

# UNIQUE LEGAL

| ISSUE III | AUGUST 2021

## FEAR OF THE TALIBAN



## **EDITORIAL BOARD**



### **Editor-in-Chief**

Anirvan Choudhuri

Founder, CEO, Unique Law

### **Senior Editor**

Sadhna Parasher

### **Student Editors**

Vidhika Panjwani

Aishani Navalkar

Shashikant Sandilya

Bharath Gowda B.R

Anusha Almeida

Prity Kumari

Akanksha

Mitali Aryan



# TABLE OF CONTENT

**01 TALIBAN TAKEOVER OF AFGHANISTAN**

**02 WHO IS THE TALIBAN, WHAT ARE THEY FIGHTING FOR AND THE EVENTS IN AFGHANISTAN**

**03 AFGHANISTAN: BEFORE THERE WAS WAR- IMAGES FROM 1950'S TO 1970'S**

**04 THE AGREEMENT**

**05 THE SHARIA LAW**

**06 INDIA- AFGHANISTAN- TALIBAN RELATIONS: DID INDIA PUT IT'S MONEY WHERE THE GUN LIES?**

**07 TALK WITH THE TALIBAN'S SPOKESPERSON AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE**

**08 MITIGATION STRATEGIES ON TALIBAN CRISIS**

**09 WHAT IS THE OPINION OF THE CITIZENS OF AFGHANISTAN?**

**10 WHAT DO THE OTHER COUNTRIES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS LIKE UN HAVE TO SAY?**

**11 WORSENING CONDITIONS IN AFGHANISTAN**

**12 MITIGATION STRATEGIES ON TALIBAN CRISES**

**13 SUGGESTIONS, BOOKS AND MOVIES ON AFGHANISTAN**

## **TALIBAN TAKEOVER OF AFGHANISTAN**

On Sunday, 15th of August when the peoples of India were celebrating their 75th Independence Day, one international news come out that Taliban militants retook Afghanistan's capital, almost two decades after they were driven from Kabul by US troops. Although Afghan security forces were well funded and well equipped, they put up little resistance as Taliban militants seized much of the country following the withdrawal of US troops beginning in early July. On Sunday, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani fled the country, abandoning the presidential palace to Taliban fighters. Already, US officials have admitted that they miscalculated the speed at which the Taliban were able to advance across the country, with Secretary of State Antony Blinken saying of Afghanistan's national security forces: "The fact of the matter is we've seen that that force has been unable to defend the country ... and that has happened more quickly than we anticipated." In the first half of 2021, the Taliban continued its offensive, threatening government-controlled urban areas and seizing several border crossings. In early August, the Taliban began direct assaults on multiple urban areas, including Kandahar in the south and Herat in the west. On August 6, 2021, the Taliban captured the capital of

southern Nimruz Province, the first provincial capital to fall. After that, provincial capitals began to fall in rapid succession. Within days, the Taliban captured more than ten other capitals, including Mazar-i-Sharif in the north and Jalalabad in the east, leaving Kabul the only major urban area under government control.



On August 15, 2021, Taliban fighters entered the capital, leading Afghan President Ashraf Ghani to flee the country and the Afghan government to collapse. Later that day, the Taliban announced they had entered the presidential palace, taken control of the city, and were establishing checkpoints to maintain security.

### **A BRIEF TRAVEL IN TIME: WHO IS THE TALIBAN, WHAT ARE THEY FIGHTING FOR AND THE EVENTS IN AFGHANISTAN**

In the backdrop of the withdrawing US Troops, the Taliban swept across Afghanistan in August 2021, gaining control of important towns and cities,

including the capital of Kabul. Uncertainty and mayhem is spreading across the region as the citizens are petrified over falling under the extreme Taliban rule once again.



### **WHO ARE THE TALIBANS?**

The Taliban literally means “students” in the Pashto language. They are an extremist Islamic militant insurgent group which emerged in the early 1990’s. This group emerged amid the turmoil following the withdrawal of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.

### **WHAT DOES THE TALIBAN WANT?**

During the initial years of its formation, the Taliban had made a promise to restore peace and security in Afghanistan and to implement and ensure enforcement of a grim version of Sharia law.

### **AFGHANISTAN CONFLICT OVER THE YEARS**

#### **Communist Coup- 1978**



**Afghan revolutionaries during the Saur Revolution. Photo source: TASS via Getty images**

The Saur Revolution also known as the April Revolution was a coup led by the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) against the rule of then Afghan President Mohammed Daoud Khan in April 1978. Mohammed Daoud Khan was murdered.

This revolution led to the creation of a Soviet aligned Government with Nur Muhammed Taraki, appointed as the President.

#### **Assassination of Communist Leader**

The newly formed PDPA Government did not enjoy the support of the masses in Afghanistan. Hence, it brought in hostile measures against any forms of dissent. The communist leader Nur Muhammed Taraki was ultimately assassinated by his fellow communist Hafizullah Amin in 1979.

#### **Soviet- Afghan War**

On 24 December 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan and ousted Hafizullah Amin from power. Babrak Karmal was announced as the leader of Afghanistan forces by the Soviet Union.

Subsequently, several rebel factions began to emerge in the country. The Soviet troops along with the allied Afghan troops fought these factions who were mostly collectively known as the “Afghan mujahideen.” It was believed that the main supporters of the Mujahideen was the US and Pakistan.

The Soviet Union eventually gave in and withdrew its troops in the year 1989.

#### **Afghan- Civil War (1989-1992)**

Despite the withdrawal of the Soviet Union, the Civil war continued between the government and the rebels. The Soviet continued to provide financial assistance to the Afghan government. On the other hand, the rebel groups continued to receive support from the US and Pakistan. This Soviet backed Afghan government survived until the fall of the city of Kabul in 1992.

#### **Establishment of the Islamic State of Afghanistan**

In 1992, the Mujahideen overthrew the Soviet Union backed Afghan government and came to power. They formed the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

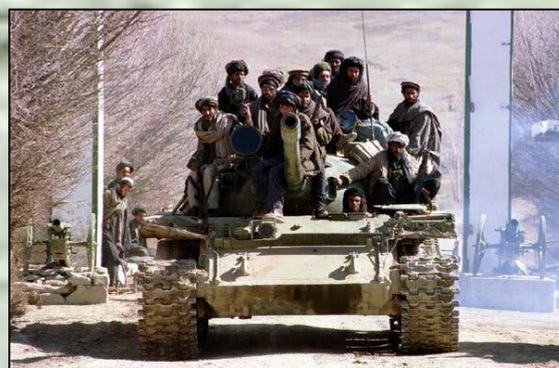
#### **Rise of the Taliban**

Following the withdrawal of the Soviet Union, the Taliban was one of the new rebel factions that emerged and began gaining popularity.

It is believed that they emerged in south west Afghanistan in Kandahar province. From south-western Afghanistan, the Taliban quickly extended their influence. In September 1995, they managed to capture the province of Herat and bordering Iran. A year later, Kabul, the Afghan capital was taken over by the Taliban, overthrowing the regime of President Burhanuddin. By the year 1996, the Taliban had gained control over most of Afghanistan. They established the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

#### **Taliban Rule**

Once in power, the Taliban enforced its strict version of the Sharia law. The freedom of women was restricted. They were forced to wear burkhas and were denied the right to work or study. Men had to mandatorily grow beards.



Further, one of the dreadful measures of the Taliban was the introduction of severe punishments which were in line with strict interpretation of Sharia law. These included public floggings and public executions for offences such as murder and adultery.

Television, music and cinema was banned in Afghanistan. They further destroyed several cultural artefacts which they considered blasphemous. An example includes the 2001 destruction of the famous Bamiyan Buddha statues in central Afghanistan.

Pakistan, United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia were the only three nations which gave recognition to Taliban at the international level.

### **US Entry after the 9/11 Attacks**

In September 2001, Osama Bin Laden and his Al-Qaeda movement were accused of being responsible for the 9/11 attacks in New York, USA. The Taliban was accused of providing protection to the Al-Qaeda leader and they refused to hand him over to the US.

On October 7, 2001, US backed military forces launched attacks in Afghanistan and by the first week of December, the Taliban regime collapsed. The then leader of the Taliban, Mullah Mohammed Omar and several other members evaded capture.

The Taliban melted away into remote areas, where it began a 20-year-long insurgency against the Afghan government and its Western allies. The US vowed to support and aid democracy and eliminate all threats of terrorism in the land.

With the aid of the US, the Afghani Government established its new Constitution. Hamid Karzai was elected as the President of Afghanistan.

### **Insurgency by the Taliban**

Despite the presence of foreign troops and control in the land, the Taliban had begun to gradually regain their influence in Afghanistan. Violence had never vanished from the land. A continuous incumbent war took place in the land where the main conflict consisted of Afghan National Army troops backed by US troops fighting against the insurgents of the Taliban and sporadically other groups as well. NATO has also been involved in the war.

Several attacks were carried out by the Taliban, especially in Kabul. In 2012, they carried out a high-profile raid on NATO's Camp Bastion base.

In 2015, they admitted that they had covered up their leader's death for around two years. Mullah Mansour was made the new leader of the Taliban. Around this same time, they managed to seize control of a provincial capital for the first time since

their defeat in 2001 and took control of the important city of Kunduz.



Following the death of Mullah Mansour in a US drone strike in 2016, a new leader was appointed, namely Mawlawi Hibatullah Akhundzada, who continues to remain the leader of the group.

### **AFGHANISTAN PEACE DEAL**



The Taliban entered into direct talks with the US in 2018, and on 29 February 2020 the two sides signed an “Agreement for bringing peace” to Afghanistan. As a part of the agreement, the US and NATO allies agreed to withdraw all their troops within 4 months if the militants upheld the deal. **S In April 2021, the current President of the US Joe Biden announced the withdrawal of all the American forces from Afghanistan by 11 September 2021**

**(20th anniversary of 9/11 attacks). On 2 July 2021, American forced vacated the Bagram Airfield.**

**Following the withdrawal of the US troops, the Taliban began capturing various territories and swept across the entire nation. They began taking control of major parts of Afghanistan such as Kandahar and Herat and military bases and finally, the Taliban captured the capital of Kabul on 15 August 2021 and took over the Presidential Palace. Following the capture, the President Ashraf Ghani left the country. eize of Power**

The Taliban’s return to power has thus brought an end to two decades of the US led coalition’s presence and control in Afghanistan. It has further brought an end to the 20-year effort by the US and Western nations to remould Afghanistan into a modern democracy

However, the Islamic World remains divided in its views on Afghan crisis and Taliban. A few countries like Pakistan and Turkey have welcomed Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan. Others have warned against the threat of terrorism. The Taliban took some areas from government by force. In other areas, the Afghan National Army withdrew without a shot being fired. Although renewed clashes had been going

on for several weeks, from 6 August the Taliban made a more rapid advance across the country, as they took control of provincial cities. US forces based outside Afghanistan had launched air strikes against Taliban positions earlier last week, but they failed to slow the advance of the insurgents. Customs duty on goods entering the country via crossings they control is now collected by the Taliban - although exact amounts are unclear as the volume of trade has fallen as a result of the fighting. But, Islam Qala on the border with Iran was, for example, capable of generating more than \$20 million per month. Disruption to the flow of imports and exports has affected prices of essential goods in the markets - fuel and foodstuffs in particular.

### **AFGHANISTAN: BEFORE THERE WAS WAR- IMAGES FROM 1950'S TO 1970'S**

Amidst the recent takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban several heart wrenching images have gripped the internet. Images and videos of the Afghan citizens attempting to escape the crisis-hit land have emerged all over the net. In one of the most viral videos, thousands of citizens can be seen surrounding a U.S military plane as it departs from the Kabul airport. The distressing footage showed the plight of the citizens desperately clinging on to the plane

in an attempt to escape the Taliban ruled land.

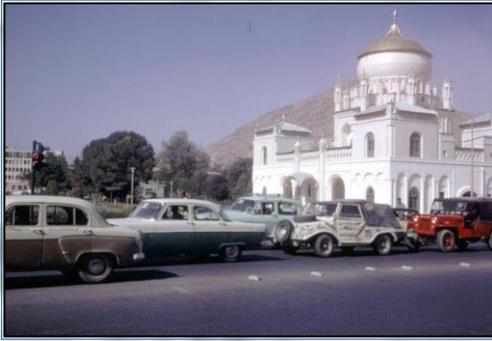
Internal conflict and foreign interventions have plagued the nation for decades. However, if one travels back to time in the 1950's to early 1970's, that time was a hopeful one for the civilians.

A collection of photographs taken by Dr. William Podlich in the 1960's in Afghanistan were discovered and released by his son- in-law, following his death. These pictures depict the land of Afghanistan in a very different light than what we witness in the unfortunate present times.

The peaceful mood and smiling faces that fill the following photographs are truly a far cry from the modern photos of the country that has been struggling with crisis and war for years.



**Schoolgirls happily chatting with one another while returning home from school**



**Newly constructed roads filled with cars**



**A merchant selling his glassware in the peaceful bazaar**



**People freely roaming in a bazaar**



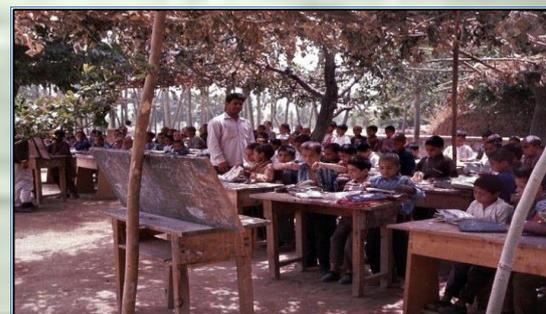
**Women enjoyed the right to liberty and education**



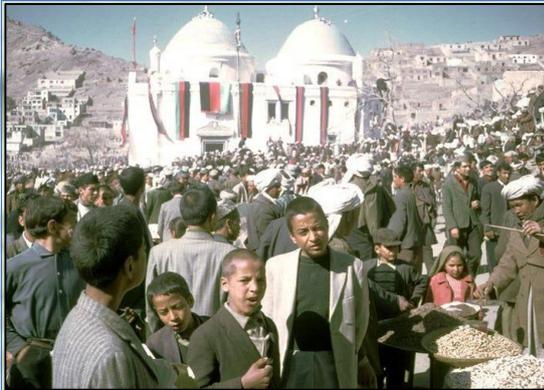
**Children roaming safely with no thoughts of fear**



**Fabric market area**



### Children in an outdoor classroom



### People gathering for a religious ceremony with no fear

## CURRENT SCENARIO

Afghanistan has fallen to Taliban, who took over the presidential palace and rechristened the country as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

Ashraf Gani, the US-backed President, resigned and fled Afghanistan saying he wanted peace and avoid bloodshed. The Taliban who allowed him to flee wanted Afghanistan. And, the US which is believed to have negotiated safe passage for Ghani and its own nationals was in a hurry to get out of that piece of land. The result is the current situation in Afghanistan.

## WHAT HAPPENED WHICH LED TO THE CURRENT SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN?

On February 29, 2020, the United States and the Taliban **signed an agreement in Doha** to end the war in Afghanistan.



Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, who was released from a Pakistani prison in 2018 and is a deputy to the Taliban leader Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada, signed this pivotal agreement. Suspicious of the agreement until the very end, Baradar signed only after Zalmay Khalilzad, the U.S. envoy who has dedicated many years to seeing this deal through, lent his signature to the document. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo sat in the first row in the audience. A large group of Taliban representatives sat behind, cheering on the Baradar-Khalilzad pact.

Soon after Khalilzad signed the agreement with Baradar, U.S. President Donald Trump reminded journalists that “everybody’s tired of war.” The withdrawal, he stated, would “start immediately.” A reduction of 9,000 troops, according to a former director in the U.S. National Security Council, “seems to be on track by July 2020.” Beyond that, he suggests, “it is unclear what

getting to zero [U.S. troops] will actually mean.” What “intel presence” will be left behind is “also not known.” For the most part, despite the ambiguity with regard to the drawdown, it is clear that the United States is going home.

### **HOW IT HAPPENED?**



Ashraf Ghani and Vice-President Amrullah Saleh fled to Tajikistan on Sunday after Taliban encircled Kabul, the Afghan capital. This happened while representatives from three sides — Afghan government, Taliban and the US — were sitting in Doha, Qatar to discuss transfer of power.

It is believed that the US had secured a ‘word’ from Taliban that they would not force their entry into Kabul until safety of Ghani-led government officials and American nationals were secured. The latest round of Doha talks had begun on Friday. Taliban entered Kabul soon after Ghani and Saleh fled the Afghan capital

### **CHINA FOREIGN MINISTER WANG YI HOSTS TALIBAN, CALLS THEM ‘PIVOTAL FORCE’**



On July 28, 2021, State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with the visiting delegation led by head of the Afghan Taliban Political Commission Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar in Tianjin. The heads of the Afghan Taliban's religious council and publicity committee were also on the delegation.

Wang Yi said that China, as Afghanistan's largest neighbor, has always respected Afghanistan's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, adhered to non-interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs and pursued a friendly policy toward the entire Afghan people. Afghanistan belongs to the Afghan people, and its future should be in the hands of its own people. The hasty withdrawal of the U.S. and NATO troops from Afghanistan actually marks the failure of the U.S. policy toward Afghanistan. The Afghan people now have an important opportunity to achieve national stability and development.



Wang Yi pointed out that the Afghan Taliban is an important military and political force in Afghanistan and is expected to play an important role in the country's peace, reconciliation and reconstruction process. We hope that the Afghan Taliban will put the interests of the country and nation first, hold high the banner of peace talks, set the goal of peace, build a positive image and pursue an inclusive policy. All factions and ethnic groups in Afghanistan should unite as one, truly implement the "Afghan-led and Afghan-owned" principle, push for early substantive results in the peace and reconciliation process, and independently establish a broad and inclusive political structure that suits Afghanistan's national realities.

## **THE SHARIA LAW**

### **➤ WHAT IS SHARI'A?**

'Shari'a' can be understood as God's will for humankind. '*Fiqh*' is the body of law produced by scholars trying to understand that will. As *fiqh* is the result of human

interpretation, it is recognised as being fallible.

Sharia is based on the Quran, stories of the Prophet Muhammad's life and the rulings of religious scholars, forming the moral and legal framework of Islam. The Quran details a path to a moral life, but not a specific set of laws.

One interpretation of Sharia could afford women extensive rights, while another could leave women with few. Critics have said that some of the Taliban restrictions on women under the guise of Islamic law actually went beyond the bounds of Sharia.

The interpretations of Sharia are a matter of debate across the Muslim world, and all groups and governments that base their legal systems on Sharia have done so differently. When the Taliban say they are instituting Sharia law, that does not mean they are doing so in ways that Islamic scholars or other Islamic authorities would agree with.

### **➤ SOURCES OF SHARIA**

**Quran:** In Islam, the Quran is considered to be the most sacred source of law. Classical jurists held its textual integrity to be beyond doubt on account of it having been handed down by many people in each generation, which is known as "recurrence" or "concurrent transmission" (*tawātur*). Only several hundred verses of

the Quran have direct legal relevance, and they are concentrated in a few specific areas such as inheritance, though other passages have been used as a source for general principles whose legal ramifications were elaborated by other means.



**Hadith:** The body of hadith provides more detailed and practical legal guidance, but it was recognized early on that not all of them were authentic. Early Islamic scholars developed a methodology for evaluating their authenticity by assessing trustworthiness of the individuals listed in their transmission chains. These criteria narrowed down the vast corpus of prophetic traditions to several thousand "sound" hadiths, which were collected in several canonical compilations. The hadiths which enjoyed concurrent transmission were deemed unquestionably authentic; however, the vast majority of hadiths were handed down by only one or a few transmitters and were therefore seen to yield only probable knowledge. The uncertainty was further compounded by

ambiguity of the language contained in some hadiths and Quranic passages. Disagreements on the relative merits and interpretation of the textual sources allowed legal scholars considerable leeway in formulating alternative rulings.



**Ijma:** It is the consensus that could in principle elevate a ruling based on probable evidence to absolute certainty. This classical doctrine drew its authority from a series of hadiths stating that the Islamic community could never agree on an error. This form of consensus was technically defined as agreement of all competent jurists in any particular generation, acting as representatives of the community. However, the practical difficulty of obtaining and ascertaining such an agreement meant that it had little impact on legal development. A more pragmatic form of consensus, which could be determined by consulting works of prominent jurists, was used to confirm a ruling so that it could not be reopened for further discussion. The cases for which there was a consensus

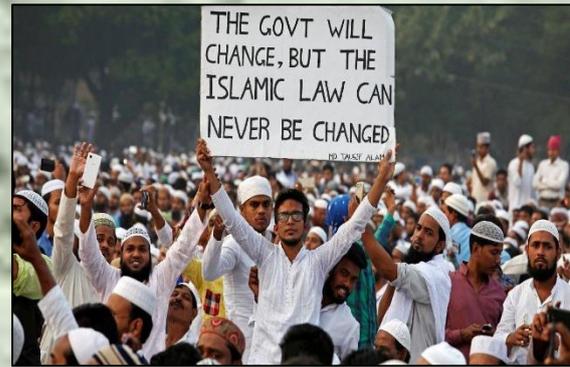
account for less than 1 percent of the body of classical jurisprudence.

**Qiyas:** It is the Analogical reasoning that is used to derive a ruling for a situation not addressed in the scripture by analogy with a scripturally based rule. In a classic example, the Quranic prohibition of drinking wine is extended to all intoxicating substances, on the basis of the "cause" (*'illa*) shared by these situations, which in this case is identified to be intoxication. Since the cause of a rule may not be apparent, its selection commonly occasioned controversy and extensive debate. Twelver Shia jurisprudence does not recognize the use of qiyas, but relies on reason (*'aql*) in its place.

#### ➤ **WHAT DOES SHARIA PRESCRIBE?**

Sharia lists some specific crimes, such as theft and adultery, and punishments if accusations meet a standard of proof. It also offers moral and spiritual guidance, such as when and how to pray, or how to marry and divorce.

It does not forbid women to leave home without a male escort or bar them from working in most jobs.



#### ➤ **HOW HAVE THE TALIBAN PREVIOUSLY INTERPRETED SHARIA?**

When the Taliban controlled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, they banned television and most musical instruments. They established a department for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice based on a Saudi model.

Restrictions on behaviour, dress and movement were enforced by morality police officers, who drove around in pickup trucks, publicly humiliating and whipping women who did not adhere to their rules. In 1996, a woman in Kabul, Afghanistan, had the end of her thumb cut off for wearing nail polish, according to Amnesty International. Women accused of adultery were stoned to death.

#### ➤ **WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF SHARIA LAW FOR WOMEN IN AFGHANISTAN?**

Under the Taliban's rule, women were effectively put under house arrest as they were not allowed to work or have an education.



- Any female above the age of eight had to wear a burqa and had to be escorted by a male relative if they wanted to leave their home.
- Women were not allowed high-heeled shoes as no man should hear a woman's footsteps.
- A woman's voice should not be heard by a stranger when she is speaking loudly in public.
- Photographing, filming or displaying pictures of females in newspapers, books, shops or the home was not allowed.
- Women were not allowed to appear on their balconies.
- The word "women" had to be removed from any place names.
- During the previous rule of the Taliban, women who broke the

rules had to suffer the humiliation of a public beating, or even stoning and in extreme cases even public executions.

### ➤ **WHAT CAN BE EXPECTED FROM THE TALIBAN NOW?**

The Taliban has tried to present themselves as a more moderate force. They have promised to respect women's rights and forgive those who fought against them.

Taliban spokesman Suhail Shaheen was quoted as telling Sky News that women in Afghanistan will have the right to work and be educated up to the university level.

However, many doubt that the group has changed its views and it's only a watching game to see what happens next.

### **THE PLIGHT OF THE AFGHAN STUDENTS IN INDIA ABOUT RELATIVES BACK HOME, REQUESTS FOR HELP FOR NATIONALS STUCK IN DOOMED AFGHANISTAN AMIDST CORONAVIRUS**

It has been restless nights and frantic measures to connect with their loved ones back at home for the thousands of Afghan pupils in educational establishments in different parts of India as they fret over the providence of their relatives and country

under the realm of the Taliban. Most of them, have also urged the Indian government to help their fellow citizens, who had gone back home due to the COVID-19-induced closure of educational institutions, to revisiting to India and extending their visas.

Shukrullah Ahmadi (25), a student of an MBA from a private university in Pune, said that he has not spoken to his family in Afghanistan for the last three days, a period which witnesses the collapse of Kabul. “The situation back home was scary. We never imagined such kind of a situation. In my hometown in Logar province, which is hardly 50 km from Kabul, the Internet and telephone services are completely shut and I am not able to connect with my family,” he said.

Ahmadi, whose immediate family consists of his mother and three elder brothers, had last visited his hometown in 2018. He opined that the Indian government should extend the visas of students whose stay is coming to an expiry date, soon as going back to Hellenistic Afghanistan as this juncture is not safe.

Several NGOs as well as the authorities of educational institutions have come forward to help the students. “In this hour of crisis, IIT Delhi stands in solidarity with our students and alumni from Afghanistan. We

are doing everything possible to get the students to return to the campus. Let’s give them hope,” said IIT Delhi Director V Ramgopal Rao.

Approximately, 40 Afghan students studying across Karnatka have made a talk with the State government seeking help in securing visas for their families and relatives. As all these come under the ambit of the Ministry of External Affairs, the visa process is made online, these Afghan nationals were asked to avail themselves of their respective visas through the same mentioned mode. These afghan compatriots enrolled in the Indian universities, stuck in captured Afghanistan, also requested the Indian government in rescuing them from the evil fate in the hands of the Taliban.



Amidst all these, news of bit relief came from Abdul Sattar, the father of Tanveen Abdul, 24, a lady, hailing from Ballari, previously settled in Afghanistan after tying the knot with Afghani man Jalal Hashmi, confirmed that his daughter and son-in-law have returned safe and sound, back to India. Tanveen, after contemplating the moves of

the Taliban, immediately, called her father, before Afghanistan's takeover by the Taliban, and expressed her wish to return to her innate country, to which Mr. Sattar actively got in touch with the Indian Embassy in Kabul and with the immediate help of the authorities in New Delhi, his daughter returned safely.

### **INDIA- AFGHANISTAN- TALIBAN RELATIONS: DID INDIA PUT ITS MONEY WHERE THE GUN LIES.**



Afghanistan and India have remained strong and friendly over the decades. They had been historical neighbours and shared deep historical and cultural ties. India was also the only South Asian country to recognize the Soviet-backed Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in the 1980s, though relations diminished during the 1990s Afghan civil war and the subsequent take-over of a government. India is the largest regional provider of humanitarian and reconstruction aid to Afghanistan.

The Taliban's rout is likely to cause a significant shift in the geopolitics of South

Asia, and it could be particularly testing for India, given the country's historically tense relations and border disputes with Pakistan and China - both are expected to play a crucial role in Afghanistan's future. This potential geopolitical realignment could "change things upside down".

So, what can India do now? The country was never as big a player in Afghanistan as Pakistan, the US or Russia. But Delhi has always been involved in promoting security and cultural ties. Thousands of Afghans are in India for education, work or medical treatment.

The biggest challenge India will face is whether to recognise the Taliban government or not. The decision will get tricky, especially if Moscow and Beijing decide to acknowledge the Taliban government in some form.

India's best option at the moment seems to keep a channel of communication open with the Taliban. But it will be an uneasy relationship, considering the history between the Taliban and Delhi. The Taliban gave a safe passage to the hijackers of an Indian Airlines plane in 1999 - an incident that remains etched in the collective memory of Indians. And Delhi has always kept close ties with the Northern Alliance - a group of Afghan warlords that fought the Taliban between 1996 and 1999.

With the Taliban in the heart of Kabul, India may now wish to put the past to one side to safeguard its interests and to ensure the region remains stable. There are concerns that militant groups like the Jaish-e-Mohammad Lashkar-e-Taiba will be galvanised by the Taliban's success and plan and execute attacks against India. It's a diplomatic tightrope India will have to walk.



Dozens of refugees from Afghanistan arrived in India following the takeover of a majority of the country by August 2021. India hosts about 16,000 refugees, according to United Nations figures from 2020. There are approximately 18,000 undocumented Afghan refugees. Following the return of the Taliban, a new category of visas to fast-track applications of Afghan citizens seeking entry into India was initiated. The evacuation has been codenamed Operation Devi Shakti (Women Power).

By 10 August 2021, India had closed all its consulates and shifted personnel to Kabul. Following the partial evacuation of these

personnel from Afghanistan, the Kabul embassy remained functioning with reduced capacity and was later evacuated on 17 August 2021.

India had helped Afghanistan in all aspects of nation-building over the past two decades when the US-Nato forces provided a shield against the Taliban and other fundamentalist forces.

India remains on a 'wait and watch' mode after the Taliban's capture of Afghanistan.

Given the situation, it remains unclear how India will maintain diplomatic ties with a government controlled by the militant group. The Taliban rule could disrupt India's friendly ties with Afghanistan and subsequently its strategic investments in the war-torn country.



India is recognised by most Afghans as the "most cherished partner of Afghanistan" and it has invested more than \$3 billion in Afghanistan. This includes investments in over 400 infrastructure projects across all provinces in the country. Afghanistan is one

of the few countries where India has delivered many practical projects, including the Afghan Parliament building that Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated in 2015. The future of these projects looks uncertain with the Taliban taking control of Afghanistan. India has not had a working relationship with the Taliban in the past

The cost of the building was estimated at \$90 million. India has also gifted Afghanistan 400 buses and 200 mini-buses for bolstering urban transportation. This is in addition to 105 utility vehicles of municipal operations and 285 military vehicles for the Afghan army. India has also donated military helicopters and other aircraft to the country.

Most of these assets have been captured by the Taliban, which regained control over Afghanistan 20 years after being forced to flee by the US-led forces. For India, however, the possibility of losing a key strategic ally in South Asia may surpass the concerns related to its \$3 billion investment in Afghanistan.

Experts believe New Delhi was late in opening channels with the Taliban. Had India done this a little earlier and taken a more balanced approach in Afghanistan, things would have been much different instead of throwing all its bets on the shaky Ghani regime. But it's still not too bad for

India, and New Delhi can still try to manoeuvre through its presently difficult position by increasing its diplomacy with the Taliban to protect its interests in Afghanistan.

A major shift in India's political position on the Afghan Taliban was reported by a Qatar official in June 2021, who confirmed that an Indian delegation had quietly visited Doha to meet the Taliban's leadership. The Taliban's reliance on Pakistan is unlikely to change anytime in the near future. The cost to India of remaining distant from the ongoing attempts at reconciliation especially since it has thus far nurtured a relationship mainly with the Afghan government would likely be much higher than the cost of being involved in them. Being more engaged in international negotiations, and even agreeing to talk to certain sections of the Taliban as part of a broader diplomatic initiative, are options that India can no longer afford to disregard.

Leaving the reconciliation process primarily to an unstable administration in Kabul will do little for India's long-term interests in Afghanistan. Repositioning Indian imperatives means also remaining ever-connected with the deep ties that India has nurtured with Afghanistan over the ages and India must be willing to pivot to the changed realities in Afghanistan and being

much more involved in conversations on and around reconciliation than ever before.

### **A TALK WITH THE TALIBAN'S SPOKESPERSON AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE:**

The Taliban sworn on Tuesday to recognize women's rights will pardon those who battled against them and ensure Afghanistan does not become a shelter for terrorists as part of a publicity blitz aimed at reassuring world powers and a fearful population.



Following [a whirlwind bellicose across Afghanistan](#) that saw many cities fall to the insurgents without a fight, the Taliban have sought to portray themselves as more moderate than when they imposed a strict form of Islamic rule in the late 1990s. But many Afghans [remain skeptical](#) — and thousands have raced to the airport, desperate to flee the country.

Older generations remember the Taliban's previous rule, when they largely confined women to their homes, banned television and music, and held public executions. A U.S.-led invasion drove them from power

months after the 9/11 attacks, which al-Qaida had orchestrated from Afghanistan while being sheltered by the Taliban.

Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban's longtime spokesman, emerged from the shadows Tuesday in his first-ever public appearance to address those concerns at a news conference.

He promised the Taliban would honor women's rights within the norms of Islamic law, without elaborating. The Taliban have encouraged women to return to work and have allowed girls to return to school, handing out Islamic headscarves at the door. A female news anchor interviewed a Taliban official Monday in a TV studio.

The treatment of women varies widely across the Muslim world and sometimes even within the same country, with rural areas tending to be far more conservative. Some Muslim countries, including neighboring Pakistan, have had female prime ministers, while ultraconservative Saudi Arabia only recently allowed women to drive.

Mujahid also said the Taliban would not allow Afghanistan to be used as a base for attacking other countries, as it was in the years before 9/11. That assurance was part of a 2020 peace deal reached between the Taliban and the Trump administration that

paved the way for the American withdrawal.



The Pentagon said U.S. commanders are communicating with the Taliban as they work to evacuate thousands of people through Kabul's international airport. It said the Taliban have taken no hostile actions there.

Mujahid reiterated that the Taliban have offered full amnesty to Afghans who worked for the U.S. and the Western-backed government, saying "nobody will go to their doors to ask why they helped." He said private media should "remain independent" but that journalists "should not work against national values."

Kabul, the capital, has remained calm as the Taliban patrol its streets. But many remain fearful after prisons and armories emptied during the insurgents' sweep across the country.

Kabul residents say groups of armed men have been going door-to-door seeking out individuals who worked with the ousted

government and security forces, but it was unclear if the gunmen were Taliban or criminals posing as militants. Mujahid blamed the security breakdown on the former government, saying the Taliban only entered Kabul to restore law and order after the police melted away.

A broadcaster in Afghanistan said she was hiding at a relative's house, too frightened to return home much less go to work. She said she and other women do not believe the Taliban have changed their ways. She spoke on condition of anonymity because she feared for her safety.

A group of women wearing Islamic headscarves demonstrated briefly in Kabul, holding signs demanding the Taliban not "eliminate women" from public life.

U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan said the U.S. and other governments will not simply take the Taliban at their word when it comes to women's rights.

"As I've said all along, this is not about trust. This is about verified," Sullivan said at a White House briefing. "And we'll see what the Taliban end up doing in the days and weeks ahead, and when I say we, I mean the entire international community."

Whatever their true intentions, the Taliban have an interest in projecting moderation to prevent the international community from

isolating their government, as it did in the 1990s.

The European Union said it was suspending development assistance to Afghanistan until the political situation is more clear but that it would consider boosting humanitarian aid.

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said the Taliban must respect U.N. Security Council resolutions and human rights to earn access to some 1.2 billion euros (\$1.4 billion) in development funds earmarked through 2024.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said Britain might provide up to 10% more humanitarian aid, but the Taliban would not get any money previously earmarked for security.

Evacuation flights resumed after being suspended on Monday when thousands of people rushed the airport. In [shocking scenes captured on video](#), some clung to a plane as it took off and then fell to their deaths. At least seven people died in the airport chaos, U.S. officials said.

On Tuesday, the Taliban entered the civilian half of the airport, firing into the air to drive out around 500 people there, said an Afghan official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to brief journalists.



The Taliban appeared to be trying to control the crowd rather than prevent people from leaving. A video circulating online showed the Taliban supervising the orderly departure of dozens of foreigners.

The U.S. Embassy in Kabul, now operating from the military side of the airport, urged Americans to register online for evacuation but not to come to the airport before being contacted.

The German Foreign Ministry said the first German military transport plane landed in Kabul but took off with only seven people on board due to the chaos. Another left later with 125 people.

U.S. President Joe Biden has [defended his decision](#) to end America's longest war, blaming the rapid Taliban takeover on Afghanistan's Western-backed government and security forces. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg [echoed that assessment](#) while saying the alliance must investigate the flaws in its efforts to train the Afghan military.

Talks continued Tuesday between the Taliban and several Afghan politicians, including former President Hamid Karzai and Abdullah Abdullah, who once headed the country's negotiating council. The Taliban have said they want to form an "inclusive, Islamic government."

The talks focused on how a Taliban-dominated government would operate given the changes in Afghanistan over the last 20 years, rather than just dividing up ministries, officials with knowledge of the negotiations said on condition of anonymity to discuss the closed-door talks.

A top Taliban leader, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, arrived in Kandahar on Tuesday night from Qatar, potentially signaling a deal is close at hand.

The vice president of the ousted government, meanwhile, tweeted that he was the country's "legitimate" caretaker president. Amrullah Saleh said that under the constitution, he should be in charge because President Ashraf Ghani has fled the country.

### **CRITICAL ANALYSIS:**

The conference by the spokesperson of the Taliban stands to its critique as the sole purpose of the press conference was to mislead the general masses and the powerful nations, to have its easy access and way to the public, acting like a double-

faceted Janus, having a neat face in front of the public, while engaging themselves in heinous and illegal activities behind the masked face, the thing that they are exactly doing, which can be directly inferred from their statements at the press release. In many instances, it could be seen that these Talibani commanders have been witnessed doing acts just contrary to what they mentioned at the press conference, such as forbidding female education at schools, prohibiting women from practicing their profession, banning the idea of co-education, also raping women. Other issues relate to the fundamental rights of the citizens, their dress codes, practicing cruelty for petty issues, or even punishing the citizens for not going by their norms in a barbaric manner. One such example relates to 1000 men pelting big stones on an afghani by stripping off his clothes, consequently, succumbing to his injuries. At another point, a female news anchor who previously broadcasted the conference on the news channel was sent home the next day, when she reported to her work with the illogical reason being given that she is a woman and women are not allowed to work.

To conclude, the capture of Afghanistan is going to have severe repercussions, paving the way to the cold war with the upsurge in the level of terrorism. This would bring the

country to the brink of anarchy, chaos, lawlessness, and an oppressive society whereby the normal citizens would have to pay the price by sacrificing their normal lifestyles, their rights, their freedom and pushing the society to the least developed nations.

### **WHAT IS THE OPINION OF THE CITIZENS OF AFGHANISTAN?**

Violence in Afghanistan is worsening in intensity and spreading in reach – causing even more human suffering and displacement. Their resilience and the resilience of their host communities are being stretched to the absolute limit. Today, nearly 6 million Afghans have been driven out of their homes and their country by conflict, violence and poverty. The intensity, the urgency, the darkness of this hour. In every direction, there are huge grey military transport planes from the US and many other countries.

The majority of the citizens fear prosecution at the hands of the Taliban.



An Afghan citizen, who fled Afghanistan after the country was taken over by the

Taliban, has said that the proposed government formation by the militant group Taliban should not be recognised by the world as they do not treat people, especially women, humanly. He further stated that the militant group was only trying to get their government recognised by the world. Describing the harrowing scenes at the Kabul airport, he said that the people were crammed inside the planes and mothers had to raise their babies in their hands so that they could get oxygen.



The Afghan citizens state that the Taliban destroy schools as soon as they take over a community. No kids, and especially no girls, will be going to school. Women are worried about their rights and the improvements that have been made in the past 20 years under the current government. Their rights will all be demolished under the Taliban. Women from all over the country are fleeing to central Kabul and living on the streets. A video of a woman who came outside without a male family member, being tortured and beaten by the Taliban is going viral.



There are hundreds of thousands of women who are sleeping on the road and streets with nothing.

The Taliban are taking over Afghanistan, and horrifying news and visuals are coming from various parts of the capital city Kabul. There was a video where Afghans were clinging to planes to escape the country. The scene at the airport was chaotic. It has been reported that several people are already dead at the airport in an attempt to flee Afghanistan.

Heading towards every single plane are long queues of Afghans. The lines don't seem to end. They have been told they can only bring one suitcase and the clothes they're wearing as they leave their country behind - the country now controlled by the Taliban.

But it's not just the country they are leaving. They are leaving behind the life they lived, and for the young educated generation, the life they built up, the dreams they cherished over 20 years.

### WHAT DO THE OTHER COUNTRIES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS LIKE THE UN HAVE TO SAY?

The *United Nations* in Afghanistan reiterate their commitment to stay and deliver aid to millions of people in need. While some UN personnel that are not location-dependent have temporarily been relocated, most humanitarian personnel are staying to support the humanitarian response in line with the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence.

The humanitarian community – both the UN and non-governmental organisations – remain committed to helping people in Afghanistan. While the situation is highly complex, humanitarian agencies are committed to supporting vulnerable people in Afghanistan who need us more than ever.

UN experts urge swift global action to protect human rights and prevent 'civilian slaughter'

The UN adamantly reiterates that it is unacceptable for the member States to stand on the side-lines when the Taliban overruns the territory of Afghanistan and engages in acts that may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.



In parallel, the UN identifies the particular responsibilities of States who have led and engaged in a peace process with the Taliban, where the most basic of commitments made in the current agreement, namely, a commitment to engage in an intra-Afghan dialogue, rather than pursue a military offensive, is being broken with impunity. International law requires that those engaged in acts of terrorism be dealt with fully with the considerable capacity of the law and practice that has developed since the Taliban was first designated as a terrorist organization by the United Nations Security Council.

The UN is outraged by the wanton attacks on civilians, the targeting of independent journalists and media, and the violence being directed at women and girls including the imposition of strictures on their capacity to function in any independent way in society, which is entirely inconsistent with the dignity and rights of women and girls. Today, women are experiencing the same rights violations as 20 years ago under the control of the Taliban, including the forced wearing of a Burka, forced marriage,

restriction on freedom of movement and required use of a mahram, prohibition on working and restricted access to health care, education and more. Some 80% of nearly a quarter of a million Afghans forced to flee since the end of May are women and children.



The UN states that it cannot stand idly by as the lives of the Afghan people are treated with contempt, derision, and weariness. Afghanistan is a test case for the value of the UN Charter, and the commitment of States to prevent the scourge of terrorism from destroying rights-bearing societies and values. They urge all member States to stand firm and have the moral courage and clarity to act in order to prevent further violence and harm.

UNHCR and partners are assisting newly displaced Afghans with emergency shelter, food, health, water and sanitation support and cash assistance, despite challenges in accessing vulnerable groups.

UNHCR also helps by facilitating voluntary repatriation for Afghan refugees from Iran,

Pakistan and other countries, once it is established that their return is voluntary, safe, dignified and durable. Afghan returnees are provided with cash grants to help address their immediate needs, as well as basic health services like malnutrition screening and vaccinations, mine risk education, information on school enrolment and overnight transit assistance. They are also assisted with reintegration into their communities.

While *European Union* leaders were careful not to directly criticize the Biden administration, many are angry over how the U.S. is departing Afghanistan, a country in which they had a common mission for 20 years.

### **WHAT DID THE US SAY?**

US President Joe Biden categorically said he would “not hand over” the Afghan war to the fifth US president. The Afghan war began with George W Bush in September 2001 days after 9/11 terror attacks in the US.



- Bush served two terms pursuing al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden, the mastermind of 9/11 attacks.
- Barack Obama came next and Laden was killed in a raid by the US marine seals but in Pakistan. In the second term, Obama promised withdrawal from Afghanistan.
- Donald Trump came to power in the US promising he would not let the American people pay for the nation-building exercise in Afghanistan. He began peace talks with Taliban, who began regrouping helped by wide-scale corruption in the Afghanistan government.
- Joe Biden, who was the vice-president under Obama, concurred with Trump on the cost of war in Afghanistan. He expedited the withdrawal.

In the end, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken told an American TV channel that the “mission” in Afghanistan had been achieved and the Afghan excursion was “successful”.

### **RUSSIA, CHINA, PAKISTAN REACT**

Russia and China appeared to take a softer tone on the Taliban.

“There is no point in panicking,” said Russia’s U.N. Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia. “The main point is that a

widespread bloodbath among civilians has been avoided.” He said Moscow’s embassy in Kabul would continue to operate as normal.

“As regards our future official steps regarding the Taliban, we will interact with them irrespective of the evolving situation and their specific actions,” Nebenzia said.

“The situation in Afghanistan has undergone major changes,” China’s Deputy U.N. Ambassador Geng Shuang told the council. “We respect the will and choices of the Afghan people.” Pakistan’s U.N. ambassador told reporters after the meeting that his government is making “active efforts” to promote an inclusive political settlement in Afghanistan. He said a number of non-Pashtun political parties and groups met with his foreign minister Monday in Islamabad. “They have promised to engage continuously with the Taliban and to try to evolve an inclusive Afghan government,” Ambassador Munir Akram said. “Pakistan will work with them and Taliban representatives to advance this objective.”

At the same time, he questioned the right of the Afghan ambassador to participate in the meeting, saying he is the “representative of a now defunct regime.”

### **WORSENING CONDITION IN AFGHANISTAN**

Recent days have witnessed the rapid collapse of the Afghan military and the resignation of its government, with the Taliban returning to national power after nearly two decades of conflict. American diplomats and development officials are being evacuated from Kabul by the U.S. military, and thousands of Afghans are attempting to flee.

In the summer of 2021, the Taliban continued its [offensive](#), threatening government-controlled [urban areas](#) and seized several [border crossings](#).



In early August, the Taliban began [direct assaults](#) on multiple urban areas, including Kandahar in the south and Herat in the west. On August 6, 2021, the Taliban [captured](#) the capital of southern Nimruz Province, the first provincial capital to fall. After that, provincial capitals began to [fall](#) in rapid succession. Within days, the Taliban [captured](#) more than ten other capitals, including Mazar-i-Sharif in the north and Jalalabad in the east, leaving Kabul the only major urban

area under government control. On August 15, 2021, Taliban fighters [entered](#) the capital, leading Afghan President Ashraf Ghani to flee the country and the Afghan government to collapse. Later that day, the Taliban [announced](#) they had entered the presidential palace, taken control of the city, and were establishing checkpoints to maintain security.



The Taliban takeover of the country could once again turn Afghanistan into a terrorist safe shelter, as the group is believed to [maintain ties](#) with al-Qaeda. The takeover also threatens to reverse advances made in securing the rights of women and girls. Moreover, increasing internal instability, a mass exodus of refugees, and a growing humanitarian crisis could have regional ramifications as neighbouring countries respond. In addition, Pakistan, India, Iran, and Russia are all likely to compete for influence in Kabul and with subnational actors.

United-States has an interest in attempting to preserve the political, human rights and security gains that have been achieved in Afghanistan since 2001.

## MITIGATION STRATEGIES ON TALIBAN CRISIS

The Strategies through Policy Calibrations: India might consider appointing a special envoy dedicated to Afghan reconciliation. A serving senior diplomat in the [Ministry of External Affairs \(MEA\)](#) or a retired ambassador with experience in Afghanistan would be the ideal choice. The envoy could make sure that India's views are heard at every meeting and conference on reconciliation. Further, the special envoy could look to enter into discussions with Taliban representatives or former representatives who have not been disowned by the movement. Such Taliban influencers are easy to access and are open to dialogue with Indian officials.

To be sure, the question of whether or not Indian representatives should directly engage with the Taliban has been debated in India for years. The idea of a special envoy has been *“floating around for a long time,”* within the MEA as well as India's [National Security Council \(NSC\)](#). It is, according to some former officials, *“positively necessary.”* In addition to ensuring that India is heard, an envoy committed to reconciliation could keep abreast of the fast-moving changes within Afghanistan and remain in constant touch with once staunchly anti-Taliban leaders in

the Afghan government who have now offered rhetorical support for the peace process. For instance, in an article he authored in Time magazine, **Afghan Vice President Amrullah Saleh**, who was targeted by the Haqqani group in a daring attack on the first day of his political campaign in 2019, has advocated for the need to *“change the past and make ourselves peace builders.”* In the past, Saleh had routinely warned international visitors and the Afghan government of Pakistani duplicity and had argued that speaking to the Taliban was futile. Yet, today, whether “he likes it or not,” it is clear that he cannot afford to “resist the U.S. demand for peace talks,” according to those who have known him for a long time. Interviews with those from the Panjshir Valley, Saleh’s home base, suggest that he is still a *“strong anti-Pakistani voice,”* but even he *“can’t openly challenge the Taliban and their supporters in Pakistan the way he used to.”* There are many in Saleh’s camp, in northern Afghanistan, who are unwilling to support any form of



reconciliation with the Taliban. In addition

to connecting with external actors and the Taliban, the envoy would need to keep channels open with detractors, many of whom have helped India greatly in the past. Partially centralizing such advances around the office of one dedicated envoy would help form a bridge for the many departments that deal with Afghanistan, improve coordination on India’s position, and help preserve institutional memory. It would also allow other external actors to connect with one central office when it comes to Afghanistan, rather than working through multiple Indian agencies and ministries.

If there is an MEA that has an appetite for risk-taking and out-of-the-box solutions, it is the one in place today. If the term *“special envoy”* is the problem, the position could perhaps instead be titled the senior policy adviser to the foreign minister. No matter what administrative formula works best, what will be essential, according to a person who has held the post of special envoy in the past, is a degree of *“strategic clarity”* on the scope of the position and the authority that derives from it, coupled with *“the support of the prime minister.”*

#### **SUGGESTIONS:**

**Women's rights in Afghanistan must have only one direction and that is forward.**

*“UN Women stands firmly with the women and girls of Afghanistan in these difficult times, and we remain committed to supporting their safety and their full and free participation in the social, economic, and political life of the country.”*

There have been many [hard-won](#) advances in human rights over the past two decades. The rights of all Afghans must be defended. We are particularly concerned about the safety of the thousands of Afghans who have been working to promote human rights across the country, and have helped improve the lives of millions. We call on the international community to extend all possible support to those who may be at [imminent risk](#), and we call on the Taliban to demonstrate through their actions, not just their words, that the fears for the safety of so many people from so many different walks of life are addressed.

*“Taliban spokespeople have issued a number of statements in recent days, including pledging an amnesty for those who worked for the Government. They have also pledged to be inclusive. They have said woman can work and girls can go to school. Such promises will need to be honoured, and for the time being -- again understandably, given past history -- these declarations have been greeted with some*

*scepticism. Nevertheless, the promises have been made, and whether or not they are honoured or broken will be closely scrutinized.”*

*“As the Secretary-General said in his statement to the [Security Council](#), all parties, including the Taliban have an obligation to protect civilians and to uphold human rights. They must respect and protect both international humanitarian law and international human rights law.”*

*Today, our top priority is to promote an inclusive and sustainable peace process that leads to an Afghanistan that is stable and does not present a terrorist threat to the United States or others. [USIP](#) does this by implementing top-down and bottom-up initiatives to identify key issues that need to be resolved and then providing options to address them. In Washington, USIP supports the U.S. government through policy analysis that draws from our work on the ground in Afghanistan and comparative lessons from managing conflicts around the world.*

*[NATO](#) Allies went into Afghanistan after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States, to ensure that the country does not again become a safe haven for international terrorists to attack our homelands. Over the last two decades,*

*there have been no terrorist attacks on Allied soil from Afghanistan.*

*[UNHCR](#), the [UN Refugee Agency](#), is providing Afghans with emergency shelter, food, water, and health care, but our supplies are running dangerously low.*

*We urgently need your help to scale up our supplies, so that we can help people trapped inside Afghanistan, as well as refugees forced to flee to neighbouring countries.*

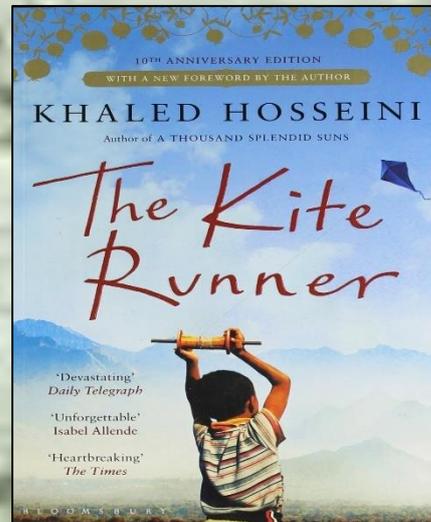


## **BOOKS ON AFGHANISTAN.**

### **The Kite Runner**

It is the first novel by Afghan-American author Khaled Hosseini. Published in 2003 by Riverhead Books, it tells the story of Amir, a young boy from the Wazir Akbar Khan district of Kabul. The story is set against a backdrop of tumultuous events, from the fall of Afghanistan's monarchy through the Soviet invasion, the exodus of refugees to Pakistan and the

United States, and the rise of the Taliban regime.



Hosseini has commented that he considers *The Kite Runner* to be a father-son relationship story, emphasizing the familial aspects of the narrative, an element that he continued to use in his later works.[2] Themes of guilt and redemption feature prominently in the novel, with a pivotal scene depicting an act of sexual assault that happens against Hassan that Amir fails to prevent. The situation as a whole was the main reason why Amir and Hassan's friendship ended.

The latter half of the book centers on Amir's attempts to atone for this transgression by rescuing Hassan's son two decades later.

*The Kite Runner* became a bestseller after being printed in paperback and was popularized in book clubs. It appeared on the New York Times bestseller list for over two years,[4] with over seven million

copies sold in the United States. Reviews were generally positive, though parts of the plot drew significant controversy in Afghanistan. A number of adaptations were created following publication,

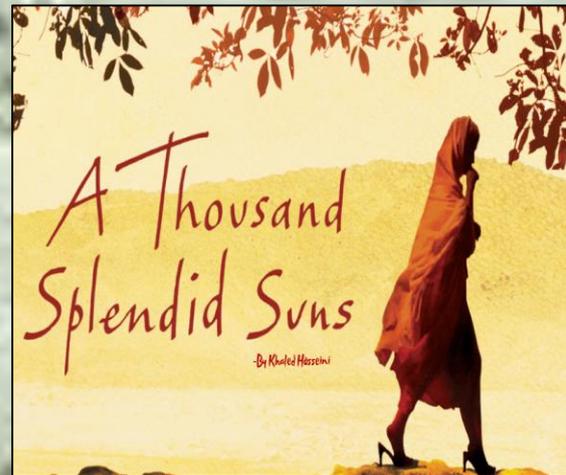
including a 2007 film of the same name, several stage performances, and a graphic novel. The novel is also available in a multi-CD audiobook read by the author.

### **A Thousand Splendid Suns**

Mariam, a young girl, lives in a small shack with her mother, Nana, outside of the city of Herat in Afghanistan. Nana had worked as a housemaid for the wealthy cinema owner Jalil, Mariam's father, but after she became pregnant, Jalil cast her out to the shack. Jalil has multiple legitimate wives and children, but Mariam is an illegitimate "harami" or bastard. Jalil visits Mariam once a week, telling stories and bringing gifts. She adores him. Mariam's other friend, Mullah Faizullah, teaches her the Koran and listens to her problems.

Eventually, Mariam asks Jalil to take her to the cinema to see the new cartoon of Pinocchio. Jalil agrees to do so, but he does not come at the expected time. Mariam ventures into Herat herself. She sleeps outside Jalil's house waiting for him, but he will not see her. Jalil's chauffeur drives

Mariam back home, where she finds that her mother has hanged herself.



After Nana's funeral, Jalil takes Mariam in, but she no longer adores him. Jalil's wife tells Mariam that Mariam is to be married off to a shoe shop owner named Rasheed in Kabul. Mariam protests to no avail; Mariam and Rasheed marry and go to Kabul. At first, Rasheed is sweet and brings her gifts. Mariam gets pregnant seven times but loses the baby each time due to a health complication. Over time, Rasheed becomes verbally and physically abusive. At one point, Jalil tries to visit Mariam in Kabul, but she will not see him.

Laila is born sometime after the marriage of Mariam and Rasheed. She lives in their neighborhood. Since her youth, Laila has a close male friend named Tariq. Tariq lost one of his legs from a land mine. As Tariq and Laila grow up, she falls in love with him.

Ahmad and Noor, Laila's two older brothers, leave to fight for the Mujahideen

in the jihad. After they are killed, Laila's mother [Fariba](#) is never the same. As conflict turns to war in Kabul, living conditions become difficult for everyone. Despite her father [Hakim](#)'s emphasis on attending school, Laila must quit because the streets are too dangerous. She is tutored at home. Hakim wants to leave Afghanistan, but Fariba will not leave the land for which her sons have died. Tariq's family, however, moves to Pakistan, and Laila feels devastated—before Tariq left, he and Laila had sex. Tariq asked Laila to come with him and marry him, but Laila could not leave her father.

A few weeks after Tariq's family leaves, Laila is almost hit by a bullet. This event wakes Fariba to the ongoing risks of living in Kabul, so she agrees to move. While they pack, a bomb hits Laila's home, and she is the sole survivor of the blast, knocked unconscious.

Laila awakens in Rasheed's and Mariam's house. They took care of her as she healed. After a few days, Abdul Sharif comes and brings news that Tariq had been hospitalized and then died. Laila feels devastated again.

As Rasheed's daily behavior changes, Mariam perceives that Rasheed is courting Laila. She protests, but he does not care. Mariam asks Laila if she would accept

Rasheed's hand in marriage, and Laila answers at once—yes—she is pregnant and wants Rasheed to think that the baby is his. Laila and Rasheed marry, and tension arises between Mariam and Laila. Rasheed puts Laila on a pedestal and makes fun of Mariam in order to impress Laila.

Once Laila announced that she was pregnant, Rasheed was ecstatic. He prayed for a boy and held Laila in even higher esteem. But Laila has a baby girl, [Aziza](#), and Rasheed feels disgusted by the smells and sounds that fill the house. Rasheed soon neglects the baby and implies that he knows the baby is not his.

Soon after the birth, Rasheed demands that Laila have sex with him. Laila refuses because the doctor ordered her not to do so for six weeks. Rasheed blames Mariam, however, and tries to beat Mariam. Laila blocks his blow, the first time anyone has ever stood up for Mariam. The tension between Mariam and Laila thus lifts; Mariam appreciates Laila for defending her. They develop a friendship.

The Taliban come to power, and strict laws are placed on women. The laws are even more severe than Rasheed has been. Women no longer may travel without men, and in general just about all their freedom has been taken away.

Laila had planned to run away from Rasheed soon after Aziza was born. She had begun stealing money from Rasheed in order to put her plan into action. After her friendship with Mariam develops, she invites Mariam to run away with them. To do so, they find a man who seems willing to act as their relative when they buy tickets to Pakistan, but he tells the authorities. They are taken to a police station and are returned home. Rasheed locks them in separate, hot rooms with no food or water for a day. He threatens to kill the three if they attempt to run away again.

Laila becomes pregnant again and gives birth to a boy, Zalmai. Rasheed adores and spoils Zalmai, and Zalmai worships Rasheed. Rasheed's shop burns down, and the family goes further into debt. Rasheed searches for work elsewhere but has trouble. The family comes close to starvation. Mariam tries to reach Jalil for help, but she finds that he is dead.

Aziza is put into an orphanage so that she can be fed. Rasheed escorts Mariam, Laila, and Zalmai to visit Aziza, but their visits become less and less frequent. Eventually Rasheed refuses to go at all, so Laila risks the walk alone, often suffering beatings by the Taliban. Rasheed finds a job at a hotel and can sustain the family again.

One day after visiting Aziza at the orphanage, Laila sees Tariq standing at the front door of Rasheed's house. Laila is ecstatic. She weeps and hugs Tariq. Tariq and Laila visit together over the next few days, and Tariq describes his past. He went through a refugee camp, both of his parents died, and he spent time in prison. He became a hotel janitor. Laila tells Tariq about Aziza and her marriage to Rasheed, and Tariq does not blame her for marrying.

Zalmai is unhappy about the visits. He tells Rasheed that Laila has allowed Tariq to see her face, and Rasheed becomes enraged. Rasheed beats Laila and tries to suffocate her. He comes to succeeding, but Mariam hits him twice with a shovel, killing him.

After Rasheed's death, Laila is determined to leave Kabul. She asks Mariam to come with her and Tariq to Pakistan, but Mariam refuses. If Mariam were to leave, the Taliban would search for both of them to find the murderer, but Mariam cannot let the children live in such danger. She also could not look at Zalmai every day knowing she had killed his father. Laila and Zalmai pick up Aziza and leave town. They never see Mariam again.

Mariam eventually is caught and put into a prison run by the Taliban. She tries to explain that she was defending herself when she killed Rasheed, but the judge

sentences Mariam to death. She is publicly executed.

Laila and Tariq marry and start a new life in Pakistan. They work for the same hotel at which Tariq worked before, and they live in a shack behind the hotel. Laila reveals to Aziza that Tariq is her father, and they bond instantly. Zalmai is at first adverse to Tariq, but he warms up.

After the terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001 and the onset of President George Bush's "War on Terror," which has toppled the Taliban, Laila hears that conditions in Kabul are improving. She wishes to return and contribute. Tariq agrees.

Mullah Faizullah's son and the kolba. Mullah Faizullah's son gives Laila a box Laila stops in Herat first and visits that Jalil left for Mariam. The box contains a letter apologizing and providing an update for Mariam. The box also contains cash in American dollars and a copy of *Pinocchio* on video.

Laila, Tariq, Aziza, and Zalmai move into a townhouse in Kabul. Laila teaches at the orphanage. Tariq works for an NGO (non-governmental organization) that fits land mine victims with prosthetic limbs. Laila always feels Mariam close to her heart. As the novel ends, Laila is pregnant with her

third child—if it is a girl, she will be named Mariam.

## **MOVIES RELATED TO TALIBAN**

### **Lone survivor**



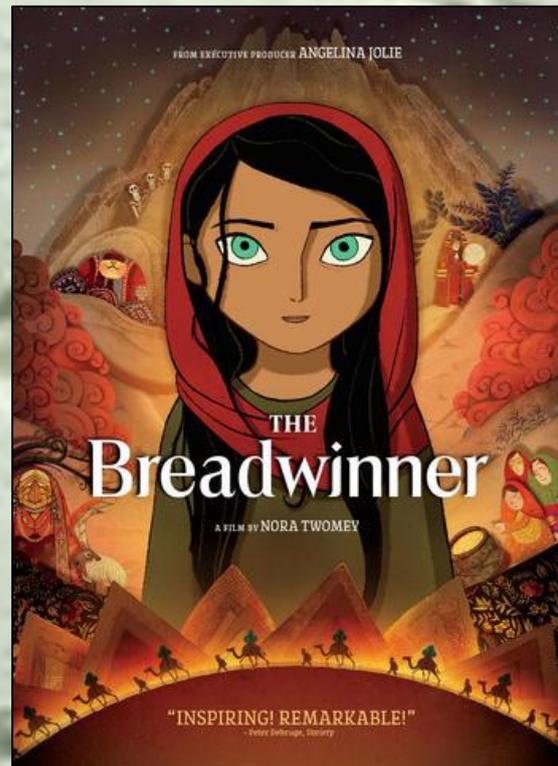
Based on former SEAL Marcus Luttrell's memoirs, this is the story of four US Navy SEALs who are left stranded in the Hindu Kush mountains when their communications are cut off. When surrounded by the Taliban, they face a fight for survival. As the show begins, we are given a glimpse of the brutal training that US Navy SEALs go through before they become trained killing machines. It is fittingly portentous because of what this particular team of soldiers will go through during the course of their battle.

As part of Operation Red Wings, Marcus Luttrell (Wahlberg), Michael Murphy (Kitsch), Matthew 'Axe' Axelson (Foster) and Danny Dietz (Hirsch) set out on a mission in a remote part of Afghanistan to eliminate Taliban leader Ahmad Shah. After reaching the rendezvous point atop a hill overlooking their target village, a group of local goat herders stumble - quite literally - upon them. The decision the SEALs take, of whether to kill or release the locals, is a fateful one. But they decide to uphold a code of honour about not killing unarmed civilians and they let them go. They know that in doing so, they are clearly alerting the nearby Taliban about their presence. Soon enough, as they expected, the Taliban have the four surrounded and the firefight begins.

The film's action is brutal and relentless, leaving the embattled men no time to even finish a sentence before an RPG goes off or a machine gun stitches the ground in front of them. They are shot, sustain gory wounds in almost forensic detail and are relentlessly riddled by shrapnel. Lesser men would break under this but not once do these soldiers falter. True to their training, they fight the Taliban with far greater ferocity and anger. That aside, the film never once ventures into partisanship or jingoism. The fact that war really is hell is always kept

front and centre throughout. Tobia Schliesser's cinematography is brilliant. This one's an adrenaline-packed ride all the way.

### The Breadwinner



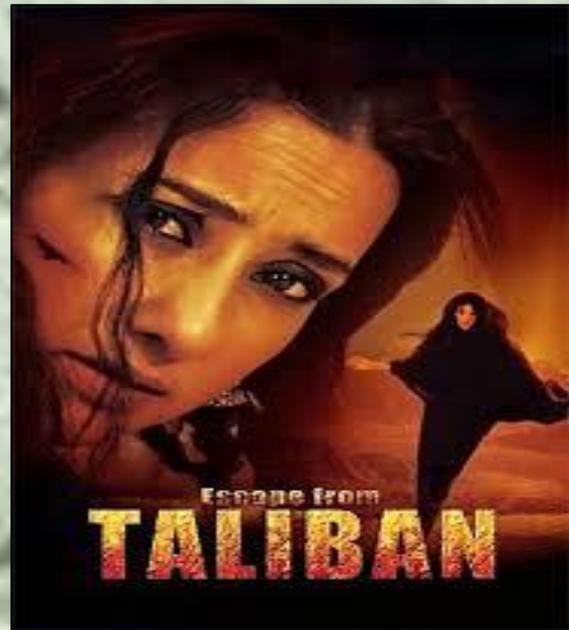
It's a tale of youthful fortitude in Taliban-era Afghanistan that has something of the defiant feminist spirit of the French-Iranian gem *Persepolis*.

Flitting between a mythical past and a down-to-earth present, the story is full of scary monsters – from fantastical demons to all-too-real landmines and brutal beatings. Yet *The Breadwinner* looks through the eyes of a resilient young girl whose courage is our guide.

Along with the eerie beauty of the animation there is a salving streak of humour that softens this tale's sharper edges, reminding us that – for children – laughter and bravery walk hand in hand.

We first meet 11-year-old Parvana (affectingly voiced by Saara Chaudry) on the streets of Kabul, where she is helping her father, Nurullah (Ali Badshah), to sell their meagre goods. A teacher by trade, he lost a leg in the Russian war, but is now considered a subversive for encouraging his daughters to be independent – to learn the history of their land and to understand the liberating power of its stories. “Stories remain in our hearts, even when all else is gone,” Nurullah tells Parvana, although she's starting to wonder: “What's the use?” When Nurullah is arrested by the Taliban, Parvana's family (mother, sister, baby brother) are unable to buy food, since women cannot leave their homes unchaperoned. So Parvana cuts her hair, puts on the clothes of her dead brother, and ventures out into the streets. “When you're a boy, you can go anywhere you like!” says fellow traveller Shauzia (Soma Chhaya) as Parvana experiences a whole new world – a magic-carpet ride full of vibrant colour and bustling life. But the storm clouds of war are gathering once more, and Parvana must secure her father's release before it's too late.

### Escape from Taliban



It is based on a memoir titled *Kabuliwalar Bangali Bou* authored by a Bengali Brahmin woman named Sushmita Banerjee. The memoir narrated her life in Afghanistan and her escape from there. The activist and writer married an Afghan Jaanbaz Khan and resided in the country from 1989 to 1995. During that time, the Taliban ruled Afghanistan forced her to convert to Islam.

The movie depicted her journey of living in the landlocked country, where the Taliban issued a death sentence on her for not abiding by their rule and later successfully attempting to flee the country. According to PTI, in September 2013, a decade after the release of the movie, Sushmita Banerjee, at age 49, was shot dead by suspected Taliban militants in Afghanistan.

After entering Afghanistan with her partner Jaanbaaz, who she intends to marry, Sushmita is left petrified at the terrorizing scenes in the country where the Taliban has taken control. After facing rejection from the society in the country for her opposition to converting her religion to Islam, Banerjee is declared Kaafir (disbeliever in god) for her attempts of teaching the Afghani women their rights. Sushmita manages to face all the troubles and only has a wish to return back to India with her adopted daughter.

#### **NATIONAL AFFAIRS:**

- The Gaming Act 1974, approved by Andhra Pradesh govt to proscribe the online games indulged in Economic Transactions, volition to which would invite one-year imprisonment for the organizers and six-month jail for the players.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/state-bans-online-gaming-betting-platforms/article32519907.ece>

- Expatriation of illegal immigrants is of utmost significance to the national concern, addresses the Patna High Court to Bihar govt to brief the masses residing there.

[https://www.livelaw.in/news-updates/deportation-illegal-](https://www.livelaw.in/news-updates/deportation-illegal-migrants-paramount-importance-national-interest-patna-high-court-sensitize-people-bihar-180496)

[migrants-paramount-importance-national-interest-patna-high-court-sensitize-people-bihar-180496](https://www.livelaw.in/news-updates/deportation-illegal-migrants-paramount-importance-national-interest-patna-high-court-sensitize-people-bihar-180496)

- The Ministry of Civil Aviation has unveiled the Draft Drone Rules,2021 based on trust, self-certification, and non-intrusive monitoring to create sky digital Dias as a business-friendly for procuring various approvals.

<https://m.economictimes.com/industry/transportation/airlines/-aviation/aviation-ministry-issues-draft-rules-to-ensure-ease-of-using-drones-in-india/articleshow/84435880.cms>

- Bombay High dismisses the petition, against the former Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Devendra Fadnavis for using Pegasus to obtain court documents.

<https://www.barandbench.com/amp/story/news/litigation/bombay-high-court-dismisses-plea-alleged-devendra-fadnavis-used-pegasus-court-documents>

- The rare bail stipulation of the Judge hailing from Bihar to the convicted was to provide free

education and planting trees, setting an example for the sustainable development of the society.

<https://www.barandbench.com/news/litigation/bihar-judge-unusual-bail-conditions-for-public-good>

- Ex-IPS Amitabh Thakur was taken under Judicial Custody by the UP court for allegedly abetting the suicide of a person through self – immolation, outside the Supreme court.

<https://www.livelaw.in/top-stories/self-immolation-supreme-court-lucknow-court-remands-exips-amitabh-thakur-judicial-custody-abetting-rape-victim-suicide-180443>

- Former Union Minister K J Alphons released a book titled, “Accelerating India:7 years of Modi government”, presenting the book to the honorable prime minister. This book is a compilation of 25 essays by 28 eminent authors, dealing with 25 sectors of Indian governance.

[https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/news\\_updates/k-j-alphons-presents-his-book-accelerating-india-7-years-of-modi-government-to-pm/?comment=disable](https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/news_updates/k-j-alphons-presents-his-book-accelerating-india-7-years-of-modi-government-to-pm/?comment=disable)

- Bhavina Patel created history on August 29, 2021, by becoming the first Indian Table tennis player to win the silver medal at Paralympics. She won silver in the women's singles class 4 at Tokyo Paralympics 2020.

<https://www.aninews.in/news/national/general-news/union-ministers-congratulate-bhavina-patel-for-clinching-silver-medal-at-tokyo20210829110754/>

- 50% of the adult population of India inoculated partially, whilst 15% got copiously vaccinated, with the nation’s aim of providing 60% of the total population with complete vaccination by December 2021.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-56345591>

- RBI is set to launch the trial program of its digital currency by December 2021 in a phased manner, and studying different aspects of digital currency and investigating its security as well as its impact on the financial sector of the country.

<https://www.livemint.com/market/stock-market-news/rbi-digital-currency-trial-could-launch-by->

[december-governor-shaktikanta-das-11630055029526.html](https://www.latestlaws.com/international-news/us-supreme-court-allows-revival-of-trump-s-remain-in-mexico-asylum-policy-biden-admin-says-will-challenge-ruling/)

### **INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS:**

- On Friday, a Hong Kong Court approved bail for a student leader who is among four charged with "advocating terrorism" after their union passed a motion mourning the death of a 50-year-old who stabbed a police officer before killing himself, with the bail stipulation to pay \$6420.

<https://www.latestlaws.com/international-news/hong-kong-court-grants-bail-to-student-charged-under-draconian-security-law/>

- China's Supreme People's Court said the overtime practice of "996", working 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. six days a week, is illegal, aiming for the controversial policy that is common among many Chinese technology firms.

<https://www.latestlaws.com/international-news/chinese-supreme-court-terms-overtime-practice-of-996-as-illegal-issues-guidelines-in-collab-with-hr-ministry/>

- US Supreme Court allows renewal of Trump's remain in Mexico's

asylum Policy, prompting the Biden's Administration to challenge the Ruling.

<https://www.latestlaws.com/international-news/us-supreme-court-allows-revival-of-trump-s-remain-in-mexico-asylum-policy-biden-admin-says-will-challenge-ruling/>

- Germany's highest court has rejected the appeals of three people who were convicted in one of the country's most high-profile murder trials involving a far-right group. The decision was announced on Thursday by the Federal Court of Justice confirming the life sentence given three years ago to Beate Zschaepe, the only known survivor of the National Socialist Underground.

<https://www.latestlaws.com/international-news/german-supreme-court-rejects-appeals-in-neo-nazi-killings-case/>

- Afghanistan Embassy's case standstill in the Supreme Court of India, amidst the current mayhem at Taliban.

<https://www.latestlaws.com/latest-news/afghanistan-embassy-s-case->

[in-indian-supreme-court-halts-as-result-of-current-taliban-turmoil/](#)

- New Zealand reports the first death linked to the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.

<https://zeenews.india.com/world/pfizer-covid-vaccine-may-be-authorized-for-children-aged-between-5-to-12-by-october-2389760.html>

- Several rockets fired at Kabul airport, US says 'operations continue uninterrupted', as reported by one of the US government officials on the pretext of maintaining anonymity. He further said that the rockets were fired at the dawn of Monday as per the Kabul time, yet it was indistinct whether all these rockets were brought down by the defence system.

<https://zeenews.india.com/world/multiple-rockets-fired-at-kabul-airport-intercepted-by-missile-defence-system-2389700.html>

- UNSC's U-Turn on Taliban rule removes the Taliban's name from the list on terror-support. Syed Akrabuddin has tweeted a copy of the statement issued concerning the Taliban's rule. It contained a copy

of the statement by India on 16th August 2021, which appealed that the Taliban should not be supporting terrorism in any of the countries. Meanwhile, the copy of the statement released by the UNSC on 27th August didn't even mention the name of the Taliban.

<https://zeenews.india.com/video/world/unscs-u-turn-on-taliban-rule-removes-talibans-name-from-list-on-terror-support-2389702.html>

- Tokyo Paralympics: Shooter Avani Lekhara wins the gold; Yogesh Kathuniya, Devendra Jhajharia bag silver. The good news came for India from the Tokyo Paralympics on Monday. Avani Lekhara, an Indian, has won the gold medal in the women's 10m air rifle at the Tokyo Paralympics. At the same time, Yogesh Kathuniya, another Indian, won the silver medal in the discus throw, while Devendra Jhajharia bagged a silver in the javelin throw. Prime Minister Modi congratulated each of them separately.

<https://zeenews.india.com/video/india/tokyo-paralympics-shooter-avani-lekhara-wins-the-gold-yogesh-kathuniya-devendra-jhajharia-bag-silver-2389695.html>

- Men sanctioned from teaching girls in Afghanistan': Taliban issue new edict. In its first-ever press conference, earlier this month, after capturing Kabul, the Taliban had assured that a group is committed to providing women with their rights as per Islamism, as the Taliban is not in the favour of co-education, and now, they are even banning the education of women.

<https://zeenews.india.com/world/men-not-allowed-to-teach-girls-in-afghanistan-taliban-issue-new-diktat-2389665.html>

### **QUIZ ZONE**

**DIRECTION: (Q1 to Q8):**

Consider the following two statements, one labelled as Assertion (A) and the other as Reason (R):

- (a) Both A and R is true the correct explanation of A
- (b) Both A and R are true but R is not a correct explanation of A
- (c) A is true but R is false
- (d) A is false but R is true

Q1. ASSERTION: A very long delay may frustrate a contract.

REASON: Delay is always self of these statements.

Q2. ASSERTION: No action lies for mere damage caused by some act which does not violate a legal right.

REASON: An action lies for interference with another's legal right even where it causes no actual damage.

Q3. ASSERTION: The parties to the contract must be competent to contract otherwise it will be a void contract.

REASON: All wagering agreements are void.

Q4. ASSERTION: Every contract must be supported by a consideration.

REASON: Every contract without a consideration is void.

Q5. ASSERTION: All contracts are agreements.

REASON: An agreement enforceable by law is a contract.

Q6. ASSERTION: A void contract is not necessarily illegal.

REASON: Every illegal contract is void.

Q7. ASSERTION: The Constitution of India ain quasi-federal.

REASON: It has given more powers to the central government than to the state government.

Q8. ASSERTION: The Chief Minister can dismiss a minister of state government.

REASON: The Chief Minister is the head of the state council of ministers.

**MATCH THE FOLLOWING**

**CONCEPTS AND LEGAL TERMS**

1. UNDUE INFLUENCE	(a). insolvent
2. COERCION	(b). Compensating the loss suffered by third party.
3. MORTGAGE	(c). Consent obtained by one party dominating the will of the other
4. BANKRUPT	(d). Property given as collateral without transferring the possession.
5. HYPOTHECATION	(e). consent obtained through the act forbidden
6. INDEMNITY	(f). immovable property given as collateral for acquiring loan.

**LET'S TEST YOUR STATIC G.K.**

**KNOWLEDGE:**

Q1. Which ruler is credited for the spread of Jainism in Karnataka?

(a) Chandragupta Maurya / (b) Bimbisara / (c) Ashoka / (d) Samparati

Q2. What was the ruling period of Chalukyas of Badami?

(a) 500-550 AD / (b) 550-650 AD / (c) 543-757 AD / (d) 545-700 AD

Q3. Which Ashokan inscription elaborates the policy of Dhamma?

(a) Major rock edict IX / (b) Major rock edict XI / (c) Major rock edict XII

Q4. In which of the following Vedas, the priest is Brahma?

(a) Sam veda / (b) Yajur veda / (c) Rig veda / (d) Atharva veda

Q5. Which of the following was the main capital of Kushana king Kanishka-I?

(a) Purushpura / (b) Pataliputra / (c) Taxila / (d) Mathura

ANSWERS....

1.c	2.b	3.b	4.a	5.a	6.b	7.a	8.d

ANSWERS.....

1.a	2.c	3.b	4.d	5.a

ANSWERS....

1.C	2.E	3.F	4.A	5.D	6.B
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----