

ETHNICITY AS A FACTOR IN CENTRAL ASIA AND AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS

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

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled "*Ethnicity as a Factor in Central Asia and Afghanistan Relations*" submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of Jawaharlal Nehru University is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this university or any other university.


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MY FAMILY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to my respected supervisor Dr. Nalin Kumar Mohapatra for his guidance, constructive supervision and constant encouragement without which this work would not have been completed.

The precious guidance of all faculty members of CRCAS, SIS has been encouraging in the formulation of this work. I thank them most sincerely for their valuable guidance and active support.

The cooperative staff of Central Library Jawaharlal Nehru University, IDSA has been instrumental in the completion of this effort by providing their help in getting required references.

I would like thank my friends Anju, Priya, Sweety and all other classmates for encouraging and supporting me throughout the entire endeavour. I would like to specially thank Rashmini who helped in my entire work and, I cannot forget her cooperation.

All through my life my parents encouraged me with their love and affection. Their blessing guidance has motivated me to overcome all obstacles in my life.

Finally, I will solely be responsible for all the inaccuracies and mistakes in the dissertation.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CARS-	Central Asian Republics
CLG-	Constitutional Loya Jirga
IMU-	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
IRP-	Islamic Renaissance Party
JUI-	Jamat-E-Ulma Islam
NWFP-	North West Frontier Province
PDPA-	People Democratic Party of Afghanistan
SSR –	Soviet Socialist Republics

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Theoretical Framework: Ethnicity, Nationalism and Nation Building

Identity has always been an important issue in social life. It is determined by, how individuals identify themselves and how they are identified by others. Ethnicity is an important element of identity. The ethnic groups share common characteristics that differentiate them from the others groups. The issue of ethnicity suddenly propped up in the post- Cold War world, which gave rise to discussions about the concept.

Max Weber defined ethnic group as a “human group that cherishes a belief in their common origins of such a kind that it provides a basis for a creation of a community”. In this definition, he identifies the basic character of ethnicity as common origin. However, he does not emphasize on the objective features of the ethnic group such as shared language, religion and biological traits (Stone 2003:32). Brass gives similar definition of an ethnic group, as a group ‘whose members have developed an awareness of common identity and have sought to draw boundaries of the group.’

Anthony D. Smith has defined *ethnie* as ‘a named human community connected to a homeland, possessing common mix of ancestry, shared memories, one or more elements of shared culture and a measure of solidarity..’ (Smith, 2001: 13). In this analysis, he considers ethnicity as a cultural phenomenon rather than biological and kinship differences. In other words, ethnicity denotes a group of peoples who share ancestry myths, history and cultures having an association with a specific territory and sense of solidarity, which differentiate them from other groups in a society (Smith 1986: 32).

Adrian Hastings describes ethnicity as "the common culture whereby a group of people share the basics of life -their cloth and clothes; the style of houses; the way they relate to domestic animals and to agricultural land; the essential work which shapes the

functioning of a society and how roles are divided between men and women; the way hunting is organized; how murder and robbery are handled; the way defense is organized against threatening intruders; the way property and authority are handed on; the rituals of birth, marriage and death; the customs of courtship; the proverbs, songs, lullabies; shared history and myth; and the beliefs in what follows death and in God, gods or other spirits" (Bacik 2002). This definition relates ethnicity with culture, values and way of life in general.

There are different processes through which the ethnic groups are formed. Some ethnic communities trace their ancestry in the ancient origins, others have appeared more recently. There are still some others who are still in their formative process. Scholars have different views about the origins of ethnicity. The Primordial scholars argue that ethnicity is deeply embedded in the human history. While, the Instrumentalists argue that ethnicity is shaped by the leaders and is used to mobilize and organize followers in the pursuits of other interests. (Wolf, 2006:33).

Ethnicity as a collective phenomenon has the capacity for social mobilization. Although it is not essentially conflictual, ethnicity has psychological properties and discursive resources which have the potential to transfer into violence. No other form of social identity in the early twenty-first century has a comparable power, sparing only religion. Other forms of social categorization, such as occupation, gender, political affiliation, or the many other kinds one might list, although frequently a basis for competition and conflict, fall far short of the potential volatility of ethnic consciousness.

From the above definitions, it becomes easy to define salient features of the term 'ethnicity'. Anthony Smith identifies several dimensions of ethnicity (Smith, 1986: 22-31).

1. A collective name: The collective name is a sure sign and symbol by which the community distinguishes itself and summarizes its essence. These names can originate from the place where it belongs, the language or even from the

personage or clan. It sums up images of the distinctive qualities and characteristics of a community in the mind and imaginations of the participants and outsiders as well as posterity.

2. A common myth of descent: It attempts to provide an answer to question of similarity and belonging.
3. Common shared history: This gives them sense of common memories that unites its members with each other successive generations each with its sets of experience.
4. A distinct culture: culture unites its members and separates them from others. The most common shared and distinctive characteristics are language and religion, but, there are also customs, traditions, and institutions. Culture is also represented through architecture, dressing, cuisine, music and the arts.
5. An association with a specific territory: Ethnic communities always possess ties with a particular territory, which they belong to.
6. A sense of solidarity: Apart from the aforesaid characteristics, the ethnic community also has a definite sense of identity and solidarity which often finds institutional generous expression. It emerges from a strong sense of belonging and an active solidarity.

Nation:

Nation is one of the most complex concepts to define. According to the simplest understanding, 'Nation' is a named human community having common homeland, language, culture, history, religion and myths, giving its members sense of unity and cohesiveness. In other words, it refers to people living in a specific territory, inspired by sense of unity and common political aspirations. The English word 'nation' is derived from the Latin word '*nasci*', meaning 'to be born'. In its original usage, the term meant a group of people united by birth or birthplace, but had no political connotation. It acquired political overtones only in the late 18th century (Heywoods 2007:169).

Benedict Anderson defines Nation as an 'imagined political community, imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.' In this definition, Anderson brings out four features of the 'nation' (Anderson B. 1983: 6-7), namely; it is 'imagined', is a 'community', it is 'limited', and 'sovereign'.

Anthony D. Smith (2001) gives a classic definition of nation. He can be classified as a 'primordialist' because he highlighted continuity between the primordial '*ethnies*' and the modern '**nations**'. Smith's definition of nation comes along with his definition of *ethnie*, discussed earlier. According to him, nation is 'a named human community occupying a homeland, and having common myths and a shared history, a common public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for all members' (Smith A. 2001: 12-13). Smith lists the common characteristics of *ethnie* and the nation as, proper name, shared history and memories, common myths and links them to their homeland. The only feature that distinguishes nation from the *ethnie* is that the nation has the 'public culture'. In other words, many modern nations have ancient 'ethnic' origin as a result of structural changes in within them (Stavenhagen 1996:15).

Smith categorizes the definitions of nation into objective definition and subjective definition, former focusing upon the factors such as language, religion and culture, whereas later emphasizing attitudes, perceptions and sentiments. While he classifies Anderson's definition as subjective, he quotes Joseph Stalin's definition as objective. According to Stalin, 'nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of common language, territory and economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture' (as quoted in Smith A. 2001: 11).

Although particular primordial features are commonly associated with nationhood, notably, language, religion, ethnicity and myths and traditions, there is no objective criterion that establishes where and when a nation exists. The cultural unity that can apparently articulate itself in nationhood is difficult to point out. It rather reflects a combination of factors. In this sense, the nation is a 'psycho-political entity', a group of

people who regard themselves as a natural political community and are distinguished by shared loyalty or affection in the form of patriotism. A community becomes a nation when it mobilizes for political action, and attains political significance (Ahmed 1996:21).

As against primordialists, there are 'modernists', who assert that nation is a purely modern phenomenon. This view is mainly represented by Ernest Gellner (1983) who argues that national identity is formed in response to the changing situations and historical challenges. It was directly related to the growth of industrial society, as pre-modern agro-literate societies had no place for nations and nationalism. Gellner emphasizes too much on the economic factors. According to him, the modern industrial economy needs both the new type of central culture and central state, the culture needs the state, and in turn, the state needs the homogenous cultural branding of its people. Thus, mutual relationship between the modern culture and state is the requirement of the modern economy (Gellner 1983: 140). John Breuilly also does not regard the nation as having a significant pre-modern history. He rather treats the nation as a modern political and ideological formation (Breuilly, 2001: 32).

Nationalism:

In the simple language, nationalism is an ideology that holds that national boundaries should be congruent to the political ones. It assumes that there has to be a natural analogy between the country's name, the territory it covers, and the population it inhabits.

Anthony D. Smith (2001: 9) defines nationalism as, 'an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity for a population which some of its members deem to constitute an actual or potential 'nation'.' Smith identifies three goals of nationalism, viz., national autonomy, national unity and national identity. A nation cannot be created and maintained without the attainment of these three goals. Here, nationalism is not merely the movement seeking independence. It is much beyond that. It is the ideology that binds national feelings with the political borders. Moreover, it is a sentiment that breeds patriotism and idea of unity and integrity. Thus, more than attaining independence, or self-rule, nationalism binds the nation with the state.

Thus, the terms nationalism is used in two senses. Firstly, it represents an ideology and secondly it describes a sentiment. In the first usage, nationalism brings about the nation to pursue certain political and cultural goals. In its second usages nationalism is a sentiment of loyalty towards the nation which is shared by the people. This loyalty is reflected through the elements such as, language, religion shared historical experience, physical continuity and so on (Graham even, et al; the penguin dictionary of international relation; 1998:33).

Modern nationalism can be traced back to the 17th and 18th centuries. The idea of nationalism first emerged during the French revolution 1799. It was for the first time that any revolutionary movement was carried out in the name of people, described as the 'French Nation'. The rising of nationalism redrew the map of Europe in the nineteenth century as various states were formed in the name of the 'nation'. By the end of nineteenth century nationalism was spread in the common masses and had become a truly popular movement.

The wave of Nationalism was preceded by the emergence of 'nation-state' system. It arose in the Western Europe in the mid-17th century as states were created on the basis of nationhood, including France for the French, Spain for the Spanish. The nation-state system was internationally formalized through the treaty of Westphalia. Germany and Italy were unified later. Gradually map of the world was redrawn on the national lines. As the decolonization started, there emerged number of nation-states in various parts of Asia and Africa. The nation-state system was so accepted by the mid-20th century, that an international organization was named as 'United Nations'.

Inter-relationship between the Ethnicity and the Nation:

After going through the concepts like ethnicity and nation, one has to determine the inter-relationship between them. As discussed earlier there is a very thin line between 'ethnicity' and 'nation', so much so that these concepts are often used interchangeably.

The definitions of *ethnie* and nation given by Anthony D. Smith (2001) explain the difference and similarity between the concepts. He is classified as a 'primordialist' because he highlighted continuity between the primordial '*ethnies*' and the modern 'nations'. Smith's definition of nation comes along with his definition of *ethnie*, discussed earlier (Smith A. 2001: 12-13). Smith defined *ethnie* as 'a named human community connected to a homeland, possessing common mix of ancestry, shared memories, one or more elements of shared culture and a measure of solidarity.'. Whereas, he defines the nation as 'a named human community occupying a homeland, and having common myths and a shared history, a common public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for all members'.

Smith lists the common characteristics of *ethnie* and the nation as, proper name, shared history and memories, common myths and links them to their homeland. The only feature that distinguishes nation from the *ethnie* is that the nation has the 'public culture'. In other words, the ethnic community does not have political significance. However, in order to get recognized as a nation, it has to evolve a public culture and desire a degree of self-determination. *Ethnies* are the passive nations and nations are in turn active ethnic communities. In the historical process, more and more ethnic communities try to take territorial components and adopt a civic model, as they seek to become nations. Here, it cannot be argued that all *ethnies* are bent on attaining nationhood, but the pressure for *ethnie* to move towards nationhood (not necessarily independent statehood) is extremely powerful (Smith A. 2001: 154).

The correlation between the terms ethnicity and nation can be best described through the concept of 'ethnic nationalism'. As read earlier, ethnic nationalism demands more loyalty to a particular ethnic group. In many cases, the majority group in a country shapes the process of national identity formation. In case of ethnic nationalism, dominant ethnic group in the nation promotes its culture, language, religion and traditions. The ethnic-nation also exploits its national history to unify the nation. They tend to glorify the golden period in their history as the motivating force to keep people together. This

creates the feeling of 'we' as a cohesive group. The ethnic nationalism has certain exclusivist traits.

Ethnicity and nation are related and interwoven concepts, so much so that, sometimes, it becomes impossible to draw a line between them. Nation has the roots in ethnic communities and in turn, ethnicity tends to transform into a nation, as it gains political significance.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Ethnicity is the most important feature of Afghan politics and society. The ethnicity issue is reflected through the new political institutions of the country. Newly created government institutions and the electoral system of government show the ethnic dimensions of the Afghan state. In the past, various ethnic groups had been coexisting with peace and tolerance. However, in present day Afghanistan, the situation has transformed to conflict situation between different ethnic groups. This relates to the scarcity of resources, uneven distribution and lack of opportunities.

Afghanistan has historical, ethno-linguistic and cultural ties with the Central Asians. In fact, the region including Central Asia and Afghanistan was under the rule of the same dynasty for long. This contiguous region was separated as a result of the rivalry between two great powers: Russia and Britain.

Central Asia and Afghanistan have been the crossroads of East and West. Both are historically linked but demarcation of border placed some tajik ,Uzbek and Turkmen in Central Asia and some Afghanistan's northern border which is the most fertile land of Afghan state. This is one of the reasons of conflict different ethnic groups. as they have the same culture and language (Mccauley 2002).

In the wake of Bolshevik revolution and civil war there was defeat of nationalist and Muslims movements and mass emigration of Central Asian to Afghanistan. Among these emigrants amirs, officials clergy and poor from villages and remote region. Central Asian

emigration was a protest against the violent breaking down of traditional and religious standards and nations by the imposed system. Afghanistan serve as a shelter for emigrants .A number of reasons are responsible for that as geographical location, open frontiers for free troops and historical and ethnic identity but the stronger factor was religion. It confirms that there is a mutual attraction among Muslims peoples residing on both sides of the southern frontiers of the former USSR.certainly , nationalist and confessional issued had not dominated regional politics interests and geopolitical forces, But Islam and ethnicity constitute unifying factors, especially in Central Asia These factors enhanced impact in a situation of political destabilisation and weakening centralized power on boths of border.

After soviet disintegration Islam re-emerged (Akcali, 1998). Islam seems a potent force in shaping Central Asian government future and legitimacy. Growing Islam influences reflected in reorganisation of national identity and cultural heritage and increasing in mosque construction, Islamic school and rituals. Revival of Islam is a response of the suppressive actions taken by communist rule .Economic determinates are also pushing towards Islam along with external forces entered from Iran and Afghanistan. Islam replaced the ideological vacuum after Soviet disintegration in the form of official Islam (Tazmini 2001; Belokrenitsky 2005; Kaushik).

Fall of the Taliban rule had a major impact on the ethnicity pattern in the country. The Pashtuns, which was a main ethnic group, became less dominant rather than other ethnic groups (Simonson, 2004). Post Taliban period ushered in a new era of state- building in Afghanistan, through the establishment of various political institutions. However, elections and constitutional reforms represented the ethno-linguistic fragmentation of Afghan society. It is not very easy to build a democratic state out of the ashes of bloody war. The problem of warlords is not yet fully solved. Constitution of Afghanistan incorporated the Islam that empowered extremist groups, has a long term risk. (Johnson 2006).

Islam as a common bond in Afghanistan and Central Asian states played a significant role in establishing relation between the Tajik and Afghan branch of Islamic renaissance Party

with Afghanistan based mujahidin. Islam is the most important and decisive identity that transcended other identities existing in the region such as nationalism and ethnicity.

Stability and security of Afghanistan directly impacts security of Central Asia. Political violence and civil conflicts in Afghanistan results in political instability in the adjacent regions: Central Asia and South Asia (Qassem 2009). This has been a major determinant in Afghanistan's relations with other neighbours.

Afghan- Central Asia linkages have led to increase in drug trafficking. The socio-economic conditions in the Central Asian states, reflected through, poverty, unemployment, scarcity of resources and uneven distribution, and weak institutions, provide the necessary impetus for drug-trafficking. It is a serious security threat for Central Asian states. The route of illegal drug supply comes from Afghanistan, which is world largest opium producer. It goes through the Central Asian state because of their geographical location and vulnerable economic condition. This has resulted in problems like increasing in drug addiction among youth, increase in crime related to narcotics and corruption. Kyrgyzstan is the most affected state in Central Asia when it comes to drug trafficking. Islamic extremist groups have been active in transferring drugs, as the drug trade is major source of finance for terrorist groups (Madi, 2004; Mohapatra, 2007). The unstable situation during the Tajik Civil War provided fertile ground for drug trade as a easy way to make money (Danial, 2011).

Crisis in Afghanistan has a major implication for Central Asian state. Supply of arms and narcotics is coupled with the objective of the Mujahidin groups to establish a Islamic regime in entire region are the causes of security threat and instability for these states. In Tajik civil war Afghan based Islamic extremist groups supported the Tajik opposition forces (Warikoo, 2004; Jonson, 2006).

Islamic movement of Uzbekistan is the most notorious organization of the region is a major threat for these state especially for Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan government as they want to overthrow existing government and establishment a Islamic government. Scattered by Operation Enduring Freedom in 2001 they are trying to regroup, making

attacks in Uzbekistan and issuing new threats to achieve their goal. They believe in violent overthrow they are receiving help from Al-Qaeda. There is a chance to win support from the Uzbek people if the government failed to deliver economic improvements or political concessions. They are recruiting youths with their extremist interpretation of Islam. It is not very reliable (Johnson 2007).

Political instability in Afghanistan led to the loss of the central control in most areas of Afghanistan and power shifted to warlords and local militia groups based on tribal or ethnic solidarity. These local warlords gained power and autonomy from the centre and it changed the power balance which shifted from Pashtuns to other peoples of Afghanistan. This unstable situation brought a variety of threats to regional stability in Central Asia like Muslim fundamentalism, ethnic nationalism, unemployment and rivalries in the region as a whole (Hyman 1997).

Research Design and Thematic Analysis:

Afghanistan shares its border with three Central Asian states, namely, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Afghanistan mainly inhabits three ethnic groups from Central Asia; Tajiks, Uzbeks and Turkmens. They are principally centered in the northern part of Afghanistan. This research is an attempt to analyze the impact of the presence of these ethnic groups along both sides of the Central Asia-Afghanistan border. This has been impacting the security, political stability, culture, society and religion of Afghanistan, as well as the Central Asian states. This research will also consider the question of identity and nationalist outburst, which mainly centers on the issue of ethnicity, especially because of central Asian ethnic groups in Afghanistan.

Central Asian states share close and historical relations with Afghanistan for centuries. In fact, the region comprising modern day Tajikistan, southern Uzbekistan and northern Afghanistan has been a contentious territory for centuries. The border between Central Asia and Afghanistan was first agreed in 1780 and updated by Russia in the nineteenth century. In 1895 the Amu Darya River became the boundary between Russia and British spheres of interest, and both empires did their best to keep Afghanistan as a buffer state.

Russia's purpose to draw a line between both regions was to defend Central Asia from British incursion (McCauley,2002:17-18).

The demarcation of border put some Tajiks, Uzbeks and Turkmen in Central Asia and some in Afghanistan. People from both the sides were mutually connected and moved to the respective territories as they wished without any restrictions. But this situation altered after the 1917 Russian Revolution, when the Soviet Union sealed its border with its southern Muslim neighbors. Subsequently, five Central Asian states were created on the basis of 'ethnicity'. The reason behind this was that the Soviets wanted to keep their territory separated from Muslim Afghanistan. From 1917 to1931, in the wake of Bolshevik Revolution, there was mass migration of central Asian people to Afghanistan. This is how northern part of Afghanistan has the majority of Tajik, Uzbek and Turkmen ethnic group (ibid).

Most of the people in Afghanistan are Muslims; and Islam is an important part of their united identity, for themselves as well as for the foreigners. The Tajik and Uzbek ethnic groups that settled in northern Afghanistan, one of the most fertile land of Afghanistan, perceived themselves as the natural ruler of this region and also wanted to control Kandahar, major city of north Afghanistan. However, it was already dominated by the Pashtuns. This gave rise to rivalry between Pashtuns and the Central Asian ethnic groups in north Afghanistan. Among Central Asian states Tajikistan has more close ethnic and cultural features with Afghanistan. Important reason being, Tajikistan is a Persian speaking state which is also the language of Afghanistan (Warikoo,2004:195).

As Afghanistan shares its border with the three Central Asian states and the ethnic groups of these three states are represented in Afghanistan state, every event in Afghanistan is bound to have impact on the Central Asian states. Anarchical situation of war, the rise of Taliban and political crisis in Afghanistan carries geopolitical implications for Central Asian states. A variety of threats to regional stability and security in Central Asia emerged from Afghanistan, such as, radical Islam that has caused stimulus among the Muslims of Central Asia. Another threat is in the form of the upsurge of ethnic

nationalism and rivalries in the region as a whole. A key development is the rise of Tajik and Uzbek factor in Afghan politics which actually represents a strategic factor for all central Asian states, one resulting from the reinforcement of existing ethnic identities (Hyman,1997:122-123).

Though Islamic fundamentalism is perceived as a threat to Central Asia that emerged from Afghan side, socio- economic and political factors within Central Asia have also activated the Islamic factor. Some of these factors are, growing ties of Central Asian states with the developing Islamic countries, Gorbachev's policy of Glasnost and Perestroika that created favorable atmosphere for the rise of opposition, and the ideological vacuum after the fall of communism. To some extent it was a reaction to the anti religious measures undertaken during the soviet period. Apart from this, the events taking place in Iran and Afghanistan also contributed to this new phenomenon. The financial crisis, unemployment, poverty and lack of development are also the reason for instability in Central Asia (Kaushik200 0:167).

Soviet intervention in Afghanistan (1979-1989) created much turbulence in the region. It was considered as an attack on Islam. Not only Afghan Mujahidins opposed Soviet troops, but also the nationalist leaders of Central Asian who had fellow ethnic members residing in Afghanistan. Many Islamic unions and groups were founded during the intervention on both the sides of Afghanistan border. These Islamic unions were actively involved in delivering weapons to his Islamic supporters in Tajikistan (Morini,2010).

The disintegration of the Soviet Union and independence of the Central Asian states was followed by some turbulent events. Most violent among them was the Tajik civil war (1992-1997). Afghanistan was blamed for supporting and training the Tajik opposition forces. The Tajik branch of the Islamic Renaissance Party had close connection with the Afghan Mujahideens. Common ethnic and religious background of the people inhabiting this border region facilitated cross border smuggling of religious and subversive literature, arms and ammunition by the Afghan Mujahedin in to Tajikistan. The Islamist wave got spread in various parts of central Asia, especially Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

The threats included drugs and arms trafficking and flow of armed Tajiks in Afghan militants (Jonson,2006: 90-95).

As the ethnic factors are causing threat to the Central Asian states; they are also the reason of instability in Afghanistan. It has given rise to a new identity crisis situation in the region. The ethnic factor has become more visible as it produces opposite demands for greater autonomy and political power by northern minorities, which include Central Asian ethnic groups.

Rational and Scope:

The proposed study analyzes the relation between Central Asia and Afghanistan. This region is very significant geo-strategically. Moreover, it is also important for the issue of ethnicity. This study explains the ethnicity in terms of social and cultural interaction among the people of both sides. The theoretical aspects of ethnicity and its close relation with the concepts like state building, nation, nationalism and race is also discussed. The study explains the history of geographical contiguity, racial and religious affinity between Central Asia and Afghanistan. Various threats to the regional stability and security of Afghanistan, such as, Islamic extremism, rise of Taliban and fear of drug trafficking are dealt. Further, this study analyzes the impact of Tajik, Uzbek and Turkmen ethnic group who are settled in northern part of Afghanistan, on the unity of Afghan state.

Research Methodology:

The proposed study is a case study based on historical, analytical and partially theoretical method of research. This research will be based on causal inference with some sort of description of the events, how ethnicity links Central Asian states with Afghanistan in social and cultural terms. This study is based on primary as well secondary sources. The primary sources will include interview with official sources, the official website of government and news materials. Book, articles of journals and materials available at website would be consulted as secondary sources.

Hypotheses:

The study is based on two hypotheses. Firstly, the radical forces from Afghanistan are posing significant threat to Central Asian Security. And secondly, the presence of Tajiks and Uzbeks in Afghanistan as ethnic minorities are accentuating the protracted ethnic conflict in Afghanistan.

Chapterization:

The second chapter deals with the common history of Central Asia and Afghanistan, especially the long regional contiguity. It also reviews the historical relations between the Soviet Central Asian republics and Afghanistan. It mainly focuses on the relations starting from the turmoil of Russian Revolution (1917) and the civil war, and deals till the Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan. The third chapter explains the major threats for Central Asian states that emerged from Afghan's side. Particularly this chapter deals with the role of Tajik and Uzbek ethnic groups in Afghanistan, in spreading the Islamic radicalism, political instability, drug trafficking and other rivalries that are the destabilizing factors for the central Asian states. The fourth chapter mainly deals with the post-9/11 situation in the region. It explores the role of Central Asian states against the Afghan-based terrorism, which is considered as a major threat for Central Asian. The fifth chapter concludes the analysis and summarizes findings of the study.

CHAPTER 2

Central Asia and Afghanistan Relations since 1917

In the present scenario of international politics Central Asia and Afghanistan both have strategic importance for big powers as well as for the regional powers. Geopolitically they are the cross roads of East and West. When we talk about Afghanistan, though it is economically not very important but its importance lies in its geographical location. It is easy to penetrate from Central Asia and leads on to India in the east and Persia and the riches of the Middle East in the west (Mc Cauley 2002:4).

Central Asia was the part of legendary Silk Route from China to Byzantium (Istanbul) and to Rome. Central Asia was called as Turkestan before 1917. After the victory of Soviets, Moscow promoted the emergence of separate identities and finally nations, so that today Turkistanis considered as Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan (Mc Cauley, 2002: 23).

The importance of this region can be realized in the words of Halford.J.Makinder who described this region of the world as the "Heart Land". As Makinder quoted: "Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland; Who rules the Heartland commands the World Island; Who rules the World Island commands the World." (Alcenat and Scott 2008:3).

There are two major incidents in the world history which affected world politics in a large way: first is the collapse of Soviet Union and second is the September 11, 2001 incident. These two events brought great concerns for the Central Asian states.

Central Asian states and Afghanistan have close historical and cultural links. The members of all the five Central Asian states are represented in the Afghan population. Three of the five Central Asian republics, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, have borders with Afghanistan. Afghanistan's relations with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan is not very developed because of their small population in Afghanistan and most of them

vanished from Afghanistan when the civil war began in 1978. The Tajiks, Uzbeks and Turkmens are of the same ethnic groups in either side of borders. Many families of these northern ethnic groups of Afghanistan migrated there from Fergana and other region of Central Asia in 1920s and 1930 (Hyman;1997:122).

Afghanistan has had a long history of relations with her neighbors in Central Asia. Due to the geographical and cultural connection it is quite difficult to distinguish Central Asia and Afghanistan. (Shayeq Qassem; 2009:16).

Afghanistan shares 1206 km with Tajikistan;137 km with Uzbekistan and 744 km border with Turkmenistan .A large number of Central Asian ethnic groups are settled in Afghanistan. Current attempt to estimate the relative proportion of ethnic groups put the Pashtuns at 42% of the population while Tajiks ,the Hazara ,the Uzbeks and the Turkmens, represents 27%,9%,9%,and about 3% of population.(The report of CIA world fact book;2011).

The shared political history of Afghanistan with Central Asia goes to centuries back. In the fourth century BC the region which includes Afghanistan up to the river Sind became under the Alexander the Great's invasion after he defeated the Achaemenid Persians. Upon Alexander's death, the northern part of Hindukush and the parts of Central Asia gradually came to be ruled by local Graeco-Bactrians and by many rulers which were Central Asian origin as Scythians, Parthians and Kushans. The Kushan dynasty, centred in Afghanistan was particularly expansive in that they built an empire to include countries which is now Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, the whole of northern India and part of northwest China. In thirteen century Afghanistan came under Khwarazm Shah of Central Asian origin. During the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, Afghanistan was divided in to three parts. The northern region was ruled as part of the Uzbek Shaibani dynasty of Central Asia. The eastern region, including Kabul, became part of Mughal India .The eastern region became part of Safavid Persia. The region of today's Afghanistan became a battleground of influence between the three rival forces. The Durrani Empire also faced challenges against its stability from Central Asia. The challenge came mainly from the

Khanate which were also called emirate of Bukhara which supported the people of the minor Turkistan, northern province of today's Afghanistan in their many revolt against the Durrani rule (Shayeq Qassem, 2009:17-21).

In order to understand Central Asia and Afghanistan relations one has to consider them as being closely linked .Central Asia did not naturally end its border with Afghanistan .The border was first agreed, in 1780 and then updated by Russia in the nineteenth century. This separation of borders placed some Tajiks, Uzbeks and Turkmens in Central Asia and some in Afghanistan .The Central Asian ethnic groups as the Tajiks and the Uzbeks settled in the northern part of Afghanistan perceived themselves as the natural ruler of the north. The Pashtuns were always in competition with neighbouring ethnic groups of Afghanistan .In1507 the Uzbeks rose to power in Central Asia and made their capital in Heart which is in western Afghanistan(McCauley, 2002: 17-18).

The importance of Afghanistan for the Tsarist Russia grew in proportion to the Russian expansion in Central Asia in the nineteenth century The Russo –British agreement of the 1872-1873 making Amu Darya as the north-eastern boundary of Afghanistan up to Lake Victoria (Sari Kul) and succeeding adjustment in this frontier through Russo –British agreement of 12 November 1893 as well as March1895 agreement on the sphere of influence of Britain and Russia on the Pamirs was significant. The political context of Soviet-Afghan relations changed after the 1917 Socialist Revolution. (Gupta,1992:270-272).

Among the Central Asian states Tajikistan has great contiguity with Afghanistan as it shares the longest border with the Afghan state and also the Tajiks are the second largest ethnic group in Afghanistan. In their common history both Afghanistan and Tajikistan were parts of the same empires for centuries until the end of the Samanid empire. The territories that later became Tajikistan and Afghanistan have an extensive cultural heritage in common . The Tajiks found in many parts of Afghanistan, although they are concentrated in Badakhshan ,around Kabul and Heart in Rohistan and in the

Panjshir valley, speak Dari which is the language of the cities in Afghanistan (Jonson,2006:90-95).

At the end of the nineteenth century the Uzbeks became part of the kingdom of Afghanistan as the result of an agreement between Russia and Britain with Amu River as its northern boundary. The number of Uzbeks increased during the early 1920s because of the Russian Revolution and civil war like the other Central Asian people. (Montgomery;1979:160).

Soviet revolution and its impact on Central Asia and Afghanistan relation:

The Soviet Revolution of 1917 was one of the greatest events in world history. It established a new socialist world order. After the establishment of USSR, the impact of Soviet communism was also felt on the peripheries of the countries bordering Moscow. Afghanistan due to its geographical proximity also could not escape from the revolutionary ideas.

The Soviet-Afghan relations changed after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. In the beginning it was regarded by the people of neighbouring states as a success over authoritarianism, colonialism and imperialism and it also attracted the Afghan youths who were struggling for constitutional government and independence in Afghanistan (Rahim Marwat,1997:57).

Islam under communism:

Soviet Union was a communist state but with approximately 50 million believers of Islam, it had one of the largest Muslim populations in the world. The October revolution of 1917 established Bolshevik government in Russia, that implemented a radical anti-religious programme separating religion from the state and launched violent campaigns against all religious institutions in general.

The legal status of the religious body was defined by a decree of the Council of the People's Commissars of the RSFSR on 23 January 1918, on Freedom of conscience and religious society. This proclaimed the absolute separation of the churches from the state, and nationalized the religious organizations. Mosques were destroyed, and mullahs were shot. In Turkestan revolution had been accomplished by Russians completely, the official action in 1918-19 was hard and brutal. Because of this anti-religious policy Mosques, sharias, courts and religious schools were closed down, members of clergy were persecuted, and religious endowment land (Waqf) were taken away. They secularized the property of the religious bodies. In the response to this religious suppression there were insurgents of Basmachis who started a religious war against Soviet's anti-religious policies. For a time being it looked like compromising the regime's whole position in Turkestan. Therefore, when in June 1919 Moscow government re-established its control, the mosques were handed back, the Shariat courts were restored, the religious school re-opened. A decree of the Central Executive Council of Turkestan Republic declared Friday a holiday. (Bennigsen and Quelquejay 1967:67).

In the wake of the civil war after revolution and serious threat posed by Basmachis Red army pursued a bloody suppression of Khokand autonomy. The Basmachis were small guerrilla forces. For some time they were able to provide a unifying symbol for a movement motivated by tribal, ethnic and personal differences. (Andersen 1997).

By 1924, anti-Islamic campaign was put on hold to restore trust among the Muslims by returning Waqf property, reopening of mosques and Islamic school, and resuming the practice of the Sharia law. But these arrangements did not last long. Under Stalin there elimination of Islamic symbols could be seen. Three of the five pillars of Islam –the payment of the Zakat, the Hajj to Mecca, and the observance of the fast of Ramadan were forbidden. The Second World War brought some relief for Islam. Anti-religious propaganda were more or less ceased, mosques were re-opened a small number of religious literature was published, and four religious board were opened to oversee the religious life of the Muslims. The spiritual Directorate of Muslims of Central Asia and Kazakhstan (SADUM) was created and Mufti as its head by communist party to undermine and even destroy popular Islam and to create a token ,regulated officially

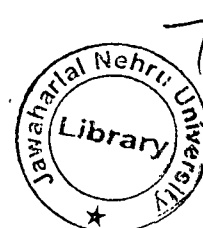
appointed clergy in order to manage the few remaining religious institutions to improve relations with the Muslim countries.(Tazmini 2001:64-65).

Events that took place in Central Asia from 1918 to 1931 in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution, the defeat of nationalist and Muslim movements, caused the mass emigration of people of Central Asian states to the bordering state Afghanistan. (Abdullaev 1994:1).

At the same time in Afghanistan in 1919, Amanullah, son of Abdul Rahman became the ruler of Afghanistan .He was significantly taken by the Russian revolutionary and the Central Asian Muslims to gain control over their own destiny .Amanullah controlled of Afghan foreign policy from the hands of British after the third Anglo –Afghan war of 1919 and the independence of Afghanistan was recognized by Soviet Union immediately .The Communist Russia’s repression of Central Asia activists who wanted independence gave rise to the Basmachi movement .Despite the fact that Basmachis used northern Afghanistan as a base for their raids into Central Asia. ,Amanullah signed a treaty of Peace and Friendship with Soviet Russia on September, 1920 which was ratified by Kabul in 1921 (McCauley;2002:8).

In this treaty besides financial help and other technical assistance there were two important things regarding Central Asia and Afghanistan relations: first an untaxed transit through Central Asia of any goods of the Afghan government would purchase in the Soviet Union or beyond and secondly this treaty also recognised the independence of Bukhara and Khiva and promised to return the frontier district which belonged to Afghanistan in the last century (Qassem; 2009:35).

Promise of self –determination to the Central Asian states was not fulfilled by the Bolshevik authorities this led to Amanullah ,the young Afghans support to the Central Asian Muslims. He presumed that with the fall of Muslim Khanates, Afghanistan would become a direct neighbour of Bolshevik Russia which would create problems. The Bolshevik activities in Central Asia forced anti-British Amanullah to meet “privately with Francis Humphrys, the British Minister at Kabul and ask for British aid for Bukhara and Khiva refused by the British government. After,Mahmud Tarzi,the Afghan Foreign



Minister requested the British Minister in Kabul again for British aid and to supply, via Afghanistan, weapons and ammunition to the Bukharan forces. But again the British turned down the request. Amanullah's Pan-Islamic policy and his actions in Central Asia provoked a hostile response from Moscow. The Soviet diplomats urged Kabul to its support to the Basmachis and demanded a declaration of neutrality in future (Marwat 1997:73-75).

These anti- Amanullah revolt in Bukhara and Tashkent were close to the ideas of Marxism and Leninism. The Bolsheviks were involved in the creation and activities of the groups and organisations in Central Asia whose goal was to overthrow the Afghan monarchy and replace it by a pro-Soviet regime. Between 1919 and 1922, Amanullah continued to pursue the pan-Islamic support both the anti-Bolshevik Baschamis resistance movement of Central Asian Muslims. The year 1924 marked new regional changes in Central Asia and tribal revolts in Afghanistan. The creation of Central Asian republics and their access to the Soviet Union, together with serious propaganda in Afghanistan, where ethnographically the inhabitants were closely related to the people of the north, led to Afghan to think that attempt to make to link up northern Afghanistan to the Bolshevik Russia (Ibid).

Afghanistan showed much tolerance towards the emigrants who fled to Afghanistan because of Soviet Revolution. This could be the reason of Afghan state's instability and problem for the security of the state mainly in the northern part of country. There are several reasons for that as, geographical location, open frontier free of troops, and close historical and ethnic identity; but the strongest factor was religion (Abdullaev 1994 :5).

In the aftermath of the formation of the Soviet Union certain sea-changes took place in the nature of inter-ethnic relations between Central Asian ethnic groups and Afghan ethnic community. The large-scale settlement of Central Asian community in the aftermath of the 1917 in the Afghanistan territory created large-scale resentment among the Afghan ethnic community (ibid).

It has to be noted that during the Basmachi revolt, some Afghan volunteers, headed by Muslim religious figures (e.g. Mavlavi Abulhai from Panjsher), were sent to eastern Bukhara in spring 1922 in the armed revolt against the Soviets. One hundred forty Afghan volunteers fought in Enver's band, according to the commander of Bukharan troops, N.E. Kakurin. In August 1926, the Russo-Afghan peace pact was signed in which the Afghan government undertook to deny its territory to anyone engaged in anti Soviet activity. In 1930 when Soviet troops advanced forty miles into northern Afghanistan in pursuit of Central Asian insurgents. Nadir moved to expel the Central Asian from the north. The most insurgent leader of the insurgent, Ibrahim Bek, was driven out in the early 1930s across the border to Central Asia, where he was captured and executed by the Soviet authorities (Ibid).

In Soviet era development projects funded by the USSR were almost all concentrated in the north of Afghanistan. Trade agreements conducted directly between the northern province of Afghanistan and the republics were often made on a bilateral basis, bypassing the central government in Kabul. This link is often interpreted by Soviet policy to integrate the economy of northern Afghanistan with central Asian republics. These developments seem as the re-emergence of old age trading links and political ties between Balkh, Herat and other regions of Afghanistan with the rest of Central Asia. The economic and infrastructural links forged mainly after 1978 between Afghanistan and Central Asian republics, along with the USSR as a whole, were often interpreted in geopolitical terms as a Soviet strategy to realign and integrate northern Afghanistan's economy into that of Central Asian republics. This pattern had been interrupted and distorted from the late nineteenth century by Afghanistan's emergence as a buffer state between Russia and Britain, together with a deliberate policy on the part of the Afghan and Soviet regimes of insulating their respective populations from cross border contacts and influences (Hyman 1994:77).

The traditional border trade and family ties between the people of this region developed over the years particularly after the improvement of communication facilities under the

Soviet regime. The Soviets used the cultural similarities among people living in Central Asia and Afghanistan border to increase its role in Afghanistan (Warikoo 1994:194).

During the 1970s, cooperation had developed between Afghanistan and Tajikistan Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR).Tajikistan helped in electricity development, agriculture and construction work. The modernization process, which was supported by the Soviet Union, provoked strong domestic resistance from the traditionalist and Islamist fundamentalist in Afghan society (to write here reason of Russian intervention). On 27 December 1979 Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan to secure Soviet influence in country .The Soviet invasion changed the situation of Afghanistan as a buffer state ,and the soviet tried to make Afghanistan part of Soviet world .The ten year Soviet occupation created a popular resistance among the mujahidin in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union and its also influenced Central Asia especially Tajikistan .The mujahidin in Afghanistan raised the issued of role of Islam in society ,which became an issue in Tajikistan and in Central Asia in general (Jonson 2006:90-93).

Soviet invasion of Afghanistan: Causes and implications for Central Asian states:

Soviet invasion ended up with the victory of mujahidin forces and disintegration of Soviet union IN this war mujahidin forces received military and financial support from United states, Saudi Arabia, UK, Pakistan, China and other nations. In the coming years aids and supports given by these sates to mujahidin forces led to the emergence of Taliban and other terrorist groups (Rubin, 2007:105).

The overthrow a pro-Soviet government on its borders was not passable for the Soviet regime. Its replacement by an Islamic regime was even more threatening, especially after the 1979 Iranian revolution. In December, 1979 the Soviet Army moved in to Afghanistan, and installed a new president , Babrak karmal, a former left- wing deputy (Phillips 1980).

The Soviets sent troops into Afghanistan in 1979 for a number of reasons. First, they wished to expand their influence in Asia. They also wanted to preserve the Communist

government that had been established in the 1970s, and was collapsing because of its lack of support other than in the military. Third, the Soviets wanted to protect their interests in Afghanistan from Iran and western nations (Zhang and Jacobs;2010).

Ten year Soviet occupation created a popular resistance among the mujahidin in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union and this unsteady situation influenced Central Asian states too. The Mujahideens in Afghanistan raised the role of 'Islam' in society which also attracted the Central Asian states. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was a costly and, ultimately, pointless war. Geopolitical calculations were at the top of the Soviets goals. These were one reason for intervention to discourage US interference in the USSR's 'backyard', to gain a highly strategic stronghold in Southwest Asia and another was to attempt to contain the radical Islamic revolution emanating from Iran. The secondary goal of the invasion was to secure an ideologically-friendly regime in the country (Morini,2010).

One of the significant implications of the Soviet intervention was the direct interaction between Central Asian Muslims to Afghans Muslims, and they have the same ethnic identity, as Soviet government sent large number of Uzbeks and Tajiks for the administrative and technical help to pro-soviet government. But in the beginning of 1980s, however, the Soviets started to replace Central Asian from the fighting areas by Slavs because the Soviets Muslims proved to be unreliable in their task against the Afghan peoples who were from the same religion and they had refused to fight. The most important reason for the Soviet failure was the popular uprising against the Moscow – backed Kabul regime. Soviet invasion was perceived against Islam. Different Islamic groups came together and announced a holy war against Soviet occupation (Akcali 1998:275).

Although Soviet forces withdrew, the war continued among different fractions of Afghan state to assert control over the government. The rival forces divided Afghanistan in four zones, depending on ethnic, religious and national difference. Pashtuns were united under the leadership of Gulbeddin Hekmatyar and his party, Hizb-e-Islami and they controlled

the south of Afghanistan. Uzbeks were united under Abdur Rashid Dostum they controlled the northern part of country. Tajiks were united under Ahmed shah Masud and President Rabbani's Jamait-e-Islami, controlled the north-east and lastly ,the Shi'ite Afghans were united under Ismael Khan and the party Hizb-e-Wahdat they controlled the city of Herat in the west. In these groups Ahmed shah Masud , an ethnic Tajik(ibid).

Moscow was very much concerned about the possibility of influence of conservative Islamic states extension along with its southern frontier. Increasing threat of Islam that could spread in to Central Asian states because of same religious affinities was also a factor of Soviet intervention (Spolinikov 1994:108).

Soviet intervention brought Central Asian Mujahids from Tajikistan who migrated to Afghanistan during the Bolshevik Revolution on the forefront of what was described as jihad (holy war) was confirmed by Mohammad Sharif Himatzade, chief of Islamic Renaissance party (IRP) who had set up his base in exile in Afghanistan. Common ethnic and religious background of the people inhabiting this border region facilitated the cross-border smuggling of religious and subversive literature, arms and ammunition by the Afghan Mujahideen in to Tajikistan.

Afghan Mujahideen leaders recognized that the 1979 Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan helped to re- establish links between the Tajiks and their Muslim brothers in Afghanistan, who have the same language, same culture, same religion and same ancestors in common. Two Afghan resistance parties, namely Jammat-i-Islami led by Burhannuddin Rabbani and Hizb-e-Islami of Gulbadin Hikmatyar were particularly active in spreading Islamic ideology to Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (Warikoo 1994:206).

The Soviet penetration in Afghanistan marked a new phenomenon in the Afghan Central Asia relations. Under the impact one witness growing religious resurgence as well as cross-border ethnic linkages. This provided fertile soil for growth of the notion of Umma in Central Asia that embraced half of the Central Asia as well as Afghanistan.(Akcali 1998:277).

The Soviet invasions in Afghanistan bring out a strong reaction from all over the world. The United States condemned the occupation immediately and also supported with millions of dollars worth of guns and food to Afghanistan to aid the mujahidin and the refugees. From throughout the Arab world, people gave money and aided the mujahidin. One of these benefactors of the war was Osama bin Laden. Although the primary reason for the Soviet withdrawal was their military failure, diplomatic pressure from around the world may have hastened it. The USSR was also affected greatly by its failure. It lost fifteen thousand troops, but the true damage done was in the degradation of its image, and the billions of dollars it spent during the war. This fall from invincibility and vast expenditure of money to finance the invasion in part caused the USSR to fall apart in the early 1990s.

The Soviet pullout from Afghanistan and subsequent disintegration of the Soviet Union marked a new phase in Kabul's relations with these Central Asian states. The emergence of weak state structure in both Central Asia as well as in Afghanistan resulted in emergence of chauvinistic religious movements aimed at destroying the nascent state structure and guiding state on the principles of orthodoxy Islamic principles. The post-1991 years saw emergence of Taliban, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan as well as Hizbut Tahrir al Islami. These factors put a strain on bilateral relationship between Afghanistan and Central Asian states.

CHAPTER-3

Ethnicity as a Factor in governing relations among Central Asian states and Afghanistan in the aftermath of 1991.

In December of 1991, disintegration of Soviet Union and creation of fifteen new countries brought a new era in world politics. Soviet's fall down was called by the west as a victory for freedom, a conquest of democracy over totalitarianism, and confirmation of the superiority of capitalism over socialism. The United States was pleased with collapse of its enemy and ending of Cold War which had soared over these two superpowers since the end of World War II. Definitely, the breakup of the Soviet Union changed the entire world political situation, leading to a complete reformulation of political, economic and military alliances all over the world.

After the disintegration of Soviet Union in 1990s, it was not only the USSR which was disintegrated. Political anarchy inside Afghanistan also made it one of the broken – backed state of third world. Though the disintegration of Afghanistan has been a gradual process that began in mid 1980s and became visible several years before the collapse of the Najibullah government in April 1992 that led to the loss of central control over the most of the areas of the country, where the regional groups who were based on tribal or ethnic coalition have gained power and autonomy from the centre. These incidents brought many local leaders in the position of power as General Abdul Rashid Dostum in Mazar – E – Sharif and Ismail Khan in Herat. While power and resources shifted from Kabul to provincial centres, much of Kabul itself has been destroyed. The government under the interim president Burhanuddin Rabbani has few resources, was struggling against a terrifying coalition of rivals parties (Hyman 1997:123).

Thus the disintegration of USSR and at the same time the destabilise situation inside Afghanistan along with Afghan civil war carries serious geopolitical implications for Central Asian states. Situation of political and social instability in Afghanistan rapidly

increased after the rise of Taliban and war against terrorism carries more threats for the security and stability of Central Asian states. A variety of threats to regional stability and security in Central Asia emerged from Afghanistan such as Radical Islam, another threat which is linked with radical Islam is that it causes inspiration among the Muslims of Central Asia from Afghan victory of Islam against communism, another is the upsurge of ethnic nationalism and rivalries in the region as a whole. A key development is the rise of Tajik and Uzbek factor in Afghan politics which actually represent a strategic factor for all Central Asian states, one resulting from the strengthening of existing ethnic identities (ibid).

Relation between Central Asian states and Afghanistan after the disintegration of Soviet Union would be examined in the form of the major threats for Central Asian states that emerged from Afghan side in this chapter.

Islamic Extremism: As a threat to security and stability of Central Asian states:

With the end of Soviet power the world observed resurgence of Islam in Central Asia. This emergence of Islam perceived as the response to Islam's long oppression under Soviet rule. During Soviet era Islam was limited mainly in its ritual and traditional forms. Isolation from the sources of knowledge about the religion for a long time led to almost complete ignorance about the basic belief of Islam. So after independence the Central Asian leadership aimed to re-educate their peoples about the basic principles of their faith. Islam was also perceived as a element of national rediscovery. Revival of Islam reflected in the dramatic increase in mosques construction, Islamic school and Islamic rituals (Tazmini 2001:67).

A more credible threat to Central Asian's stability arises from Afghanistan as its shares borders with Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. In Tajik civil war Afghan mujahidin tried to begin a jihad against the communist ruler of Tajikistan, to full fill their aim they provided a reliable flow of weapons to opposition forces of Tajikistan. In spite of

its own deprived situation it managed to support Tajikistan opposition groups (Mesbani 1994).

But roots of Islamic revival were presented in 1980s when Gorbachev came to power and introduced the policy of Perestroika and Glasnost. After disintegration revival of Islam gained further momentum in Central Asian states. It became visible in the opening of new mosques, madrasas or religious schools. After independence Central Asian states which have different ethnic identities, 'Islam' became a common bond for these states (Akcali 1998:67).

Gorbachev's policies and Soviet disintegration both gave an opportunity for the foundation of many Islamic groups aiming to establishment Islamic state in region. One of the major religious group was the IRP which believed deeply rooted Islaimic ideology and attempt to use Islam to challenge the communist regime in Central Asia. Leaders of party stated that religion was the main identity of the Central Asian people. The main objective of the IRP was to enable the Muslim population of former Soviet Union to live according to Koran. IRP emphasized religion as the common bond of Central Asian Muslims along with this common bond of Islam was used in relationship between the Tajik branch of the IRP and the Afghan Mujahidin who supported each other on various occasions , because they were all part of the Muslim umma (ibid).

Tajik branch of the IRP had close connections with the Afghan Mujahiddin . Hekmatyar and Masood trained the Islamist militants in their camps in Afghanistan. After the civil war in Tajikistan many of the IRP leaders including Davlat Usman, Mohd.Sharif Himmatzoda and Akbar Tirrajonzoda fled to Afghanistan and continued their opposition activities with the help of the Afghan Mujahideen Ahmad shas Masood and Hekmatyar both are known to have trained and armed Tajik rebels during the Tajik civil war.(Johnson 2007:83-85).

Independent Central Asian republics were not very much reluctant to adopt any form of Islam in their respective republics but they were aware that it could play a potential role

in the state building process. Many Islamic movements were going on in these states at the time of independence, rooted in the Soviet period became active speedily. Number of movements having political liking towards Islam emerged in the Soviet Central Asian republics. Among them were Alash in Kazakhstan, Rostokhez ,in Tajikistan, the Islamic Centre in Kyrgyzstan , Adolat in Uzbekistan.

These parties began to receive ideological inspiration from the Taliban and their mentors in Pakistan. Ahmed Rashid informs that from 1996 to 1998, Yuideshev the leader of the IMU was based in Kabul and Peshawar, where Afghani and Pakistani Islamic groups provided him with funding and trained a large number of Uzbek youths in their Madrassas. The role of Taliban and Pakistan in aiding and supporting terrorism in Central Asia (Mohapatra 2004:144-145).

There are some internal roots also for the emergence of Radical Islam in Central Asia. In post Soviet period there was ideological vacuum in Central Asian states, earlier these states were under Soviet ideology. It created an atmosphere to search for an alternative ideology and Islam began to acquire deeper roots among the masses in Central Asia. But this Islamic revivalism was, of course, not Islamic Fundamentalism. But later it is activated by the some other factors like, growing ties of Central Asian states with the developing Islamic countries, events of the seventies and eighties in Iran and Afghanistan, which was perceived attack on Islam. To some extent it was a reaction to the anti religious measures undertaken during the soviet period Thus there was a beginning of renewal of Islam in the society even before Soviet disintegration but it was Islamisation of life not the radical Islam. Lack of any strong power in these states like Soviet Union after independence the Islamisation of life gradually stated changing in the form of Radical Islam. The Islamic factor thus became actively involved in struggle for political and economic power after the collapse of Soviet Union. The impact of radical Islam in Pakistan also influenced Central Asian states primarily through Afghanistan (Kumar 1993:334-336).

In May 1992 fighting erupted in Dushanbe between the government and Islamic opposition of Tajikistan. These opposition groups have received support from

neighbouring Afghanistan and they succeed to throw out the government (Tazmini 2001:69).

After the end of civil war Tajik government banned Islamic based political groups and suppressed activities related to Islamism and a cease fire occurred and accepted by both sides to seek reconciliation through political means. Only the Islamic democratic coalition continues fighting from bases in Afghanistan (ibid).

Uzbekistan has the strongest Islamic tradition in Central Asian state. After independence Uzbek government accepted official Islam as a useful tool for the national identity and solidarity. In post Soviet Uzbekistan by 1992, Uzbek government decentralized the Muslim board, many Muslims established their own mosques, selected their own imams and started to practice many Islamic rituals. Karimov government perceived these innovations as a threat for the state because the same forces ruined the Tajikistan and Afghanistan and it was a potential force for the alternative political organization in Uzbekistan. So the government took suppressive measure for abolishing the IRP in 1992 with article 57 of constitution that prohibits the establishment of the political parties with national or religious features (Tazmini 2001:72-73).

The Islamist fundamentalist movement appeared in the Fergana region of Uzbekistan during late eighties. The first manifestation of militant Islam in the Fergana valley was in the form of violent demonstration at the time of President Karimov's visit to Namangan in early 1992, who demand for setting up for an Islamic State in Uzbekistan but by 1995 , the Islamic religious boom was almost over in the wake of the actions taken by Uzbek as well as Tajik government. But the revival of Islam remerged when Taliban takeover of Kabul .Religious terrorist group became active in Namangan district of Fergana region in Dec 1997 and in early 1998 and they killed police chief. The Islamist fundamentalist threat in Uzbekistan, be noticed in the beginning of year 1997after the Taliban extension in northern part of Afghan state where the Central Asian states have borders with Afghanistan and also the same ethnic group resides either side of border that could create security and refugee problems for these newly independent states. To rule out the threat

of Taliban posed Islamic Extremism , Uzbekistan taken many steps as Tashkent for some time tried to keep good relation with Taliban, hoping to deal with the threat posed by them. In spite of all efforts taken by Uzbekistan did not result positively. The five bombs that went off in Tashkent on 16 Feb 1999 signalled a new upsurge of religious terrorism. Two explosions took place inside the building of the Interior Ministry, one near the Uzbekistan National Bank and on the Independence square where government headquarters are located. President Karimov himself escaped hardly as one of the bomb exploded just 150 metres away from his car. Islamic militant also started taking hostages by hijacking buses as in March 1999 they hijacked a bus and also in May 1999 they hijacked another bus taking passengers as hostages (Kaushik 2000:170-176).

The most recognized terrorist organization of Central Asia is Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), known since 2001 as the “Islamic Movement of Turkestan” (IMT). In Sep 1998, Tohir Abdoulaliloivitch Yuldeshev and Juma Namangani leaders of IMU announced the formation of the IMU, in the Taliban dominated city of Kabul, it was associated with the International Islamic Front(IIF) of Osama Bin Laden. Al-Quada and the Taliban provided man power, expertise and funds to IMU. This group also have the same objective to create an Islamic state based on sharia law. Leaders of IMU had the contacts with many Islamic countries as Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, United Arab Emirates picking up information about methods and ideology about Islamist groups and the most important organization he made contact was Pakistan’s ISI, which gave him funds for his purpose. He also made contacts with a variety of jihadist groups as The ‘Jamiat-i-Ulema, the organization that provided funds for the Taliban (Johnson;2007:14-17).

The members of Islamic movement of Uzbekistan , which developed out of local radical muslims groups in the Fergana valley in the mid 1990s. But the non-violent radical Islamic groups are also threatening .the largest in these is the Hizb-ut Tahriral-Islami.or the Islamic party of liberation, which was founded in Jerusalem in 1953 by Taqiuddin ql Nabhani to unite the Islamic community in a new caliphate and to promote the Islamic

way of life.. It became active active in the region in the mid 1990s, and its influence grew at the end of the de (olcott2005:29).

The Hizb was alleged to be arming Islamic militants in Tajikistan during the power struggle in 1992. The parties who were involved in Tajik civil war such as Islamic Revival Party and the Democratic party of Tajikistan advocates later full religious freedom for Muslims and others but does not support the creation of an Islamic state. After disintegration the emerged situation in Tajikistan and Afghanistan there was a assumption about the political implication of the presence of Tajiks on both sides of border focuses on weather a new state might be created to unite them. But this perception was also ruled out because that time Ahmed Shah Masud ,the guerrilla leader of the Jamat-i-Islami, who became a hero during the war in Afghanistan and minister of defence in the first post communist government, was not interested because the power struggle with in Afghanistan was a far higher priority for him. According to the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees, some 50,000 to 60,000 people fled to northern Afghanistan by the beginning of 1993, crossing the Amu Darya. After these incidents the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan turned in troubles there was huge border violation including arms smuggling. It is important to note that all the weapons that have travelled this route are intended for opposition group. Supporters of the communist old guard in the southern province of Kulob are also alleged to have obtained arms from Afghanistan, seemingly without interference from the border guards. At least some of the border arms acquit ions are business transactions rather than being based primarily on ideological or ethnic cooperation (Atkin;1994:109-112).

Until the disintegration of Soviet Union, Tajikistan border were guarded by Moscow as international border of USSR. After the emergence of Tajikistan as a independent state created the problem of management of the safety of Tajik's borders with Afghanistan. Although a considerable number of Russian troops remained stationed on the Tajik – Afghan border even after the break down of Soviet Union. After the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan in 1989, the US-Pak supported Islamic militants who had already been Active during soviet era in Afghanistan became ruthless brutally mass

destructive towards the supporters of communist regime in Afghanistan .Afghanistan turned in to civil war and Pashtun population organized under Gulbuddin Hekmatyar emerged as a major aspirant for power. His rival General Rashid Dostum a Uzbek and Ahmad Shah Masood a Tajik also organised the respective ethnic groups under their control. The mujahiden of Afghanistan established close relation with the Islamist of Tajikistan they sought against the government in Dushanbe and the security forces of the CIS on the Tajik- Afghan border. This external interference created a problem of internal and external security and integrity of the newly emerged Tajikistan. Tajikistan was seen by the Islamic militants as a bridge for the extension of Islam in to Central Asia and from there in to Russia's autonomous Muslims republics. The drug mafia has also been active behind the Islamist as they wanted to create a safe supply route for drug –traffickers to Europe via Tajikistan and Russia (K.Asopa;2004).

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, civil war broke out in 1992, in Tajikistan causing the death of 50,000 persons, 500,000 were displaced and 70,000 left the country to take refuge in Afghanistan. On the other hand, the exit of Mohammed Najibullah from the Afghan political scene in April 1992 raised the moral of the Islamic forces dominated by the Tajik opposition at that time. There were four million Tajiks in Afghanistan, the largest in any Central Asian state. The Tajik opposition continuously received support from Afghanistan. The former Afghan Pashtun Prime Minister, Gulbadin Hikmatyar, trained hundreds of opposition Tajik militants, while the former Afghan Tajik Defence Minister, Ahmad Shah Masood, armed his supporters in Tajikistan's opposition Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP). Furthermore, the President of Afghanistan, Burhanuddin Rabbani, also accused the governments of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan of interfering in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. He also alleged that Uzbekistan was fuelling civil war in Afghanistan by helping Uzbek leader Abdul Rasheed Dostum's forces with fuel, war planes and aircraft. On the contrary, Dostum levels counter allegations against Masood to facilitate he received military and other assistance from Tajikistan. Thus Afghanistan is clearly divided on ethnic lines between Pashtoon and non-Pashtoon. The ruling establishment of Tajikistan believes that turmoil in Afghanistan has directly affected Tajikistan. The Tajik Prime Minister, Abdul Jalil Samadov, during his visit to Britain,

expressed concern about the civil strife in Afghanistan and maintained that if civil war in Afghanistan did not come to an end, it would eventually spread to other areas. There are blood ties and linguistic affinity between the two states, naturally the civil war in Afghanistan has a more direct impact on Tajikistan than on any other republic of Central Asia. When the Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) regime brought revolution in 1979 with the help of the Soviet government, the Soviet Union deployed 15,000-20,000 technical and administrative personnel, mostly of Uzbek and Tajik origin, in order to establish cordial relations between the minorities of Central Asia and Afghanistan. (Akiner and Barnes 2001).

After the Soviet dissolution civil war erupted in Tajikistan in 1992. This was after Tajikistan's neo-communists took control of the country. The Tajik opposition received strong support from Afghanistan and at the same time civil war also started in Afghanistan and Afghan government accused the Russian-backed Tajik forces of violating Afghan airspace and borders. Thus the Tajik-Afghan border became the centre of clashes between Afghan-based Tajik rebels and Russian border guards. The situation improved when the Afghan government sent conciliatory signals in May 1995 and got a positive response from the Tajik government. Both sides showed mutual tolerance for two reasons: first, the emergence of the Pashtun-dominated Taliban threatened the non-Pashtun government in Kabul; and, second, a shift in the Russian attitude towards the Rabbani regime and its concern over the rising popularity of the Islamic fundamentalist Taliban. In Tajikistan, Russia, Iran and Uzbekistan initiated a dialogue between the Tajik opposition and government in order to go faster the peace process in the region and indirectly consolidate the Rabbani government in Afghanistan. There have been five rounds of talks held between the Tajik government and the Opposition, which provides a positive result (Ahmad 1998).

At the time of Batken event in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan helped Kyrgyz state including military assistance. That time Kazakhstan concerned with the possibility of spread of Islamic radicalism in their territory. Alnur Musaev, the chairman of the committee of National Security stated that on Oct 20, 1999 in parliament that, "There is a problem of

religious extremism, it becomes more urgent each year. We investigate these problems, and our intelligence service is actively acting against extremist ideology and activity.”(Knyazev;2007).

Kyrgyz state faced radical form of Islam supported from Afghan territory, which is known as “The Batken Event” In this event the IMU role had been noticed. The IMU operations took place in Kyrgyzstan on 9 August 1999, a group of twenty one man took four officials captive and demanded a ransom, with free passage to Afghanistan. Two weeks later, IMU kidnappers seized twenty hostages including a general and four Japanese. This time Kyrgyz army was deployed to locate the kidnappers in Batken province. The kidnappers again demanded ransom and the release of several thousand Uzbeks held in Karimov’s prisons (Johnson;2007).

It is important to mention that In Kyrgyzstan non-orthodox Islamic missionaries belonging to the organizations of Arab countries , Turkey , Pakistan and Afghanistan are quite active and this is one of the reason of Islamic revival that turned in the form of religious extremism. In Kyrgyz republic many religious and political groups such as Jamat-ul-Islami and Jamat-ul –Ulema(Pakistan) , Daavat-ul-Irshad, Sunni-Tehrik and Harkat-ul-Ansar, Islami Jamait-ul-Tulaba(Afghanistan), Taliban have been illegally operating. Many incidents took place in Kyrgyzstan as a result of religious extremism. (Knyazev;2007) .

Drug-trafficking in Central Asia: Role of Afghanistan:

Post Soviet Central Asia is not a major producer of narcotics but major transit route for narcotics from Afghanistan moving towards Russia, Eastern then Western Europe. The flow of illegal narcotics through post Soviet Central Asia is a relatively new phenomenon because borders were closed under the Soviet regime. But after independence traffickers have found easier and more accessible routes to Europe through the weak and corrupt Central Asian. It is important to see that drug in Central Asia seems to be currently expanding, particularly in areas that are especially weak or in conflict with the central

government, for example Tajikistan, southern Kyrgyzstan. These regional economies are being increasingly criminalized as a greater proportion of the economy is controlled by the drug money (Jackson 2005:40).

Among all Central Asian states Kyrgyzstan is the most effected from drug –trafficking. Because of economic and political crisis making Kyrgyzstan vulnerable to variety of internal and external threats. There is a vast implication because of this narcotics trafficking for Kyrgyzstan. It poses serious threats of a social, economic and political nature as increase in drug addiction, the exposition of HIV/AIDS among regular drug users, a noticeable increase in drug related crimes and the increasing involvement of the population in drug- related activities. Economic threats include the growing corruption of state officials, border guards, law enforcement and customs officers, and the laundering of proceeds received from the drug trade and their further reinvestment in to legal businesses. Political threats include the challenges posed by the transnational criminal groups to the weak state institutions through corruption and infiltration them, while criminal networks have gone to extent of launching armed incursions in to state's territory in order to ensure the shipment of drugs to their final destination (Madi 2004:250-251).

Drug trade is a great source for the finance of Taliban and Al-Qaeda. It was not only the Taliban and Al Qaeda which were involved in the narcotic trade, but Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) also took interest in this trade to finance its activities. Apart from receiving funds from various external organizations to promote its subversive activities in and around Central Asia, IMU also like its Afghan counterpart Taliban, took keen interest in the drug trade to finance its activities. IMU leader, Juma Namangani was actively involved in drug smuggling through Tajikistan, and used his network of IMU militants in Central Asia and his links (Mohapatra 2007: 164-69).

Civil war that broke out in Tajikistan in 1992, have favoured the establishment of drug routes. Tajikistan is the poorest among Central Asia states and with the end of the USSR traditional sources of income dried up. Because of this, to finance the armed struggle, the

warring parties had to find new income-generating opportunities. Smuggling opium from Afghanistan soon appeared as an easy way to income. (De Danial;2011: 142-145).

Ethnic Nationalism as a Threat to State Integration:

After independence Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan links residing other side of border created keen interest in nationalist circle in Uzbekistan for creation for a confederation or the merger of Uzbek dominated areas of Afghanistan with the republic of Uzbekistan of Central Asia. Like Uzbekistan ,Tajikistan also contributing to a more insensitive nationalistic mood .The state borders set in the 1920s has never been questioned openly by the respective governments in post Soviet Central Asia .But in June 1995, a statement made by Tajikistan 's Interior minister, Yaqubjan Saklimov, in that he called for a unification of all ethnic Tajiks, regardless of which state they currently lived in .This made by a official of government at the time absolutely challenges the territorial integrity of both Uzbekistan and Afghanistan. However, there is considerable interest in some form of federation or uniting with their ethnic kinsmen living across the borders or even changes it existing borders (Hymen 1997:124).

Emergence of Taliban and its implication for Central Asia:

The Taliban implemented an extreme interpretation of Islamic law that many Afghans and the Muslim world. The Taliban brand of Islamic fundamentalism was so extreme that appeared degrade. Islam's message of peace and tolerance and its capacity to live with other religion and ethnic groups has inspired a new extremist form of fundamentalism across Pakistan and Central Asia (Rashid 2000:144-149).

After capturing Mazar-e-Sharif and Kabul Mujahidin forces Taliban forces moved towards northern part of country dominated by Tajiks and Uzbeks warlords and then to Central Asia. In 1998 Yuldeshev moved the headquarter of IMU from Peshawar to Kabul and Namangani also moved from Tajikistan to Kabul to gain experience and in warfare and sabotage. They also joined the Taliban (Belokrenitsky 2005:167).

Afghanistan was in a state of virtual disintegration just before the Taliban emerged at the end of 1994. The country was divided in two different warlords and they were fighting against each other. The predominantly Tajik government of president Burhanuddin Rabbani controlled Kabul, while three provinces in the west centring on Herat were controlled by Ismael Khan. In the east on the Pakistan border three Pashtun provinces were under the independent control of a council of Mujaheddin commanders based in Jalalabad, a small region to the south and east of Kabul was controlled by Gulbuddin Hikmatyar. In the north the Uzbek warlord General Rashid Dostum held sway over six provinces and in January 1994 he had abandoned his alliances with the Rabbani government and joined Hikmatyar to attack Kabul. Hazaras controlled the provinces of Bamian, southern Afghanistan and Kandhar were divided up amongst dozens of petty ex-mujaheddin warlords who plundered the population at will. Talibanis were part time or fulltime students at madrassas, the name they chose for themselves was natural. A talib is an Islamic student, one who seeks knowledge compared to mullah who is one who gives knowledge. Taliban had the closest links with Pakistan where many of them had grown up and studied in madrassas run by a fundamentalist party Jamat-e-Ulema Islam (JUI) which had considerable support among the Pashtuns in Baluchistan and the north west Frontier province (NWFP). Mazar-e-Sharif was a stronghold in northern Afghanistan of the anti-Taliban alliance which was under the control of General Rashid Dostum and his Uzbeks. In the war against Taliban Dostum was supported by neighbouring states and by many Afghans as a saviour and the last hope against the Taliban (Rashid 2000:150-157).

The civil war has pitted the majority Pushtun population in the south and east against the ethnic minorities of the north- Tajik, Uzbek, Hazara and Turkmen but emergence of Taliban once again strengthens their position. The bloody civil war has destroyed this tolerance, setting sects and ethnic groups against one another. The one unifying factor of Islam has become like a weapon in the hands of extremist and a force for division and fragmentation. Jihad, however, does not sanction the killing of the fellow Muslims on the basis of ethnicity or sect. Yet the

Taliban has used it to do just that. This create a rivalry in non -Pashtuns against Taliban who accuse the Taliban of using jihad as a cover to eliminate them. With their linked border, weak security and financial condition the five former Soviet Central Asian states have feared the turmoil originating from Afghanistan. During the Afghan civil war, the newly independent Central Asian states supported their ethnic kin in northern Afghanistan, who provided a buffer against the spread of Pashtun fundamentalism that has now been virtually eliminated. The Taliban control Afghan territory bordering Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. These states continue to support to weakened Northern Alliance. Ahmad Shah Masud, the alliance's ethnic Tajik military commander, keeps a major resupply base in southern Tajikistan, where he receives arms from Russia and Iran (Rashid 1999: 22-28).

Thus, after disintegration though Central Asian state became independent but in the absence of strong power like Soviets these state became fragile and they threatened by the Islamic radicalisation which perceived a destabilising factor for these secular and pro-communist government. After independence, Central Asian state were also very keen for the revival of Islam, but they supported only official Islam. The radical forces, who were receiving support from neighbouring Afghanistan and also from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, as these countries were supporting terrorist groups like Taliban and Al-Qaida who are exporting Islamic extremism, drug trafficking and etc because of this Central Asian states are facing enormous problem in their nation building process.

CHAPTER 4

Impact of the 9\11 incident and Central Asia –Afghanistan Relations

The 9/11 phase marked a new phase in Afghanistan and Central Asia relations. It provided opportunity to distant powers like America and France to intervene in this region. Russia which has strong linkages with this region also entered this region. Soon the Central Asian states also turned into a battlefield as foreign powers tried to use this region as a base for carrying out military operation.

Role of Central Asian states on war against terror after 9\11:

9/11 attacks and the subsequent Operation 'Enduring Freedom' in Afghanistan brought made the Central Asian states the frontline states in this. Uzbekistan was the first Central Asian state to offer support to US. War led by US in Afghanistan eliminated the security threat which comes from Afghan based militants groups. It also gave an opportunity to the Uzbek state for cooperation with US and at the same time it was a chance for US to force Uzbekistan for political and economic reform (Olcott 2007).

Uzbekistan granted permission to USA to use Kharasi- Khanabad airbase near the Karshi that is called K2 in south eastern Uzbekistan for operation enduring freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan. The US military was very much dependent on Uzbekistan for its military operation but it was for short-term use (Tyson and Wright 2005).

According to Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman, United Sate had paid 15 million dollars for the use of this airbase after 2001(ibid).

Unfortunately the relations between these two states soured and soon one witness growing thaw in bilateral relationship between Uzbekistan and America after the US criticism of Andijan incident (Blau 2006).

In response, the Uzbek government ordered to close the K2 airbase in southern Uzbekistan. After that Kyrgyzstan became the primary major ally of US (Shanker 2005).

On 31 July 2005, U.S. officials have confirmed that they have been asked to withdraw all U.S. military forces from the Karshi-Khanabad air base in southern Uzbekistan, which has served as a core for U.S. led alliance missions in Afghanistan since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 (Synovitz 2005).

USA was also permitted to access to the Manas airbase in north of Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan for the US military operation. Although Tajikistan does not host any U.S. troops offered the United States air-space rights (Behner 2005).

Relation with the Kyrgyz state also spoiled when a U.S. serviceman shot dead a Kyrgyz civilian on December 6 at the American airbase outside Kyrgyzstan's capital (Sershen 2006).

Kyrgyzstan's parliament has approved a government order closing the Manas air base, used by the United States to transport supplies and troops to Afghanistan. Its importance to the U.S. and NATO mission in Afghanistan has grown significantly in recent months, as Taliban insurgents have shown themselves able of breaking off the major road supply route from Pakistan through the Khyber Pass to Afghanistan. Reason behind of this decision, what was stated by president, Bakiev has said that he wants the Manas base closed because the United States is not paying enough for its use.¹

One of the implications if Afghan crisis is the beginning of arms race in Central Asia because of the US troops appearance in Central Asian states. The war on terror gave a chance to Central Asian republics to utilise the situation.

Following the attacks of 11 September 2001, Dushanbe also joined US-led coalition in fighting with its old enemy, the Taliban. Dushanbe offered its airspace and facilities to

¹ REF/RL Report, 19 Feb 2009, www.rferl.org

US for the military operation in Afghanistan. In response to this help, United States lifted economic sanctions imposed because of the civil war and again stated giving military and humanitarian assistance².

Turkmenistan has remained neutral but has agreed to provide over flight facility. Kazakhstan too allowed U.S.-led coalition flights over its territory to fight against the Taliban in Afghanistan (Saidazimova; 2006).

Implications of 9\11 war on Central Asian Security, stability and development:

In the US led war against terror, Central Asian States eagerly agreed to support in the hope that this will provide an opportunity to Central Asian state to defeat their own Islamic militants IMU and HTI who received every kind of assistance from their mentors, Taliban and Al-Qaeda. About the situation of Post September, in Central Asia interpreted by different experts, Olivier Roy , a French scholar, says that radical Islamic threat like IMU in Central Asia has decreased in a large extent because of massive crackdown of these forces By US forces. While Ahmed Rashid ,a Pakistani scholar argued that, despite their weakened capability for organising a large scale military activity but its underground network in Central Asia largely remained intact and also able to carry out their activities (Mohapatra 2005:156).

September 11 attack also created the expectation for economic recovery among Central Asian states. During the war period, United States gave huge assistance to these states (Olcott 2005:5).

In the war against terror, the IMU fought against the US and its allies but this Islamic organization suffered heavily during the war period and its top leader Namangani reported killed in 2001. Still IMU militants are residing in Afghan –Pakistan border and have links with other Islamist groups, including al Qaeda, the Afghan Taliban. These

² Tajikistan and Afghanistan, Institute for the study of war.

groups are again active in the wake of re-emergence of Taliban and trying to reach their goal to establish an Islamic state in the region (Saidazinova: 2006).

Assumption that the conflict in Afghanistan had secured Central Asian governments from Islamist opponents was not reliable and worries were given emphasis by fresh warning that Namangan, the military commander of the banned (IMU), was alive. Misir Ashyrkulov, chairman of Kyrgyzstan's National Security Council, said on 24 July that Namangan was alive and currently in the Badakhshan district of Afghanistan with militia of 1,500 men, some of whom have already crossed into Tajikistan, in preparation for an attack on the Fergana Valley. Ashyrkulov already announced that IMU militants were meeting on the Afghan-Tajik frontier with a vision to launch an attack on Kyrgyzstan. According to analysts, kidnapping of a Tajik border guard and three local men near the southern Tajik city of Shurabad indicate revival of Islamist activism in the region (RFE/RL Report on Central Asia, 25 July 2002).

After the defeat of Taliban, several leaders returned from exile (among them Dostum, who had spent his exile in Mashhad in Iran, Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, and Ismail Khan of Herat). In the changing circumstances, Russian, Iranian, Uzbek and Tajik officials gathered in Dushanbe to discuss the situation after the Massoud death. One week later, the Russian chief of staff, Anatolii Kvashnin, met the new leader of the Northern Alliance, Qasim Muhammad Fahim, another ethnic-Tajik Afghan, in Dushanbe. After the invasion in Afghanistan, USA started to support the Northern Alliance to overthrow the Taliban regime. USA supported the Uzbek part of Alliance under commander Dostum, on the other hand Russia, continued its support for the Tajik section. The Tajik faction of the Northern Alliance at first dominated the Karzai administration; they held the posts of minister of defence, minister of interior and foreign affairs and provided 36 of the 38 initial 38 generals. The northern Alliance allotted 17 of 30 cabinet positions but the intentions were to widen the ethnic composition of government (Jonson 2006: 100-103).

After the elimination of Taliban, role of major ethnic groups in Nation Building process and its impact of Afghan politics and society:

Since the fall of the Taliban in late 2001, 'the Agreement on Provisional Government in Afghanistan Pending the Re-Establishment of Permanent Government Institutions' commonly referred to as the "Bonn Agreement" has driven the Afghan political road map. A conference was organized in Bonn on 5 December 2001, and the Bonn Agreement was signed between Afghan factions. This agreement was introduced by UN and highly influenced by the USA, established the provisional arrangement for Afghanistan to create permanent government institutions (Jonson 2006: 2).

The Bonn agreement established a political process. It drafted an internationally supported four years political process that included organising a Loya Jirga in December 2002 to elect the Interim president and ratify a new constitution in 2003. A Loya jirga was to be convened within six months, to form a transitional government that would oversee the writing of a new constitution. A permanent government was to be selected within two years. The political process initiated by the Dec 2001 Bonn Agreement has led to the successful agreement on the new constitution in December 2003 and the presidential election in 2004 in which Hamid Karzai won the election. This would then be followed a presidential election in Oct 2004 (ICG Asia Report No, 56 June 2003).

By mid November 2001, UNIFSA had captured over 80% of Afghanistan including Kabul. With the fall of Taliban, international attention turned to Afghanistan's future. U.S much due to Pakistan's insistence ruled a government led by the Tajik dominated UNIFSA. The domination of one ethnic group is seen as a barrier to peace. UN sponsored talk on Afghanistan's future that end with the Bonn Agreement, proposed the establishment of an interim government composed of ethnic tribal leaders. Hamid Karzai appointed the leader of Interim government. Several warlords from UNIFSA initially rejected the agreement. The leader of the ethnic Uzbek National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan (NIMA) and the deputy defence minister of interim authority, General

Rashid Dostum, claim that the agreement had failed to reward the contribution by the NIMA to UNIFSA ground offensive (Fishpool ,Asia and pacific review 2003- 2004).

The Bonn agreement also provided for an international peace keeping force to maintain security, at least in Kabul. Northern Alliance forces were to withdraw from Kabul according to the Bonn agreement, but forces loyal to Defence Minister Fahim have remained stronghold there. The Bonn conference's conclusions were endorsed by U.N. Security Council Resolution 1385 (December 6, 2001), and the international peacekeeping force was authorized by Security Council Resolution 1386, adopted December 20, 2001 (CRS Report 2003).

One of the major emphasis of Bonn agreement was on multi-ethnicity, it discusses choices can best contribute in long term stability and reconciliation by stimulating inclusive, integrative identities and what the problems and prospects are for these outcomes.

Afghanistan is a multi ethnic society which has different culture and language, still there is a strong collective sense of identity within the country. Most of the inhabitants of Afghanistan believe that they will be successful only if they are united and live in peace with one another. As Louis Dupree writes, "In Afghanistan, only distinctive tribal and ethnic clothing, language, religion and other cultural impediments make the difference. But like the United States, and for a much longer period, Afghanistan had been a cultural, as well as physical, melting-pot, the influences of many empires rose, fell and blended."(Stanekzai 2008:7).

The divide-and-rule policy found its most extreme expression as the government employed Pashtun tribesmen to repress Hazara resistance, their methods being the confiscation of land, looting and killing. Service as high ranking military officers, and in the foreign ministry, was reserved for certain groups. Full access to social mobility belonged first and foremost to Pashtuns. The years of wars have had an impact on the relative significance of different identities particularly in terms of ethnicity, when the

civil war started particularly with the fighting for control over Kabul. Ethnicity had become the prime factor in political actors, claim to legitimacy (Sinonson 2004:7-10).

After the fall of Najibullah, Rabbani became President but he did not have the support of different mujahidin factors in Afghan state. Kabul was sealed by other mujahidin faction the nominal Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, a Pashtun, who accused Rabbani of monopolizing power. In the year of 1993-1994 Afghan Islamic clerics and students, mostly of rural Pashtun origin, formed the Taliban movement. The Taliban analysed the Rabbani government as corrupt and anti- Pashtun (CRS Report April, 2010:5).

After the fall of Kabul in November 2001, the United nation invited major factions of Afghanistan, most prominently the Northern Alliance a coalition of different ethnic groups in Afghanistan (CRS Report April,2001).

In these Invited factions who were going to form interim government Gulbuddin Hekmatyar was an ethnic Pashtun and the leader of the Islamic party of Afghanistan,Hezb-e-Islami Massoud was as Tajik, and Dostum was an ethnic Uzbek, a minority group in Afghanistan. All the leaders of different ethnic groups exploited ethnicity for their own purpose (CRS Report April 24, 2002: 20-21).

Bonn Agreement was signed to work out a framework for the future of Afghanistan for a period of six months. Hamid Karzai was chosen to lead the coalition. He is a Pashtuns belonging to the dominant Durrani tribe. The Karzai administration became the country's first transitional government (Ved: 2003).

In spite of the formation of the interim government in Afghanistan, the warlords are still having their strong position and continue to collect revenues in their respective areas. The Tajik Rashid Dostum has 5000 soldiers and control five Northern provinces. He was introduced in to the government as part of a deal to keep him away from rebellion. Another Tajik leader Ismail Khan, hold sway over another 5000 soldiers. Shia leader Mohammed karim Khalili hold control over the minority Hazara tribes (ibid).

The most visible result of the rise and fall of the Taliban is the stronger position of the minority ethnic groups of the Northern Alliance. The fall of Taliban created a new pattern of ethnic differences in Afghan state. Controlling Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kunduz, and Herat, the leaders of the Northern Alliance effectively hold sway over more than half of the country and all its six international borders except the one with Pakistan (CRS Report April 24,2002:24).

The ethnic group which became most affected by fall of Taliban was Pashtun. In the perception of many ethnic Pashtuns, they lacked significant representation in the central government, particularly in its security institutions. Other factors which contributed in growing hostility among Pashtuns were continued violence against Pashtuns in northern and western part of the country. Though the interim government was headed by a Pashtun, Hamid Karzai, it was dominated by a mainly Panjshiri Tajik armed faction, the Shura- yi Nazari Shamali (Supervisory Council of the North). The power ministries of defence, interior and foreign affairs were held respectively by Mohammad Qasim Fahim, Younus Qanuni, and Abdullah Abdullah, all members of supervisory council of north. The Emergency Loya Jirga in June 2002, which was expected to install a more broadly representative, Panjshiri Tajik monopoly over government (ICG Asia Report No 62, August 5, 2003:1).

In many parts of the country, even small land disputes can also be explained in terms of ethnic dimension. The Pashtunisation of Hazarajat and the north from the 1880s onwards, remains one basic reason for current disputes. Under Zahir Shah, large dam and irrigation projects brought the resettlement of people (often Pashtun nomads). The Pashtun delegates became satisfied to some extent when the CLJ (constitutional Loya Jirga) decided that the national anthem should be in Pashto, both Pashto and Dari were named official languages. This was the sign of drawback of Pashtuns (ibid).

The Bonn Agreement resolute that no armed group should be allowed to operate in the capital, except International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) but avoiding this

resolution the Tajik commander Mohammad Qasim Fahim forces moved into Kabul. In December 2001, he has by and large, been allowed to operate there at will and they had stronghold under Fahim command. Fahim has his own troops, estimated at 18 000, with a smaller number belonging to the new Afghan National Army (ANA, currently numbering around 6000, but aiming at 60 000), which Fahim control being the Transitional Administration's Defence Minister. The remaining uniformed personnel belong under the Ministry of the Interior. The control of the Ministry of Defence has been total to the point that, when Fahim in February 2002 named 38 generals, 37 were Tajik and one Uzbek. The Tajik faction of the Northern Alliance at first dominated the Karzai administration they held the posts of minister of defence, minister of interior and foreign affairs and provided 36 of the 38 initial 38 generals. The northern Alliance allotted 17 of 30 cabinet positions but the intentions were to widen the ethnic composition of government. Afghan interim administration tried to take some effort to reform but it was very limited. President Karzai approved plans for 22 new non-Panjsheri appointments, leading to civil and military positions in the ministry. They controlled over the defence and interior ministries in Kabul (Simonson 2004:723-724).

Afghan Elections and Ethnic factor:

According to the Bonn Agreement, election for the Afghan presidency, National Assembly and Provincial Council, were all to be held in the year of 2004. These elections showed the inter-ethnic dimensions in Afghanistan. Karzai with the encouragement of the USA tried to undercut support for the Taliban and inviting moderate supporters of the Taliban, mostly the ethnic Pashtuns. Tajik leaders viewed this move with suspicion that Karzai is promoting Pashtuns within his government. Karzai also took action to marginalize warlords. During September 2004, he removed Ismail Khan as governor of Herat Province. Again a bold move taken by the Karzai on 26 July 2004 was the dismissal of Mohammad Fahim, the powerful Tajik Minister of Defence and leader of the Northern Alliance, as one of his vice-president at the last movement to keep away him to filling of presidential election candidacy forms to not to allow tajiks to regroup and

promote a new candidate. These events exacerbated inter ethnic tensions in Afghan state (Simonsen 2004:712-715).

The voting results of the Afghan presidential election closely resemble the ethnic patchwork of the country. The ethnic groups have voted largely for the candidate from their own communities as Pashtuns voted for Karzai, Uzbeks for Abdul Rasdid Dostum, Tajiks for Yunis Qanooni, and Hazaras for warlord Mohhammad Mohaqeq. According to Bonn agreement, the parliamentary elections were to be conducted with the presidential election. Parliamentary elections produced mixed political results without a clear mandate for any major political player. President Karzai did not get enough numbers and the houses of parliament were politically fragmented (Rais 2008:135).

In Afghan presidential election on October 9, 2004, as expected, Hamid Karzai was elected with 55.4 percent of vote. Karzai main opponents Yunus Qanooni, Haji Mohammad Mohaqiq and Abdul Rashid Dostum received respectively 16.3%, 11.7% and 10%. The presidential election result showed that the traditional ethnic splits in the country and traditional ethnicity remain at the forefront of Afghan politics. It reflects the long standing ethnic divisions and long driven ethnic conflicts dynamics in the country. No candidate received significant support outside of their particular ethno- linguistic groups. As Karzai was elected by a majority vote, but he was not elected with a majority of vote from any ethnic group outside his own ethnic groups. Qanooni, a leading figure in the Northern Alliance a tajik, received most of the Tajik vote, while Dostum got the votes of his fellow Uzbeks in the North, and Mohaqiq received the vote of the Shia Hazaras of central Afghanistan which he leads. Though this election was assumed as the first step on the path towards democracy but the result also showed that the two most influential Afghan ethno-linguistic groups and traditional rivals not only vote for their own candidate but also against the other. Afghanistan faces an extremely difficult challenge of unifying a fragmented society and fostering the development of a national identity because each ethnic group is attempting to gain a foothold in government often at the expense of other groups (Johnson 2006 12-13).

Pashtuns emerged as biggest victors but they did not won the majority support. Pashtuns dominated the southern and eastern regions, took 113 of 249 seats. Tajiks, the second largest group and widely dispersed across the country took 60. As anticipated, the SNTV voting system favoured organised minorities. The Hazara-Shia (42) and Uzbek (22) communities won more seats than their estimated populations. In smaller groups with Baluch Tatar and Nuristani each got one seat and Turkmen four and Pashai, all got two seats (ICG Report no 116, 15 May 2006).

The presidential and parliamentary elections in Afghanistan have produced some consequences, as the Taliban has been weakened politically and some moderate sections from the militant wing had decided to join the political process. The ballot box provides an alternative to armed struggle for groups to empower themselves and seek representation. Ethnic and social pressure also work in changing political preferences. The Pashtun population, in a climate of ethnic feelings and fragmentation, was eager to elect a Pashtuns as president and Pashtun member for the provincial councils and Wolesi Jirga. Many Taliban themselves voted for Karzai to prevent Yunus Qanooni, a Tajik, from getting elected (Rias 2008:137).

One of the major impact of the fall of the Taliban was the emergence of Warlords in Afghanistan who are also ethnically divided and most of them belong to non –pashtuns. They became stronger during war period because US supported them to remove the Taliban from power. These warlords are uniting under northern alliance which has the composition of Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras and also small number of Pashtuns. It has always been a policy of the Northern Alliance to increase the involvement of the Pashtuns to control over Pashtuns areas .The phenomenon of one ethnic group dominating other ethnic groups is a chief cause of civil war in Afghanistan (Plunk 2001).

One of the another implication of the war against terror was the abolition of Pashtuns in Afghanistan. In the North, the Uzbek chief, Gen. Rashid Dostum, soldiers looted minority Pashtuns. They were also ousted by Afghan Army as there were majority of Tajik ethnics, this led to the ethnic tension among Afghan society (Rashid 2008).

If we see the foundation of Afghan National Army (ANA), its leadership is also dominated by Tajiks after war period, but the original troops composition of the ANA was relatively well-balanced ethnically. Under the US military guidelines there was military reformation in ANA, which called for 38 percent of the troops to be Pashtun, 25 percent Tajiks, and 19 percent Hazaras and eight percent Uzbek. As recently as 2008, the RAND Corporation was given data showing that 40 percent of the enlisted men in the ANA were Pashtun and that Tajiks accounted for less than 30 percent. A major reason for the predominance of Tajik in ANA was that, there is a serious problems recruiting troops in the rural areas of Kandahar and Helmand provinces by mid-2007. At least in the Pashtun province of Zabul, the percentage of Pashtuns in the ANA has now been reduced to a minimum. In Zabul province, U.S. officers embedded in one of the kandaks (battalions) reported earlier this year that they believed only about five percent of the troops in the entire brigade are Pashtuns. The brigade commander in Zabuli is a Tajik. Meanwhile, Tajiks have maintained a firm grip on the command structure of the ANA (IPS Report 2009).

In Helmand province, beginning in May 2006, there were major bursts of Taliban violence, causing many casualties. The renewed Taliban insurgency presented a threat to the authority of the Karzai government more severe than any since 2001. Despite major initiatives to transform the Afghan National Army into a capable and strong military force, in 2006 it possessed insufficient firepower.(Robert I. Rotberg : 2007:2) .

There are many reasons behind the re-emergence of the Taliban in 2005 and 2006 as the return of foreign fighters (some after training in Iraq), better tactics, new outside support, shelters in Pakistan, and financial control over the vast profits from narcotics trafficking (ibid).

This is also perceived that insurgency came from a narrow group of Taliban who were waiting for some offer from Kabul for the participation in government since 2002 which never came so they were forced to restore to violence. Ideological reason is also important for insurgency as some hardcore follower of Islam never accepted the defeat

and thought it was their duty to continue fight. Insurgency of Taliban known as Neo-Taliban. 95 % of the members of the Taliban were Pashtuns they did not allow to other ethnic groups for recruitment of Taliban group (Giustozzi 2007:11,48).

Insurgency of Taliban again has the security concern for Central Asia. In March 2004, the cities of Tashkent, Bukhara, and Chorsu were hit by suicide bombers and for this attack government blamed HT, and the IMU and Al-Qaeda, closed to its border. But the responsibility of this attack was taken by the Islamic Jihad Union ,a group whose members had broken away from the IMU and trained by Al-Qaeda in Waziristan. There were also rising tension in the Fergana valley due to growing poverty and 'underground Islamic movements'. The IMU leader Tahir Yuldashev remains in Waziristan and re-established his links with Uzbekistan. Hundreds of Afghan youths travelled Waziristan to took training and have fought in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq (Rashid 2008:343-347).

Taliban led insurgency has become ever more dangerous in the southern and eastern part of country and is trying to extend even outside Kabul. On September 2008, a bold attack on a coalition convoy in the city killed 16 people including two U.S. soldiers, near the U.S. embassy, the most heavily fortified section of Kabul. Even as NATO has organized its forces across the country particularly in the province of Helmand, a Taliban stronghold showed increasing power and agility (Rubin 2007:105).

After 9/11, there was really an opportunity for Central Asian States to reshape the trajectory of the development in their respective nations. But neither Central Asian States nor the international community has made good use of this opportunity. Though state building process has begun with some institutional changes like, establishment of loya jirga and holding elections in Afghan state. But these political processes are not very strong because of many reasons like conflict between different ethnic identities, religious extremist forces Taliban and Al-Qaeda which are backing by Pakistan and Arab countries.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

Afghanistan and Central Asian states share a common ethno-cultural connections. There are several ethnic groups which are spread across the Afghanistan- Central Asia border. Historically, Afghanistan and Central Asia was a contiguous region. However, it was tightly divided as the result of the agreement between Tsarist Russia and colonial Britain. Afghanistan was made the buffer state between the two.

The situation has not improved much in the aftermath of the formation of the Soviet Union. The continuation of a soft boundary was a myth. After the formation of the Soviet Union large-scale movement of the population took place from Central Asia as they left due to persecutions carried out by the Soviet authority. The Soviet authority also feared that to checkmate radical forces it is necessary that border should be controlled.

The intervention of the Soviet Union in 1979 altered the geo-political configuration of this region. The Soviet intervention resulted in opening of the borders between these two states and continuation influx of radical ideology across the Soviet Central Asia from Afghanistan. The result is growing radicalisation of Central Asian society and polity . The 1991 phase marked a new phase in bilateral relationship between the newly independent Central Asian states as well as Afghanistan minus Soviet supported regime. This is the most crucial phase in the bilateral relationship among these states.

The Ethnic connections on both sides of the Central Asia- Afghanistan border activated ethnic nationalist feelings in states like Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. As reported these states gave a call for confederation or the merging of same ethnic groups, such as Uzbekistan for Uzbek dominated areas in Afghanistan to Uzbek state Tajikistan also called for a unification of all ethnic Tajiks who are living in other states. These demands of unification Generated a threat to regional unity and integration. The emergence of Taliban can be termed as an important turnaround in the relations among these states. Taliban not only generated a threat to Afghan unity and integrity because of its

propagation of religious hatredness but also generated a feeling of marginalization among the Central Asian minority ethnic groups who constitutes significant and influential sections of Afghan population. The flushout of Taliban forces in the aftermath of 9/11 incident as well as emergence of new regimes under Karzai following the Bonn agreement resulted in weakening of militant activities in both Afghanistan and also Central Asia. Efforts are going on in both Central Asian states as well as in Afghanistan to maintain peace and tranquillity in this part of the world. Apart from strategic cooperation political elite of both Central Asia and Afghanistan are also interested in strengthening cultural cooperation as well as economic one. It is in this context one envisages a better cooperation between Central Asia and Afghanistan in the ensuing years that will strengthen peace and stability in the region.

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