

# Geopolitical Significance of Afghanistan: A Reappraised Episteme

MASTER OF ARTS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE



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**Abstract:-** The purpose of the study is to understand the geopolitical significance of Afghanistan. This chapter tries to answer the questions, why Afghanistan is geopolitically very important in today's world and politics? How the Afghanistan's geographic nature attracts the regional and international powers for rivalries in the region? The chapter also investigates the factors and elements which help the security and stability in the country and put an end to the war. Moreover, the aim of this chapter is to determine the role of the geographic characteristics in the formation of the state and the practice of statecraft to the statesman and decision maker.

**Keywords:** *Geopolitics, Afghanistan, South Asia, International Politics, Foreign Policy.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

One of the simplest aspects and determinant of a country's overseas coverage is geography. Whenever geographical factors, inclusive of territory, population, strategic region and herbal resources have an effect on the family members between states, another discourse will come to exist, which is called geopolitics (Deudney 2007). In fact, geopolitical factors include geography, economics, demography and their effect on politics, mainly on the overseas policy of a state. Geopolitical scholars have sought to illustrate the importance inside the dedication of foreign guidelines of things which includes the acquisition of herbal boundaries, get right of entry to crucial sea routes, and manipulate over strategically crucial land areas. This proposed study is an attempt to examine the ways in which the geography of Afghanistan stimulated the history, politics and social elements of the country. Further it also tries to

draw the regulations of rivals within the place as properly as inside the worldwide sphere.

Afghanistan's territory covers 652,000 km<sup>2</sup> (252,000 sq mi), making it the 41st biggest country inside the world (Blogger, 2016). The strategic geographical location of Afghanistan has made the country most vulnerable in phrases of web, hosting the top notch sport of politics among the incredible atomic powers like America, China Russia, India, Pakistan and Iran. It is almost for four decades that the place has been the ground of political games (Sultani, 2012). Throughout its history, Afghanistan has been situation to intervention with the aid of outside powers. These forces, running from outdoors have always decided the politics, social shape and place of the country in the world. Such incidents have made Afghanistan to face an uninterrupted movement of offensives and conquests from the earliest times (Magnus, 1998).

## II. GEO-POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF AFGHANISTAN

The country has international significance for being on the intersection of Central Asia, South Asia and the Middle East. Its geopolitical importance, is no longer in isolation, due to its vicinity and 'the sports of its external stakeholders—Pakistan, India, Iran, Saudi Arabia, USA, China, Russia and some Central Asian republics' (Kenny, 2016).

In addition to Afghanistan's strategic region, it has very wealthy natural and mineral resources. Hajigak mines of Bamyan province have iron and different minerals of \$1 trillion worth (Akbari 2018). Due to immense resources Afghanistan has always been a key to the rivalry for pipeline routes. There has been enormous competition for the control

of the same, leading to geopolitical conflict. This intends to refill the gap inside the area of Afghanistan's geopolitics and also to light up the Afghanistan geopolitical importance that's more relevant to the modern era. The issues like Afghanistan's lengthy association in warfare and its relation to its geopolitics, importance of country's strategic location for regional and global powers, and how it affects the ongoing struggle in Afghanistan, needs to be addressed.

In response to the expansionism of the United States, the state proposed an encircling strategy referred to as Kennan's system of containment. So, while the Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan in 1979, the Americans responded in support of the uprising that turned into a struggle against the Soviets for power. Nowadays, foreign players are involved within the Afghan conflict, although this time the situation is much more complicated, particularly because of its complexities. It is imperative that all diplomatic and geostrategic players involved in all conflicts occurring in a buffer state study the hobbies and the work.

Though it has been able to maintain a respectable diplomacy of neutrality in Afghanistan, thanks to its geographical state of affairs, it has not recognized peace in the last 31 years. The United States and the King of Afghanistan signed a non-aggression pact in 1931, so the neutrality can be affirmed. The presence of uranium enrichment technology has created more interest about the countries vis-à-vis the neighbours. However, the situation of the nation remains in the hands of doomsday.

### III. CONCLUSIVE ANALYSIS

To sum up, Afghanistan was marked by the absence of central authority, weak financial system, and difficult terrain. All of these characteristics have made Afghanistan poor. However, its geostrategic state of affairs has attracted many nations to meddle in its inner affairs and attempt to make the most as its weakness. The British and Russian Empires within the area had long standing geostrategic objectives. While the Russian Empire was motivated to access Indian Ocean's warm waters, the British Empire decided to conquer the passes that connected Eurasia's Rimland with the Heartland.

Afghanistan received key passes such as Khyber, Gomal and Khojak and hall such as Wakhn, which joined Heartland with Indus lowland. Therefore, Afghanistan provided continental electricity routes to extend naval energy and continental naval power.

The military presence of distant power in Afghanistan is best placed four hundred miles away from the vital Gulf oil field, posing a prevailing danger for other states to get oil from the Gulf and oil exports through the straits of Hormuz. In the nineteen seventies, while the Soviet Union did not have a strong foothold in the Gulf, its involvement in Afghanistan was viewed as a danger to Western interests in the Gulf. A certain supply of electricity was maintained by the major powers in Afghanistan almost until the Soviet

military intervention in 1979. As part of the game, the third strength was never allowed to interfere in the Great Game between the Russian and British Empires. It developed into the idea that the third power would benefit the most in the dispute scenario between the two powers. Therefore, any interference from the third energy having the capability to weigh down Afghanistan led to cooperative strategy between powers.

Afghanistan is also distinguished by its ongoing fight for neutrality. Apart from the position of Russian and geographic area to create Afghanistan a state, the role of Afghanistan in saving its territory from the first powers' have a commendable bearing. Afghanistan's position within the pan-Islamic moves to supply management for the arrival of Central Asian Confederation and its support to Basmachi movement within the Central Asian vicinity to task Russian Empire factors to the very fact that Afghanistan should each be prone to and source of such actions. Afghanistan maintained strict neutrality throughout the two World Wars. It joined Non Alliance Movement for the duration of the conflict.

In marked comparison to Pakistan's foreign coverage that has perpetually wanted shelter in external alignments and alliances to carry and sell its security, Asian country assiduously averted the temptation to depend upon foreign affects to confirm its survival. The Russia become invariably on the lookout of keeping preponderance of electricity in Asian country. However, due to the boom of world norms and laws, Russia tried to penetrate Asian country via the ideology of development and gift. Daoud's pro-Soviet policies helped it consolidate its position in Asian nation. It at the facet of the communist celebration of Afghanistan-PDPA helped Daoud return to power via a coup throughout this point, PDPA reinforced itself by means that of receiving all varieties of aid and patronage from Daoud. Once Daoud determined to diminish the operate of the country and its counterpart in Asian nation, he become additionally toppled through a coup in Apr 1978.

However, the Soviet military intervention in Islamic State of Asian country in Oct 1979 shattered the balance and Asian country became the theatre of a proxy warfare among the two superpowers for a decade with black outcomes for the place and on the way facet.

Therefore, a keen and an instructional lens at the political significance of Asian nation and within the relevant and south Asian place exemplified the very fact that the hypotheses launched during this study examined the two essential tested hypotheses. First, in most cases the geographic options of Asian nation square measure the aim for rivalries of variety of the native and worldwide powers inside the country. Secondly, the political science importance of Asian nation decides the protection and stability of the country.

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