



# Examining the mantle of India in the regional peace process(South Asia) with special reference to Afghanistan

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## Abstract

India plays a prominent role in the overall development of SAARC and has contributed the most in terms of greater connectivity , in maintaining peace and sharing of information , allowing refugee in India from neighbour SAARC encompass world's 3% area, world's 21 % population (US\$2.9 trillion) of the global economy i.e 3.8%. It is the most densely populated region in the world and one of the most fertile areas. India supports various measures taken in the SAARC framework to achieve closer cooperation in diverse areas. India enjoys magnificent bilateral connection with Afghanistan, Bangladesh , Bhutan , Maldives , Sri Lanka and Nepal. As per our neighbourhood policy , India is vital evolution partner and is attached with several projects in this country .Our engagement with these countries are build on a consultative , correlative and outcome oriented approach while concentrating on consignment welfare in the form of greater connectivity improved infrastructure , stronger development in various sectors like security and broader and people to people contact . In case of Afghanistan, India from the very beginning has been sharing a warm, pragmatic relationship and share many profound cultural, societal, and economic ties ranging from Afghans' love for Indian music and film, to strong trade and medical tourism and technology information and sharing with Afghanistan , followed by India has helped Afghans in prepare a civil society , helping in building and construction of roads followed by social and constructional reform a few of the them .

**Keywords:** SAARC, Afghanistan , security and border relation , regional development , maintaining peace

## Introduction

The establishment of SAARC in 1985 was a landmark in the institutionalization of regional cooperation in South Asia .SAARC is an economic and geopolitical organization established with the objective to promote socio-economic development , stability and welfare of all states with collective self-reliance within its member. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation has India, Pakistan , Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh .Later on Afghanistan joined and received the status of full-member in 2007 . SAARC respects the principle of sovereign , equality , territorial integrity and national independence as it strives to attain sustainable economic growth . There are eleven areas of cooperation which comprises of agriculture , culture and sports, population and child welfare , health , environment and

meteorology , rural development , tourism , transport , science and technology , communication, women in development and prevention of drug trafficking and drug abuse.

The objectives of SAARC are as follows

To assist the well being of the people of South Asia and to enhance their quality of life.

To stimulate economic growth, social progress and cultural growth in the region and to provide all individuals the chance to live in dignity and to realize their highest potentials.

To assist and build collective self-reliance among the countries of South Asia.

To accord to mutual trust, understanding and appreciation of one another's problems..

To provide active collaboration and mutual assistance in the economic, social, cultural, technical and scientific fields.

To build collaborate with other developing countries.

To build cooperation among themselves in international forums on subject of mutual interests;

To uphold with international and regional organizations with similar aims and purposes.

### **Research Methodology**

For the purpose of this exploration , I have used a amalgamation of two of the archetypical social sciences research tools application –as they are authentic and brilliant method to assemble statistics from multiple appellants in a methodical and convenient way . Question were asked to the parents and their children , survey , interviews –consisting of several interrogation which were dispersed among representative of each contender group .

### **Objective of the Research Paper**

The main areas of exploration in this paper incorporates

1. Why was SAARC formed and its important
2. Contribution of India in maintaining peace in SAARC and its relation with its member states
3. Role of India in Afghanistan Peace Process

### **Literature Review**

SAARC encompass world's 3% area, world's 21 % population (US\$2.9 trillion) of the global economy i.e 3.8%. It is the most densely populated region in the world and one of the most fertile areas. SAARC countries have common tradition, dress, food and culture and political aspects thereby collaborating their activities . All the SAARC countries have common trouble and concern like poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, natural disasters, internal conflicts, industrial and technological backwardness, low GDP and poor socio-economic state and uplift their living standards thereby creating mutual areas of development and progress having common solutions

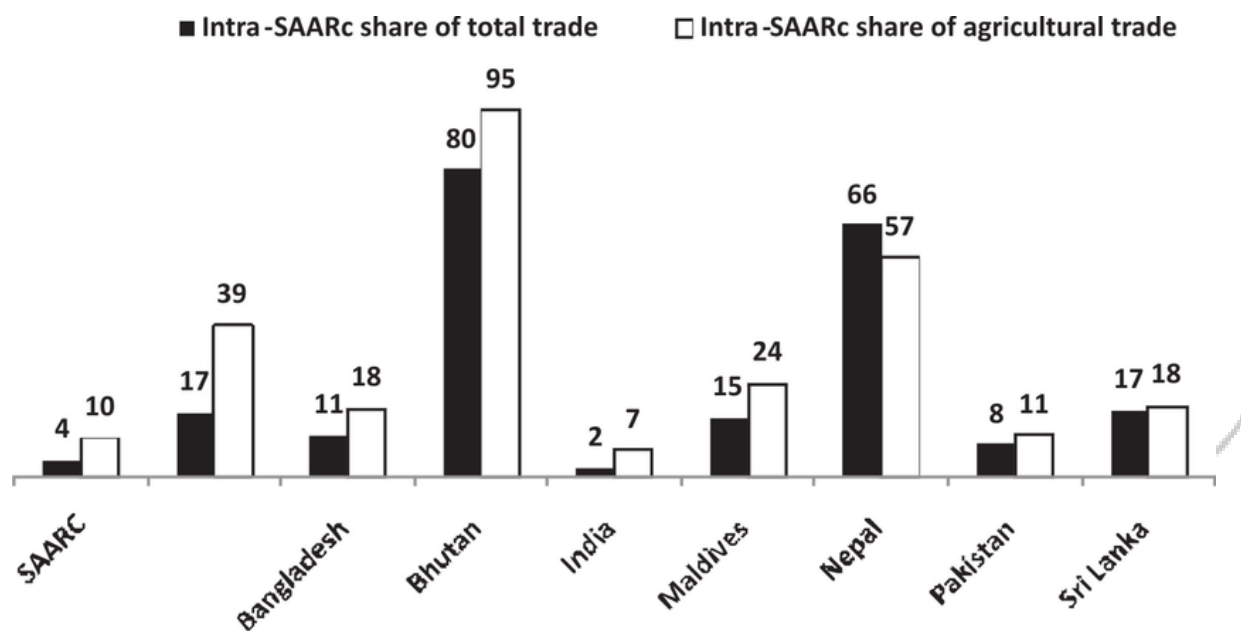
Free Trade Area (FTA): SAARC is relatively a new arrangement in the global coliseum. The member countries have set up a Free Trade Area (FTA) which will amplify their domestic commerce and reduce the commerce gap of some states significantly.

SAPTA: South Asia Preferential Trading Agreement for stimulation of commerce amongst the member countries came into effect in 1995.

SAFTA: A Free Trade Agreement constricted to commodities, but eliminating all services like information technology. Agreement was directed to lessen customs responsibilities of all commerce commodities to zero by the year 2016.

SAARC Agreement on Trade in Services (SATIS): SATIS is following the GATS-plus 'positive list' approach for trade in services liberalization.

SAARC University: Inaugurate in India a SAARC university, followed by in Pakistan food bank and also an energy reserve.



Some of the challenges which SAARC faces is Lack of meetings More engagement is required by the member states and instead of meeting biennial meetings should be held annually. Broad area of collaboration leads to deflection of energy and resources. Limitation in SAFTA: The implementation of SAFTA has not been adequate for Free Trade Agreement constricted to goods, eliminating all services like information technology. Indo-Pak Relations increasing tension and conflict between India and Pakistan have severely hindered the prospects of SAARC.

SAARC-South Asia Association for regional cooperation, it has 8 members ever since it was launched it has become a platform for India-Pakistan rivalry. It was a multilateral platform with a bilateral agenda, Pakistan opposition of any Indian Initiative, SAARC never really achieved more than rhetoric, Two main problem in south Asian economic integration is 1) External Politics and 2) Domestic political ramification of opening markets to neighbours. Moreover India will not take part in SAARC summit in Islamabad due to continuous border terrorism and Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Bhutan also declared their reluctance to attend the meeting. Maintaining peaceful relation with Pakistan is utmost important in order to focus on development, Untapped economy of Pakistan can be a source for trade and commerce. The South Asian region is full of disparities, contradictions and paradoxes.

Keeping harmonious connection with Pakistan is paramount in order to concentrate on development, else India will not be able to fulfil its urge to be one of cosmic economies. Unfastened economy of Pakistan can be an asset for trade and commerce. Mutual penetrable border with Bhutan and Nepal are important for cultural ties, better economic integration, exchange of benefits like power, growing together peacefully. The racial bind is an aligned string of link along with Palk strait with Sri Lanka, profitable development of Tamil fishermen benefiting the country, interchange of Buddhist ethnic values will maintain and assist peace in India especially Southern State of Tamil Nadu which is dominant for country's comprehensive growth. Development of Afghanistan is in the interest of India for peace in the region from problems of terrorism and Afghanistan economy can be a better for Indian businesses to spread their presence. The island nation of Maldives with Indian exodus is an endowment in itself and growing ties will motivate the trade, tourism of both

## Findings.

India is one of the founding member of SAARC that was set up in 1985 as an organisation to build a secure and unified South Asia with the larger aim of promoting the development and progress of all countries in that region. India supports various measures taken in the SAARC framework to achieve closer cooperation in diverse areas. India enjoys magnificent bilateral connection with Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Nepal. As per our neighbourhood policy, India is vital evolution partner and is attached with several projects in this country. Our engagement with these countries are build on a consultative, correlative and outcome oriented approach while concentrating on consignment welfare in the form of greater connectivity improved infrastructure, stronger development in various sectors like security and broader and people to people contact. India has shared the benefits of advance technology with its neighbourhood countries. India has extended its National Knowledge Network with its neighbourhood countries of South Asia which has reached to Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Bangladesh. India also launched a South Asian Satellite in may 2017 from sriharikota. Demonstration terminals of the satellite has been installed in all the SAARC countries apart from Pakistan. India had opened a University called the South Asian University, it was formed through an inter-government agreement at the 14<sup>th</sup> summit to provide excellent education facilities to students and researchers across the SAARC countries, offering master degree and M.phil and PH.D in programmes in eight major fields, the campus is located in New Delhi and India has been paying the cost for the construction of the campus, Later on the university will run taking into account the budget and contribution by all SAARC Countries, where India will contribute the most. SAARC Disaster Management Center which is located in Gujarat's Institute of Disaster Management. It is formed to serve of all SAARC member states in the field of policy, technical support on system growth, capacity building services and training for holistic management of disaster risk management in the SAARC region.



On March 15, 2020, during a video conference of the SAARC Heads of State and Government, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed a Corona virus Emergency Fund. This emergency fund was set up in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. The initiative seeks to mitigate the risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic in the South Asian region. The other members of the SAARC expressed their support of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his proposal for the coronavirus emergency fund, other countries followed

### India's role in relation to Afghanistan

Afghanistan and India enjoy a warm, pragmatic relationship and share many profound cultural, societal, and economic ties ranging from Afghans' love for Indian music and film, to strong trade and medical tourism and technology information and sharing

For the modern, post-Taliban Afghanistan, India has been a loyal partner ever since re-establishing ties with the country after the 2002 Bonn Agreement. India has supported Afghans with roughly \$3 billion in instigation service, far more than it has furnished to any nation. This assistance has been in the form of providing scholarships to students, infrastructure facilities and transportation projects, medical teams to treat and heal Afghans, and building institutional capacities at the ministry level. A powerful and self-sufficient Afghanistan without Taliban role will anticipate entry to Central Asia and decrease concerns about Pakistan's impact in the region for New Delhi. Therefore U.S.-Taliban negotiations has been a concern for Indian leaders fearing the agreement reached on the drawdown of U.S. forces would leave its Afghan partners to play a losing hand in talks with an invigorate Taliban.

It's therefore in India's interest to promote and safeguard those profits and continuing those investments so that any future political settlement is durable

Beyond assertion of support, India should join other friends of Afghanistan to motivate its Afghan partners to detach their differences and form a unified front for conciliation. Continued political antagonism in Afghanistan only helps the Taliban, but clear and public support from India for a peace process that protects the many gains Afghans have enjoyed since 2002 will reiterate India's commitment to a tranquil and wealthy Afghanistan.

India offers technical support to Afghans involved in the peace process, as Afghanistan need to resolve very fundamental issues regarding social and political organization. From building democratic institutions, social and constitutional reforms in a tranquil Afghanistan, the newly appointed mediating teams will



spend month or years in constructing a feasible future. India can impart its technical expertise to Afghan moderators

India has helped Afghan prepare a civil society. Peace processes are normally built around a core group of centralized conciliation, but this doesn't prevent the process from outside influence. The negotiating team will be persistent with pressure by various constituencies, including women's groups, youth groups, ethnic minorities, and others. It is pivotal that Afghan citizens engage with negotiators on a regular basis to advocate for the outcomes they desire. A knowledgeable and authorized civil society can effectively convey the needs and apprehension of citizens and hold the process. They can gain from and preparation, and the process will benefit from their activism. India's civil society can play a crucial role in providing support to Afghan civil society—and Indian institutions that have a history of training Afghan officials can continue to train and invest in Afghanistan's institutional building efforts.

Critically, India can make clear that it does not seek proxy conflict with Pakistan within a peaceful Afghanistan. Though not likely, India and Pakistan would ideally have a quiet closed door communication about their presumption and agree to do no harm to a feasible Afghan peace. Even if they both support a negotiated outcome to Afghanistan's civil war, Pakistan and India will likely not share specific interests. A smooth and table relation between India and Pakistan can help reduces terrorism and violent extremism in the region, can keep Afghanistan from being a foundation for international terrorism, and can conduct miserably require peace to Afghans after experiencing political and economic instability, violence and conflict for more than four decades. A stable Afghanistan can help in economic development of both the countries

India has essential absorption in Afghanistan, incorporating the desire to counter Pakistan's impact there and tight Kabul's friendship in the process. For both India and Afghanistan Zaranj-Delaram road, is of prudent important. It links the border town of Zaranj with the city of Delaram, thereby inaugurating greater communication between Afghanistan and the Iranian border and paramount transport line, the Ring Road (which links the country's biggest cities and passes through Delaram as well). As Afghanistan is very dependent on Pakistan for transit, such footing components make other options simple, in this case, a part of Afghan communicate through Iran. This will serve a good opportunity for both government of Kabul and New Delhi. In a magnificent scheme of things, the Zaranj-Delaram road will become a part of a enlarged framework chain that will reach from Iran's Chabahar port to Delaram. The erection of the road was funded, concluded, and partially sheltered by Indian institutions. Alike, the India assisted Shah toot dam project, if realized, may result in terminating more Kabul River waters in Afghanistan, lessen the quantity flowing posterior to Pakistan.

So here are some of the major projects realized, in one form or the other, by India in Afghanistan (1) the building of Afghanistan's Parliament in Kabul (the complex includes a library, so in that sense India did build a library in the country); (2) the restoration of the Stor palace in the same city; (3) rebuilding of the Habibia High School, also in the capital, and providing it with grants-in-aid; (4) reconstruction of the Salma dam, now known as the Afghan-India Friendship Dam; (5) The establishment of underline from Pul-e-Khumri to Kabul; (6) In Kabul re-establish Indira Gandhi Institute for Child Health/Indira Gandhi Children's Hospital (7) financing the establishment of the Afghan National Agriculture Sciences and Technology University (ANASTU) in Kandahar and supporting it in various ways; (8) building the Chimtala power substation in Kabul; (9) construction of the cricket stadium in Kandahar; (10) In the same city building a cold storage warehouse; (11) ameliorate telephone interchange in some provinces; (12) enlarging the national television network; (13) digging tube wells in some of the states; (14) reputedly reintegrating three water reservoirs; and (15) establishing five toilet and sanitation complexes in Kabul.

## Conclusion

India plays a very important role in maintaining regional peace in South Asia one because of its size and resource availability. India maintains harmony with all its neighbours and provides greater framework and support several projects undertaken by SAARC. India is a tropical country which has unfastened resources. India is one of the larger exporters of various goods and provides technology facilities to its neighbours and provides welcomes refugees from all the SAARC countries. India is home to lakhs of refugees from Bangladesh and Nepal. India is even trying to maintain cordial relations with Pakistan where SAARC was earlier considered as a platform for India–Pakistan conflict which effected the overall development of the region and trade relations. India has played a major role since the very beginning in providing support to Afghanistan in many matters from constitutional reforms to social protection and technology sharing. From building construction to cross border roads facilities, prepare a civil society and India is also home to many Afghans refugees.

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