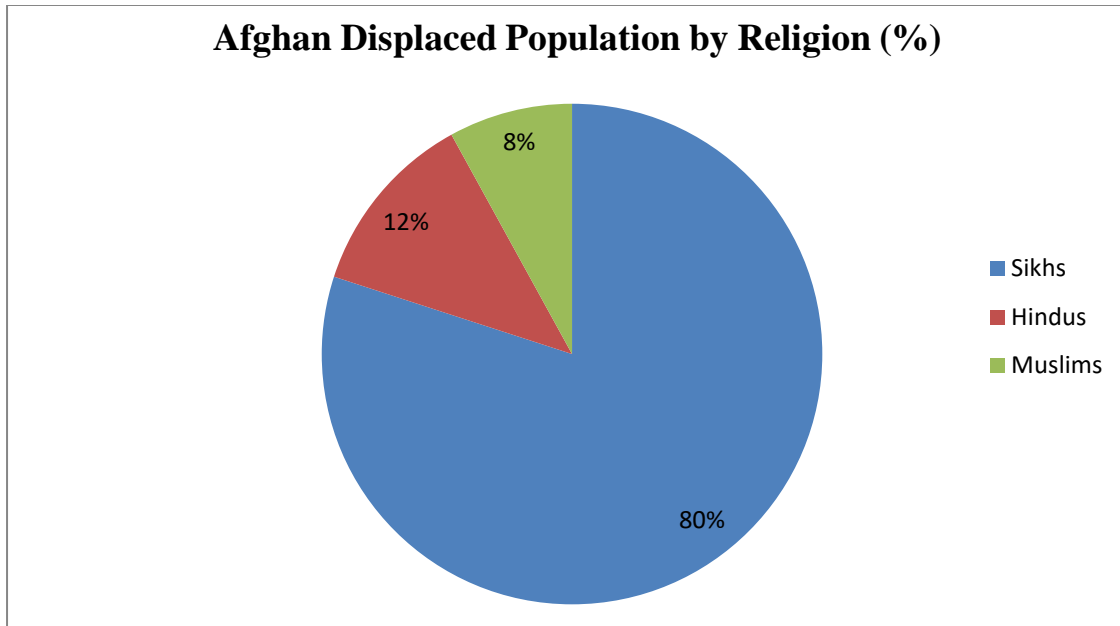
(Source: Survey based on Field Visit in September 2016)

Figure No III.1

The Hindus and Sikhs of Afghanistan are called as Afghans because they experienced the Afghan culture. In our analysis the fear of language loss was the most outstanding theme addressed by the respondents of Delhi. They believe that their children's and grandchildren's are very much adaptive to local culture and they are afraid that their language may die out completely in near future because their language is spoken mostly in homes not usually among the children's themselves. It has been pointed out that the intermarriages with the local Indian families in Delhi lose hold on mother tongue.

III. 4.2 Religion and Customs

Afghan Hindus and Sikhs who came to Delhi have very much close cultural acquaintance with each other. Because they grew very close knit environment and having strong brotherhood feelings for each other. Majority of the population in our sample from Delhi consists of Sikhs because out of total 35,000 migrants who reached Delhi 27,000 constitutes the Sikh population. According to official UNHCR records out of total migrated population 80% constitute the Sikh population. Hindu and Muslim population constitutes the lesser amount than that of Sikhs, the breakdown of sample population is shown below in table and Pie chart (UNHCR, 2014)



(Source: Survey based on Field Visit in September 2016)

Figure No III.2

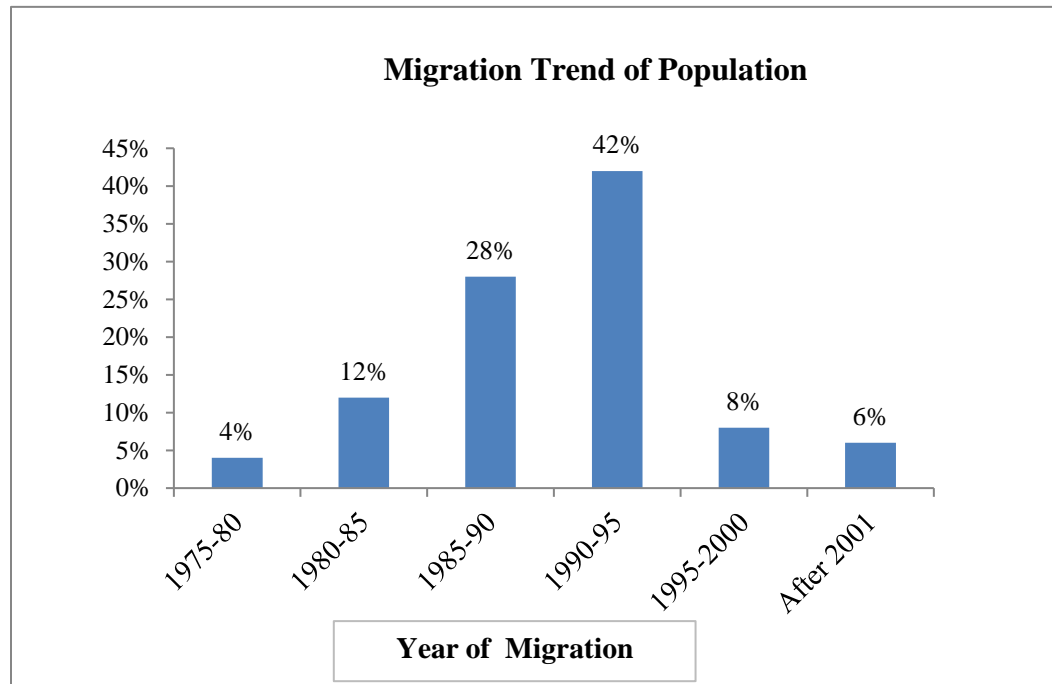
Historical evidence shows that Mahmud Ghazni has taken Indians with him as slaves in every time of his attack and many Hindus reached Afghanistan. During the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, large scale settlements of Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan from India because most of them want to do trade. During the time of partition, the large scale displacement of Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan and Potohar in search of safe heaven, finally they landed in Afghanistan. Thus the refugees who came back to India in the time of crisis from Afghanistan have Indian origin (Ballard, 2011). At present Afghan Hindus and Sikhs have their own Gurudwaras and Temples in Delhi as well as other parts of the world. In Delhi alone there are around 8 Kabuli Gurudwaras and temples. Afghan Hindus and Sikhs have their own customs and traditions which are not being practiced properly in the new environment along with this the dispersal of expanded family households also weakened the distinct traditions and customs which passed on generations. The second and third generations of these communities are not very much possessive about their culture symbols, customs and traditions. In our research finding we found that many children's following their customs in order to appease their parents and they are following because of pressure from older generations.

III.4.3 Migration Trends

The political turmoil in Afghanistan has been adversely affecting the lives of Hindu and Sikh minorities in Afghanistan. The Afghan Hindu and Sikhs encountered widespread discrimination, religious intolerance and illegal grabbing of their property and business at the hands of majority community. The intensity of religious persecution of the minority community increased in post Soviet period all this led to migration of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan to other parts of the world. The Afghan Hindu and Sikh minorities have close ethnic and religious fellow feelings with the Indian population so they choose India especially Delhi as the first destination.

In the initial phase of 1975-80 the minority communities travelled to India basically for business purpose and for enjoying medical services. Hindu and Sikh communities travel in order to pay homage to their religious temples and Gurudwaras. In this phase the Soviet entry into Afghanistan in the time of Saur Revolution brought violence and bloodshed in Afghanistan. In the second phase from 1980-85 the insurgent groups and Soviet Army fought, nearly 6 lakh civilians lost their life's and 10-12 lakhs of Afghans fled to the neighboring countries Iran and Pakistan as refugees. The minority communities choose India as safest place to migrate and they started migration to India. In the third phase 1985-90, large scale migration of Afghan Hindu and Sikhs because the tussle between American backed Mujahidin's and Soviet backed forces was at peak. The Soviet withdrawal of troops after signing the Geneva Accord of 14 April 1988, brought disaster for the minority communities and the forced migration of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs started. In the fourth phase 1990-95, the migration of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs was at peak because the internal tussle of Mujahidin's increased and along with this the Babri Masjid demolition in India invited attacks on the religious places of Afghan Hindu and Sikh minorities. The minority community left with no any other resort rather than migration. During this period around 30,000 Hindus and Sikhs migrated directly to India according to UNHCR data. In the fifth phase 1995-2000 migration of the minority communities because of strict Taliban code and absence of religious freedom (UNHCR, 2016). In the post 2001 period US launched GWOT programme against terrorism and migration of minorities in order to find the safer places. All the phases of migration are discussed below:

Migration Trends from Afghanistan



(Source: Survey based on Field Visit in September 2016)

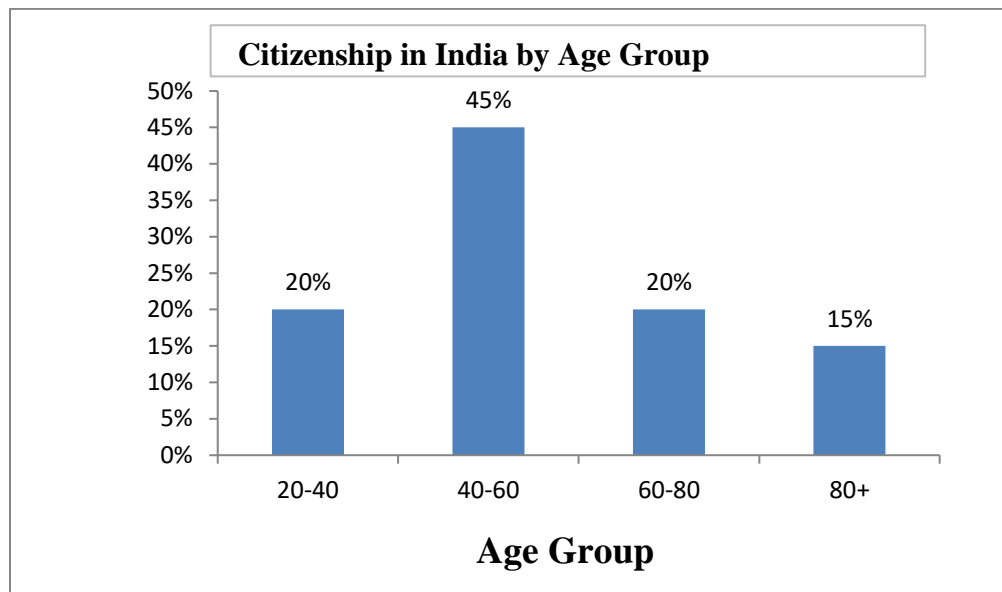
Figure No III.3

III.4.4 Problems Faced

The political turmoil in Afghanistan has deeply impacted the lives of Afghan Hindu and Sikh minorities. At one time their numbering was above 50,000 in the early 1990s, now they left with meager. In the early 1990's around 30,000 to 35,000 Hindus and Sikhs migrated to India, the population of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs in India is also dwindling. According to Manohar Singh Kabuli, in India they are not getting Indian citizenship because India is not the signatory of 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. These two conventions relating to refugees and it is the complete codification of norms and rules for the rights of refugees to claim citizenship at international level. A refugee can seek asylum from persecution in other countries under Article 14 of Universal Declaration of human rights. According to this convention, a refugee is a person who is unable or unwilling to return his country of origin because of fear of being persecuted for

the reasons of language, religion, membership of particular social group, nationality, race or political opinion. The Afghans who are living in India especially Delhi 16,000 among them possessed UNHCR certificates, identified them as refugees and entitled to certain basic services like healthcare, education, and assistance in naturalization process. They are not entitled to full services like employment, free education, access to PDS, protection against arrest and detention in certain cases. The 'Indian Citizenship Act of 2005' stipulates that citizenship can be acquired by mandatory stay period of 12 years in India under the naturalization clause. Due to lack of government initiative and complicated bureaucratic process only few have been able to complete the process and got Indian citizenship. At present in Delhi out of 16,000 only 35% got Indian citizenship. According to our sample study those who got Indian citizenship are in age group of mostly 45-60 years. (Ghosh, 2016)

The NDA government in June 2015, granted citizenship to nearly 4,300 Hindu and Sikh refugees from Afghanistan and Pakistan. The stated aim of BJP government is to consider that India is the natural home for Hindus and Sikhs across the world. This recent decision of Indian government to provide citizenship to more and more Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan is a welcome step and it would heal the wounds of decades of oppression and marginalization faced by Afghan Hindus and Sikhs in India. They faced extremely challenging situations in India and they spent alien life in their ancestral homeland. They faced difficulties in self settlement, livelihood earning, making new life in new environment, visa issues etc. According to our sample survey the group of peoples who got Indian citizenship, majority of them are Sikhs and around 80% of Sikhs are above the age of 40 years (Sriram, 2015). In some cases we found that husband got Indian citizenship but wife is still holding the refugee status and lingering for the Indian citizenship, it is the dream for the refugee population to get Indian citizenship. At one time their population was around 35,000 in India, but due to strict citizenship norms these refugees are migrating to other parts of the world like Canada, USA, UK, Germany, and Australia etc. The below mentioned graph (III.4) shows the age group of Afghans in India got Indian citizenship.



(Source: Survey based on Field Visit in September 2016)

Figure No III.4

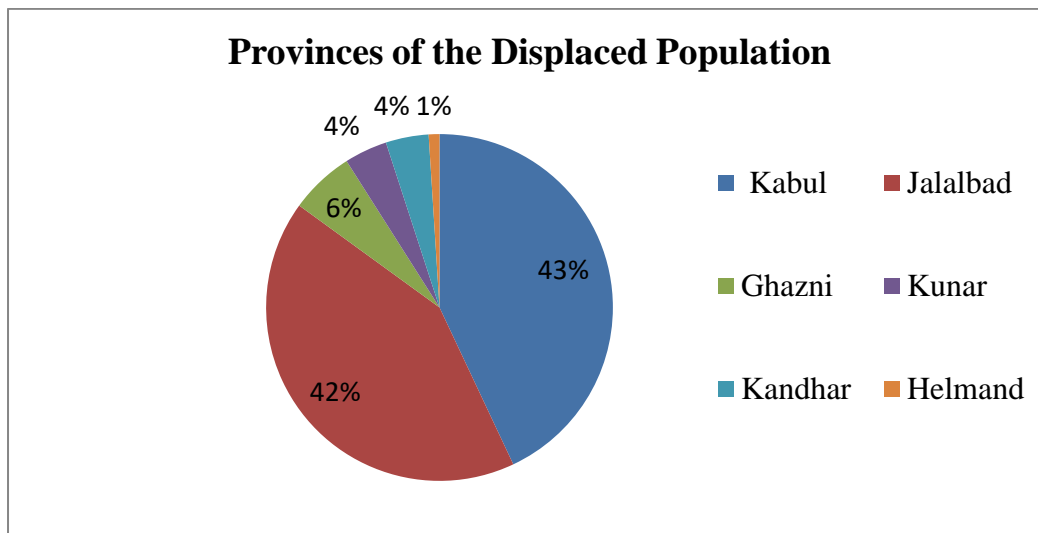
III.4.5 Literacy

Majority of the Afghan Hindu and Sikh migrants came to India in the post Soviet period, the sample reveals that those migrants who came to India before 1995 period were not much educated, but their children's are well educated. The displaced minority community in India is struggling for their rights and due to this forced migration many of them abandon their basic education practices. In our sample out of the literate peoples, very few around 5% were found to be graduates and majority of them were secondary school dropouts and illiterates. In Delhi "Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society" office was set up in the year 1993, to ensure that refugees from Afghanistan were in a position to establish their identity and become self-reliant. The society at present is working to train Afghan youth educationally, spirituality and by providing vocational training to them in several fields in order to ensure both employment and survival of Afghan refugees.

The organization is at present taking care of the education of 780 Afghan Hindu and Sikh children's in Delhi, besides this it arranges tuition classes for these students and in order to impart vocational trainings it arranges computer courses, stitching classes for ladies, French and other language courses, harmonium classes, English speaking classes etc. It also works as an institution in resolving disputes among Afghani Hindus and Sikhs in India. Many of the youths wish to join information technology, entertainment and lifestyle related services this organization is helping them in fulfilling their dreams. According to Joginder Singh 'Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society' is contesting on the cause of citizenship for Afghan Hindu and Sikhs because from the last two decades the Afghan Hindu and Sikh refugees staying on the renewing visas. The origin of "Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society" can be traced back in the year 1921 in Jalalabad by Akali Kor Singh. It was established to spread education among the Hindus and Sikhs of Afghanistan, to look towards their marriages. This organization established many Gurudwaras and temples in Afghanistan. In India also this organization is working for the welfare of Afghan Hindu and Sikhs. Manohar Singh of Minakshi garden area, President of Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society mentioned that this problem persists from 1989 onwards, and there is a continuous flow of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan. Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society is working continuously for the settlement of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs in India. (Singh, 2016)

III.4.6 Places of Origin

According to Arjinder Singh Lal Afghani, the Afghan Hindu and Sikhs living in Afghanistan in a peaceful way, the Hindu and Sikh communities spread across the cities of Kabul, Kunar, Helmand, Ghazni, Jalalabad, Kandhar, Khost area etc. majority of them are businessman's and rich merchants. In the post 1989 they were targeted and their business and living places were looted and plundered so the process of migration started. The Afghan Hindus and Sikhs have established their own style of Gurudwaras and the total number of Sikh Gurdwaras was 65 and 15 Hindu temples in Afghanistan. The Majority of the displaced population have the places of origin from Kabul (42%) and Jalalabad (43%) rest from Ghazni (6%), Kunar (4%), Kandhar (4%) Helmand (1%) etc. as shown in the figure (III.4).



(Source: Survey based on Field Visit in September 2016)

Figure No III.5

III.4.7 Displacement with Family

In the year 1989, in Jalalabad province of Afghanistan, Mujahidin's attacked on the Gurudwara Guru Nanak Darbar and 35 Sikhs lost their life. This was the melting point for minorities to abandon and save their lives. In this turmoil they choose India their ancestral homeland as their first destination. In Delhi Majority of the respondents, who came with their families, they constituted (90%) population, while (10%) percent of them came without families because they have their own business setup in Afghanistan. They still have their families back home in Afghanistan and they have a ray of hope to settle back in Afghanistan once situation will get normalize. The displacement of families from various areas of Afghanistan is shown in the Table (III.2).

Displacement Status of Respondents from Afghanistan

Displaced Families	Percent %
Displaced with Families	90
Displaced without Families	10
Total	100 (983)

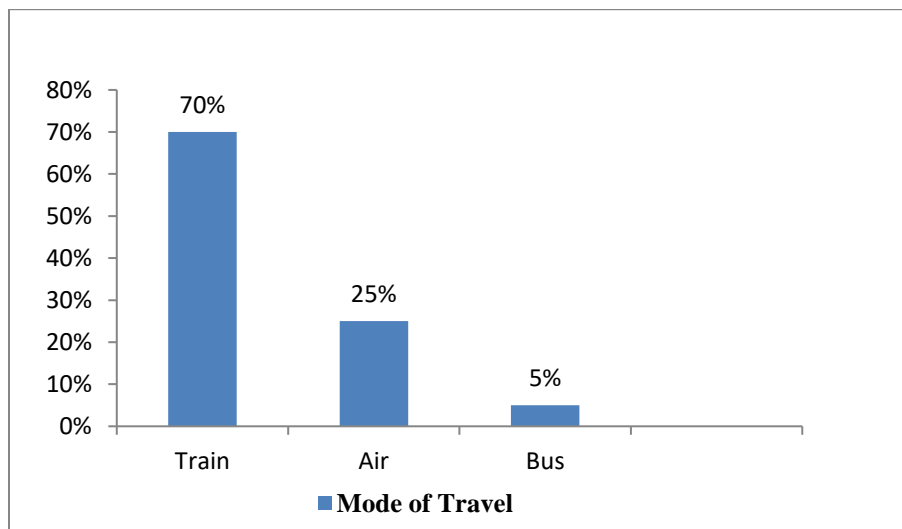
(Source: Survey based on Field Visit in September 2016)

Table No. III.2

III.4.8 Mode of Travel

Most of the respondents migrated from Afghanistan via the land route, firstly they reached Pakistan from there they entered to India via the Attari station. The rich and affluent travel to India by air and some of them reached to Wagah border via bus. According to Manohar Singh, some of them settled in Punjab nearly 300-400 families settled there. So in this way within a decade India received nearly 35,000 Hindu and Sikh minorities from Afghanistan.

Displaced Population reached India with Mode of Travel



(Source: Based on Sample Survey conducted on September 2016)

Fig. No. III.6

Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan are professional traders specialized in trade, cloth merchants, traditional medicines, crafts and music. They travelled to India from different parts of Afghanistan like Khost, Jalalabad, Ghazni, Lashkar Gah, and Kandhar. They left around 65 Sikh Gurudwaras and Temples in Afghanistan. In the 1990's era many of them travelled from Afghanistan to other parts of the world in search of safety and peace. So besides India many of them landed in U.S, UK, Canada, Australia, Germany, China and Belgium etc. In India Afghan Hindu and Sikhs were welcomed by their counterparts and government authorities (UNHCR, 2014).

III.4.9 Reasons for Displacement

In our sample survey we found that majority of the migrants displaced from Afghanistan under the hostile conditions in which religious persecution and intolerance was at peak. The Taliban wants to create a theocratic state according to the Sharia law, the Taliban decree to the members of Hindu and Sikh community members to wear yellow color badges in order to identify themselves. They also needed to hang yellow flags over their homes and shops, efforts were being made to persuade them to adopt Islam. Such persuasions soon took an extreme form and open verbal threats were given to Hindus and Sikhs, they were even required to make financial contributions for "Jihad" and if they failed to pay they were kidnapped and murdered. The religious minorities also faced worst discrimination on the grounds of cremation. Cremation, a tenet of the Hindu and Sikh faiths, has been quietly practiced in Kabul's eastern district of Qalacha. The Sikh community in Kabul started cremation in the backyard of Gurudwara Sahib. The residents of Qalacha in eastern Kabul began to complain of the smell of cremation. The extensive restrictions on the religious freedom by the Taliban have displaced large number of Hindus and Sikhs to other parts of the world for their safety. So, it proves that it is the insecurity, threat to life, and fear from persecution compels them for their displacement (Singh, 2016).

In one of our case study Joginder Singh (name changed) highlighted the struggle of their community in Delhi. He explained that in Delhi, life is not easy because it is completely new environment for us and life in Delhi is so fast for us to adjust, but anyhow we adjusted with lot of compromises. Every time we hear epithets from the fellow Indian neighbors that you are "Afghanis" they didn't accept us as fellow Indians. Back in Afghanistan they call us "Kafirs" and "Hindustanis" so our identity is in deep chaos. Moreover, the struggle to get new home in

our ancestral homeland forced to question our identity. He said, in the year 2009 Indian government made certain changes in the law due to which citizenship process became precarious and the FRRO (Foreign Regional Registration Office) in R.K Puram started harassing us to bring old and sick peoples be they are bed ridden, young children's, and school going children's. All the members of the family need to present at the office in order to get their visa renewed. By recalling those nostalgic days, after taking a deep breath he said, "If there were no religious intolerance and discrimination we never had left our homeland". We had our businesses there; we traded clothes, dry fruits, traditional medicines, having cosmetic shops, etc. we had houses there in big lands and double triple in size of the houses here. We left our properties and some of being taken by the locals at throwaway prices. So in all these conditions we choose India as the destination for our settlement.

III.5 Afghan Minorities in the West

The Afghan Hindu and Sikh population started migration to other parts of the world because of the intolerant regime. The minority communities faced the worst discrimination at the hands of the majority Muslim community. This discrimination started with restrictions on their religious freedom, exclusion from government jobs, kidnappings, murder, illegal seizure of property and ill-treatment to their religious places. All this led to the process of migration of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan to other parts of the world such as Germany, Canada, Belgium, Scotland, England, Netherlands, and Australia. At present Afghan Hindus and Sikhs population scattered throughout the world, with a meager population remaining in Afghanistan. The remaining population of Hindu and Sikhs still faces challenges relating to the employment, education of their children's, cremation of their dead, looting of their property and threats of conversion etc. (Ballard, 2011).

III.5.1 Europe

III.5.1.1 United Kingdom

The United Kingdom constitutes the four countries Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The United Kingdom is a unitary state with a constitutional monarchy; it has a parliamentary system based on the Westminster system. The Afghan refugees reached UK in

order to save their lives from religious persecution and settled later on. In the post Soviet period, there is quantum jump in the number of applications of Afghans for asylum in UK. In the year 2001 BBC news survey showed that 7 out of 10 Afghans in the UK lived in London. The total population in of Afghans in UK was estimated by the BBC in the year 2001 to be around 14,875 people. The National Statistics of UK in the year 2009 has estimated the total population of Afghans in UK is around 50, 000 peoples. The asylum grant applications were high in the year 2006-2007. (BBC, 2016)

The Afghan Hindu and Sikh community is opting UK as their destination for asylum, because UK provides confirmed residence to Afghan asylum seekers within a 3 years period. The 2009 estimates of the Office of National Statistics (ONS) put forward the amazing figures of migration. According to ONS report the numbers of Afghan females in UK were 20,000 and males figures are 35,000. The majority of the Afghan Hindu and Sikhs in UK are in the age group of 35-40 years and the main languages spoken by these Afghans are Pashto and Dari.

The applications of Afghans for asylum in UK have been consistently rising since 2001. In the year 2001 the 9,000 applicants applied for asylum in UK one of the highest. In the year 2005 home department received 1,580 applications for asylum. In the year 2006 a rapid jump noticed with 2,400 applicants received for asylum. In the year 2007 the home department received 2,500 applications for citizenship. The dramatic rise in the graph is noted from the year 2008, the home department of UK received around 3,505 applications for asylum in UK and the slight reduction in the year 2009, this time the home department received around 3,300 applications for asylum. In the year 2009 around 5,000 Afghans were granted British citizenship. (ONS, 2010)

According to the survey conducted by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) in 2009, Afghans were the 6th highest nationality to be granted British citizenship. The Afghan community in UK is not free from worries they also faced numerous issues in UK, relating to unemployment, cultural isolation, racism and racial attacks, fear of return and mental health of children's because they were treated badly by the UK border agency. Recently about 35 Afghan Sikhs were recovered from the container of UK port in Tilbury dock London, one among them found dead 34 alive out of which 12 were children's. The port staff heard the screaming's from the container and they discover one man dead and 34 suffering from dehydration and hypothermia all were

taken to hospital for treatment. Later on the police agency found that they spend nine days locked inside in their 4,000 mile journey started from Afghanistan. (Tran, 2014)

III.5.1.2 Netherlands

Afghan Hindu and Sikhs having one of the larger Afghan Diaspora in Europe they started their migration to Europe after the conflict escalated in Afghanistan in the 1990's. The Afghan asylum seekers holds the third ranking after the Syrians and Iraqis (UNHCR, 2015). The current instability in Afghanistan shows that the migration of Afghan Hindu and Sikh population will not stop. The official data of Netherland government analyses the last two decades migration of Afghans is a irregular migration. The Afghan migrants in Netherlands found 130 Associations which aimed at maintaining Afghan culture in Netherlands and providing charitable assistance in terms of providing shelter, food, and employment counseling. The Afghan Hindu and Sikh population in Netherlands is scattered in major areas like Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Hague, Almere, WIjchen, Denhelder etc. The Afghan Hindus established their temples in Netherlands, some of the famous Hindu temples in Netherlands are:

1. Lord Shiva Hindu Temple, Amsterdam.
2. Holi Hindu Centre, Rotterdam.
3. Shri Ram Mandir, Wijchen.

The Afghan Sikh population in Netherlands also established their Gurudwaras, some of the prominent Sikh Gurudwaras in Netherlands are as follows:

1. Shri Guru Nanak Gurudwara Sahib, Amsterdam.
2. Shri Guru RamDas Ashram, Amsterdam.
3. Gurudwara Maan Sarovar Sahib, Amsterdam.
4. Gurudwara Shri guru Nanak Dev, Rotterdam.
5. Gurdwara Vereining, The Hague.
6. Gurudwara Shri Guru Sangat Sabib , Almere.
7. Gurudwara Shri guru Singh Sabha, The Hague.

The Afghan Hindu and Sikh population in Netherland is fluent in 'Pashto' and 'Dari' languages. The Afghan community in Netherlands is a heterogeneous group both culturally and ethnically.

The major problem faced by them in Netherlands is related to their rejection of asylum by the authorities. It has been found that Afghan Hindus and Sikhs have chosen the Netherlands as their destination of migration because of the network tie and information received from other migrants. (Magnier Mark and Baktash Hashmat, 2013)

III.5.1.3 Belgium

The Afghan Hindu and Sikhs after saving their lives from Afghanistan reached Belgium in order to restart their life again. The Hindu and Sikhs minorities in Belgium were predominantly laborers with limited education and they usually spent their lives in rented houses. These minorities were accustomed to working in agriculture where they found seasonal jobs in the fruit farms. According to the official Belgium records the total population of Hindus and Sikhs in Belgium are 17,000. The main areas of their concentration are Sint Truiden, Leige, Tienen, Vilvoorde, Antwerp, Ostend, Ghent, Leuven, Alken, Hasselt, Borgloon, Limburg etc. There is only one Hindu temple in Belgium, which is spread over 135 acres and it came into existence in the year 2009. In the Sint Truiden area of Belgium there is a stronghold of the Sikh community (Variyar, 2014). The Sikh community in Belgium established 5 Gurudwaras they are at:

1. Gurdwara Sangat Sahib, in Sint-Truiden (Founded in 1993)
2. Gurdwara Guru Nanak Sahib, Brussels (1999)
3. Gurdwara Guru Ram Dass Sikh Study and Cultural Center, Borgloon (2005)
4. In Liège City Area (2005)
5. Gurudwara Mata Sahib Kaur (2014)

The Gurudwara Guru Nanak Sahib in Brussels was closed by the local Belgian authorities in the year 2014, on the grounds that they provide free food to the illegal immigrants. The Gurudwara Sahib was reopened after 7 weeks of negotiation and the local Sikhs of Belgium defended it that, it is in the Sikh tradition that the place of worship is open to everyone and every visitor can enjoy free langar in the Gurudwara premises. According to the local Hindu and Sikh community in Belgium the police regularly check the identity cards of the visitors in temple and Gurudwaras. (Singh, 2014).

In the year 1993 violence broke out against the religious minorities and new comers in the Sint Truiden area. The Sikh workers in the agriculture farms of Belgium were harassed by the local citizens and one Sikh was shot by the local Belgian civilian. It was followed with the attacks on the houses of Sikhs, they were bombed and in the aftermath arrests were made. As immigrant the necessary paperwork is one of the challenging tasks for these minorities. The Belgian authorities are very unpleasant in accepting the cases of asylum for Afghan refugees. In Belgium the life is good but living without papers is difficult for the Afghan Hindu and Sikh migrants and paperwork is quiet lengthy process. The Belgian government wants the men without families, to return voluntarily back to Afghanistan. In the year 2013 the Belgian authorities received 1300 applications for asylum in Belgium. The asylum seekers were not able to get jobs, health facilities, education and descent home for their children's (Singh, 2014).

III.5.1.4 Germany

Afghan Hindu and Sikhs came to Germany during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Afghan Hindu and Sikhs settled in Germany as they want a peaceful place, the already existing members of their community supporting them for resettlement. At present in Germany more than 12,000 Sikhs are living. Germany is having third largest population of Sikhs in Europe after United Kingdom and Italy. The Hindu population is living peacefully in Germany, and at present around 5,000 Hindu refugees are living there and they constructed four temples in Germany in their own style. These temples are located in Frankfurt, Hamburg and two in Cologne. These temples are protected by both Hindu and Sikh population. In Germany there are group of western Germans who converted to Hindu faith and adopted Osho Movement, Anand Marga, Hare Krishna and transcendental meditation. This converted population is estimated to be around 7,000-8,000 in number. In Germany the Hindus formed a prosperous urban minority group they are culturally very rich and these migrants established several cultural societies. The Sikhs are also well settled in Germany, there are about 15,000 Sikhs in Germany and half of them are Afghans. The largest chunk of Sikhs population is in Frankfurt, Berlin and followed by Cologne. Frankfurt is also known as "Mini Punjab" because of the large population of Sikhs residing there. The Sikh Community in Germany established several Sikh Gurudwaras, at present the total number of Sikh Gurudwaras in Germany are twenty two. The Afghan Hindus and Sikhs usually paid visits

to these Gurudwaras and take care of them (Nielsen, 2014). The details and locations of these 22 Sikh Gurudwaras are as follows:

1. Gurdwara Singh Sabha, Frankfurt
2. Gurdwara Singh Sabha, Hamburg
3. Gurdwara Shri Guru Nanak Darbar, Hamburg
4. Singh Sabha Sikh Center, Hamburg
5. Gurdwara Shri Dashmesh Singh Sabha, Cologne
6. Gurdwara Guru Nanak Parkash, Cologne
7. Gurdwara Shri Guru Teg Bahadar Sahib, Cologne
8. Gurdwara Guru Shabad Parkash, Cologne
9. Guru Nanak Niwas Gurdwara, Stuttgart
10. Gurdwara Sahib, Tübingen
11. Gurdwara Nanak Darbar, Offenbach
12. Gurdwara Sri Guru Nanak Sabha, Munich
13. Gurdwara Singh Sabha, Augsburg
14. Gurdwara Singh Sabha, Berlin
15. Gurdwara Shri Guru Darshan Sahib, Bremen
16. Gurdwara Guru Nanak Mission, Nurnberg
17. Gurudwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Paderborn
18. Gurdwara Nanaksar, Essen
19. Gurdwara Singh Sabha, Iserlohn
20. Gurdwara Singh Sabha Duisburg, Moers
21. Gurdwara Shri Singh Sabha, Mannheim
22. Gurdwara Gurmat Parchar, Leipzig

III.5.2 USA and Canada

Afghan Hindus and Sikhs in the post Soviet period migrated to US, it is estimated that around 7,500 Afghan Hindus and Sikhs are living in US. The Afghan Hindu and Sikhs migrated to US in order to save their lives from religious persecution and for educational and professional

purposes. They are ethnically diverse representing the variety of backgrounds, religious affiliations and ethnicities. The total population of Afghan immigrants to USA according to the US home department report is around 97,865 (Census Bureau US, 2016). It constitutes the Muslim, Hindu and Sikh population, among the Muslims Pashtun and Tajik ethnic groups are in majority and overall the concentration of Muslim population is more than that of Hindus and Sikhs. The Afghan population in USA is residing mainly in Northern Virginia, San Francisco Bay area, Texas, Southern California, New York, Texas, Georgia and Oregon. Afghanistan is experiencing the shortage of human capital at present because of the exodus of intellectual expatriate doctors, engineers, architects and legal experts. The Afghan President Hamid karzai has appealed to the Afghan Diaspora to come back and reverse the brain drain. Due to this clarion call many members of the Afghan Diaspora community travelled back and established their own organizations and business setups hoping to contribute to the process of improvement in their native country. They had travelled to Afghanistan with their own organizations, such as micro lending institutions aimed to help Afghan women to become successful entrepreneurs. The Afghan Hindu and Sikhs in USA established their own style of temple and Gurudwaras, they celebrate their festivals like Holi, Diwali, Lohri and Gurburabs in according to their cultural traditions (Census Bureau US, 2016).

Afghan Hindu and Sikhs also preferred Canada as their destination because of heavy civilian casualty and human rights violation in the post Soviet period. The refugees from Afghanistan scattered all around the world and constitute the largest refugee population in the world. In the year 1993 the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration of Canada headed by Sergio Marchi and Afghanistan's minister of immigration Aziz Bhaloo negotiated a joint resettlement agreement. This agreement opens the doors for all Afghan refugees, especially for the women and children. Canada is among the top 10 countries of the world hosting the largest population of Afghan asylum seekers. The Canadian government welcomed the Afghans visiting Canada for education, tourism and permanent stay. According to BBC, the Afghans who settled in Canada prior to 1991 were 5,390 in number. In the Afghan Civil war period from 1991 to 1995 around 10,320 Afghan refugees migrated to Canada. Whereas, in the Taliban period from 1996-2000, the population of Afghans who migrated to Canada was highest and record-breaking, it was recorded around 16,240 and the migration of Afghan Hindu and Sikh population is still a continuous process to find a better place for living. The Afghan Hindu and Sikhs population is concentrated

mainly in Ontario, Toronto, Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Quebec, Yukon, Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador (Ghafour, 2014).

III.5.3 Australia & New-Zealand

The Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan reached Australia after the Soviet withdrawal because of the factional fighting among the Mujahidin warlords and the emergence of Taliban era, which imposed strict Sharia code on the civilian population. This religious intolerance led Afghan Hindu and Sikhs flee from Afghanistan in search of secular regime and some of them landed in Australia as asylum seekers. The Australian authorities accepted some of them as refugees. A severe drought in the year 2000 in Afghanistan prompted Afghan refugees to migrate Australia and they migrated by boat. The population of Afghan Hindu and Sikhs increased drastically in Australia from a mere 764 in 1991 to 9,945 in 2011. The majority of Afghan population in Australia settled in Victoria and New South Wales. The Afghan population is working hard for earning their livelihood they are engaged in transport, production, agriculture, farming, and mining (Sikh Youth Australia, 2016). The major Hindu temples in Australia are:

1. Sri Venkateshwra Temple in Canning vale.
2. Sri Selva Vinaykar Temple, South Maclean.
3. Perth Hindu Temple, Canning vale WA, Australia.
4. Sri Laxminarayan Mandir, Hindu Temple, Burbank QLD Australia.
5. Sri Durga Temple, Rockbank VIC, Australia.
6. Shri Shiva Vishnu Temple, Carrum Downs VIC, Australia.
7. Vishnu Shiv Mandir, Mawson ACT, Australia.

The major Gurudwaras of Sikh Community in Australia are as follows:

1. Sri Guru Nanak Satsang Sabha, Melbourne.
2. Sikh Temple Hoppers Crossing, Melbourne.
3. Sri guru Singh Sabha Gurudwara, Melbourne.
4. Gurudwara Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Melbourne.
5. Guru Nanak Sikh Temple Woolgoolga (first temple).
6. Gurudwara Penrith Sydney.
7. Brisbane Sikh Temple.

8. Guru Nanak Sikh Temple, Brisbane.
9. Sikh Gurudwara Perth.

Most of the Afghan Hindu and Sikhs are fluent in English and Afghan languages. They spoke 'Pashto' and 'Dari' language very fluently. Besides this there are two Saturday schools opened for Afghan Australian youth so that they remain interconnected with their roots (Sikh Youth Australia, 2016).

III.6 Afghan Diaspora and Racial Attacks

Afghan Hindu and Sikh population in post 9/11 period faced lot of humiliation and discrimination at the international level, they were not allowed to enter in US and other European countries. Besides this the already existing Afghan Diaspora in various parts of the world received racial attacks and hatred discrimination towards them. They were openly declared as terrorists by the white peoples around the globe. Many Afghan Hindu and Sikhs lost their jobs and the number of hate crimes against the Sikhs, Muslims and South Asians increased dramatically. The Sikh population was harassed by using the epithets like "Bin Laden" by the assailants, who saw the similarity in the outer look of Sikhs and Talibani's, as both wear turban and support beard. The first person who became the target of hate crime in the aftermath of 9/11 attacks was Balbir Singh Sodhi, an American Sikh (owner of the gas station) in Arizona. The white racist Frank Roque, wanted to revenge the Al-Qaeda attack on World Trade Centre by killing this innocent Sikh. He selected Mr. Sodhi because he was wearing turban in accordance with his Sikh religious faith and supporting beard. The words of Frank Roque were, "I am going to go out, and shoot some towel heads" it showed how he mistook a Sikh man for a Muslim and committed crime. With this episode a new wave of racial and hatred crimes swept across the entire Europe and America. It tremendously increased the attacks on the people of minority communities. The peoples of minority communities becomes the easy target of these hate crimes because of their popular cultural practices and their different attire with beard and moustaches. Throughout the world the countries responded with a tightened immigration and asylum policies for the Hindu and Sikh migrants. Some of the countries like Spain have openly declared the war against terrorism with the fight against illegal immigration. Besides this the British home secretary David Blunkett has vowed to stop Afghan refugees from spreading across the world and has equated asylum seekers with terrorists. In the year 2005, in London Sikh Gurudwaras

were targeted with firebombs in Leeds and Kent area. In all these circumstances the asylum seekers in other parts of the world like Canada, Netherlands, Belgium, UK, and Australia are living with the fear and insecurity. They are facing regular attacks on their Gurudwaras and temples with racist abuse online as well as offline (Samaha, 2017).

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Chapter -IV

Status of Afghanistan's

Hindus and Sikhs in Post 2001

IV.1 Operation Enduring Freedom and Minorities

The 9/11 attacks on the World trade centre in 11 September 2001 killed around 2,996 people, and injured over 6,000 peoples, it caused 3 trillion dollar damage to U.S. The entire world was shocked to see the images of destruction and was overwhelmed with grief, fear and anger. They supported the Bush administration's declaration of war against terrorism, the Bush administration declared that this attack was masterminded by Osama Bin Laden and carried out by Al-Qaeda. The international community fully backed the American decision to launch a global war against terrorism. The US demanded that the Taliban should immediately hand over Osama Bin Laden for this heinous crime and he should be tried outside Afghanistan for his act. But the Taliban rulers declined to follow the demand of US, by seeing all this on 19 September 2001, President Bush declared that, "either you are with us or with the terrorists". The American efforts to put Osama for trial outside Afghanistan were endorsed by the UN Security Council resolution 1373¹⁶ on 28 September 2001. The resolution gave 30 days time to the Taliban to hand over Osama. The resolution mandated by UN member states to deny support and sanctuary to terrorists and their network. After this resolution the three countries United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan deny their support to the Taliban network and Taliban was completely isolated. Of the three countries that recognized UAE already withdraw its support, Saudi Arabia downgrade its relations and Pakistan was the last to disassociate from Taliban and break off its relations with Taliban. (Mukarji, 2003)

The Bush administration has announced to the world that they launched a global war against terrorism, and this war will continue till terrorism itself eliminated. On the morning of 7 October 2001, the US launched airstrikes in Kabul, Kandahar, Mazar-e-Sharif and Kunduz. US launched operation enduring freedom with full support of Northern Alliance. The Northern Alliance or united front is the front composed of Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras, and other minorities like Nuristanis and Turkmens; they came forward to wage a radical war against Taliban. They had been fighting with the Taliban since the latter had grabbed their power and territories in

¹⁶ The UN Security Council Resolution no 1373 was adopted after 9/11 attack on US, it was adopted under chapter VII of UN charter of collective security and it is therefore binding on all the UN member States. This resolution was aimed to combat terrorism and it announced a global war against the terrorism. This resolution established counter terrorism committee in the Security Council. The UN member states were encouraged to share the information of intelligence agencies about the terrorist groups.

Afghanistan. They have stronghold over the Panjshir Valley rest they lost in the battles with Taliban. In the below mentioned Map the stronghold areas of Northern Alliance are shown in Map No (IV.1) (Mishra, 2004).

Areas under Northern Alliance before U.S Intervention



Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Atlas_of_Afghanistan

Map No. IV.1

The Northern Alliance¹⁷ lost battle after battle because the Taliban army mainly recruited from the majority Pashtun, was larger and better equipped with the armaments supplied by Pakistan. The US did not want large scale deployment of its ground troops but understood well that the war in Afghanistan could not be won by the airstrikes alone. But the active support of Northern Alliance influenced the American policy and assured the alliance with a large share in the interim government. The Northern Alliance couldn't cope up with the Taliban troops because their strength was quiet meager; the Northern Alliance had only 15,000 troops at their disposal whereas, and Taliban was commanding nearly 40,000 troops. The Northern Alliance depended

¹⁷ The Northern Alliance was a military formation that came in the forefront in the year 1996, when Taliban invaded to Kabul it was assembled by the key leaders Ahmad Shah Massod, Burhanuddin Rabbani, Abdul Rashid Dostum, Asif Mohseni and Haji Abdul Qadir. This united front of key leaders fought a defensive war against the Taliban government and they received support from the Turkey, India, Russia and Tajikistan. It was dominated earlier by the ethnic Tajiks but later on amalgamation of Uzbeks and Hazaras was seen. The US forces with the help of Northern Alliance launched a joint war against Taliban.

for its armament and equipment on other countries like India, Iran and Russia and US. They had been fighting with the Taliban forces since 1996. When US launched its Operation Enduring Freedom in September 2001, they got the support of Northern Alliance in their joint mission to combat the Taliban forces. Later on, in 2003 NATO forces also joined the Operation (Mishra, 2004)

It was hell for the civilians to sustain their life in this chaos and especially for the minorities group because they left with no other resort rather than to migrate. The Hindu and Sikh minorities abandoned their homes and started living in temples and Gurudwaras. They faced the unemployment, lack of education and confiscation of their property, these are the common reports and all this invited the mass migration of minorities from Afghanistan to other parts of the world.

IV.2 Expatriation of Minorities

The 9/11 attacks on the United States, directed by Al-Qaeda¹⁸ passed the retaliation attempt by U.S.A with the allied forces. U.S.A accused Osama Bin Laden for the crime. The U.S government demanded that the Taliban to hand over Bin Laden. The Taliban's response was to demand proof of Bin Laden's guilt, and they refused to hand him over. Within a few weeks the United States launched its GWOT (Global War on Terrorism Programme). This begins with bombing, as well as providing active support to the Northern Alliance warlords. Following the weeks of devastation and bombing with several failed offensives the Northern Alliance finally succeeded in breaking out its northern enclave and seized the city of Mazar – e – Sharif, and then move on to take Kabul. All this set in motion the series of attacks on Hindus and Sikhs from both sides and their houses were devastated in these attacks. Seven Sikh temples and many schools were destroyed by rocket fire. The attack on the religious places of Hindus and Sikhs were a common phenomenon. Kabul was once the home to eight Sikh Gurudwaras, but only one remains today. The migration of Hindus and Sikhs were at peak and they fled to other parts of world like U.K, India, Australia, Belgium, and Germany etc. (Ballard, 2011)

¹⁸ Al-Qaida is a Sunni Islamist Organization founded in the year 1988 by Osama Bin Laden, Abdullah Azzam and several other Arab volunteers who raised their voice against the Soviet Invasion in Afghanistan. Al-Qaida has mounted attacks against the civilian and military groups in different countries including the 1998 US embassy bombings in Kenya, in this attack over 200 peoples lost their lives. Al Qaeda is responsible for instigating the sectarian violence among the Muslims.

Hindus and Sikhs are marginalized in social and political arena of Afghanistan. Hindus and Sikhs avoid sending their children's to the public schools because of the pervasive abuse and harassment by fellow students and they send their children's to private schools sponsored by their communities. There is only one school for Hindu and Sikh children's in Ghazni, Helmand, Kabul and Nangarhar. After completing their schools these children's even faced problems in seeking employment in the government sectors and their representation in bureaucracy is nil. The Hindu and Sikh minorities were being harassed by fundamentalists when they celebrate their religious festivals. The Sikhs used to hold religious functions celebrating the birthday of Guru Nanak, founder of Sikhism, and such activities are scaled down in Kabul and other places in order to avoid troubles with fanatic Muslims. Hindus and Sikhs continue to fight for the assertion of their cultural rights. When Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Kabul in 2011, the delegation of Afghan Hindu and Sikhs meet him and appealed him to grant Indian citizenship to Hindus and Sikhs of Afghanistan as they are not safe in Afghanistan (Singh, 2014). According to UNHCR report of 2010, the Afghan Hindus and Sikhs are left with only 3,000 in Afghanistan and this population is also lingering for their rights, they also want to leave Afghan soil but they don't have money. Hindu and Sikh leaders estimated their combined population at one time was more than 100,000. In post 2000 period, more than 15,000 Hindu families fled to other countries, leaving only about 3,000 Hindu and Sikh families in Kabul. Today, just more than 300 Sikh families remain in the capital. One of the biggest problems faced by Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan is that whenever they are trying to assert their rights, Afghans regularly viewed them as immigrants from India. So the US invasion and migration of minorities is interlinked because of mass scale destruction and civilian casualties in drone attacks (UNHCR, 2014).

IV.3 Religious Diversity and Concentration in Afghanistan

According to UNHCR estimates 80 % of the population in Afghanistan belongs to Sunni Muslim group, Shia's population constitutes 19% share whereas, the other religious groups in Afghanistan constituted the population of around 1%. These other religious groups includes minority religious communities of Afghanistan, it is estimated that the total population of the minority group of Hindus and Sikhs constitutes 3,000 population, while the Hindu population is of 500 in number. The population of Christian community is estimated to be around 500 in

number. There is a small group of peoples belongs to Baha'i faith¹⁹ and their estimated population is to be around 400 in numbers. In addition to all, there is a small number of adherents belong to a Jewish faith. There is one known Jewish citizen reported by UNHCR, all these religious groups are concentrated in different regions of Afghanistan; the southern and eastern part of Afghanistan is constituted by the Sunni Pashtun population. The mountainous and highland provinces around the Bamiyan province are constituted by the Shia Hazara community. In the adjoining areas near to Mazar-e-Sharif includes a mix population of Sunni and Shia population group. Some of the Non-Muslim religious practices survive even today throughout the remote areas. The population of Hindu, Sikh, and Baha'I faith scattered in the heterogeneous areas like Kabul, Kandhar Jalalabad, Ghazni, Helmand, Shorbazar, and Khost areas of Afghanistan. In post 2001 period, the non-Muslim population had been virtually declined and they left with a miniscule number in Afghanistan. With the fall of Taliban some members of these religious minorities have returned back but majority of them didn't returned back to Kabul because of 'religious In-tolerance' and economic hardships in Afghanistan. According to the estimates of the Hindu and Sikh religious leaders their population shrunk in the past few years and they felt insecure because of the prevailing turmoil. (UNHCR, 2012)

IV.4 Cultural Rights of Minorities in Post 2001 Period

According to the International religious freedom report of 2011, at one time there were around 64 Sikh Gurudwaras in Afghanistan but in the time of Mujahidin era many were looted and plundered. At present only 13 are functional, out of which 3 Sikh Gurudwaras are active in Kabul and rest 10 in other parts of the Afghanistan. The Hindu temples has the same tale they were 23 in number before the eruption of Civil War, in the Civil war period 18 temples were destroyed and rendered unfeasible due to plunder and loot. Now only 5 remaining temples are functional; two are in Kabul, one in Jalalabad, one in Helmand, and one in Kandahar. There is no any Christian church for the peoples of Christianity faith because peoples of Christianity faith are

¹⁹ Baha'i faith is a religion which teaches the essential worth of all the religions and the unity and equality of all the peoples, it was established by Baha'u'llah in the year 1863, initially it was intact only in middle east but later on it spread to all parts of the world. The followers of this faith has now reached up to 7 million known as Baha'is into most of the world countries, with the highest concentration in Iran. This religion was grown from the Babi religion whose founder taught that god will soon send a prophet in the manner of Jesus or Muhammad. In 1863 after being banned from his country Baha'u'llah announced that he was this prophet. Following Baha'u'llah's death his son took the responsibility of religion in 1892. The central authority of Universal House of Justice which is governing body of Baha'is is located in Haifa in Israel.

present only in several military bases. In case of Jewish Synagogues²⁰ are concerned they are no longer in use but they are four in number in Afghanistan, three are in Herat and one in Kabul. Buddhists are free in Afghanistan to worship in Hindu temples and some of Afghan Christians worship alone or in small congregations in private homes. The followers of Baha'i faith were reportedly more than 400 in numbers, around 300 members of this community are predominantly based in Kabul and another 100 members in other parts of the country. In the post 2001 period many in the Hindu and Sikh community people did not able to send their children's in public schools because of reported bullying, abuse and harassment by the fellow colleagues. The local communities had decided finally to sent their children's to private Hindu and Sikh schools, many of these schools were closed because of communities deteriorating economic condition and shrinking population. All this have badly impacted the private schooling because of dwindling economic resources makes it unreasonable for most families. The public schools curriculum in Afghanistan includes Islamic content, but no any such content from other religious groups. There are some of the schools for Sikh children's in Ghazni, Helmand and Kabul that teaches few classes related to their culture and tradition. The government of Afghanistan assigned one teacher to Sikh and Hindu community in Afghanistan to teach Dari and Mathematics to the children's. The government of Afghanistan provides very much little funding to Sikh schools teachers. The Sikh community by itself funding and hired a teacher to address the religious education, Hindus don't have separate schools, and their children's attend Sikh schools. A few Sikh children's attended private international schools; the Afghan government took least steps to integrate Hindu and Sikh children's into the classroom environment (Religious Freedom Report, 2012).

According to the International Religious Freedom Report of 2012, the government of Afghanistan observes the following national holidays: First day of Ramadan, Birthday of Prophet Mohammed, Eid-e-Qurban and Eid-al-Fitr etc. There is no such holiday for the minority community festivals, the members of minority community religious groups continued to suffer

²⁰ Synagogues are the Jewish house of prayers having large and small halls for the study of Torah. Jews are said to be resided in Afghanistan for nearly 1500 years but this community has been greatly reduced to a miniscule number because of migration. The Afghan Jewish community now exists mostly in Israel and United States. In Afghanistan they had formed a community of leathers and traders, most of the Jewish families lived in the border city of Herat. In the year 2007 only one Jew Zablon Simintov remained resided in Afghanistan and he too cared for Synagogue in Afghanistan's capital Kabul.

discrimination and government is not able to protect the cultural rights of these minority group they faced continued societal harassment. In the last few years there are repeated incidents to proselytize the Hindu and Sikh minorities. The Hindu and Sikh community members continuously demanding for the mechanism of free electricity for their Gurudwaras and Mandirs, as government provided free electricity to the Mosques only. The Gurudwaras and Mandirs were charged as business entities, paying higher rates of electricity bills (Religious Freedom Report, 2012).

Afghanistan's Sikhs holding Religious Procession in Kabul



(Source:<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/02/afghanistan-sikhs-face-an-uncertain-future>)

Picture No. IV.1

IV.5 U.S Liberal Democracy Model for Afghanistan in Post 2001

The main agenda of the U.S government's Liberal democracy model was to combat violent extremism and to promote democratic atmosphere in which religious freedom and religious tolerance should be there. They introduce to the public diverse perspectives and enhanced the capacity of the government to counter the extremist discourse. The overall policy of the U.S government is to promote the human rights. The U.S government with the help of civil society organizations tried to uphold religious freedom and tolerance. For the promotion of this agenda the U.S representatives met regularly with the government officials and with other religious and minority groups for continuous dialogue regarding the political, religious, and human rights process in country's reconstruction process. The U.S embassy drafted a detailed programme to counter the violent extremism, for this they constituted a working group also. The working group drafted a detailed report on how to combat the radical extremism, for this proposal they worked more closely with Madrassas, by providing secular textbooks to them and by introduction of teachers training programmes. Along with this they worked with the influential community members and young peoples to develop methods that will counter the violent extremism. (Religious Freedom Report, 2012)

The U.S embassy is actively working on to create a database to register all the Mosques of Afghanistan and put a vigil on their activities. The U.S embassy is actively promoting the professional and cultural ties between the Afghan citizens and the United States. The public affair section of US department is coordinating the exchange and information programmes among the masses for cultivating the spirit of human rights and religious freedom. It is functioning to generate an exchange of secular ideas on democracy and civil society between the local citizens and Americans. The U.S embassy actively promoting the cultural and professional ties, the embassy funded the travel of academicians, government officials, NGO's, journalists and politicians. The embassy also sent the Madrassas instructors and educational officials from Afghanistan to U.S, in order to participate in an international visitor and leadership programme. The public affairs section of U.S is funding the visits of prominent Muslim scholar activists to America, they also supported the tours of Muslim scholars across the globe they organized the seminars on secular religious outlook. The religious leaders and civil society organizations were

trying to promote secular religious ethos by preaching religious tolerance and human rights principles. (Srivastva, 2011)

The U.S military is assisting in refurbishing and repairing facilities in Afghanistan; it upgraded the six Madrassas and an unspecified number of mosques, including the Blue Mosque of Mazar-e-Sharif. The US forces also renovated the Noh Gunbad mosque in the Balkh and Badkshan province, the Noh Gunbad site is a holy site visited by both Shia and Sunni Muslims. Along with this the U.S military travelled throughout the country to meet and interact with the local Muslim leaders for promoting religious understanding. The U.S department of public affairs is also providing scholarships to the local peoples in English language and micro-scholarship programme for students at five Madrassas in Kabul. The U.S government is actively working with the civil society organizations in order to endorse tolerance and religious freedom. (Religious Freedom Report, 2012)

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) trained local practitioners in order to incorporate gender and human rights concerns into community decisions. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) also funded the local NGO's for distributing materials to community leaders and elders including religious leaders. The USAID programmes tried to motivate the religious leaders to discuss the women rights especially the education rights for girls. The other initiatives of U.S public affairs department are to support the academic engagements in Kabul University. It also encouraged the legal clinic programme that covers the outreach to human rights issues. They also sent the deans of Sharia University faculties to visit the Institute of Islamic learning in Egypt. All these efforts of the U.S government are working under its RLSP (Rule of Law Stabilization Programme) (Suhrke, 2013).

IV.6 Constitution Formation and Place of Minorities

In the post Taliban period, the Bonn agreement was passed on 5 December 2001 which envisaged for the state building in Afghanistan. This agreement was signed in Bonn, Germany by 25 prominent Afghans, who met under the auspices in Germany. This agreement is based on the provisional arrangements in Afghanistan pending the re-establishment of permanent government institutions. It was designed to end the tragic conflict in Afghanistan and to promote stability with lasting peace and emphasis should be laid on respect for human rights. The UN invited all

the delegates and major power sharing groups of Afghanistan, excluding Taliban in this agreement. The Bonn agreement laid out a three year, phased process of political transformation in which a series of national activities formed the state building of new Afghan state. The Bonn Agreement failed to hold the power sharing among the different sections and due to this the internal conflict between the Pashtun and Northern Alliance spurred. (Allin, 2011)

Under the Bonn Agreement state building process got fillip in Afghanistan, It acknowledges the rights of the peoples of Afghanistan, their independence, territorial integrity and national sovereignty. One of the clauses of Bonn Agreement envisaged the establishment of Afghan National Security Force (ANSF)²¹. This agreement sought to establish an Independent judiciary, a new constitution in Afghanistan, a centralized security force, free and fair elections and the protection of rights of minorities in Afghanistan. With the continuous pushing of U.S, the Afghan Interim Authority was setup consists of 30 members, presided by a chairman; it was inaugurated on 22 December 2001. A schedule plan for holding the elections of national council i.e. Loya Jirga was decided and this Loya Jirga is to be named as transitional administration. Under this plan the elections of president, drafting and approval of the constitution, elections of the members of provincial assemblies and district councils was decided. The Afghan Constitution Commission was established to draft the new constitution after taking into the consideration of all the Afghan citizens. The Loya Jirga elected Hamid Karzai as the interim head of the state in June 2002, Karzai constituted members of his own choice due to this the conflict erupted. The Vice President Haji Abdul Qadir was assassinated by gunmen in Kabul. The U.S air raid in retaliation killed 48 civilians of local area most of them were attending wedding party. In the meantime in September 2002, assassination attempt was made against Karzai in his hometown in Kandahar. Karzai narrowly escaped from the assassination attempt. In the mean time the clashes erupt between the Taliban fighters and the government forces in Kandahar leaving 49 people dead. All this deteriorates the security situation in Kabul and it got worsened to such an extent that by August 2003, the NATO²² took control of security in Kabul.

²¹ Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) consists of Afghan National Army (with Strength of 185,300 personnel), Afghan National Police (153,000 personnel), Afghan Air Force (66, 00 personnel). The overall up gradation of ANSF was the NATO's training mission they worked in close partnership with the Afghan ministry of Defense and interior. There are at present 25 Nations contributing to the NATO's mission of up gradation and training of ANSF.

²² The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is an intergovernmental military alliance between 29 North American and European states based on the North Atlantic Treaty that was signed on 4 April 1949. It constitutes the system of collective security whereby its member states agreed to collective action against any aggressor.

In the same month the Taliban militants killed the local twenty peoples, including one police chief and two aid workers. In this entire security situation the Pashtun factions welcomes the agenda of new government and new constitution. The final draft of constitution was adopted by the Loya Jirga²³ in January 2004; it provides for all the logistical support to the convening of emergency Loya Jirga and election of Hamid Karzai as the Interim President of Afghanistan. In January 2004 the Grand Assembly called Loya Jirga adopted a new constitution, which provides for strong government institution. President Karzai announced the first post Taliban elections in March 2004. This constitution approved by the Loya Jirga has full-fledged provisions of Islamic Republic with Islam as the sacred religion of Afghanistan. It puts emphasis on the freedom of the religion, gender equality, liberty, and equality, free and fair elections and so on. The constitution emphasized on the Presidential form of government which is directly elected by the Afghan peoples. The new constitution also provided two houses of the Afghan Parliament, the house of peoples or the 'Wolesi Jirga' and the house of elders or the 'Meshrano Jirga'(Usha, 2004).

IV.7 State Building and Reconstruction of Afghanistan

In the post Taliban regime several political agreements signed between various Afghan factions and the international organizations for the Afghan reconstruction. The international community came forward and organized the number of meetings on Afghan reconstruction. It includes the creation of steering group of donor governments especially the governments of European Union, Saudi Arabia, Japan and U.S participated in it. The national development program was initiated in the year 2002; it aims to focus on the three main pillars of development;

- (D) Rebuilding the physical infrastructure of Afghanistan including the Afghan Parliament.
- (E) Enabling the creation of a private sector as the engine of sustainable and inclusive economic growth.
- (F) Human development and security of the Afghan nationals. (Stanekzai,2012)

Three NATO members US, UK and France are the permanent members of UN Security Council. The NATO headquarter is located in Brussels, Belgium.

²³ Loya Jirga is a grand Assembly in Afghanistan; it is basically a code of laws of the Pashtun peoples they mainly organized for collective decision of Afghans in choosing the head of the state in case of sudden death, to settle the national and regional issues of war, for adopting new constitution. It is mostly favored by the Pashtun peoples. The Loya Jirgas have been reportedly organized since the 18th centuries when the Durrani and Hotaki dynasties rose to power.

The reconstruction process of Afghanistan was started in the year 2002, with the assistance of 34 donor countries and World Bank. The Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) was established in the same year for providing a coordinated financing to Afghanistan government it also prioritize the national investment projects. In Afghanistan there are more than 15,000 projects underway with assistance and supervision of the World Bank. The Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) spent almost \$2 billion dollars for the reconstruction of infrastructure and development of Afghanistan. In this collection the pool fund of the 24 international donor countries including the U.S is approximately \$30 billion dollars, the largest amount of this share is from USA. The major impediments in the development projects are corruption, lack of coordination and absence of sound planning in implementation of these projects. (Gaouette, 2016)

The US government is emotionally attached with the development of Afghanistan and for this process of rebuilding they created special post of Inspector General for the Afghanistan Reconstruction and this post is presently headed by John F. Sopko, “According to Sopko, the project of reconstruction and development is not an easy task, because the hilly terrain of Afghanistan is more acceptable to attacks and the area is completely insecure with dangerous roads, and sometimes the general staff took helicopters to supervise the development functions”. In the Sopko’s report to U.S administration he mentioned that more than 700 schools have been closed because of this insurgency phase and we need to restore all. (Synovitz, 2007)

Under the reconstruction aid programme the financing of Afghanistan’s “Ring Road” is one of the major developmental goal, because the importance of this road is that it connects all the major cities of Afghanistan with the sparsely populated hilly terrains. The total length of this ring road is around 3,000 km. This project of ring road was financed by the World Bank and it was described as the backbone of the Afghanistan’s development. It is the building block of Afghanistan’s economy because it provides the shortest distance for communication and transportation to far flung areas. It connects the major cities like Kandahar, Kabul, Delaram, Herat Province, Phul-e Khumri, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Maidan Shar etc. The extension part of this road connects Khost, Jalalabad, Zarang, Kunduz, Laskargarh and Islam Qala. It is one of the longest routes of the Asian Highway Network most of the work on this road is done by the Indian, Turkish and the local companies of Afghanistan. (Weinbaum and Frankelman, 2007)

The international efforts have also been taken to develop the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) through training, equipping and mentoring them. It is for safeguarding the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan. The NATO Training Mission (NTM-A) was designed for Afghan National Security Force (ANSF's) professional training, equipping, education and for developmental activities. The training of the Afghan forces for protection of Afghanistan was supported by UK servicemen and they played a very important role in up gradation of these forces. The ANSF numbering is nearly 3, 50,000 soldiers of police and air force personnel they took responsibility of protection across Afghanistan for its 30 million citizens. The ANSF training basically constitutes the specialized skill impartation and strengthening of the training institutional structures and processes. The training is carried out by the Afghan educated officers in two regional languages 'Pashto' and 'Dari', along with it the compulsory literacy training programme is also designed which will impart the professional skills in advanced level. After equipping these ANSF forces the NATO troops reduced their strength and combat operations. The sustainment of the ANSF forces in post 2014 period after the withdrawal of NATO forces is the cause of concern for Afghan Government. But ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) took the responsibility in Chicago Summit of 2002 that in future they will work for supporting and sustaining the ANSF forces. (Barry, 2011)

IV.8 Indian Assistance in Reconstruction and Protection of Minorities

India is the 5th largest donor to Afghanistan by investing \$750 Million USD after the US, UK, Japan and Germany. India is providing assistance to Afghanistan for construction of 220 KV transmission line from Kabul to Phul-e –Khumri. The construction of 218 KM road from Zaranj to Delaram is one of the most praise worthy project sponsored by India. It will facilitate the movement of commodities and goods from Iranian border to Afghanistan easily. Moreover the construction of Salma Dam by India in Herat Province is also a milestone in friendship and reconstruction process. The below mentioned companies are engaged in several development works:

1. KEC – Electrical Transmission Lines
2. AIPL – Establishment of Hydro Power Project in Helmand Province
3. ANGELIQUE International – Salma Dam and other Power project
4. Phoenix – Consultancy in Electrical Transmission

5. APTECH – Computer & Management Education
6. GAMMON INDIA – Power Transmission Line & Power Sub-stations
7. ANAAR GROUP (AIR INDIA GSA)
8. KPTL – Power Transmission Line

India in its mission of reconstruction and development provided assistance to Afghanistan in several areas. The Indian Diaspora is engaged in Afghanistan in banks, hospitals, construction processes of roads and buildings, IT firms, UN Missions, telecom companies, up gradation of Universities and Schools etc. India reconstructed the Afghan Parliament at the cost of \$83 million and handed over by PM Narinder Modi to Afghanistan government. As shown in Picture (IV.3)

Prime Minister Modi while handing over Afghan Parliament to the Afghan Government



(Source:<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/modi-inaugurates-afghan-parliament-building/article8028735.ece>)

Picture No. IV.2

The reconstruction of Habiba School, digging of 26 tube wells and gifting of around 1000 vehicles to Afghanistan army and public is all in the credit of India. The Indian government is providing assistance to Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) in the form of providing equipments, training and capacity building programmes to Afghan National Security Forces on the special request by the Afghan authorities. (Norfolk, 2012) In the year 2005 on the invitation of Afghan President PM Manmohan Singh paid the high level visit along with delegation to Afghanistan. In this visit both the countries reaffirmed their common interest in establishing peaceful atmosphere for Hindu and Sikh minorities in Afghanistan. India reiterated its continued commitment to the development and reconstruction of Afghanistan by providing economic assistance and carry forwarding developmental projects. Both the countries took pledge and signed agreements for cooperation in the field of medicinal science and healthcare, further the memorandum of understanding was signed in the field of education and agricultural research. Later on, when Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Kabul again in 2011, the delegation of Afghan Hindu and Sikhs meet him and appealed him to grant Indian citizenship to Hindus and Sikhs of Afghanistan as they are not safe in Afghanistan. (MEA, 2017)

After, all these efforts of Indian government the religious minorities in Afghanistan still faces humiliation and discrimination, the local Hindu and Sikh communities have complaint that the situation in Afghanistan is not favorable for them to develop. According to Awtar Singh, there are series of Land grabbing episodes came to limelight in Kabul, Karte Parwan and Jalalabad area, where Sikhs and Hindus have historically lived from generations. Singh also mentioned about the physical and verbal harassment to the minority communities when out on the streets. The local Hindu and Sikh community people's complaint about the kind of disrespect and religious intolerance, which they are facing in Afghanistan, they mentioned about the local Afghan shopkeepers who called them as "Kafirs" and moreover they hurled stones on us during the time of funeral procession, they meant it is an offence according to Islam and this practice should be forbidden. According to Awtar Singh it did not exist earlier, but it started only after the Taliban rule. In present times the local Hindu and Sikh community peoples before going for funeral procession now need to intimate the local Afghan police for their security. In the Qalacha area of eastern Kabul, the local residents are complaining of the smell due to cremation. The Afghan government after receiving all these petitions from the local Muslims has provided 10 different locations to the members of Hindu and Sikh communities to cremate their dead ones

but each time they face humiliation and abuse. The minority community finally decided to cremate the deads in the backyard of Gurudwara sahib where they erected high walls. So, this kind of insecurity still persists among the Hindu and Sikhs of Afghanistan. Besides this in the year 2015 the most recent issue which shattered all the hopes of Afghan minorities was the rejection by Afghan Parliament to a decree issued by Afghan President Hamid Karzai, which facilitates to reserved a seat for the Hindu and Sikh minorities in the lower house of the legislature. Some of the Sikh community members wonder why the Afghanistan's parliament provided 10 seats to the population share of 2 million strong nomad Kuchis²⁴. After the rejection of seats to the members of minority community a delegation of representatives from both the communities meets the government and demanded serious actions in connection with elimination of all forms of discrimination against them, they demanded freedom to hold religious rites, restitution of their confiscated property and access to education. (Latifi, 2014) One of the Afghan Sikh named Ranjit Singh said, "Send us to France, Send us to Germany, Send us anywhere- but we can't stay where we are not respected anymore".

IV.9 Rehabilitation of Afghan Minorities in Afghanistan

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2011) makes an assessment of the returnees in Afghanistan in the post-Taliban period. The Afghanistan has experienced more than three decades of war, political upheaval, and insecurity, resulting in millions of Afghans fleeing to neighboring countries, primarily the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and India. Of these 5.7 million Afghan refugees have returned to Afghanistan since 2002, and UNHCR has assisted 4.6 million of them. A high number of returnees hope positively to see their future back in their home country. Almost 60 percent of the returnee community groups surveyed, and it indicates that many of the returnees have not achieved parity with their local counterparts in terms of livelihood, shelter, access to land, basic services, and protection. Some 15 percent of the returnees had departed from their original ancestral place. They returned to their former

²⁴ Kuchis are nomad Pashtuns from the Southern and Eastern part of Afghanistan, they have characteristics of the different ethnic groups, most of the Kuchis follow the nomadic livelihood pattern of herding, farming etc. there are typically three types of Kuchis: Pure nomads, Semi sedentary and nomadic traders. The majority of them are semi sedentary living in the same winter area year after year. The purely nomadic kuchis have no fixed abode and they are dependent on animals for their livelihood; their movements are determined by the weather and the availability of good pasturage.

countries, primarily in search of ancestral linkages with place, sustainable livelihoods and food security. (UNHCR, 2011)

Large scale refugee movements and forced migration pose a threat to human, state and societal security. The plight of Afghan refugees can be studied under the following four phases: phase one began after the Saur revolution in 1978 which brought a secular regime in Afghanistan that threatened the belief of Islamic forces. The migration in Phase two started in 1989, when the Soviet troops withdrew from Afghanistan and a war like situation began. The mass exodus in phase two erupted, when the Mujahidin fighter's conquest began in Kabul. The start of Phase three of migration started in 1996, when the Taliban gained control of Kabul and the majority of Afghan territory. The Taliban after coming into power started installing the repressive regime based on interpretations of 'Sharia laws' in their quest for a pure Islamic society. Human rights violations were at peak and poppy cultivation rose to alarming heights, this poppy cultivation financing the Taliban activities all this led to forced migration for Hindu and Sikh minority groups. So, this phase is also called as phase of mass migration of minorities particularly of Hindus and Sikhs. The last phase of migration got fillip in post 9/11 period, when US invaded in Afghanistan in order to weed out terrorism from the Afghan soil. (Latifi, 2014)

The displaced minority's regime after the post Taliban period is proved to be a watershed for the international humanitarian regime and it affects the human rights of millions of refugees and asylum seekers across the world. The U.S strikes in Afghanistan brought out the volatile situation for minorities in Afghanistan, leaving hundreds and thousands of destitute Afghans for mass migration. The Afghan peoples have been suffering because of unending political turmoil in Afghanistan and the civil war characterized by serious human rights violations, mass murder, deteriorating economic conditions and the longest droughts in modern Afghanistan. Sometimes a reign of terror unleashed on people belonging to certain group just because of their ethnic links. All these factors push the migration of Afghans to escape from a hostile condition and seek refuge in a foreign land. Now at present the Afghan refugee problem is the biggest cause of concern across the world and this problem needs a permanent solution. The main focus is to shed some light on the plight of the displaced refugees in post Taliban period. (Noor, 2006:59-78)

In the first Parliamentary elections after the fall of Taliban regime the Afghan government decided to provide representation to the minority community in the lower house of the Afghan parliament. Anarkali Kour Honaryar was elected in Wolesi Jirga (Lower House) from Kabul Province and senior Hindu Gangaram was appointed as a senator in Meshrano Jirga (Upper House). In the year 2010 when the Anarkali Kour Honaryar failed to retain her seat in the Wolesi Jirga, at that time Karzai government came forward in her rescue and nominated her to the Upper House Meshrano Jirga. The Karzai government instructed the Ministry of Religious Affairs, to carry out an assessment of the problems faced by the Hindu and Sikh communities and demanded suggestions from the ministry in order to improve the volatile situation. The Afghan Hindu and Sikh population provided reservation by the government because their chances of getting elected is very much minuscule to the 249 seats in the Lower House. (Foschini, 2013) According to Hamid Karzai statement to the leading state newspaper, “If we don’t give them this constitutional privilege, these minorities will never reach the parliament”.

In the year 2013, while debating for the reservation, the Afghan lawmakers completely ignored the minority population and started working on the literal interpretation of the constitution, they bring forward Article 22, which states that in front of law all the Afghan citizens have equal status and have equal rights and duties. Besides this, Article 83 of Afghan constitution, which states that all the members of the Wolesi Jirga should be elected by the people through proper general elections. These two clauses of Afghan constitution became stumbling block for the minorities’ representation. In this way this debate reveals that lawmakers did not have any interest about the welfare of these minority community peoples. (Sharma, 2017) The Afghan government finally in the year 2015, has taken the reservation memorandum of these two minority communities in the country’s lower house of parliament (Wolesi Jirga). It is demanded by these minority communities from the last 3 years. The Ashraf Ghani government and the leaders of Hindu and Sikh communities wants to approve this by the members of Wolesi Jirga, otherwise this attempt remains incomplete again. The members of Hindu and Sikh community have lived to this land from the last hundreds of years, but the volcano of religious intolerance, which erupted from the last three decades, brought disaster for them. Now they are on the verge to extinct from their homeland, most of them were settled in foreign countries. (Sharma, 2017)

IV.10 Status of Minorities in Post 2001

After the years of struggle the Afghan national government under the Presidentship of Ashraf Ghani passed the bill, it is indeed approved by the Afghan cabinet and presented to the president for his final authorization. This bill reiterated to provide representation to the members of minority groups in the nation's parliament. This came at a very important time because the underrepresented minority group is lingering for their representation in their homeland. It is all for the protection of rights and proper representation of those 3,000 Afghan Hindu and Sikhs in Afghanistan. The majority of these Afghan Hindu and Sikhs are resided in Kabul, Ghazni, Helmand valley and Nangarhar provinces. (Kumar, 2016)

In April 2017 the foundation stone of the first ever school modeled on the demands of Hindu and Sikh minorities has been laid in the Nangarhar province. The foundation stone of this school was laid down by the Education Ministry of Afghanistan and the other big officials of Jalalabad government. The Governor Gulab Mangal, along with the head of the eastern zone engineer Ahad Samoon and Sikh community leader Mir Singh laid the foundation stone of building. On this occasion Mir Singh, the Sikh leader in his speech mentioned that, in past members of Hindu and Sikh community peoples send their children's in government schools, from these schools they got education and after completion of their graduation degree, they enrolled in universities and later on, served in government departments and health professions. He further mentioned the names of Dr. Jatendar Singh, Dr. Krishan Lal and Dr. Bhuget Singh all these were educated from these government schools in Jalalabad. Once this school building will get completed almost 60 students will be shifted from the temporary school which is established in the temple. This school is with 5 classrooms, separate office for the principal, a decent library and five toilets. It will be handed over to the members of Sikh community most probably by the end of 2017. It is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)²⁵. It will be

²⁵ Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency is the government agency of the Swedish ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is responsible for the development of the bulk of Sweden official assistance to the developing countries for their development. It also affirms the protection of Human Rights in developing countries, promotion of Democracy and Gender Equality. It works in the promotion and propagation of Universal Declaration of Human Rights in their mission. The SIDA is also working on the Yogyakarta principles in action with the LGBT Rights along with the SIDA's action plan on Sexual orientation and Gender Identity in International Development cooperation. SIDA is working in developing countries for action plan on the LGBT issues and it is working on to dialogue with the civil society members for inclusion of LGBT in government policies and initiatives.

completed by the end of 2017 with an estimated investment of around 8.9 million AFN²⁶. This is the second school which is constructed on this model; earlier one school was constructed in the Southern Ghazni. In picture (IV.4) Governor Gulab Mangal along with the engineer Sammon and Sikh Leader Mir Singh laying the foundation stone of the special minority schools for the children's of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs (Pajhwok, 2017).

Foundation stone of Special School for Hindu and Sikh Minorities in Nangarhar



(Source: <http://menafn.com/1095391222/Afghanistan--Work-on-school-building-for-Sikhs-launched>)

Picture No. IV.3

One of the primary school established inside the religious temple in Jalalabad, is running by the Non-Governmental Organization. At one time it was accommodating around 130 students, but recently most of these students move to Kabul, because it lacks in infrastructure and moreover it is up to the 5th grade only, it received the enrollment of 60 students this year out of which 25 are

²⁶ AFN is the currency of Afghanistan, it is nominally subdivided by 100 Pul, and the first Afghan currency was introduced in 1925. Since the year 2002 the Afghanistan central bank has adopted the floating exchange rate to be determined freely by the market. At present the 1 INR is equal to 1.05439 AFN.

girls. At one time there was around 10,000 Sikhs residing in Nangarhar province but now they left with only 160 families. (Pajhwok, 2017)

In the eastern part of Nangarhar province members of the Sikh and Hindu communities have reported their land and property confiscation by the rich and powerful elements in the area. The land which was grabbed by the locals has three documents but when the Hindu and Sikh community member consults the department they are told by the authorities that this land needs several other documents and certificates. The member of Hindu and Sikh community wants assurance from the Afghan government to take steps for the security of their lives, so that they can easily support their life and development in Afghanistan. (Latifi, 2014) The main reasons for insecurity in Afghanistan among the Hindu and Sikh minority community are:

- Hostile Environment for Minorities
- Threat to life
- Fear of Taliban
- Religious Intolerance
- Confiscation of property
- Cultural Insecurity
- Unequal access to government jobs
- Harassment in schools
- Strict code for Women's and Societal Discrimination against girls
- Absence of community Schools
- Law and Order Problem
- Fear Psychosis for Taliban's Resurgence in near Future
- Deprivation from Cremation Rites
- Illiteracy & Poverty
- Lack of Economic opportunities
- Indiscriminate Killings and attacks on the Civilians
- Torture and Abuse by Government forces
- Cold Blooded Murder's
- Extortion and Detention, and

- Physical Violence and Illegal Taxation. (Ahmadi, 2017)

All these factors are responsible for migration of Hindu and Sikh minorities from Afghanistan to other parts of the world. Recently the murder of Afghan Sikh leader Nirmohan Singh also known as Lala Dilsoz has shocked to the entire Afghan community residing in different parts of the world Lala Dilsoz was a prominent Sikh leader from the Kunduz Valley he was shot dead by the unidentified gunmen on 29 December 2016 around 9 am, he was heading towards his medicine shop when he was gunned down and while on the way to hospital he succumbed to his injuries. 'Lala Del Souz' is survived by his four children's and his wife they were migrated to Delhi and residing in the Tilak Nagar area, he went back to Kunduz, to look after his medicine business shop. His father and his family members received the dead body and they performed all of the cremation rites in Tilak nagar area at Gurudwara Guru Arjan Dev Sahib. It is in the latest strikes trend to target the minority community peoples so that they may easily left this country. (Hussainkhail, 2016) This is the second killing of a Sikhs in the last 3 months, before this Sardar Rawail Singh was abducted from his home and gunned down by the suspected militants in the Nangarhar province. In another episode, Kulraj Singh was kidnapped by Taliban from Afghanistan they demanded ransom and he remained captive for 40 days and Taliban's cut his hairs and kept him under solitary confinement without food. Finally, he left the country and reached India for asylum from the Indian authorities. All these episodes confirmed that the threats to the lives of these minority communities in Afghanistan, and how much unsafe they are in the country which was once their homeland. Khajinder Singh the president of Afghan Society appealed to the Prime Minister Narinder Modi for the rescue and rehabilitation of remaining families of Hindu and Sikh minorities living in Afghanistan. Further, all the members of Afghan community in Delhi also requested to Prime Minister Modi for the evacuation of remaining and announcement of rehabilitation package for them (Kumar, 2016).

IV.11 Prospects of Returning Back

According to the sample survey conducted on 19 September 2016, Majority of the displaced respondents have never dream of going back and resettled in Afghanistan but very few around (20%) are willing to restore their lives again, only if the government assured them of their lives and security, most of them wants to go back on Indian Passports because at any worst case they

may be able to save their lives and can return back. Apart from this (80%) of them never wants to go back they are happy in India, they said they don't want to go back in hell again. According to Swadar Singh of Vishnu Garden, "Whenever we go to Afghanistan the locals tell us, 'oh have you returned from your country?' and when we came here to India, we are asked by local Indians, 'Have you returned from your country?' we are not recognized anywhere and sometimes we are doubted, whether we are Afghans or Indians. A respondent Chhbeol Singh of Tilak Nagar area narrated his story, he belongs from the Karte-e-Parwan area and he recently came from Kabul, where he is running a cosmetics shop. He narrated his story when he came to India in the year 1992 with his family members, after saving his family members life from religious persecution. By focusing on the secular nature of India he emphasized that, he will be happy, "if the Indian government will provide him the Indian citizenship then he will never go back". At present he is holding the temporary visa. He remarked that unfortunately they are neither accepted in Afghanistan and nor even in India (Dutta, 2009).

Afghan Refugees perception on Returning Back

Respondents Answer	Percentage (%)
No	80%
Yes	20%
Total	100 (983)

(Source: Survey based on Field Visit in September 2016)

Table IV.1

In Delhi Afghan Hindus and Sikhs were mostly concentrated in old Mahavir Nagar, New Mahavir Nagar, Tilak Nagar Block 20-24, Krishna Park, Krishna Puri, Janakpuri, Fateh Nagar, Shiv Nagar, Varinder Nagar, Greater Kailash, Vikaspuri, Sarojini Nagar, Najafgarh, Netaji Nagar and Keshavpura etc. A large number of families have sought asylum in the capital and the adjacent areas of Delhi. The wealthy ones among the Afghan Hindu and Sikhs have settled down in the posh colonies like Greater Kailash, Defence Colony and Lajpat Nagar. Many Hindus and Sikhs have settled down in Faridabad, an industrial township, the middle class and below middle class groups have purchased homes in the West and East Delhi. Delhi has attracted many Hindu and Sikh Afghans because it is the trading hub and most of the Afghan Hindu and Sikhs are

traders, so they preferred Delhi as their first destination. According to Manohar Singh Kabuli, in Delhi, Afghanistan Sikhs established their own Gurudwaras, it was all started after 1990, when the Afghan community realized the importance of their own Gurudwaras, as they have traditional rituals associated with these temples. Whenever any person dies they carry his dead body in the premises of Gurudwara Sahib, there all near and dear ones gathered and they paid homage to the family. But in India it was not possible for them to carry out this ritual, so they decided to establish their own style of Gurudwaras. According to Manohar Singh Kabuli the head of Afghan Sikh Sabha, at present in Delhi there are 8 Kabuli Gurudwara's established by the Afghan Hindu and Sikh community members all these are mentioned below :

- Gurudwara Guru Arjan Dev Ji Mahavir Nagar.
- Gurudwara Guru Nanak Dev Ji Manohar Nagar.
- Gurudwara Guru Har Rai Sahib Ji Palam Kakrola Morh.
- Gurudwara Guru Amardas Ji 14-Block Tilak Nagar.
- Gurudwara Guru Angad Dev Ji Karala.
- Gurudwara Guru Har Gobind Sahib Ji Karala.
- Gurudwara Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Chandravihar.
- Gurudwara Guru Ramdas ji Chandravihar. (Singh, 2016)

According to the UNHCR 2014, figures as per the recent data around 18,000 Afghan Hindu and Sikhs refugees are living in India with maximum concentration in Delhi. The Indian government didn't officially recognize them as refugees but allowed the UNHCR to operate a programme for them. UNHCR also slashed down its aid programme, it resulted into the worsening condition for Afghan refugees in India. In India they are also facing numerous problems, because they don't have residence permits they face financial problems, along with it they are continuing their lives in substandard houses. The "Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society" an organization of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs supporting and sustaining their lives by providing education and vocational courses training to their children's. According to the estimates of Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society the current size of their population is around 15,000; and most of them migrated to Western countries over the past decade. These 15,000 minority group in future want to settle in India, if the Indian government will provide them citizenship because they have ancestral roots with India. Moreover, they adore India being a secular country supporting their lives and having better

economic prospects in future. So there are very much minimum prospects of returning back (20%) to Afghanistan by the Afghan respondents in Delhi. (Singh, 2016)

IV.12 Security and Development in Afghanistan after Lisbon Treaty (2010)

In Afghanistan the international community involvement in the development and reconstruction programme is praise worthy initiative, the international community's involvement especially the NATO led operations for the progress and development of Afghanistan has reached a level to meet the people's needs. After nearly a decade of joint efforts by the government of Afghanistan and international community to build the war torn country, Afghanistan now entered the crucial phase where progress have been made on several fronts including governance, health, education, infrastructure development and institutional reform. It was however, in the beginning of 2010 that the international community started to align its efforts behind the vision that was laid out by the president Karzai in his inauguration speech for second term in office. In his speech he mentioned about the five strategic goals: (Suhrke, 2013)

1. Initiate an inclusive political process that provides opportunities for Afghans to reconcile and reintegrate to their communities and live in peace with each other.
2. Strengthen the regional cooperation and international long term partnership.
3. Improve governance at the national and sub-national levels through building human resources and fighting corruption.
4. Achieve Afghan sovereignty through transition of responsibility to the Afghan forces and strengthen the capacity and capabilities of civil military institutions.
5. Provide increased investment opportunities in key sectors such as energy, mining, water, infrastructure, health, education and to promote private sector growth. (Stanekzai, 2012)

The development agenda for Afghanistan was laid down in the Lisbon Summit of November 2010; it was the meeting of the heads of the government and head of the states of NATO member countries. It was held in Lisbon (Portugal) in November 2010. In this summit all the member countries reaffirm their commitment to the common vision and the shared democratic values on the purpose and principal of United Nations charter. NATO remains the strong transatlantic framework for strong collective defense and the essential forum for security consultations and

solidarity. In this Lisbon Summit of 2010 the NATO member countries adopted the ‘Strategic Concept’ which emphasized on to protect and defend the members against the full range of external and internal threats. In this address the alliance members chalked out the strategy to counter terrorism and attacks of militant organizations so that civilian causality should be avoided, the member countries agreed to develop mutual missile defense system. The NATO member countries met with the Afghan President Hamid Karzai regarding the undertaking of group’s operation in the country. They agreed to provide training and assistance to the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) and police. The NATO forces also planned to gradually withdraw from the Afghanistan with the deadline of 2014. According to the official analysis of NATO countries the year 2014 is of crucial importance as the security and economic impact of drawdown can resurface. (Nicoll, 2011) The period between 2014 and 2024 will serve as the “Transformational Decade” in order to reach the goal of peaceful and sovereign Afghanistan. For achieving the goal of a sovereign, democratic and peaceful Afghanistan it required the meaningful progress in the five strategic areas outlined by the President Karzai in the year 2009. There is the dire need to address the potential threats of the period up to and beyond 2014, some of the immediate measures include:

- a. Engaging the Afghans on the constructive dialogue on a number of strategic issues this could include the efforts to promote the understanding between the Afghans and the international security forces.
- b. Building of the public confidence as an essential step to move the peace reconciliation and reintegration process forward through extensive and sustained outreach efforts.
- c. Mobilizing the Ulema’s and the religious leaders across the country to promote the message of peace and stress that the continuation of fighting in Afghanistan cannot be justified and it will not bring peace in the long run.
- d. Replacing of the current violence with meaningful negotiations and overcome the environment of fear and terror.

All these efforts will help in the proper functioning of the government and it will contribute in the peace process of Afghanistan. Whereas, the real success will be achieved, when the neighboring country Pakistan stops interfering in its domestic affairs and support the peace process. (Stanekzai, 2012)

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Chapter – V
Political Processes and Policy
Responses towards Afghanistan's
Hindu and Sikhs

V.1 Present Condition of Afghan Minorities in India

The process of migration started before the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan because violence erupted in different areas and some Hindus and Sikhs were fearful for the future. The religious minorities faced widespread discrimination in Afghanistan, it brought much agony and hardship for them and compelled them to leave their motherland and took shelter in India and other parts of the world. It was all started when the Mujahidin's attacked the Gurudwara Guru Nanak Darbar in Jalalabad, in the year 1989 and 35 Sikhs lost their lives in this attack; this led to start the process of migration from Afghanistan to India. Most of the Afghan Sikhs travel to Delhi via air and some through land routes via Afghanistan to Pakistan and then Pakistan to Attari via train. The Afghan Hindus and Sikhs choose Delhi as their first destination because some of their relatives were already present there and for better business opportunities in Delhi. (Singh, 2016) Some 300- 400 Afghan Hindu and Sikhs settled down in Punjab, and nearly 1,000 in Faridabad (U.P). It is difficult to estimate about the exact number of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs living in India, but according to the estimates of "Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society" their number was approximately 30,000 in the year 2005 it got dwindled slowly, and now they left with only 15,000 in India (Ghosh, 2016).

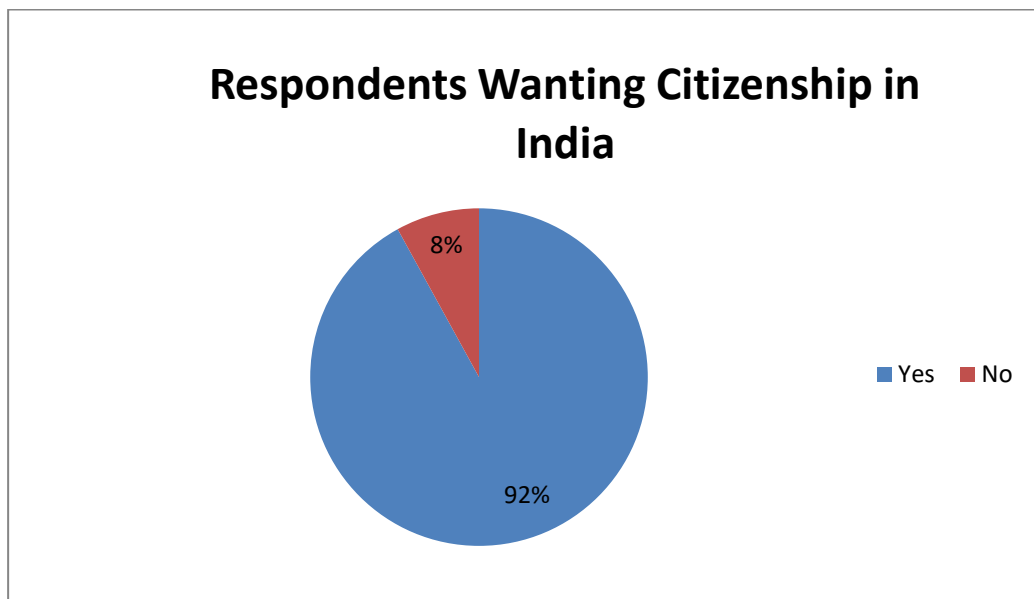
According to the UNHCR estimates of 2011, at present India is holding around 13,381 Afghan Hindu and Sikh refugees and most of them are settled in and around the National Capital of Delhi. Those Afghan refugees who are under the protection of UNHCR, they are holding proper identity cards issued by UNHCR and they are recognized as official refugees and provided assistance in the process of 'Naturalization' for citizenship. They also entitled with certain basic amenities like healthcare facilities, education for earning livelihood and implanting vocational training courses to them. It is pertinent to mention that the life in India has been extremely challenging for these minorities because they are living in alien land, with absence of host countries recognition and protection. They faced lot of hurdles in self settlement, employment, livelihood avenues, visa issues and confrontation with the local peoples. In this atmosphere where the income is hardly expected and each displaced person who moved with two to four dependents life became miserable for them. All of these migrants were expecting assistance from the Indian government for their rehabilitation. The non recognition from the Indian government as refugees meant lack of access to certain basic rights and privileges to them. The UNHCR

recognition could enable some of them to acquire temporary residence permits from the Indian authorities' therefore full protection and security is possible only through Indian citizenship. (UNHCR, 2011) The Government of India while providing helping hand to all these refugees allowed them to avail the 'Stay Visa' and they are free to do work, they can practice the trade and business work under the clause of stay visa. However they are not entitled to enjoy the political rights, it implies that they are not allowed to avail ration cards and to cast their votes. The majority of the respondents in survey want to acquire the Indian citizenship and the state protection from the government; they are aspiring to enjoy political rights in India. The respondent Mohan Kumar of Tilak Nagar area appreciated the concern of Indian government for extending the helping hand to us; he hoped that we will get Indian citizenship very soon. Another respondent Kulwant Singh who runs a chemist shop in Munirka area near to JNU campus, shared nostalgic memories of his journey from Afghanistan to India he mentioned that, "He was a kid of 6 years old, when his family migrated to India in the year 1987, he stated that he knew nothing about the Afghanistan and he even forgotten Pashtu and Dari because of his grooming in Indian culture". He further mentioned that 4 years back, he and his family got Indian citizenship and now they are happy in India to continue further (Singh, 2016).

In the case study of the Afghan refugees in India majority of the respondents want to settle in India (92%). While very few wants to return back in future if the situation gets normal (8%) because the respondents have flourished business there and they are afraid of this lengthy visa process. In one of our case study of Joginder Singh (name changed) highlighted the struggle of their community in Delhi. He explained that in Delhi, life is not easy because it is completely new environment for us and life in Delhi is so fast for us to adjust, but anyhow we adjusted with lot of compromises. Every time we hear epithets from the fellow Indian neighbors that you are "Afghanis" they didn't accept us as fellow Indians. Back in Afghanistan they call us "Kafirs" and "Hindustanis" so our identity is in deep chaos. Moreover, the struggle to get new home in our ancestral homeland forced to question our identity. He said, in the year 2009 Indian government made certain changes in the law due to which citizenship process came to a stop and the FRRO (Foreign Regional Registration Office) in R.K Puram started harassing us to bring old and sick peoples be they are bed ridden, young children's, school going children's. All the members of the family need to present at the office in order to get their visa renewed. By recalling those nostalgic days, after taking a deep breath he said, "If there were no religious

intolerance and discrimination we never had left our homeland”. We had our businesses there; we traded clothes, dry fruits, traditional medicines, having cosmetic shops, etc. we had houses there with big lands and double triple in size of the houses here. We left our properties and some of being taken by the locals at throwaway prices. So in all these circumstances we choose India as the destination for our settlement (Singh, 2016).

Respondents Perception for Indian Citizenship



(Source: Based on the sample survey conducted on 10 October 2016)

Figure No V.1

V.2 Geneva Convention of 1951 and its 1967 protocol for refugees

The Geneva Convention of 1951 is a United Nations multilateral treaty also known as the convention on the status of refugees; it is the key legal document that constitutes the base of certain obligations on the part of signatory countries with respect to rights and benefits being granted to refugees in a host country. It also sets out the rights, duties and responsibilities on the part of individuals who are granted asylum. This convention clearly mentioned about the category of peoples who did not qualify as refugees, such as war criminals. This convention was ratified by around 144 member countries and defines 'refugee' as a person who has been forced

to leave their country in order to escape from war, religious persecution and natural disaster. (UNHCR, 2010) It is based on the Article 14 of 1948, UN charter on “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”, which emphasized on the right of a person to seek asylum from persecution in other countries according to International law. A refugee may enjoy certain rights and benefits according to this convention. The soul principal of this convention is “Non-Refoulement” which means that a refugee should not return to a country where they face persecution on the basis of religion, race, nationality and membership of a particular ethnic group. UNHCR is the body which serves as the guardian of 1951 convention on refugees and its 1967 protocol. Although UNHCR has only supervisory responsibilities and it is not being empowered to enforce the convention in any country. This convention also kept some provisions that all the complaints should be refer to ‘International Court of Justice’ but no any nation has ever done this in this regard to violation of convention. In the Initial period this convention of 1951 was limited only for protecting the rights of European refugees, the other states supports this declaration so that its provisions should be applied to refugees from other places also. The 1967 protocol removed all the barriers and it is now applied to all the refugees without any geographical limitation. (UNHCR, 2011)

V.2.I Refugees in India

India is hosting around 4, 56,000 refugees including 1, 20,000 asylum seekers from Sri Lanka mostly Tamils they fleeing in the fighting scenario between the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam) and Sri Lankan armed forces. The next highest asylum seekers are from Tibet, it is estimated by UNHCR that India is providing asylum to around 110,000 Tibetans having scattered settlements in different pockets of India. The Tibetans in exile has established Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) which maintains the democratic structure of government in exile in Himachal Pardesh. This CTA co-ordinate all the political activities of the Tibetans in exile and is located in Dharamsala. (Singh, 2016) The next category of asylum seekers are from Myanmar their number is around 1,00,000 they are settled in state of Mizoram and other parts of India, they are fleeing from the persecution by the Burmese authorities, the worst suffering ethnic group in this category are Rohingya Muslims. (Dabas, 2017) According to UNHCR data the third highest numbers of asylum seekers in India are from Afghanistan, most of them are Hindus and Sikhs, who migrated to India in post 1989 period because of the religious persecution and

discrimination, they are now settled in Delhi, and their number is around 30,000. It is estimated that around 25,000 Bhutanese refugees are also residing in India. The Nepalese asylum seekers constitutes the lowest number among all the refugees in India, their number is around 25,000. Along with this around 65,000 ethnic Chakma²⁷ refugees from Bangladesh also staying in the states of Mizoram, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. The Supreme Court of India established their nationality as De-jure. (Singh, 2017)

Registered Refugees and Asylum Seekers in India, (UNHCR, 2017)

Country	Refugees
Sri Lanka	120,000
China	110,000
Myanmar	100,000
Afghanistan	30,000
Bhutan	25,000
Nepal	25,000
Total	411,000

(Source: http://www.unhcr.org.in/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3&Itemid=125)

Table No. V.1

V.2.II India as non Signatory of Convention

India is a refugee receiving country in the South Asia providing asylum to different category of refugee groups in India. The Government of India provided different standards of protection and assistance to the refugee groups. India respects the principal of “Non-Refoulement” for the

²⁷ The Chakma and Hajongs are the ethnic people who lived in the Chittagong Hill tracts, most of which are located in Bangladesh. Chakmas are predominantly Buddhists, while Hajongs are Hindus. They are found in Northeast India, West Bengal, Bangladesh and Myanmar. They are living in the Chittgong Hill tracts fled from the erstwhile East Pakistan in 1964-65, since they lost their land to the development of Kaptai Dam on the Karnaphuli River. In addition to it the Chakmas faced religious persecution as they were non-Muslims and did not able to speak Bengali. They eventually sought asylum in India, the Indian government setup relief camps in Arunachal Pradesh and a majority of them continue to live there even after five decades. According to the 2011 census around 47,471 Chakmas are living in Arunachal Pradesh.

refugees, which states that India is not forcing the asylum seekers to return back to the country in which they are subjected to persecution. India is not the signatory of 1951 Convention of refugees and its 1967 protocol, but still India is providing different standards of protection and assistance to these refugee groups. India always stood up for providing asylum to the refugees. At present India is holding the biggest share of South Asian refugee population. (Sarkar, 2016) So the question arises why India didn't sign the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol?

- The Indian line of argument is that borders in South Asia are extremely porous and in case of any conflict it can result into the mass movement of peoples to India and it will create strain on the infrastructure and resources of the country, which is already reeling under the high population pressure.
- It can also upset the demographic balance of India.
- This protocol is only the partial regime for the protection of refugees.
- Most of the migrants are economic migrants so the issue of mixed flows has not been adequately addressed by the convention.
- The concept of international burden sharing has not been developed and there is no as such clause of convention deals with burden sharing.
- The Convention of 1951 and its Protocol of 1967 didn't address the question relating to the responsibility of the states, to create refugee flows.
- Cooperation with other states for addressing the issue of refugee problem has not been resolved in the convention. (Sarkar,2016)

In India the lack of refugee protection law is a major obstacle for asylum seekers, the refugees are treated as aliens it creates a limited understanding of refugees and it may give rise to statelessness issues along with hostile attitude of locals towards asylum seekers. The steady increase of number of refugees from Afghanistan in the last two decades has diminished the protection space for them; along with it give rise in Xenophobia and racism in India. (UNHCR, 2011) The magnitude of Afghan refugees in India differs from study to study but it is clear that their figure in India at present is above 18,000 and they are concentrated in different pockets of Delhi. The refugees and asylum seekers in India are treated at par with the foreigners and their domestic legal standards related to their stay, exit and entry, all are included in the following Acts as such mentioned below:

- Passport Entry Into India Act, 1920
- Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939
- Foreigners Act, 1946
- Passport Act, 1967 (MEA,2007)

V.3 Afghan Minorities and Citizenship

The process of migration which started in the post soviet era is still going on and the thousands of Afghan refugees have been living in India for more than two decades. The Indian government put the official figures of Afghanistan refugees in India is 18,730. The Government of India is providing LTV (Long Term Visa) to the religious minorities such as Hindu, Sikhs, Jain's and Buddhists in order to save them from the religious persecution in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The lack of national refugee protection framework is a major hurdle in providing effective refugee protection to the Afghan minorities. According to the UNHCR estimates the population of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs in the year 1989, when Soviet Union withdraws from Afghanistan was 50,000. Thousands of Afghan Refugees Staying in Delhi from past 2 decades has been recognized as political refugees, UNHCR also slashed down its aid program which helped them earlier for many years. There has been a continuous outflow and inflow of Afghan refugees, this trend of migration is not constant it entirely depends upon the prevailing situation in Afghanistan (Dutta, 2009).

The process of migration started before the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan because violence was prevalent in some areas and some Hindus and Sikhs were fearful for the future. In the year 1989-1992 around 30,000 Afghan Hindus and Sikhs migrated to Delhi. It was all started when the Mujahidin's attacked the Gurudwara (Guru Nanak Darbar) in Jalalabad in the year 1989 and 35 Sikhs lost their lives in this attack; this led to start the process of migration from Afghanistan to India. Most of the Afghan Sikhs travel to Delhi via air and some came through land routes via Afghanistan to Pakistan and then Pakistan to Attari via train (Singh, 2016). The political turmoil in Afghanistan has deeply impacted the lives of Afghan Hindu and Sikh minorities. At one time their numbering was above 50,000 in the early 1990s, around 30,000 thousand Hindus and Sikhs migrated to India between 1989-1998, within a decade. The population of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs in India is also dwindling because they are not getting

Indian citizenship as India is not the signatory of 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. These two conventions relating to refugees are the complete codifications of norms and rules for the rights of refugees to claim citizenship at international level (UNHCR, 2011).

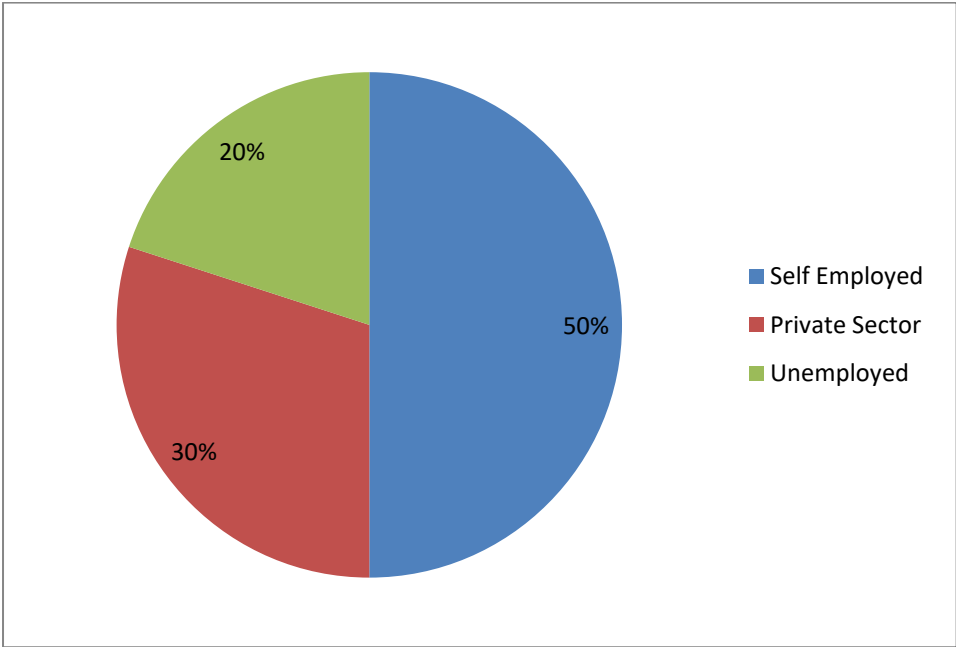
A refugee is a person who is unable or unwilling to return his country of origin because of the fear of being persecuted for the reasons of language, religion, membership of particular social group, nationality, race and political opinion. At present after migration of Afghan minorities from India to other parts of the world they left with 16,000 in number and possessed UNHCR certificates, identified as refugees and entitled to certain basic services like healthcare, education, and assistance in naturalization process. They are not entitled to full services like employment, free education, access to PDS, protection against arrest and detention in certain cases. The 'Indian Citizenship Act of 2005' stipulates that citizenship can be acquired by mandatory stay period of 12 years in India under the naturalization clause. Due to lack of government initiative and complicated bureaucratic process only few have been able to complete the process and got Indian citizenship. At present in Delhi out of 16,000 only 35% got Indian citizenship. At one time their population was around 35,000 in India, but due to strict citizenship norms these refugees are migrating now to other parts of the world like Canada, USA, UK, Germany, and Australia etc. (Ghosh, 2016).

V.4 Socio-Economic and Political Status of Displaced Minorities

At present the Afghans who are living in India out of 16,000 only 35% got Indian citizenship. This recent decision of Indian government to provide citizenship to Afghan Hindus and Sikhs is a welcome step and it would heal the wounds of oppression and marginalization faced by Afghan Hindus and Sikhs in India. They faced extremely challenging situations in India and they spent alien life in their ancestral homeland. They faced difficulties in self settlement, livelihood earning, making new life in new environment, visa issues etc. It is amply clear that the Afghan refugees in India are facing lot of problems because they don't have residence permits; due to this their survival becomes difficult in Delhi. They are facing lot of financial problems and insecurity in India. They are forced to live in substandard houses and even they can't afford to send their children's in good schools, for earning their livelihood. In Delhi most of them are relying on private business, spending their life in destitution and some of them have become hawkers and street vendors in posh South Delhi streets.

The biggest socio-economic problem for Afghan refugees in an alien country like India is of the occupation because the Government of India has not given them proper amenities status of refugees. They are practicing private trade, small scale business and other small works. Accordingly majority (50%) of the Afghan respondents are self employed, 30% were holding private jobs in some factories and shops, while rest 20% are unemployed as shown in the (pie Chart 5.1) and (Table 5.2) below.

Occupation of Afghan Refugees in India



(Source: Based on the sample survey conducted on 10 October 2016)

Figure No V.2

Majority of the respondents are of the opinion that they were much better off and spending a comfortable life in Afghanistan with their business and good portion of land, whereas in Delhi the situation is entirely different because scarcity of land in capital city. In the sample survey, it came to our knowledge that majority of the displaced persons have their income very much meager to survive in India, because Delhi is one of the costliest cities of India. Narinder Singh of Guru Nanak Pura (Tilak Nagar) has mentioned that currently the fee for Indian citizenship is

very high i.e. Rs 15,000, he applied for Indian Citizenship in the year 2007 but still lingering for citizenship rights. He requested to the Indian government that Afghan Hindu and Sikh refugees should be exempted from this fee because their forefathers are of Indian origin and India is their motherland. He further mentioned that, in Canada and USA if a child is born he got the citizenship of that country instantly at the time of birth, but same is not in the case of India, our children's born here are not treated as Indian citizens. (Singh, 2016)

The present status of these refugees is of displaced peoples from Afghanistan, on the basis of it they are availing stay visa, the validity of this stay visa is for one year. All of the respondents demanded that this validity should be extended to three years; it will be a big assistance to the Afghan Hindu and Sikh communities in India. The respondents are also in the favor of extension of return visa up to three times a year, rather than present status of once in a year. It could be beneficial for the Afghan minorities because they can easily look after their properties in Afghanistan. Recently, the Union Minister 'Rajnath Singh' announced, that centre has introduced the Indian Citizenship Amendment Bill in parliament, this bill will give citizenship to the religious minorities migrated from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh due to religious Intolerance. (Ghosh, 2016)

V.5 Policies for Afghan Minorities in the Host Countries

The Afghan Hindu and Sikh refugees reached UK after saving their lives from religious persecution and later on they settled there. In the post Soviet period, there was a quantum jump in the number of applications of Afghans for asylum in UK. The National Statistics of UK in the year 2009 has estimated the total population of Afghans in UK is 15,000 peoples. (ONS, 2010) The asylum grant applications were high in the year 2006-2007. The Afghan Hindu and Sikh community opt UK as their destination for asylum, because UK provides confirmed residence to Afghan asylum seekers within a 3 years period. The 2009 estimates of the Office of National Statistics (ONS) put forward the amazing figures of migration. According to ONS report the numbers of Sikh females in UK were 20,000 and males figures are 35,000. In the year 2009 around 5,000 Afghans were granted British citizenship. According to the survey conducted by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) in 2009, Afghans were the 6th largest nationality to be granted British citizenship. (Tran, 2014)

The Afghan community in UK is not free from worries they also faced numerous issues in UK, like;

- Problems related to unemployment,
- Cultural isolation in UK,
- Racism and racial attacks on Afghans,
- Insecurity and fear of return
- Mental health of children's because they were treated badly by the UK border agency.

(Rose, 2013)

**Afghan Sikhs Recovered from Container proceeding to UK
(one out of 35 was dead)**



(Source: Sikh channel coverage on UK Docks Afghan Sikh Death)

Picture No. V.2

Recently about 35 Afghan Sikhs were recovered from the container of UK port in Tilbury dock London, one among them found dead 34 alive out of which 12 were children's. The port staff heard the screaming's from the container and they discover one man dead and 34 suffering from dehydration and hypothermia all were taken to hospital for treatment. Later on the police agency found that they spend nine days locked inside in their 4,000 mile journey started from Afghanistan (Variyar, 2014). Meet Singh Kapoor was 40 years old, who died in this container, succeeded by his wife and two children's. He was found dead in the Tilbury docks in Essex London he undertook his family in order to escape from the debt and worst situation in Afghanistan. He was grown up in the Jalalabad city of Kabul, he was running a spice and herbs shop in Jalalabad and his business eventually crumbled because of civil strife and turmoil in Afghanistan, it plunges him into debt and he was unable to repay the debt of Haji Ghandoi. It was in all these circumstances he took the decision to migrate Europe with his family. He hoped for a better life in Europe, where his relatives are settled and they will also ascertain him among the London's 37,000 afghan Hindu and Sikh community (Sikh Channel, 2017)

The asylum seekers from Afghanistan hold the third largest ranking after the Syrians and Iraqis (UNHCR, 2014). The current instability in Afghanistan shows that the migration of Afghan Hindu and Sikh population will not stopped in future. In the last two decades the official data of the Netherland government analyses that there is a continuous migration of Afghans to the Netherlands. The Afghan migrants in Netherlands found 130 Associations which aimed at maintaining Afghan culture in Netherlands and providing charitable assistance in terms of providing shelter, food, and employment counseling. The Afghan Hindu and Sikh population in Netherlands is scattered in major areas like Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Hague, Almere, Wijchen, Denhelder etc. (AIDA, 2016).

(Singh, 2014) explains about the Gurudwara Guru Nanak Sahib in Brussels, which was closed by the local Belgian authorities in the year 2014, on the grounds that they provide free food to the illegal immigrants. The Gurudwara Sahib was reopened after 7 weeks of negotiation and the local Sikhs of Belgium defended it that, it is in the Sikh tradition that the place of worship is open to everyone and every visitor can enjoy free Langar in the Gurudwara premises. According to the local Hindu and Sikh community in Belgium the police cops regularly check the id cards of the visitors in temple and Gurudwaras. The Belgian government wants the men without

families, should return voluntarily back to Afghanistan. In the year 2013 the Belgian authorities received 1300 applications for asylum. In Belgium the asylum seekers not able to get jobs, health facilities, education and descent home for their children's. (Nielsen, 2014)

The refugee population from Afghanistan scattered all around the world and constitutes the big share of refugee population in Canada also. In the year 1993, the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration of Canada headed by 'Sergio Marchi' and Afghanistan's Ministry of Immigration 'Aziz Bhaloo' negotiated a joint resettlement agreement. This agreement opens the doors for all Afghan refugees, especially for the women and children. Canada is among the top 10 countries of the world hosting the largest population of Afghan asylum seekers. The Canadian government welcomed the Afghans visiting Canada for education, tourism and permanent stay. According to BBC, the Afghans who settled in Canada prior to 1991 were 5,390 in number. In the Afghan Civil war period from 1991 to 1995 around 10,320 Afghan refugees migrated to Canada. Whereas, in the Taliban period from 1996-2000, the population of Afghans who migrated to Canada was highest and record-breaking, it was recorded around 16,240 and the migration of Afghan Hindu and Sikh population is still a continuous process in order to find a better place for living. The Afghan Hindu and Sikhs population is concentrated mainly in Ontario, Toronto, Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Quebec, Yukon, Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador (Ghafour, 2014).

The religious intolerance led Afghan Hindu and Sikhs flee from Afghanistan in search of secular regime and some of them landed in Australia as asylum seekers. The Australian authorities accepted some of them as refugees. A severe drought in the year 2000 in Afghanistan prompted Afghan refugees to migrate Australia and they migrated by boat. The population of Afghan Hindu and Sikhs increased drastically in Australia from a mere 764 in 1991 to 9,945 in 2011. The majority of Afghan population in Australia settled in Victoria and New South Wales. The Afghan population is working hard for earning their livelihood they are engaged in transport, production, agriculture and farming, mining and laboring. (Sikh Youth Australia, 2016)

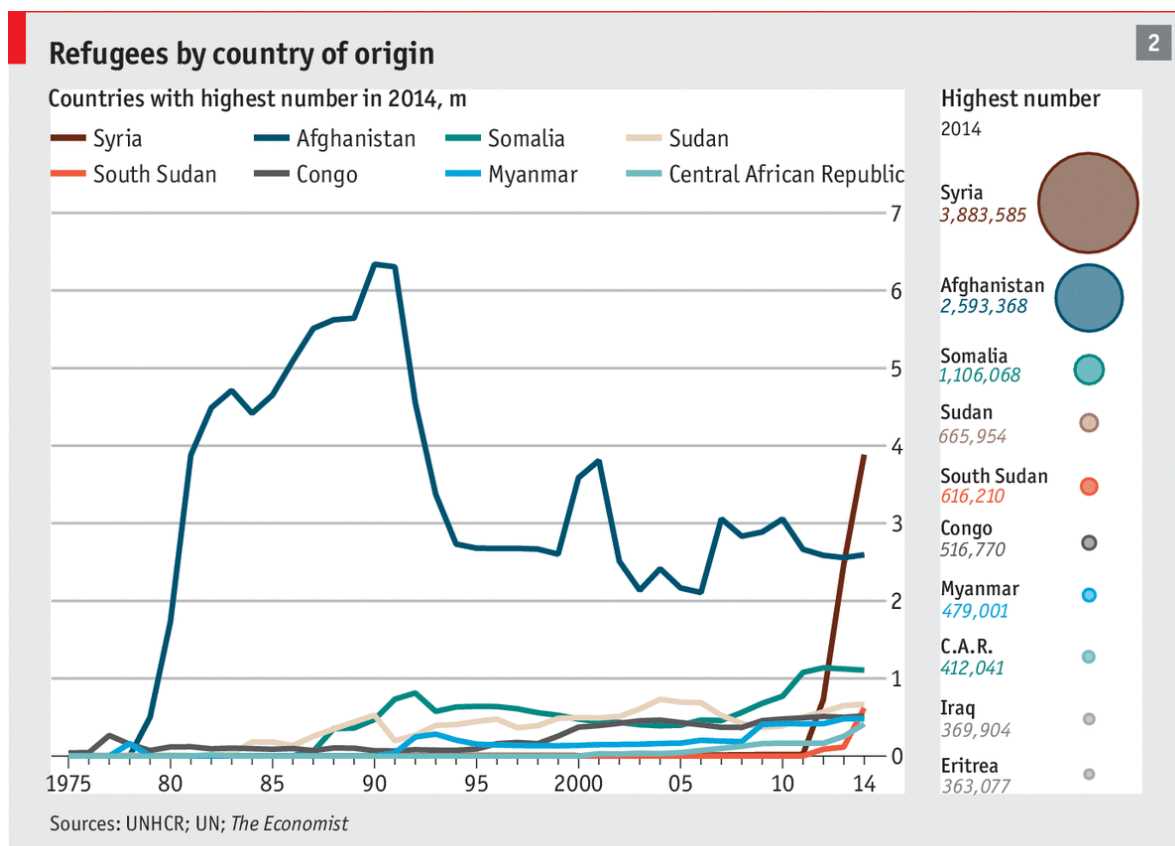
So, there is no as such permanent policy for the Afghan minorities in the host countries but being the signatory of the convention of 1951 the host countries need to provide citizenship to the asylum seekers within a short duration of their stay in the country. It may my 3 to5 years stay,

the Afghan Hindu and Sikh community choose UK as their destination for asylum, because UK provides confirmed residence to Afghan refugees within a 3 years period.

V.6 Policies of Afghan Government towards Displaced Minorities

The Afghan Civil War totally disrupt the development of Afghanistan, it destroyed much of the country's infrastructure. In this catastrophe around two million Afghans were killed, as many as one million were injured and more than six millions were driven out of the country as refugees, additionally two million became internally displaced refugees. (UNHCR, 2013:18) Massive destruction in the physical infrastructure of Afghanistan with more than twenty four thousand villages of Afghanistan destroyed.

Refugee Population by Country of Origin



Economist.com

Figure No V.3

The physical destruction could not be measured properly in number or percentage of the peoples killed, wounded and displaced by the war. Along with it the physical destruction of infrastructure, brought damage to property such as houses, roads, buildings, orchards, bridges and fields. Nothing is spared in this violent struggle everything was targeted including schools, temples, Gurudwaras, Mosques (Minarets), Hospitals and Industrial structures all being damaged and destroyed during the combat operations (Goodson, 2001:93). It made the long chunk of farms unsafe for farming, because it sown the land with mines instead of seeds. The large portion of roads reduced to dirt tracks, along with it the large portion of cities reduced to rubble. The political and social institutions were destroyed irrevocably especially armed forces, government institutions, universities and political organizations. (IDP, 2015)

V.6.1 Phases of Displacement

The entire structure of Afghan society crumbled due to effect of Afghan war. Afghanistan's displaced population constitutes the highest count in the world with 6.2 million refugees, migrated from Afghanistan in nearby countries Iran and Pakistan in 1990's, more than 2 million peoples constitutes Internally Displaced Population (IDPs). After the fall of communist government the substantial population repatriation has occurred but only 3.5 million refugees returned back. In the year 1994, as the fighting in Kabul was at peak Pakistan closed its border in order to prevent another massive flow of refugees. In this dark period of 1992-97, the dramatic influx was seen in the internally displaced population. The Taliban's clash with Northern Alliance and cultural hijacking prompted several hundred thousand more Afghans to flee their homes. In this migration and displacement process since 1978, Afghanistan has experienced with six major phases of forced displacement; (Firdous, 2015)

1. Phase 1 (1978-1988)

In this phase the major chunk of refugee outflow and displacement started after the 'Saur Revolution' of 1978, this revolution was backed by the Soviet Union and it brought the Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) faction into power.

2. Phase 2 (1989-1995)

In this period displacement started after the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan in the year 1989, with this the American backed Mujahidin's came to power and the Afghan Civil war broke out, the Mujahidin's after several years of fighting fell down in 1992. In this fighting the Mujahidin's internal rivalry became so radical that they started fighting with themselves.

3. Phase 3 (1996-2001)

In this Phase the radicalization of Taliban movement began and this created volatile situation for the minority population groups in Afghanistan and the mass migration of minorities from Afghanistan to other parts of the world. In this Taliban period, the non-state actors wants to govern the state according to Sharia laws and the fighting was concentrated mainly in Non-Pashtun territories of the North. In the mean time drought and famines at this juncture of time also prompted displacement.

4. Phase 4 (2001-2002)

After 11 September 2001 attack on USA, US along with NATO forces launched 'Global War on Terror' for eliminating the base camp of terrorism. In these drone attacks on Taliban cadre, the mass casualty of civilians and this impelled the displacement to the safer zones.

5. Phase 5 (2002-2004)

Following the end of Taliban, the international agencies like UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) undertook the world's largest refugee repatriation programme for rehabilitating the Afghan refugees from Iran, Pakistan, India and other parts of the world. It is estimated that nearly 5 million Afghan refugees have taken asylum in other countries. The majority of 1.2 million internally displaced persons returned home safely due to the efforts of UNHCR and Karzai government.

6. Phase 6 (2004-to present time)

The growing strength of Taliban in the Pashtun dominated areas particularly in Southeast and Southwest of Afghanistan instigated a new fierce battle with the joint Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF)²⁸ and NATO forces against the Taliban led-insurgent groups.

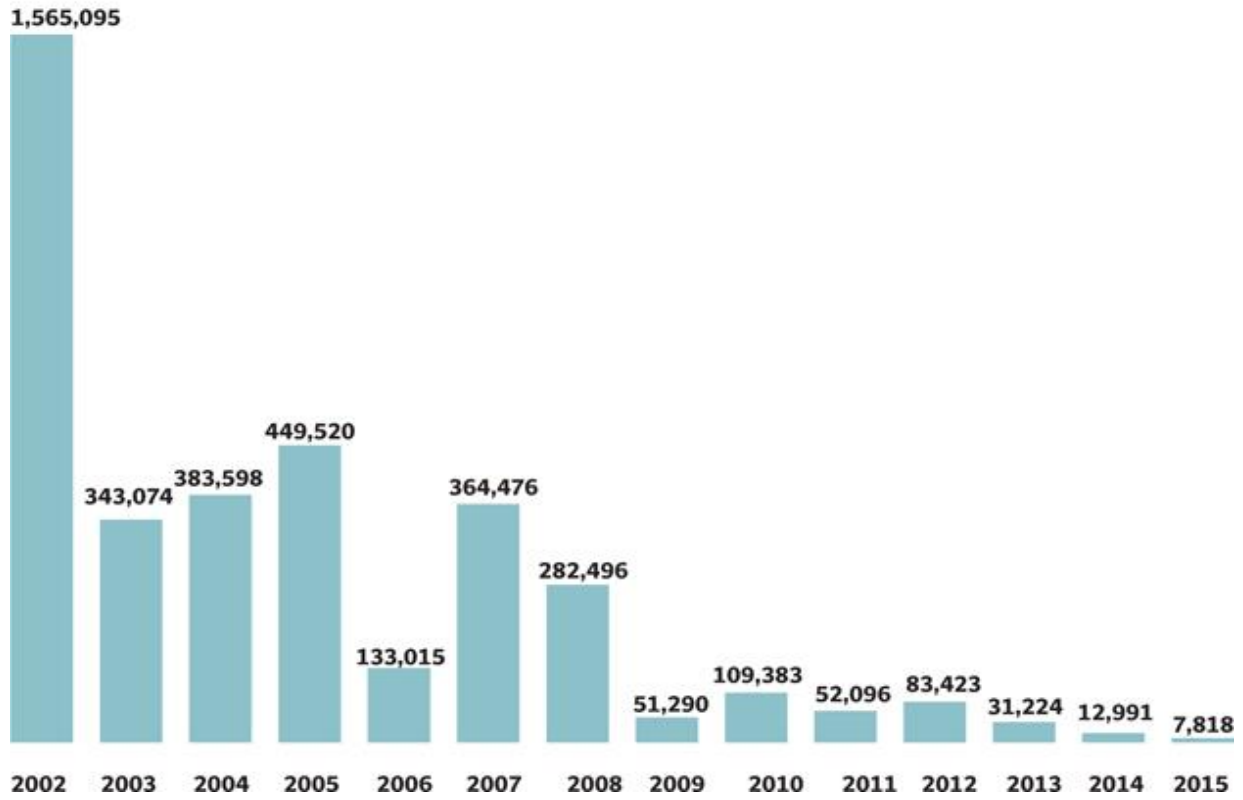
In the year 2007, the UN Secretary General on Human Rights of Displaced Persons in association with the Afghanistan Government Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MORR) outlined the policy to prevent the displacement and to assist the displaced population. The Afghanistan government is not able to prevent the arbitrary displacement because of its inability to exercise effective control in its territory due to the presence of non-state actors and armed groups. The central government of Afghanistan exercises effective control over less than 50% of the Afghan territory. The inability of the national government to mitigate the displacement of Afghan civilians because of the ongoing operations of the international military forces, the Afghan President repeatedly condemned the repeatedly killing of Afghan civilians in these NATO operations. The issue of civilian causality is a major bone of contention between the Afghan government and NATO forces. The Karzai government also launched investigations into a number of the incidents in Afghanistan. In the year 2010, Karzai government appreciated the NATO' S role in reducing the civilian casualties, but at the same time urged the NATO forces to protect the lives of civilians in their combat operations. (Stanekzai, 2012)

In this battle, thousands of local civilians relocate to the safer zones where shelter and livelihood can be easily accessible. In this phase the civilian population is forcibly displaced in their own country, because there was a relative volatile security and political situation in Pakistan. The continued deportation from Iran also makes it a less desirable place, moreover the harassment of refugees in refugee camps of Iran and Pakistan was also a common phenomenon. 'The UNHCR Report of 2011' mentions the number of persons displaced due to conflict, violence, and turmoil in Afghanistan is estimated to be around 3,50,000 in this phase. According to the IDMC (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre) report of 2015, around 948,000 peoples were internally displaced by this conflict and violence as of July 2015. (IDP, 2015) In the below mentioned

²⁸ Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) is the combined forces of Afghanistan it is also known as Afghan National Defense and Security forces. It consists of Afghan National Army, Afghan Armed Forces, Afghan Air Force, Afghan Local Police, Afghan National Police and National Directorate of security. It was in the year 2010 NATO forces initiated to equip ANSF with training and overall grooming. At the NATO Summit in Chicago in May 2012, NATO and ISAF nations agreed to play their part in the long term sustainment of ANSF so, that in future these forces can handle the situation. The combined strength of the ANSF forces is around 3, 80,000.

graph 5.3 of UNHCR, the year wise return of Afghan refugees shows that the highest number of refugee population returned back to Afghanistan in the years 2001, 2004 and 2005.

Year-wise return of Afghan refugees



Source: IDP data on the Year-wise breakup of displaced population)

Figure No V.4

V.7 Policies of Afghan Government for Returnees

The Karzai government presented a blueprint for the security, education, economic growth and governance of the country to address the cause of displacement. It encouraged the refugees to return back to their homeland and to redesign their motherland with progressive model of development. For promoting this agenda the Afghan Constitution affirms the right to freedom of education, health, employment, freedom of movement and family life to all those who are

internally displaced. In 2003, 'Ministry of Rural Development and Rehabilitation' (MORRD) concluded in the statement that the state of Afghanistan is responsible for the protection of the displaced population of the country, with the support from specialized agencies such as UNHCR. The Ministry of Justice (Afghan government) in its report of 2010, presented a national policy for the promotion of public awareness program with the aim of creating citizens inclination towards their legal rights. In addition to this, the UN guiding principles on internal displacement have also been translated into Pashto and Dari languages and were distributed at the national and local levels in 2003. The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) report distinguishes the following four categories of displacement as under:

1. 'Protracted Displacement' is the displacement that lasts for a longer period; it includes the majority of identified internally displaced persons.
2. 'New Conflict Induced Displacement' it included those individuals which displaced since 2002.
3. 'Secondary Displacement' it includes the displacement of returnees and deportees.
4. 'Food Security Displacement' it is a kind of displacement which occurs due to natural disaster and food security.

The government of Afghanistan took several initiatives for the protection of property rights, in order to discourage confiscation of property episodes because it is being reported to the authorities that in many places there is a rampant plundering and seizure of property of displaced population. The UNHCR in coordination with the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR) has organized 'go and see visits' special program to protect the property rights of displaced population. (Solomon & Stark, 2016)

V.7.I Policies in Hamid Karzai's Time

The Afghan Government in the post 2001 period wants to safeguard the rights of non-Muslim minorities, they want to balance the unity and equality of Afghanistan because the 90% of Afghan Hindu and Sikhs have left the Afghanistan from the last three decades the discrimination. The neglect attitude of government is the main reason for their migration to other parts of the world. The worst humiliation they faced during the Taliban regime in which they need to wear yellow color badges to identify themselves, moreover they lost all of their government jobs.

Fifteen years after the Taliban rule they are still lingering for their cultural and political rights but no one is hearing them. The Hindu and Sikh community peoples who are remaining in Afghanistan are struggling for their rights and they are facing insecurity, hostile neighbors, bullying in schools, dwindling economic prospects, negotiations for cremation of their dead and restoration of the confiscated property. It was only after the coming into power of President Hamid Karzai announced the allocation of seats to the members of the minority communities in both lower and upper house of Loya Jirga. In this context it was a welcome step supported by civil society members. It was seen as a good step for the protection of a tiny minority in times of insecurity and turbulence. (Foschini, 2013)

In recent times the changing political conditions in Afghanistan have allured Hindu and Sikh Afghan refugees to opt for voluntary repatriation, According to the UNHCR reports, Afghan refugees have been in India since 1981. The option of return back was not there, it is the first time in the last twenty years that Afghan refugees have shown their interest in returning back, it could be the beginning of a new trend because they had received the maximum number of requests for repatriation. In the first Parliamentary elections after the fall of Taliban regime the Afghan government decided to provide representation to the minority community in the lower house of the Afghan parliament. Anarkali Kour Honaryar was elected in Wolesi Jirga (Lower House) from Kabul Province and senior Hindu Gangaram was appointed as a senator in Meshrano Jirga (Upper House) (Ruchi, 2017).

In the year 2010 when Anarkali Kour Honaryar failed to retain her seat in the Wolesi Jirga, at that time Karzai government came forward and nominated her for the Upper House Meshrano Jirga. The Karzai government instructed the Ministry of Religious Affairs, to carry out an assessment of the problems faced by the Hindu and Sikh communities and demanded suggestions from the ministry in order to improve the volatile situation. The Afghan Hindu and Sikh population provided reservation to the government because their chances of getting elected are very much microscopic in the 249 seats of the Lower House. According to Hamid Karzai statement to the leading state newspaper, "If we don't give them this constitutional privilege, these minorities will never reach the parliament. So President Hamid Karzai has keen likings for the marginalized minority community of Hindus and Sikhs he wants to protect this ethnic group from insecurity.

Afghan Sikhs and Hindus with President Karzai in Kabul



(Source: <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/world/photo/2011/07/18/2008060779>)

Picture No V.2

V.7.II Policies in Ashraf Ghani's Time

The Afghanistan government in the year 2015 under the President ship of Ashraf Ghani has retaken the reservation memorandum of the two minority communities in the country's lower house of parliament (Wolesi Jirga). It is all for the protection of rights and proper representation of those 3,000 Afghan Hindu and Sikhs in Afghanistan. The majority of these Afghan Hindu and Sikhs are resided in Kabul, Ghazni, Jalalabad, Kunduz, Helmand valley and Nangarhar provinces. In the April of 2017 the foundation stone of the first ever school modeled on the demands of Hindu and Sikh minorities has been laid in the Nangarhar province (Sharma, 2016). The Afghan Hindu and Sikhs were invited by the President Ashraf Ghani on the occasion of Eid festival, they came to see the President and after their meeting they were very happy and thankful to President Ashraf Ghani for providing reservation to the two minority communities in

Loya Jirga. The arrival of new President after more than a decade shifts the power relations of tiny elite. The new President has decided to tackle corruption and insurgency from Afghanistan with a liberal democratic model in his mind. President Ghani has pushed the reset button in the US Afghan relations on a different and a much better way. It is a good step for both Kabul and Washington. The Afghan US relations got deteriorated in the previous regime of Hamid Karzai because President Karzai condemned the civilian casualties and he held US responsible for ills plaguing in Afghanistan.

Afghan Sikhs were invited by the President Ghani on the occasion of Eid festival



(Source:<https://thewire.in/afghan-government-approves-reservation-for-sikhshindus-in-parliament/>)

Picture No. V.3

President Ghani have a different posture towards US, he publicly acknowledges the United States sacrifice in terms of blood and treasure and he thanked American taxpayers on several occasions for Afghanistan’s reconstruction and stability since 2001. President Ashraf Ghani has adopted the “Liberal Democracy” model of US in which freedom and protection should be

provided to all the citizens of the country. He stressed on the improvement of governance with special emphasis on economic development of the country. The opposition camp of Afghanistan targeted the President Ghani's government on the major issues like flourishing drug trade, Poverty and insurgency in Afghanistan. The President also decided to cut the opium production because it is fueling the Taliban and it risked Afghanistan into a fragmented criminal state. (Sharif, 2014)

V.8 Elections in Afghanistan and its Impact

Afghanistan is in the process of transition as the NATO forces and US handed over the security responsibility to the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF). A new mission launched by the NATO forces called as 'Resolute Support' in order to train, equip, advice and assist the Afghan Security forces and institutions, it was launched in January 2014. In the continuity of US liberal democracy model the elections for the third presidential poll held on 5 April 2014. Hamid Karzai was not able to contest because of constitutional provisions on term limits. On 22 July 2014, after the first and second round of elections the final result declared, the election commission named the Ashraf Ghani as winner and it paved the way for the peaceful transfer of democratic powers from the existing President Hamid Karzai to Ashraf Ghani. It was for the first time in the history of Afghanistan that power was democratically transferred with proper procedures. The election was held in two rounds by following the French system, in which the first round held to secure 50% of the votes for all the candidates, and then second round for the top two candidates against each other (Harrison, 2014).

This process stretches to months because getting the ballot papers back from the far flung areas took several months. The election was held under the superintendence of the Independent Election Commission (IEC), all the grievances and discrepancies were handled by the Electoral Complaints Commission. In 2014 elections 12 million candidates registered as new voters, and about 8 million members of Afghan Diaspora were also eligible to vote. In total there were about 6,845 voting centers and the election organizers was very active for proper voting system. In the elections 58% of voters turnout recorded, nearly 4.5 million above the last election voter's turnout. The Taliban wants to disrupt the election by targeting the polling centers and election workers. The Taliban forces attacked in the heart of Kabul and opened fire in a restaurant killing

nine peoples including one Afghan journalist, his wife and two of his children's. In all these episodes finally in 19 September 2014, the Election Commission declared Ashraf Ghani as the President and Abdullah signed power sharing agreement for taking an important position in the government (Harrison, 2014). The Afghan Hindu and Sikh community members welcomed the new government and members of these communities have some hope in new government, Kabul's Rawail Singh a leader of Sikh community is a big supporter of recently sworn new president Ashraf Ghani. His face book profile timeline having a photo of the President Ghani holding his 4 year daughter during the election campaign rally. In the below mentioned picture (V.5) the Afghan President Ashraf Ghani is holding meeting with the representatives of Hindu and Sikh community members in 2017.

President Ashraf Ghani is Hosting Meeting with Afghan Hindus and Sikhs



(Source: <https://afghanhindu.wordpress.com>)

Picture No. V.4

The president Ashraf Ghani after coming into power holds a brief meeting with the Sikhs of Afghanistan and assures them their protection and promised them to solve their problems in all the spheres of life. The president assured the business class of Afghan Hindu and Sikhs to trade freely. The government will provide them full security and protection. The 'Department of Land' has been instructed by the President Ghani for restoration of confiscated property to minority groups. The members of Hindu and Sikh community also got assurance for the crematorium rites of their community and President assures them for the police protection in the cremation procession, President also allocate them some places for the cremation of their dead. On promising the preservation of their culture rights President Ghani ensured them for the establishment of special schools for Hindu and Sikh community members where they can preserve their culture easily (Stancati and Amiri, 2015).

Rawail Singh, the Afghan Sikh leader worried about the future of their minuscule religious minority that will disappear in near future if the new government of Afghanistan doesn't pay attention to this persistent issue of discrimination. Schooling is one of the main issues; most of the Afghan Sikh families from Helmand are illiterate and they teach their children's Punjabi at home, but they hired a private teacher also who comes home to teach them Pashto and Dari. Despite all these challenges faced by the minority community, Rawail Sikh mentions that, he is proud of being Afghan. "I love Afghanistan more than any other country, because it's my homeland country, we Hindus and Sikhs didn't belong from somewhere else, this is the area from where we belongs too". The country's constitution recognizes the rights of minority community members to practice their religious faith freely. In a meeting with the representatives of Hindu and Sikh community members President Ghani promised to address their main concerns and assure them that they will also be entitled to the same rights as other Afghans are entitled. (Stancati and Amiri , 2015)

To sum up after conducting the detailed interviews with the Afghan Hindu and Sikh Diaspora in India and also the informal interviews with the help of social media with various knowledgeable community members present in Afghanistan. This research gathered qualitative data and personal perspectives. Through this research I investigated the Immigration of Afghan Hindu and Sikh minorities to other parts of the world. It is also to be taken into consideration that how this

immigration has affected the identity, culture, language, religion, family and marriage patterns of these Afghan Hindu and Sikh communities.

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Chapter -VI
Conclusion

The present study analyzed the impact of religious extremism on Afghan Hindu and Sikh minorities. This study presents the linkage between the religious extremism in Afghanistan and the migration of minorities. The main argument of this study is how in the post Soviet period radical shift came in Afghanistan which crumbled the secular structure of society and the two minority communities faced the worst discrimination at the hands of majority Muslim population. This work analyses the role of India in such a turbulent time, when these Hindu and Sikh minorities didn't left with any other option to take shelter then India came forward. The Indian government provided them all the possible help in their rehabilitation and resettlement of life in India. This work also studied the socio-economic and political conditions of refugees in exile and the role of international organizations in their resettlement. This work also analysis the mass migration of minorities to other parts of the world like Germany, UK, Canada, Belgium, Netherlands and Australia etc. because of the stringent and rigid clauses of citizenship in India.

The overwhelming majority of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs identified themselves with the Indian subcontinent and mostly were of Indian origin. Afghanistan's Hindus and Sikhs came to Afghanistan as traders and later settled down there. The geostrategic location of Afghanistan is such that it lies in the heart of South Asia, Central Asia and West Asia. Afghanistan is at the crossroads of major north-south and east-west trade routes. Afghanistan's Hindus and Sikhs have a long history in the country; they came through the trading routes via Kandhar and Kabul and later on settled here. After the Soviet withdrawal in 1989 both the minority communities faced the worst discrimination at the hands of the majority Muslim community. The collapse of Soviet-backed regime had left Afghanistan's Hindus and Sikhs in a vulnerable position. 'Religious Intolerance' towards Hindus and Sikhs was at peak in the Mujahedeen era. Ultimately Hindus and Sikhs were deprived from the state protection and the process of migration started. This discrimination started with restrictions on their religious freedom, exclusion from government jobs, kidnappings, murder, illegal seizure of property and destruction of their religious places. The economic misery and the religious intolerance towards them was at peak in one time. The untrimmed beards and the turban wearing Sikhs were easily identifiable and become the target of hate crimes and harassment. The business community of these Afghan Hindu and Sikh traders, which stretched from Afghan cities to India, was perceived as wealthy and this perception made them a key target of kidnappings for ransom. In this way the "Religious Intolerance" towards Hindus and Sikhs started in Afghanistan in the Mujahidin's era deprived Hindus and Sikhs from

the state protection and the process of migration started all this led to the process of mass migration of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan to other parts of the world.

The Mujahidin faction's rivalry increased day by day, the Mujahidin factions began fighting as much with themselves as with the PDPA forces, resulting in increased suffering and bloodshed for the local masses and especially for Hindus and Sikhs. Afghanistan is now a battleground among different Mujahidin warlords; they occupied different cities and regions of the country. The Northern Alliance warlord Rashid Dostum, who is in the control of the city of Mazar-e-Sharif ruled over it from 1992 until his ouster in 1997. Burhanuddin Rabbani, the same Northern Alliance warlord ruled over Kabul from 1992-96, during his reign over 60,000 people were murdered and thousands of women were raped. The warlord Ismail Khan rules the city of Herat, which he ruled from 1992 to 1995. The warlord Yunis Khalis ruled over Jalalabad up to 1994. The mujahidin warlord's internal rivalry brings continuous death and destruction over the country. They fought over the spoils, and sought to enlarge their new fiefdoms at the expense of their neighboring rivals. In this tussle ethnicity becomes the important cause of concern because these leaders were of different ethnic origins. The fall of Najibullah government in April 1992, served as the legitimate end to the Jihad and prompted a large scale return of the refugees from Pakistan and to a lesser extent from Iran. In the mean time Taliban forces gained its roots, it appears that in the midst of all these discussions, the Taliban movement appeared, the Pakistan Intelligence aided in the creation of this new Islamic fundamentalist movement. The Taliban was born in the Islamic schools that had sprung up inside the Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan. Its leadership was primarily motivated by the bulk of religious students, primarily Pashtuns who wants to create a theocratic state according to Sharia law, the ideological underpinnings of the Taliban movement, have been further a cause of concern. The country became politically and diplomatically isolated. Although the arrival of Taliban was welcomed by some sections of Afghanistan's population as a result of Taliban's replacing the period of warlords with strictly Sharia law in combination with the Pashtun tribal code. They imposed Wahabhi and Deobandi interpretations of Islamic tradition and openly declared that idolaters have no place in the "Islamic Paradise" which they have constructed.

This Taliban cadre was basically the orphanages operated in the refugee camps, with funding from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States. These students were the strong adherents of Islam and are

basically trained in Pakistan based training camps and Madrassas. These Taliban forces came to power in the year 1994. The Taliban sought to create a theocratic state based on their interpretations of the Koran. Minorities were already severely crushed by the various Mujahidin warlords.

The Taliban decree to the members of Hindu and Sikh minority was to wear a yellow star and arm bands. They also needed to hang yellow flags over their homes and shops. During the Mujahidin period Hindus and Sikhs were barred from government posts. Now, efforts were made to persuade them to adopt Islam. Such persuasions soon took an extreme form and open verbal threats were given to Hindus and Sikhs, they were even required to make financial contributions for “Jihad” and if they failed to pay they were kidnapped and murdered. The religious minorities also faced worst discrimination on the grounds of cremation. Cremation, a tenet of the Hindu and Sikh faiths, has been quietly practiced in Kabul's eastern district of Qalacha. The Sikh community in Kabul started cremation in the backyard of Gurudwara Sahib. The residents of Qalacha in eastern Kabul began to complain of the smell of cremation. The extensive restrictions on religious freedom by the Taliban have displaced large number of Hindus and Sikhs to other parts of the world for their safety. In all these circumstances illiteracy was one of the major problems that appeared during the Taliban period affecting 90% of girls and 60% of boys. Within 3 months of the capture of Kabul city. The Taliban's closed 63 schools in the city affecting 103,500 girls, 148,000 boys and 11,200 teachers of whom 7,800 were women. In 2001 they even shut down Kabul University and sent home some 10,000 students of which 4,000 were women. Thus the plight of women and children got much poorer after the Taliban came into power in Kabul.

The 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on America, led to the American campaign for combating terrorism, directly targeting Afghanistan as a breeding ground for terrorism. The United States began bombing and also started providing active support to Northern Alliance that created havoc for the local masses in Afghanistan. As Osama Bin Laden waged war against America with the support of Taliban, America in turn intervened in Afghanistan on the pretext of eliminating the anti-American terrorists. America declared War on Terror in Afghanistan on 7, October 2001. Before the American invasion, the Taliban blew up the giant Buddha Statues in defiance of the international efforts to save them. Following this, it ordered the religious

minorities to wear tags. The drive of United States and the coalition forces against Taliban brought enormous sufferings for the local masses and the minorities faced the worst scenario. The main aim of U.S led NATO force was to destroy Bin Laden's training camp facilities. It was planned to target the Taliban primarily, in order to tear down their morale so that they get fragmented.

The physical and social structure in Afghanistan was completely uprooted by Taliban forces. Afghanistan is now facing political fragmentation. This fragmentation can be easily seen in the entire range of art, culture, literature, music and sports. The socio-cultural changes in Afghan society came due to four main factors: the first is the development of the youth cadre of Mujahidin's and Taliban (religious students) which replaced the old defunct pre-war elites. Secondly the proliferation of high technology weapons which transformed the nature of violence in Afghan society. Thirdly, the emergence of drug trafficking which badly affected the Afghan people. Finally, the increased Islamization of Afghan society brought a radical change in the Afghan culture.

The mass exodus of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan started when Mujahidin's put restrictions on their religious freedom, excluded them from government jobs, illegal seizure of their property and destruction of their religious places. All this started the process of migration of Hindus and Sikhs from Afghanistan to other parts of the world in India, Germany, U.K, Canada and Australia. All these factors unleashed the mass migration of Afghans to escape a hostile condition and seek refuge in a foreign land. Now at present the Afghan refugee problem is the biggest cause of concern across the world and this problem needs a permanent solution. The main focus of this research work is to shed some light on the plight of the displaced refugees.

The Large scale refugee movements and forced migration pose a threat to human, state and societal security. The plight of Afghan refugees can be studied under the following four phases: phase one began after the Saur revolution in 1978 which brought a secular regime in Afghanistan that threatened the belief of Islamic forces. The migration in Phase two started in 1989 when the Soviet troops withdrew from Afghanistan and a war like situation began. The mass exodus in phase two started when the Mujahidin fighter's conquest began in Kabul. The start of Phase three of migration started in 1996 when the Taliban gained control of Kabul and the majority of

Afghan territory. The Taliban after coming into power started installing the repressive regime based on interpretations of Sharia laws in their quest for a pure Islamic society. Human rights violation was at peak and poppy cultivation rose to alarming heights. All this led to forced migration of minorities due to religious intolerance and discrimination, this phase is also called as phase of mass migration of minorities. The last phase of migration began in post 9/11 when US invaded in Afghanistan in order to weed out terrorism from the Afghan soil and started operation enduring freedom for installing liberal democracy model in Afghanistan.

Significance of the Study

- This study analyses the problems faced by Afghan minorities at grass root level in Afghanistan as well as in India, the lack of statistical documentation with regards to magnitude and spread of Afghan refugees, their socio economic status in the asylum seeking countries is the major cause of concern. This study attempts to assess the magnitude of Afghan refugees and draw attention to the problems faced by these refugees.
- The argument of this study is that from the last three decades there has been a continuous flux of Afghan Hindu and Sikh minorities to other parts of the world because of the existing religious intolerance and insecurity in Afghanistan. This study brings a fundamental relationship between insecurity and displacement of minorities from Afghanistan.
- This study examines the lack of national refugee protection framework is a major hurdle in providing effective refugee protection to the Afghan minorities in Delhi; the Afghan refugees in Delhi today live in state of anxiety and uncertainty because of lengthy citizenship process. The Government of India is providing Long Term Visa's to the religious minorities such as Hindu, Sikhs, Jain's and Buddhists etc. in order to save them from the religious persecution in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh.
- The migration of Afghan Hindu and Sikh ethnic minorities to India is because of shared cultural heritage with India. Afghan Hindu and Sikhs shared a common ancestry, common culture, common language, common religion and ethnic traits with the peoples

of India. In the ethnicity the primordial school of Cultural theory believes that ethnicity is deeply rooted in the historical experience and the individuals had usually been in a particular ethnic group because of certain inherent characteristics and ethnic traits that had given since they born. So, the primordial identity of one's group cannot be changed and it will remain for forever till the end of his life. The primordial identity of a person becomes the cause of a concern for a person and acts as a motivating force for migration of minorities from Afghanistan.

- In multiethnic societies, conflicts are usually channeled through non violent demonstrations like strikes, and controlled through the state apparatus like police, bureaucracies and assemblies. But in case of Afghanistan there is no as such strong state governing apparatus which caters the needs of minority ethnic groups, so in due course of time when the clashes with the majority cultural groups become intense the migration of minority ethnic groups to other parts of the world is evident. The authors like Will Kymlicka and Charles Taylor argues that individual is a cultural construct and state must recognize the ethnic identity of a group.
- This research work highlighted that according to the Government of India the number of Afghan Hindu and Sikh minorities in India are 11, 753, but in actual according to our research survey and the data of 'Khalsa Dewan Welafre Society' their number is around 18,000 in India. The sample survey also reveals that majority of the respondents are Sikhs who constituted 85% of the sample size. Whereas, Hindus and Muslims among the displaced section constitutes less than 15% each. Almost all the displaced population of respondents knew Pashto and Dari languages very well irrespective of their religion.
- The study also highlighted that Afghan Hindu and Sikh minorities are very much self reliant in India and having very good livelihood skills. They are working and earning in Delhi, some of the Afghans even occupied the trade markets of Delhi like Sarojini Nagar and Ghaffar Market. The study also analyzed that they had established eight Sikh Gurudwaras in Delhi working according to their own indigeneous culture and these Gurudwaras are also known as Kabuli Gurudwaras.

- This research analyzed that according to UNHCR data the number of Afghan refugees in Delhi have been dwindling over the years, it reached a peak in 1993, when it stood at almost 26,000. Today their number is around 15,000. One of the major trend which has been noticed in this research is the migration of Afghan minorities from India to other parts of the world like Canada, UK, USA, Netherlands, Australia and Belgium. Because they are getting citizenship easily in these countries under the asylum clause within four to five years period after fulfilling the requisite conditions. Moreover, for finding better economic opportunities and better future prospects these minority communities are migrating from Delhi to the western and European countries.
- This study also examined that in Delhi Afghans are unwilling to repatriate because of continuing conflict and human rights violations in Afghanistan. It is also pertinent to mention that the economic devastation in their homeland and dispersal of their relatives to other parts of the world created vacuum in Afghanistan. The respondents mentioned that they don't have any craze to settle back in Afghanistan because there is deep chaos and their fraternity is now scattered all around the globe that is irreparable loss to all the Afghan community.
- The study focused on the political turmoil in Afghanistan, which has deeply impacted the lives of Afghan Hindu and Sikh minorities. At one time their numbering was above 50,000 in the early 1990s, now they left with not more than 3,000 in number, which is approximately with 450 families residing in Afghanistan. The majority among them were Sikhs, whereas the Hindu population constituted the 400 in number. In the early 1990's around 30,000 thousand Afghan Hindu and Sikhs migrated to India.
- The study analyzed the praiseworthy role played by the "Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society". Its office was set up in the year 1993, to take care of the refugees from Afghanistan. This society is working to make Afghan refugees self reliant by providing them vocational training in different fields, to ensure both employment and survival of Afghan refugees in India. This organization is at present taking care of education of around 780 Afghan Hindu and Sikh children's in Delhi; besides this it arranges tuition classes for these students. It is imparting vocational training by arranging computer courses, stitching classes for ladies, French and other language courses, harmonium classes, English speaking classes etc.

- The present study also examines the stand of India as non signatory of 1951 Convention of refugees and its 1967 protocol, but still India is providing different standards of protection and assistance to these refugee groups. India always stood up for providing asylum to these refugees. At present India is holding the biggest share of South Asian refugee population. The Afghan refugees occupied the fourth largest place after the Sri-Lanka, Tibet and the Myanmar Rohingyas. The 16,000 Afghans, who are living in Delhi possessed UNHCR certificates, identified as refugees and entitled to certain basic services like healthcare, education, and assistance in naturalization process. They are not entitled to full services like employment, free education, access to PDS, protection against arrest and detention in certain cases. The Indian Citizenship Act of 2005 stipulates that citizenship can be acquired by mandatory stay period of 12 years in India under the naturalization clause. Due to lack of government initiative and complicated bureaucratic process only few have been able to complete the process and got Indian citizenship. At present in Delhi out of 16,000 only 35% got Indian citizenship. At one time their population was around 35,000 in India, but due to strict citizenship norms their number is dwindling in India.
- This study also examines that many Afghans in India have experienced significant changes in their conditions of life. Throughout the 1980's and 90's the refugees received the monthly maintenance allowance from the UNHCR. But in post 1995 the monthly subsistence of refugees cut down. It has been noticed that after the fall of Najibullah regime when Taliban's came to power significant numbers of Hindu and Sikh minorities came to India. It was decided by UNHCR to stop monthly allowance because of the belief that many refugees have other sources of income and they were living in relatively comfortable circumstances having the capacity to become self reliant.
- The study also focused that recently, in response to the representations to Indian government by the Afghan refugees, the Indian government provided assistance to Afghan refugees for rehabilitation. The Union Minister 'Rajnath singh' announced, that centre has introduced the Indian Citizenship Amendment Bill in parliament, this bill will give citizenship to the religious minorities migrated from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh due to religious Intolerance.

- This study examines that there is no as such permanent policy for the Afghan minorities in the host countries but being the signatory of the convention of 1951 the host countries need to provide citizenship to the asylum seekers within a short duration of their stay in the country. It may my 3 to5 years stay period. The Afghan Hindu and Sikh community opt UK as their destination for asylum, because UK provides confirmed residence to Afghan refugees within a 3 years period.
- It has been analyzed in the research that the Afghan Hindu and Sikh Diaspora in the west have been experiencing several changes. In this research the researcher investigated the process of change in language, identity, dressing style, marriage, family and the customs of Afghan Hindu and Sikhs. The Afghan Diaspora has changed the religion and customs practiced, as they pick the western lifestyle and the intermarriages with other communities has become a common phenomenon. It has been found in our analyses that that the second and third generation of Afghan Hindu and Sikh communities are not very much possessive about their culture, customs and traditions. Many children are following their customs in order to appease their parents and they are following because of pressure from older generations.
- It has analyzed in this research study that in foreign countries the second and third generations of Afghan Hindu and Sikhs were not able to speak Pashto and Dari languages. It can also be predicted that in near future the Afghan culture and tradition will extinct among the migrants settled in foreign countries. However the Afghan Sikhs have retained their culture, language and religious traditions because of close cultural linkages with Punjabi Sikhs in foreign countries and close knit marriages within a group.
- The present study also examined the role of Afghan government for allurements of returnees. The Karzai government presented a blueprint for the security, education, economic growth and governance of the country to address the cause of displacement. It encouraged the refugees to return back to their homeland and to redesign their motherland with progressive model of development. The government of Afghanistan took several initiatives for the protection of property rights, in order to discourage confiscation of property episodes because it is being reported to the authorities that in many places there is a rampant plundering and seizure of property of displaced population. The UNHCR in coordination with the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation

(MoRR) has organized 'go and see visits' special program to protect the property rights of displaced population.

- The study analyzed the role and policies of Afghan Government in the post 2001 period, in the post 2001 period the government wants to safeguard the rights of non-Muslim minorities, they want to balance the unity and equality of Afghanistan because the 90% of Afghan Hindu and Sikhs have already left the Afghanistan within the last three decades. The discrimination and neglect attitude of government are the main reasons for their migration to other parts of the world. It was only after coming into power President Hamid Karzai announced the allocation of seats to the members of the minority communities in both lower and upper house of Loya Jirga. In this context it was a welcome step supported by civil society members. It is also seen as a good step for the protection of rights of a tiny minority in times of insecurity and turbulence.
- The study presents that in recent times the changing political conditions in Afghanistan have allured Hindu and Sikh Afghan refugees to opt for voluntary repatriation, According to the UNHCR reports, Afghan refugees have been in India since 1981. The option of return back was not there, it is the first time in the last twenty years that Afghan refugees have shown their interest in returning back, it could be the beginning of a new trend because they had received the maximum number of requests for repatriation. In the first Parliamentary elections after the fall of Taliban regime the Afghan government decided to provide representation to the minority community in the lower house of the Afghan parliament. Anarkali Kour Honaryar was elected in Wolesi Jirga (Lower House) from Kabul Province and senior Hindu Gangaram was appointed as a senator in Meshrano Jirga (Upper House)".
- It has been analyzed that Afghanistan government in the year 2015 under the President ship of Ashraf Ghani has retaken the reservation memorandum of the two minority communities in the country's lower house of parliament (Wolesi Jirga). It is all for the protection of rights and proper representation of those 3,000 Afghan Hindu and Sikhs in Afghanistan. The majority of these Afghan Hindu and Sikhs are resided in Kabul, Ghazni, Jalalabad, Kunduz, Helmand valley and Nangarhar provinces. In the April of 2017 the foundation stone of the first ever school modeled on the demands of Hindu and Sikh minorities has been laid in the Nangarhar province.

ANNEXURE I
QUESTIONNAIRE

Date:

S.No:.....

Impact of Religious Extremism on Afghan Hindu and Sikh Minorities from 1989-2014

1. Name

2. Contact Address:

3. Email

4. Which year did you migrate?

Pre 1989

Post 1989.....

5. From which province?

6. Why did you come Straight to India and especially Delhi?

7. Did your family members visit Afghanistan after migration?

8. Would you like to go back to Afghanistan? Yes/ no

9. Status of migrants in India and other countries, if u have figures please mention it?

.....
.....
.....

10. What about the other countries where Hindus and Sikhs migrate from Afghanistan?

.....
.....
.....

11. When did your ancestors settled in Afghanistan and what assets you have in Afghanistan?

Year.....

Assets.....
.....
.....

12. Work status in Afghanistan before migration: (tick anyone)

Service/ Trade/ Farmer/others

13. What is the present status of yours in India : (please tick anyone)
- a. Refugee
 - b. Indian citizen
 - c. Holding temporary visa
 - d. Stay visa
 - e. Other permits
14. Would you prefer Indian citizenship or trying for a citizenship anywhere else?
15. What are the major problems faced by you in India?
16. Are you able to sustain yourself in India or were you comfortable in Afghanistan?
17. What about the job opportunities and monthly earnings of yours in India and your expenditure?
18. Do you think you are culturally different from your counterparts in India?

19. Are you socially accepted by the Indian society especially Sikhs and Hindus?

.....
.....
.....

20. Does the religious extremism and discriminatory practices towards the minorities exist today?

.....
.....
.....

21. Would you like to return back to Afghanistan or stay here?

Respondents Perception

ANNEXURE II
PHOTOGRAPHS

(Afghan Sikhs In Gurudwara Shri Guru Nanak Sahib Ji)



(Researcher Conducting Survey in the Office of Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society office, Old Mahavir Nagar -New Delhi)

(Kabuli Gurudwara's in New Delhi)



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British Afghan’s Women’s Society - <http://www.britishafghanwomen.org/>

Scottish Afghan Society - <http://scottishafghansociety.blogspot.com/>

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Non-Governmental Organizations

Afghan Aid - <http://www.afghanaid.org.uk/>

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