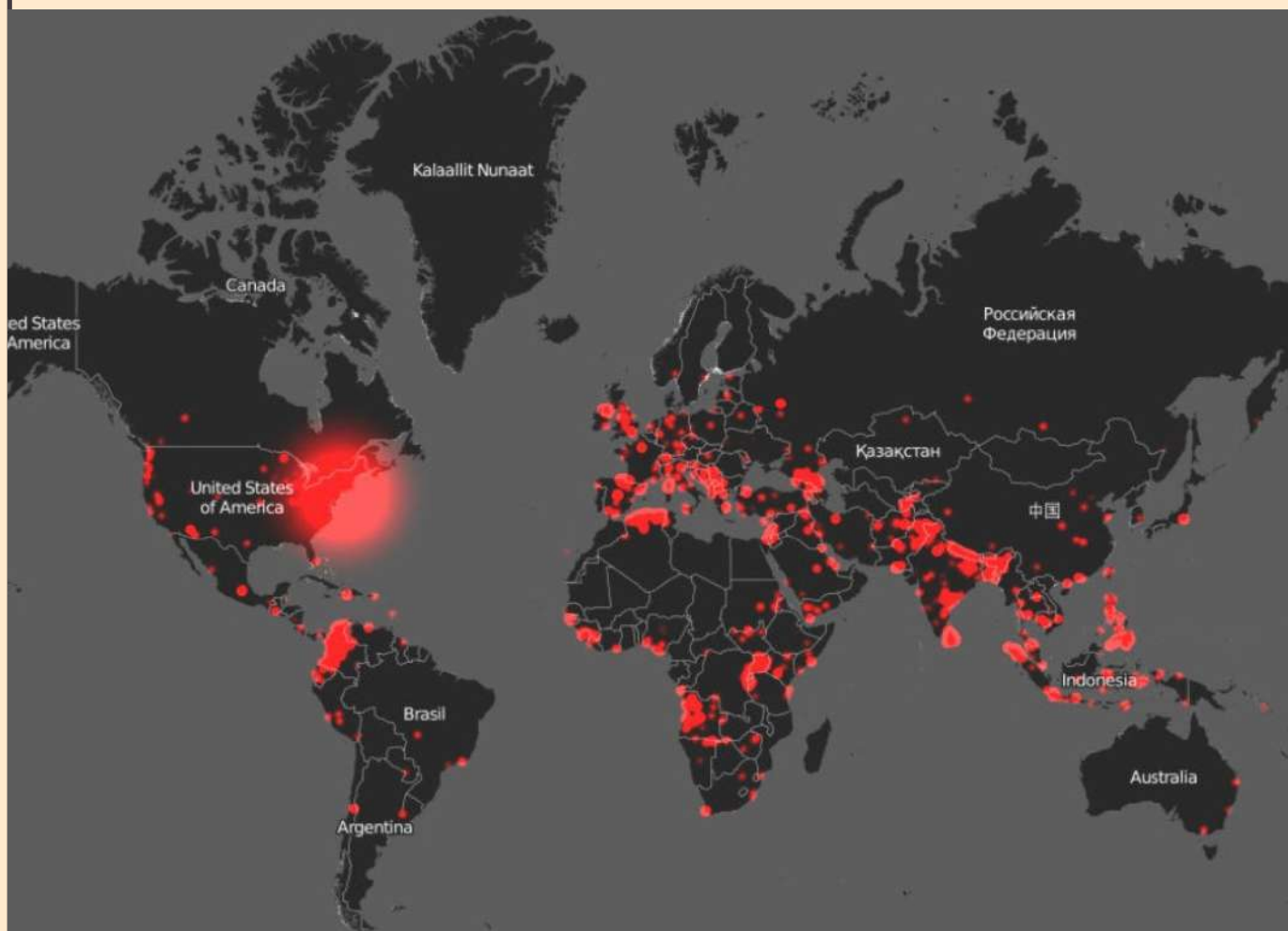


Research Report 2021-2022

# THE NEXUS OF TERRORISM AND ECONOMICS



THE ECONOMICS SOCIETY,  
SHRI RAM COLLEGE OF COMMERCE



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# INTRODUCTION

*"We live in a time of terror, and contrary to what we see on television and allow ourselves to believe, the real goal of terror is not to kill people but to kill thought; to so demoralize a society that it implodes from within." - John Lahr*

Then How do we fight terror, What is the way forward? The attacks on the world trade center acted as a catalyst in the fight against terrorism. After various military operations by the US, Osama Bin Laden was declared dead.

Osama was not fighting the American military. He waged a war against the western way of life, against democracy, freedom of expression, and multiculturalism. He destroyed the bonhomie between the Muslims and the west.

Osama might even have albeit unknowingly triggered America's economic downfall by making the country spend trillions of dollars on one of its costliest wars. Even after Bin Laden's death, the number of terrorist attacks has gone up by over twelve folds since 9/11. Terrorist organizations like Al-Qaida have passed on their legacy to the likes of ISIS, Bokoharam, al Shabab, and various others. Yemen has become a cesspool of terrorism. Afghanistan, Syria, and Nigeria are still some of the worst affected. India has seen a series of bloodshed among army officials as well as civilians.

Terrorism is also leading to socio-economic problems such as high unemployment rates, international displacement, refugee crisis, and drug-related crimes. Now with technology, cyberterrorism is acting as a new danger to the world. Thus, terrorism has proven to have an opportunistic form that evolves in response to the attempts to counter it.

Then is the fight against terror worth it?

George Bush stated that "There is no bigger task than protecting our homeland. The terrorists are fighting against freedom with all their cunning and cruelty because freedom is their greatest fear and they should be afraid because freedom is on March. These words act as a source of inspiration for various countries to not only fight terrorism with guns but also with education. The whole world must aim to eradicate terrorism which is imperative for the society to grow.

Having said that, we must understand the nuances behind terrorism, to fully grasp what it demands from us, in order to have a better understanding to tackle it. This report will focus on various segments. From the cost of terrorism, the policies and bureaucratic structure in place to deal with terrorism, to delving deep into the essence of terrorism, the funding it gets and how terrorism thrives and survives. It is important to understand the cost of terrorism (that includes several hidden costs) to realize why terrorism is something that a layman must be concerned about. It is also important to analyze the cost of terrorism to understand what are the areas where the cost incurred is the highest and consequently allot resources efficiently. To fight terrorism, it becomes important to take note of the existing policies in place, in order to devise better policies, in the sense, that they are more comprehensive in their approach to tackling terrorism.

To break down terrorism from its core, it is overwhelmingly crucial to understand the intricacies of how terrorism continues to survive and persist in the world, the funding, and its operations.



In this report, we will focus on terrorism and its various aspects such as its cost-affects, cost incurred to fight it, various policies of international and governmental agencies to curb it. In the latter half of the report, we shall take one of the contemporary examples, which is also of utmost relevance in today's political dynamic, the case of Afghanistan, to analyze terrorism in more depth. Furthermore, we will see how the various theoretical assertions and dissertations, can be witnessed in the case of Afghanistan, supporting our case and report.

We will discuss the funding of the Taliban, in the context of our case study and talk about international players and their role in Afghanistan's trajectory. The case of Afghanistan is crucial to our analysis due to its exponentially increased relevance in the current political landscape, with the withdrawal of US troops in August 2021 and the subsequent downfall of the Afghan government, and leading to a consequential in the rise of Taliban once again. This has created an extremely intense situation in the world, as well as created a ripple effect that has led subtle yet far-reaching changes in world's socio-economic and political order.

For instance, India invested in several infrastructural projects in Afghanistan, these foreign investments and their returns stand at risk, which might change both public and private outlook on foreign investments, thus impacting incomes and employment in the Indian context. Another such instance demonstrating far-reaching impact can be seen in terms of changing political dynamics in the middle east, mass refugee crisis, changing demographics of nearby countries which will receive Afghan refugees, increasing hunger within Afghanistan, etc. Thus the importance of the case of Afghanistan especially in the context of terrorism cannot be ignored.

Connecting the above-mentioned domains such as international policy concerning terrorism, cost of terrorism, funding of terrorist organizations, with a real-life case study such as that of Afghanistan becomes pertinent to give a reality check to our analysis and learn whether or not the theory and solutions on paper bear any fruit on the ground. In search of all the above-mentioned questions, this research report tries to shed some light on the same.



# COST OF TERRORISM

Even after two decades following one of the most devastating acts of terror on the World Trade Center in New York, the US in particular and the world, in general, continue to feel the aftershocks of the cost incurred in that terror attack. Why is it important to talk about 9/11? Other than being a classic example of the magnitude and impact of a terror attack, the infamous attack changed the entire world order, global politics, and international relations as we know them. It became a trigger for something that would last decades and uproot generations.

It is not in conjecture that billions of dollars were spent in rebuilding the world trade center and the pentagon, paying reparations for human lives and starting one of the longest wars on humanity, the Afghan war after the US invasion of Afghanistan. But this is just the tip of the iceberg. Only when we dive deep do we realize the hidden costs of life, deteriorating human psychology, worsening international relations that consequently have far-reaching and binding effects on the standard of living of people, especially in third world countries, and many more.

The analogous first category in terms of terrorism is the direct economic harm caused by terrorist attacks: buildings and infrastructure are destroyed, and productive lives are lost. Besides, terrorism also creates market uncertainty, lowers confidence of investors, and raises risk perceptions, which ultimately result in lower investment rates and slower economic growth.

The budget cost of government responses to terrorism is the second category. It includes money spent on national defense and homeland security in an attempt to prevent or mitigate future terrorist acts. In theory, this is simple to measure; nevertheless, in practice, we encounter the challenge of disagreement about what portion of increased defense spending is a response to terrorism.



The third category is the subtlest: The cost imposed by the way people respond to fears of terrorism. This category includes comparatively tangible costs, such as the value of over and above the normal time spent waiting in line to pass through airport security checks, but also more spread out costs, such as the "friction" imposed by increased fears about the security of cargo on the global supply chain. Terrorism also has an indirect impact on the economy by reducing tourism and increasing insurance claims.

The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) measures the direct and indirect impact of terrorism and ranks countries according to the impact of terrorism from 0 (no impact) to 10 (highest impact). As per the results shown by GTI 2022, Afghanistan continues to remain as the country with the highest impact due to terrorism for the third consecutive year followed by Iraq and Somalia. The report identified Islamic states (IS) and its affiliates as the world's deadliest terrorist group in 2021. An ISIS suicide bomber detonated two bombs at Afghanistan's Kabul International Airport, resulting in 170 deaths and more than 200 injuries, making it the worst attack of 2021. In the past decade, the global peace index (GPI) has also presented trends of increased global violence and less peacefulness.

Long-term findings of the GPI include a less peaceful world over the past decade, a 2.14 per cent deterioration in the global level of peace in the past decade, and growing inequality in peace between the most and least peaceful countries while the world continues to spend enormous amount of resources on containing violence.

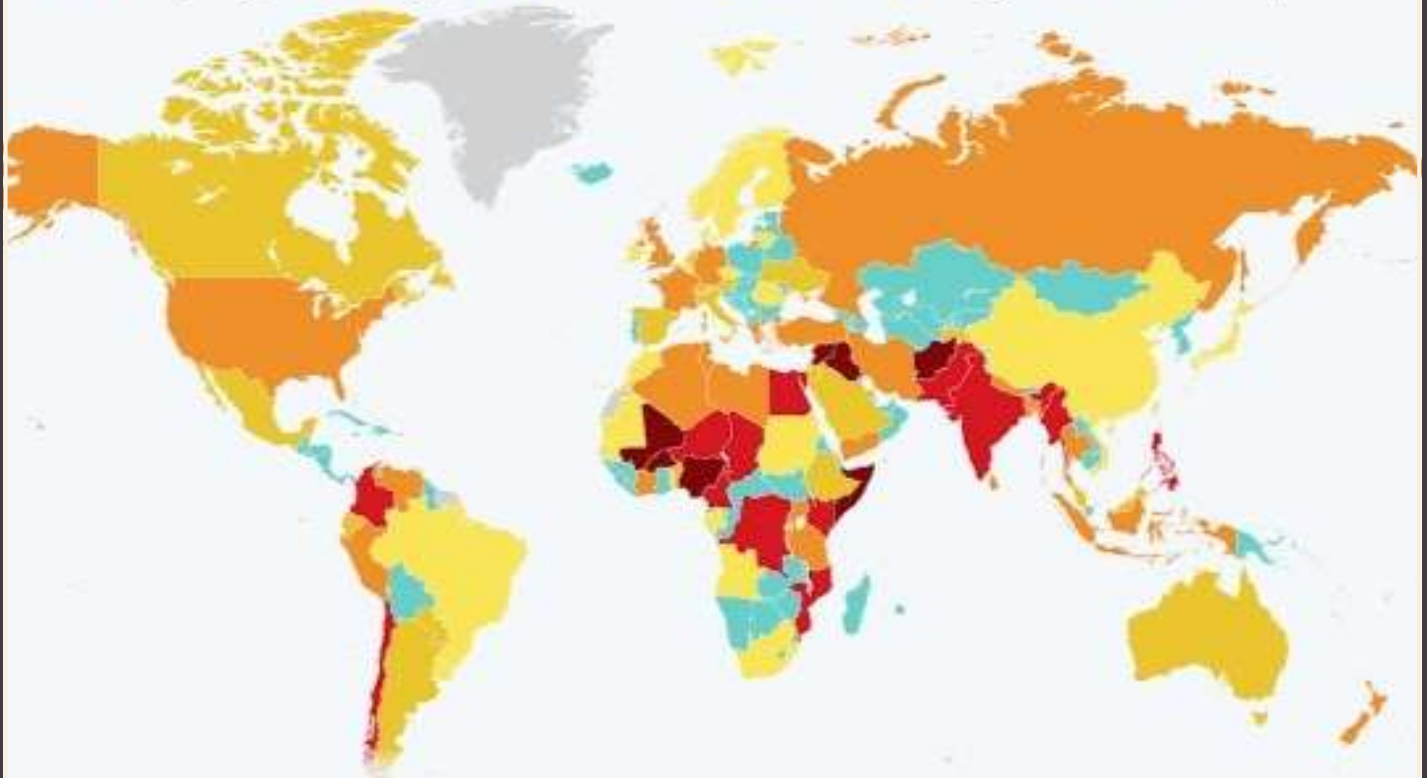
Statistics from the report also claim that historically high numbers of people have been killed in terrorist incidents over the past 10 years.

All these negative consequences and costs of terrorism would be examined thoroughly in the later sections, concerning a case study on Afghanistan.

# The Impact of Terrorism Around the World

Impact of terrorism in countries according to the Global Terrorism Index (2022)

Very high High Medium Low Very low No impact



Source: Institute for Economics and Peace

# Economic Costs

The overall economic cost of terrorism has three basic components as follows:

1. Direct costs – These are the costs of violence accrued to the victim, the culprit, and the government. It includes direct expenditure, such as the cost of hospitalization and medical costs.
2. Indirect costs – These costs include indirect economic losses and physical and psychological trauma to the victim which accrue after the terror event.
3. The multiplier – The multiplier represents the flow-on effects of direct costs, which include opportunity costs such as additional economic benefits that would come from alternate investment rather than from containing or dealing with violence.

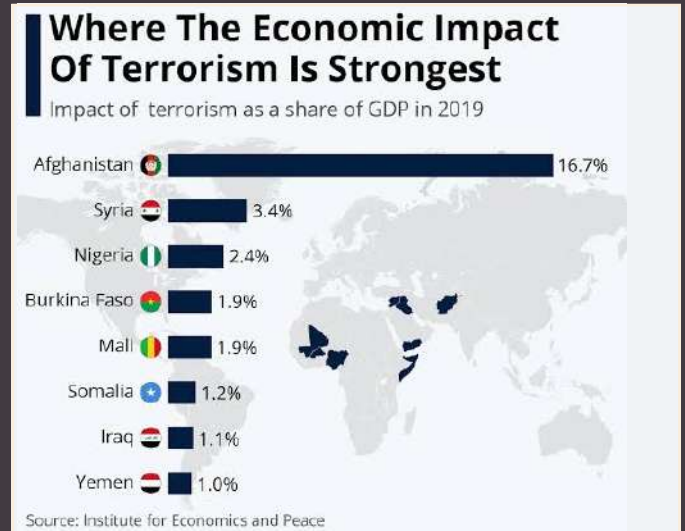
The total economic impact of terrorism for country x in year t can be calculated as follows;

$$\Sigma \text{Economic impact of terrorism} = \text{Direct costs} + \text{indirect costs} + \text{Multiplier}$$

The multiplier used here is equivalent to one. This indicates that every dollar saved from the absence of terrorism will be worth an extra dollar of economic activity from the flow-on effect. The multiplier applies only to the direct costs of terrorism and reflects the supplementary economic boost from reducing terrorism. These costs create additional productivity losses and expenditure multipliers are commonly used in economic calculations to account for this loss.

## Converting Costs to Constant \$US 2018

To facilitate the comparison of the cost of terrorism between years, all costs are converted from current prices to constant using the GDP deflator. The data for the study is taken from the World Bank's World Development Indicators and the International Monetary Fund's World Economic Outlook. It is found that data is not available for all years for a particular country, but at least one year is available,



so nominating the average between years, fills the gap to impute the missing data.

Suppose, the researchers used 2018 as the base year for each country, then dividing by each year for every country, one can get the factor by which the unit costs can be multiplied. Unit costs in constant \$US 2018 are computed by multiplying the unit costs by the deflator factor, for each country, for a particular year. The Equation below shows the formula used for country x in year t;

$$\text{Deflator factor} = \text{GDP Deflator 2018} / \text{GDP Deflator}$$

## Scaling Unit Costs

Unit costs are used to estimate the cost of terrorism including deaths and injuries. These unit costs are adjusted using the GDP per capita ratio as a scale in PPP (purchasing power parity) terms. The per capita GDP of a country in PPP terms for a particular year is divided by the per capita GDP of the United States in PPP terms for the same year. Equation (3) below shows the formula used for country l in year t ;

$$\text{GDP Scale} = \text{GDP Per Capita in PPP} / \text{GDP Per Capita in PPP united states}$$

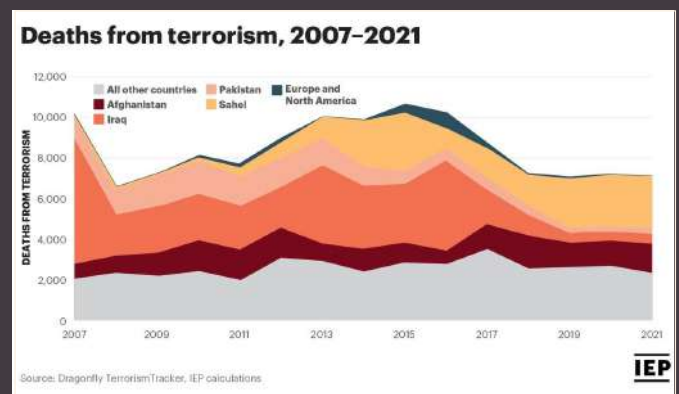
A nation with a GDP per capita PPP that is 60% of the GDP per capita PPP of the United States would have a terrorism death unit cost equalvant to 60 percent of the United States homicide unit cost.

# Impact upon Foreign Direct Investment

In regards, to Foreign Direct Investment, these attacks disrupt and destroy infrastructure in a country, limiting output from a given set of inputs. A study found that both domestic and transnational terrorism have a considerable negative effect on FDI in the country, where the attack takes place. According to a study based on the econometric conditions, a rise in one standard deviation in domestic terrorist incidents per 100,000 people results in a fall of net FDI by between US\$323.6 and US\$512.94 million for an average country, whereas a one standard deviation increase in transnational terrorist incidents per 100,000 people decreases net FDI by between US\$296.49 and US\$735.65 million for an average country.

A research paper estimated that terrorism in Spain reduced the average annual FDI inflow by 13.5% from 1975 to 1991. Similarly, terrorism in Greece reduced FDI by 11.9% p.a over the period 1976 to 1991.

Terrorists can quite easily disrupt and damage foreign-owned firms, seriously affecting their activities. Even quite mild terrorist activity tends to create sizeable reduction in the inflow of capital to a terror-stricken country or region, because foreigners have a choice of numerous countries to invest in. The particular reason for, these reductions in FDI is likely the fact that terrorism affects the allocation decision of firms investing money in real foreign assets.



## Foreign Trade

Apart from above mentioned economic costs of terrorism, international trade is also severely affected by terrorist events leaving negative impacts. To begin with, the cost of doing business rises significantly with a general increase in insecurity in a country. Second, transaction costs also rise as a result of increased security measures in response to a terrorist attack. Third, there's always a possibility of traded goods being destroyed in their entirety in the wake of terrorist incidents.

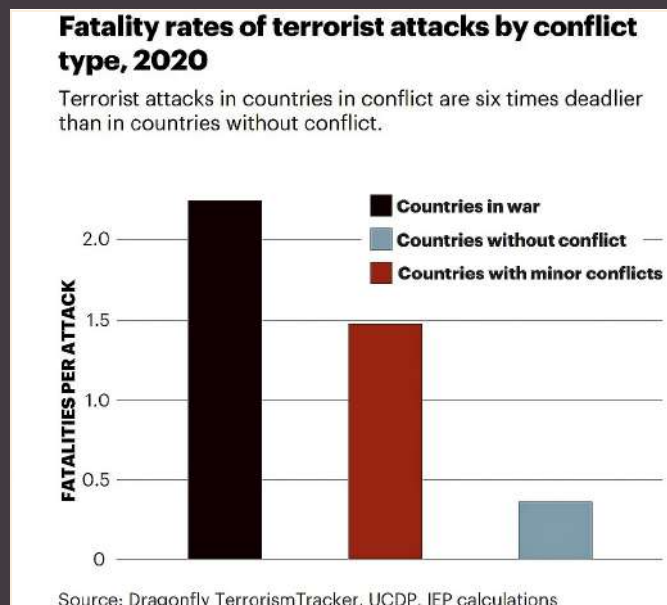
In the view of India-Pakistan relations, bilateral trade between the two neighboring countries has always been one of the biggest casualties of

cross-border terrorism. This was evident when India removed the most favored nation status from Pakistan in the wake of the Pulwama attack in February 2019. It has triggered a series of tit-for-tat trade derogatory between the nations. In fact, In 2019, according to India's Directorate-General of Foreign Trade, the country's exports to Pakistan from April to October, dropped 43.5%, from \$1.18 billion to \$665.6 million. In the same period, imports from Pakistan to India also plunged 96.25%, from \$338.65 million to \$12.71 million.

A large number of empirical evidence also reinstated that terrorism hurts international trade.



For instance, most recently, in September 2019, drones were used to attack oil processing facilities at Abqaiq and Khurais in eastern Saudi Arabia and as a result, severe damage has been caused to the global oil trade. The attack, fortunately, caused minimal damage in human costs, but the economic effect of the attack was staggering, resulting in serious economic hardships. Refineries were forced to shut down due to the post-attack repair work, cutting Saudi Arabia's oil production by half, representative 5% of the global supply of oil. The pipelines in Iraq had also been targeted by terrorists, after the fall of the regime of Saddam Hussein. Hence, impacting the foreign trade of these countries.



## Public expenditure, Debts and borrowings

Terrorist events can also cause governments of the affected countries to incur greater debt costs. Indeed, these events encourage an upward trend in national defense spending, which results in either a reallocation of public resources and a reduction in productive investment or an increase in the sovereign debt and borrowings, ultimately resulting independence of a country from some other nations or world organization.

During times of conflict and war, the mindset of the reactive governments and citizens induces them to give up economic and political freedoms in exchange for security which could result in higher taxes, higher government deficits, and higher inflation.

According to a study, in the absence of terrorist attacks between 2008 and 2013, state borrowing costs in Pakistan could be reduced by 100 basis points and in Iraq by 150 basis points. Terrorism raises borrowing costs for states and affected countries, according to Procasky and Ujah (2014), On a 10-point scale, a 2-unit increase in terrorism results in a half-unit decrease in state credit rating. Terrorist attacks also have an impact on financial markets, leading to an increase in risk premiums,

which raises the cost of government borrowing.

The condition of Afghanistan after the 2011 US attack, bears testimony to these costs. When the United States (US) declared the 'the War on Terror' and initiated nation-building in Afghanistan, there were attempts by NATO that aimed at westernizing the Afghan institutions, training, weapons, vehicles, and counterinsurgency tactics. As a result, the US decided to deploy more of its troops, and employ local mass recruitment and training tactics. This led to further dependence of the country on the West for leadership, funding, logistics, salaries, military operations, and air cover. Hence, over the period of 20 years, nearly a trillion dollars were spent by the US alone, to fight against the Taliban and build the Afghan security forces.

Analogously, the subsequent Afghan governments had also failed to sustain their economic growth. Consequently, over 80% of the Afghanistan government's public expenditure continued to be covered by international aid. A parallel trend was seen in the Afghan security sector too.

The government had a very sparse contribution to the states' defense budget and was largely reliant on the West's logistics and funds. For example, even in 2021, the government was able to contribute the only US \$600 million out of the allocated defense budget of US \$4.3 billion. Thus, implying that the authority was free riding on western budgets and security guarantees.

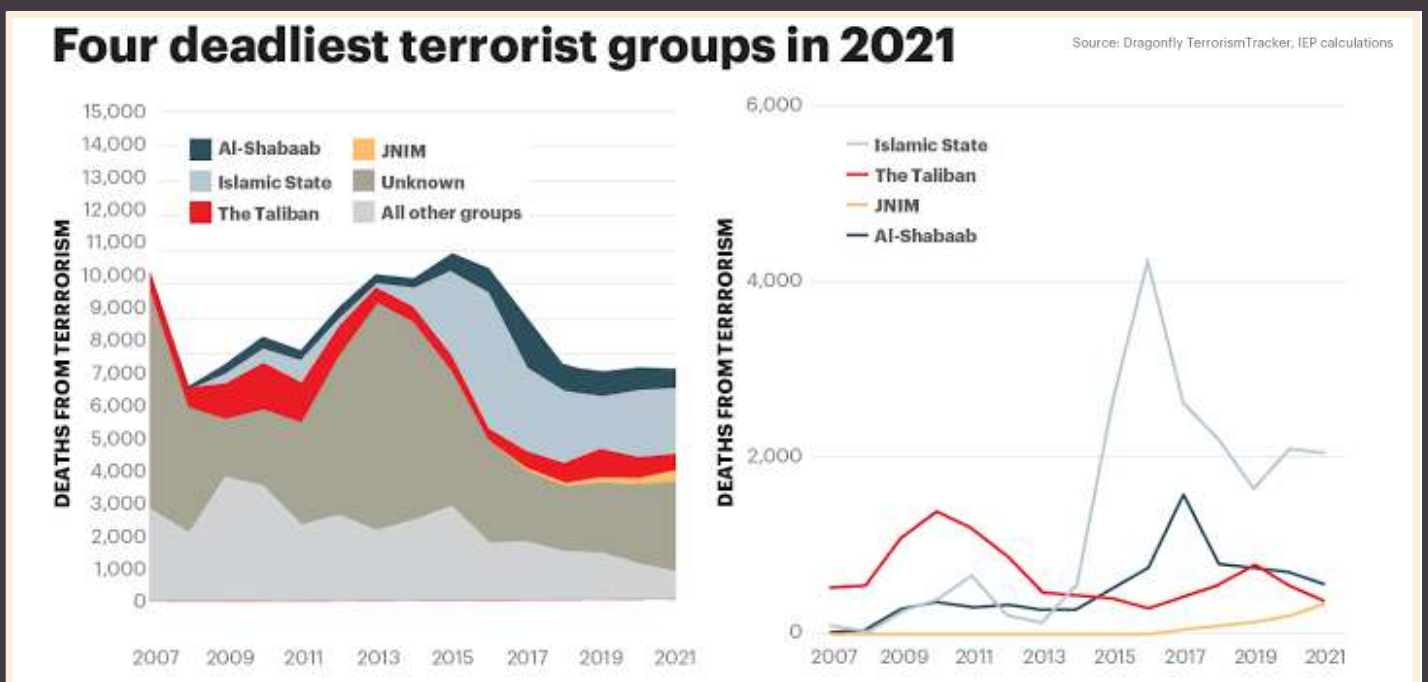
The Taliban's rapid progression and fall of Kabul are not only inflicting concern about Afghanistan's future but also about the impact on other nations in the region and their economies. Iran and Iraq lie to the west, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan to the north of the Islamic State of Afghanistan. But the Republic of Pakistan to the east of the country is the immediate focus of financial markets and investors.

## Impact on stock market

Terrorist attacks have also negatively impacted the stock markets. Stock prices emulate the expected future gains of a company, as well as the likelihood that these expected gains materialize. Terrorist attacks influence both by creating a high degree of uncertainty and shakiness in the market.

The September 11 attacks had an immediate negative effect on the U.S. economy. The New York Stock Exchange along with other Wall Street institutions was evacuated during the attacks. On the very first day of trading following the attacks, the market fell significantly by 684 points which accounts for 7.1 percent. The stock market shut down for four trading days. It has been the longest closed down since 1933 as the authorities worked to fix the damage. The bond market was also closed for two days.

After the attacks, the Federal Reserve added \$100 billion in liquidity to the market to prevent an economic crisis. Due to asset reallocation, there was a one-third increase in the price of gold, a safe harbor for capital, and a result of panic selling. Equity markets around the world fell significantly, and the U.S. market lost \$1.4T the week it reopened. Terrorism sustains financial and emotional shock for a country. If terrorist events occur in a developing country, the capital market will have less capacity to absorb the disturbance caused by terrorist events. The cost of debt may then become even more expensive as a consequence of the decline in sovereign credit rating, with critical implications for developing than developed countries. International investment and cooperation usually remains at the lower levels during times of violence.



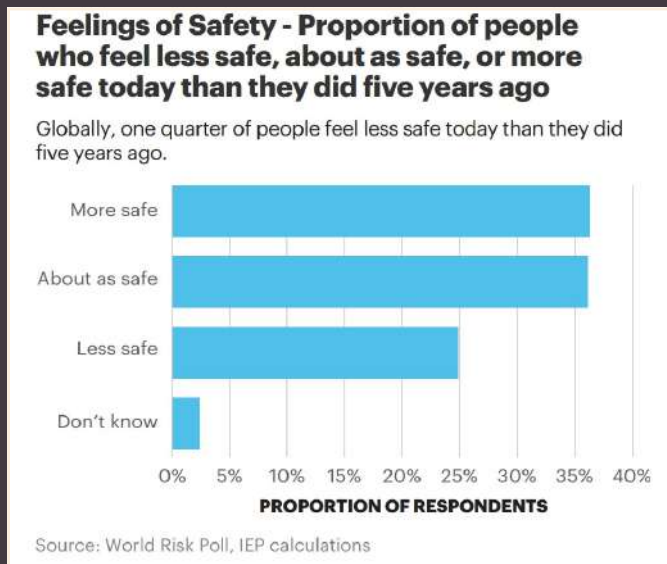
# Psychological Impact

When economists refer to terrorism, stating that it can have a huge impact on an individual's life, they are not only referring to the physical damage that the victims undergo, but also all the fear, uncertainty, and trauma, instilled by the terrorist events, which can lead to psychological damage as well. Psychological trauma, as a consequence of a terrorist attack, is usually more common than physical injuries. Terrorism is intended to instill fear and uncertainty in the population of an affected country. This fear can spread rapidly and is not restricted to those who are directly affected by the terrorist event. It can also affect family members of victims and survivors, as well as those who are exposed to broadcasted images through media or newspapers.

The approximation with the aid of numerous studies displays the impact of 2001, September 11 terrorist attack on the psychological health of the citizens of America. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 have brought a substantial and enduring burden of post-traumatic stress disorder on those people who lost their loved ones, as well as on firefighters and recovery workers.

For instance, Silver et al. show that 90% of interviewees confirmed a minimum of one symptom of stress for at least three to five days after the terrorist attack. Schlenger et al. estimates that about 7.5% to 20% of adults living in New York City manifested signs of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) up to 2 months following the event.

Ten years after the attacks, 15% of Registry enrollees reported depression and 10% reported both depression and PTSD. We identify similar challenges in Afghanistan due to Taliban crisis. When looking upon the current situation in Afghanistan, particularly the emotional and mental well-being of people, especially women and kids, it can convey a grave picture. The experience of violence, losing cherished ones, serving as a fighter, or being separated from own family members have bearings on one's mental health. One study found that one in five women out of 1,463 inside the trial were exposed to stressful suffering by witnessing an armed attack.



# COST OF FIGHTING TERRORISM

Fighting terrorism necessitates the utilization of resources, thus imposing an economic cost on the concerned organization and country which allocates resources for this purpose. When terrorism is recognized as a threat, governments, business organizations and individual people all across the world tend to spend more on security. The government spending on security and private spending is touted to grow between 100 and 200 percent by the end of the 2020s and the private security industry has seen an exponential rise.

Costs have to be allocated for insurance since the risk of terrorism is quite similar to risks due to natural disasters like floods and natural fires and even events which happen due to extreme weather conditions like hurricanes and storms. Resources set aside for insurance and security purposes reduce funds available for other activities that yield better returns and are more productive. The only beneficiary here stands to be the provider of insurance and security-related services.

The increased costs incurred on such services by businesses and governments alike are passed onto the consumers and the citizens of the country in terms of higher prices of products and services and higher taxes. Certain costs are incurred but they are quite difficult to quantify in mathematical terms. Tighter security and surveillance at airports and ports significantly increase the costs for tourists and business travelers.

During terrorist alerts and otherwise as well when increased counterterrorism activities are going on, firms and businesses feel these increased costs in terms of higher logistics costs as most businesses today rely on just-in-time inventory systems. Higher transport costs, on one hand, result in added costs and on the other hand act as a significant and invisible trade barrier. This can jeopardize trading relationships between countries and penalise the trade partners even though they might not have any

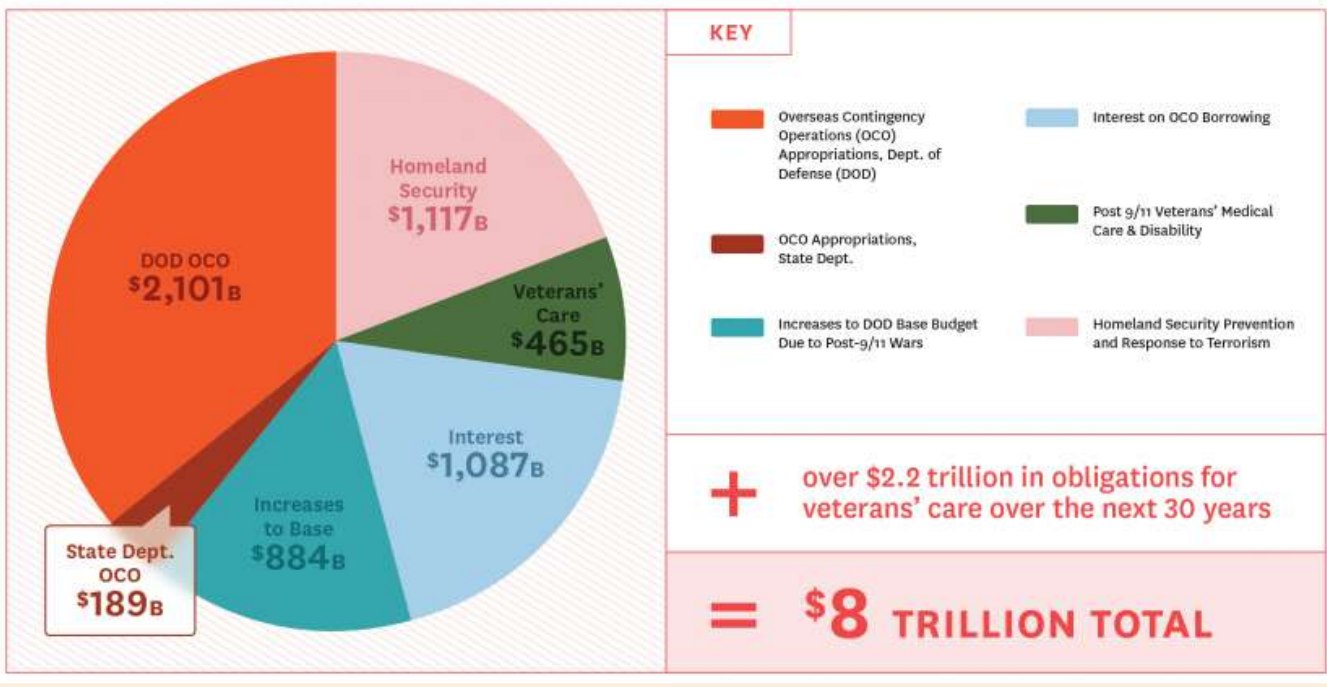
links with terrorism.

Tighter immigration restrictions on account of terrorism and counter-terrorism activities represent another cost as it becomes quite difficult for skilled and semi-skilled workers to immigrate. In another related example, a 32% drop had been noticed in foreign applications to the US universities on account of a much more difficult and cumbersome visa application process in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. Greater restrictions have been imposed on the import of pathogens to the United States after 9/11 attacks, even though the import of pathogens is pivotal to biomedical research and bio-defense related innovations and research. These can only be understood as an implicit cost or tax on economic activity as they do not contribute to improving either quality or quantity of the services rendered. However, the costs talked about above were only invisible costs. The most visible costs and expenditures are those which are incurred by governments on counter-terrorism activities.

The United States has been at the forefront of counter-terrorism activities after the 9/11 attacks and has incurred significant costs and expenditures on the same. Taking the United States as an example here, it added a Department of Homeland Security after the 9/11 attacks. Budgetary allocation for this department saw a significant increase in allocations from \$15 billion in the financial year 2001 which was before the 9/11 attacks to almost \$32 billion in the financial year 2003 in a span of just 2 years. The Budgetary outlays and expenditure by other departments involved in counter-terrorism operations also saw a significant increase. In this context, the Costs of War Project undertaken by the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs of Brown University seeks to estimate the costs of the 20-year war against terrorism. Have a look at the figures to understand the humongous costs involved in fighting terrorism.



## Estimate of U.S. Post-9/11 War Spending, in \$ Billions FY2001–FY2022



Now to understand the global spending on counterterrorism activities, we use the military expenditure incurred by countries as a rough proxy for expenditure incurred on fighting terrorism and we also analyse the trends in military spending. The figure shown from The Economist shows military spending from 2006 to 2016 for the United States and other NATO-allied countries. Europe saw a reduction in military expenditure in the late 1980s and the 1990s.

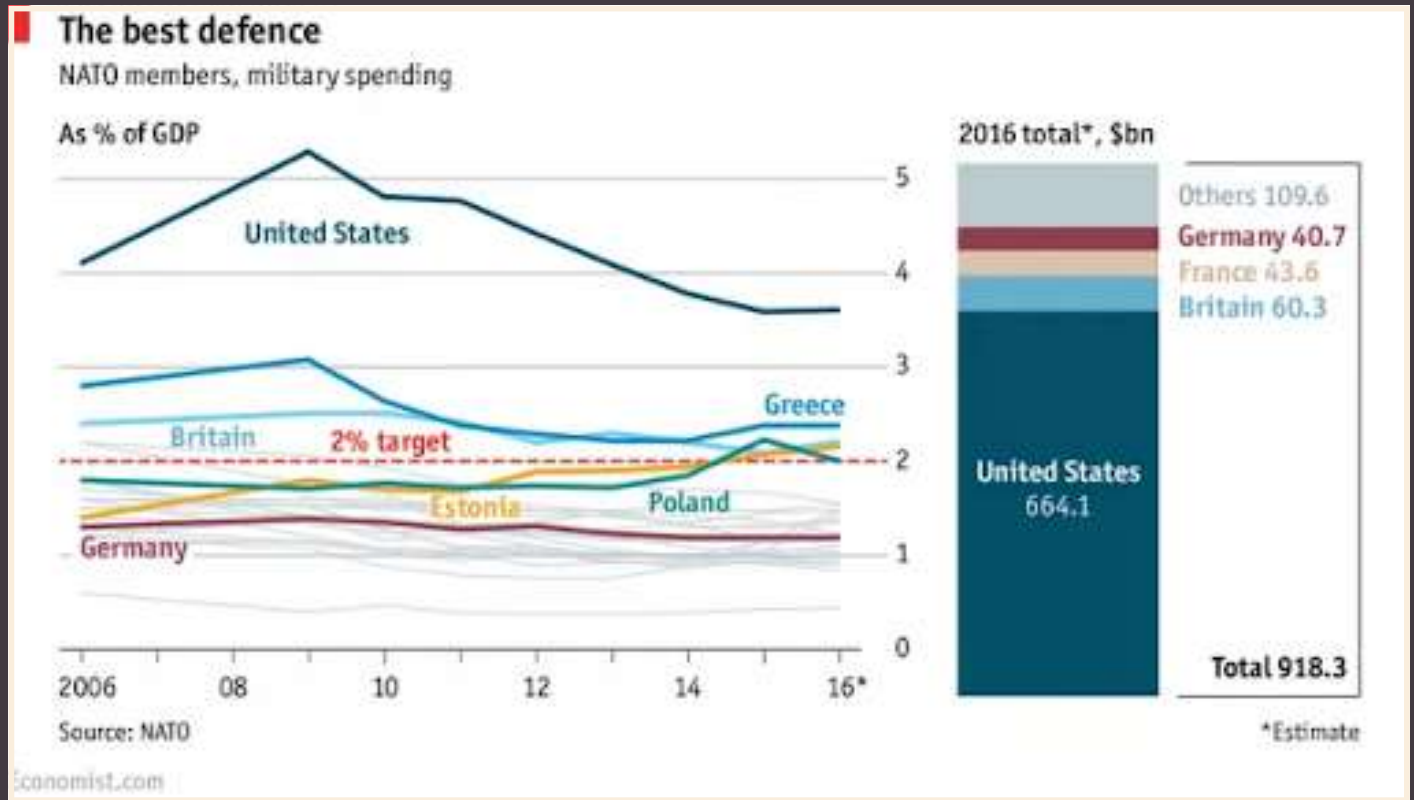
China, on the other hand, began increasing its military expenditure in the 1990s and by 2001, it had the second-highest spending on the military after the United States surpassing the UK, France, Germany and Japan. The countries which are members of NATO have to spend around 2% of their GDP on the military but many countries do not meet this minimum spending, whereas, the US is one step further as it spends 3.4% of its GDP on such expenditure.

UNITED STATES COSTS OF THE POST-9/11 WARS, FY2001-FY2022	
Estimated Congressional Appropriations and Spending in Current Billions of U.S. Dollars, Excluding Future Interest Payments on War Borrowing	
	\$ Billions*
<b>Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) (War) Appropriations</b>	
Department of Defense (DOD) (Incl. \$42 billion request for FY22)	2,101
State Department/USAID (Incl. \$8 billion request for FY22)	189
<b>Estimated Interest on Borrowing for OCO Spending</b>	<b>1,087</b>
<b>Increases to DOD Base Budget Due to Post-9/11 Wars</b>	<b>884</b>
<b>Post-9/11 Veterans' Medical and Disability Care Through FY22</b>	<b>465</b>
<b>Homeland Security Prevention and Response to Terrorism</b>	<b>1,117</b>
<b>Total War Appropriations and War-Related Spending through FY22</b>	<b>\$5,843</b>
<b>Estimated Future Obligations for Veterans' Care, FY23-FY50</b>	<b>&gt; 2,200</b>
<b>Total War-Related Spending Through FY22 and Estimated Obligations for Veterans' Care through FY50</b>	<b>\$8,043</b>

\*Rounded to the nearest billion. Amounts for FY22 are budget requests.

This shows that the United States continues to lead the worldwide anti-terrorism war, based on its total military budget. Russia spent \$61.4 billion on its military in 2018, a 22.3 per cent decrease from 2016, owing in part to the country's economic woes. Military spending surged in both Central and Western Europe in

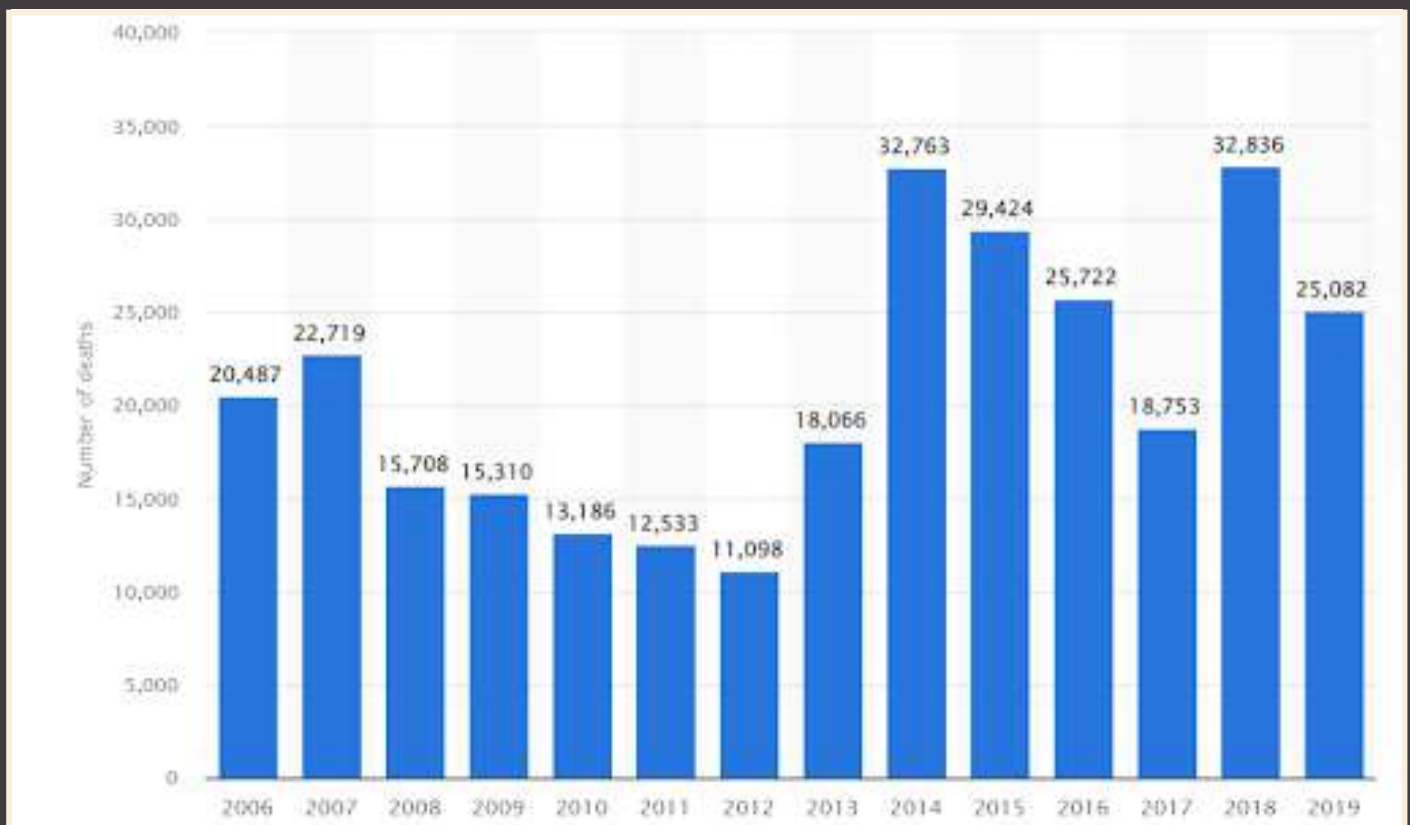
2017 and 2018, possibly as a result of a need to combat terrorism and a NATO-wide agreement to enhance military spending. This also shows that a clear worldwide definition of counter-terrorism does not exist and there have been shifts in the definition of counter-terrorism which has made tracking difficult.



# OPPORTUNITY COSTS OF FIGHTING TERRORISM

The expenditure that the government spends on social and economic infrastructure and other expenditures stimulates the aggregate demand in the economy. Expenditure on counterterrorism and security has a comparatively smaller impact on the aggregate demand of an economy as there may be leakages from the economy in terms of outlays for foreign counter-terrorism operations. This would mean lower spending in areas that could have a greater aggregate demand stimulating impact. For example: After the 9/11 attacks in the US, greater expenditure on counter-terrorism operations and military meant that there was lower spending in other areas like health, education, etc. which are crucial for the economic growth of a country and are essential for human capital formation in an economy. Most of the anti-terrorist operations are financed and funded through increased fiscal deficits and increased debt which results in lower savings in the economy.

Increased debt would also result in higher interest payments resulting in tax hikes and spending cuts and increased risks of a fiscal crisis. The figure below shows the number of fatalities that have occurred worldwide from 2006 to 2019. But the number of these deaths pales in comparison to the world's biggest killer, ischaemic heart disease which is responsible for 16% of the world's total deaths. It was responsible for 89 lakh deaths worldwide in 2019. Till February 2022 the coronavirus pandemic has claimed the lives of 57 lakh people worldwide. This is just to prove that the biggest challenges that the world faces today are not terrorism but climate change and health-related diseases that people face the world over. Fighting terrorism has consumed much of our attention and resources which could have been much better utilised in providing quality healthcare, education and mitigating climate change.

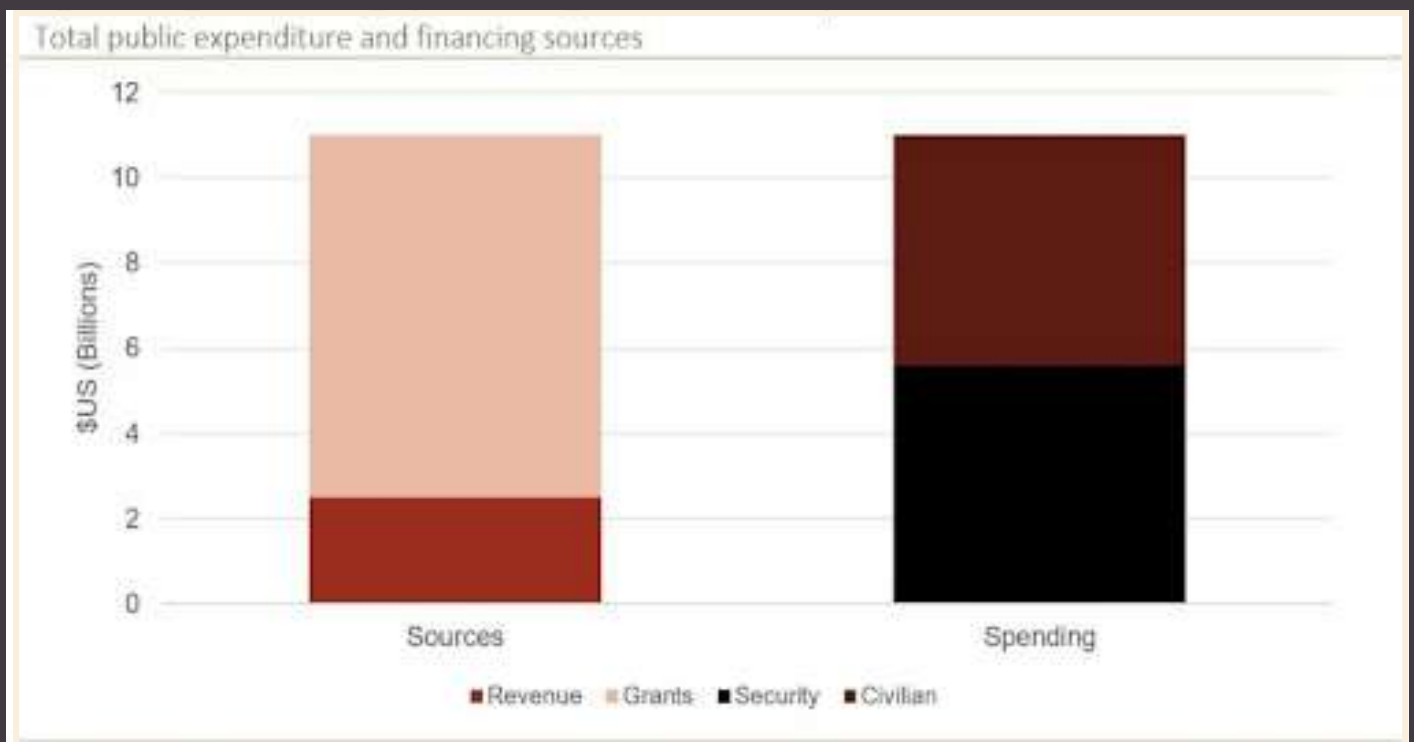


Public expenditure and government spending are at quite high and untenable levels in Afghanistan. Total government expenditure comes to \$11 billion while the government revenue comes to a measly \$2.5 billion. More than three-fourths of the budget is sustained by grants by foreign countries and other donors.

The figure below proves that Afghanistan is highly reliant on grants to finance its expenditures. In Afghanistan, spending on the security sector and fighting terrorism occupies a greater proportion of government spending. Around \$135 is spent per Afghan from the budget, of this amount \$50 is spent on the security and fighting terrorism-related aspects. Health expenditure continues to be abysmally low, at around \$8 per Afghan. This is around 1.8% of the GDP whereas the recommended levels are 5 to 7% of the GDP. Expenditure on education has declined by around

13 percent from 2014 to 2019. This brings to the fore the opportunity cost of fighting terrorism in terms of decreased spending on sectors that result in human capital formation like health and education.

The Stimson Centre study group report has estimated that the costs of counter-terrorism spending are gargantuan. It would also mean that the opportunity cost of fighting terrorism is equally high. It is suggested that when countries recover from terrorist attacks, the economies still incur considerable costs in the future and the longer term. These costs result from actual costs incurred on fighting terrorism as well as the opportunity costs arising from the expenditure not done on much more productive avenues. Ultimately these costs substantially reduce the potential for the economic growth of a country.





# FUNDING OF TERRORISM

Terrorist activities occur in various forms and the criminal network is such that these activities can be linked to the small crimes which occur in the city. The forms of financing terrorism, therefore, vary accordingly. These organizations need a significant amount of funding to undertake these activities and to function as a unit. In addition, the basic needs, weapons, technical necessities as well as to cover costs related to spreading related ideologies among many others, forms the idea of how necessary money is to undertake such acts.

Adding to the where these funds are allocated, we must know the various sources of funding these organizations receive. Firstly, they may originate from illegal activities which include the low scale criminality to organized crime. Drug trafficking, weapons trade and production and even human trafficking can be used as a source of income. These can directly be procured from, for example, abusing nonprofit organizations or members of the organization itself.

Several important findings emerged from the analysis of case studies submitted by FATF member states or compiled from open sources as well as current research on the threat environment as it affects the NPO sector.

These findings can be summarized as follows: The NPO sector has interconnected vulnerabilities, and terrorist entities seek to exploit more than one type of vulnerability. The diversion of NPO funds by terrorist entities was a dominant method of abuse. However, other types of non-financial abuse such as the abuse of programs, or the support for recruitment, also appeared regularly as a feature. The NPOs most at risk appear to be those engaged in 'service' activities, and that operate close to an active terrorist threat. This may refer to an NPO operating in an area of conflict where there is an active terrorist threat. However, this may also refer to an NPO that operates domestically, but within a population that is actively targeted by a terrorist movement for support and cover. In both cases, the key variable of risk is not geographic, but the proximity to an active threat.

Recently the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), has discovered the new funding techniques being used by terrorist organizations in respect to Islamic states. Among many others, imposing taxes on exports and the goods supplied within their territory which is under their control has been a frequent practice along with exploiting natural resources such as natural gas and oil.



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# EXISTING POLICIES OF BODIES ON COUNTER- TERRORISM

In the following pages, we will analyze the Counter Terrorism Policies adopted by the United Nations, United States of America & European Union.

Under the efforts undertaken by the UN, we are going to examine the past efforts by the UN & its security council, the counter- terrorism efforts after the attacks of 9/11 as well as try to understand the formation & ideals of the United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism. We will also look into the role of UNOCT in the current context i.e, the pandemic as well as highlight various steps undertaken by UNOCT in recent times. Thus we have tried to shed light on the strategy and steps undertaken by UN against terrorism.

In the latter half, we will explore the steps taken by the United States of America and European Union against terrorism. We will shed light on the strategy undertaken by both of them to counter terrorism in the past as well as the recent times. We will also explain their ideology with respect to terrorism in order to understand whether they stuck with their ideals with respect to the takeover of Afghanistan by Taliban.

# UN POLICIES TO COUNTER TERRORISM

The UN General Assembly incorporated its first anti-terrorism convention more than fifty years ago, while the Security Council imposed sanctions on Libya for sponsoring terrorist actions 31 years ago. The UN General Assembly adopted a Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy more than fifteen years ago. The terrorist events on September 11th, 2001, acted as a catalyst for UN efforts to combat the menace of terrorism.

In recent years, the UN's counter-terrorism efforts have been categorized into three parts: first, a norm-setting role that includes a) the development and promotion of a Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and efforts to counter violent extremism b) a set of international conventions, and c) far-reaching Security Council resolutions imposing counterterrorism obligations on member states; second, capacity-building activities to assist countries in meeting these obligations; and third, counter-terrorism operations with the help of sanctions approved by UN Security Council.

Since 2006, the UN has been active in gathering information on state and regional counter-terrorism operations from the Member States. The Counterterrorism Committee has received over 1000 reports, making it the custodian of "perhaps the largest body of information about worldwide counterterrorism capacity".

In 1992, the Security Council imposed sanctions on Libya for refusing to cooperate with investigations into two airline bombings; in 1996, Sudan was sanctioned for alleged involvement in an assassination attempt on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak; and in 1999, the Taliban were sanctioned for propagating Al Qaida's leadership. The UN Security Council (UNSC) had adopted a new Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism in 2016, which would be undertaken at the international, regional, and national levels in priority areas. The plan calls for using all "UN efforts—including on conflict prevention, governance and rule of law, human rights, sustainable development, and gender equality—to prevent "radicalization" and ultimately "violent extremism."

In 2017, UN Secretary-General António Guterres refined and strengthened the UN counterterrorism infrastructure by establishing The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism which is now led by Under-Secretary-General Voronkov. This office's mission is to lead UNGA-led counterterrorism mandates, improve coordination and coherence across the Global Coordination Compact's 43 institutions, and generate resources for UN counterterrorism activities. Even though the UN regular budget covers only 4% of UNOCT's yearly financing, it has risen quickly since its inception thanks to voluntary contributions through the UN Trust Fund for Counter-Terrorism.





## THE 4 PILLARS OF UNOCT:

1. Addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.

2. Measures to prevent and combat terrorism.

3. Measures to ensure respect for human rights for all and the rule of law as the fundamental basis for the fight against terrorism.

4. Measures to build states' capacity to prevent and combat terrorism and to strengthen the role of the United Nations in that regard.





# Role of UNOCT during the pandemic in counterterrorism

The United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) marks the 20th anniversary of its work to prevent and combat terrorism and violent extremism across the world.

As the COVID-19 epidemic spread worldwide, UNOCT increased its efforts to assist the Member States in achieving a future free of terrorism. Promoting multilateral collaboration remained at the heart of UNOCT's efforts in the unprecedented 2020 situation.

UNOCT's first virtual counterterrorism week brought together 1000 participants from 134 member states, civil society organizations, UN entities, and the private sector to promote international cooperation in the fight against terrorism. Virtual diplomacy has instantly matured as a unique way of conducting international affairs. Over the year, the Under-Secretary-General held over 100 high-level meetings with member states and representatives of international organizations.

## New Initiatives and Achievement of UNOCT

UNOCT's "Connect & Learn" portal aims to provide an easily accessible virtual arena for learning and connecting stakeholders from all walks of life. This cutting-edge platform will broaden the Office's reach and capabilities to provide online counter-terrorism training and capacity-building to counter-terrorism practitioners worldwide.

International Expert Group Meeting on the Protection of Vulnerable Targets and Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) was hosted by the UNOCT Vulnerable Targets Program. When deploying UAS to safeguard vulnerable targets, key takeaways included the significance of public-private partnerships, increased international collaboration, and respect for international human rights.

In addition, the UNOCT Special Projects and Innovation Branch (SPIB) has launched a new global program on 'National-Level Interagency Coordination Mechanisms,' also known as Fusion Cells, which will assist Member States in strengthening their national capacity through specialist technical assistance, such as training and mentoring, resulting in improved decision-making, planning, and operational capability to combat terrorism.

The program also supports and benefits from INTERPOL's regional Fusion Centers in Africa, such as Uganda, Ghana, and Botswana, and fosters integration and complete synergy at the regional and national levels.

# US Strategy

## Attack terrorists and their capacity to operate.

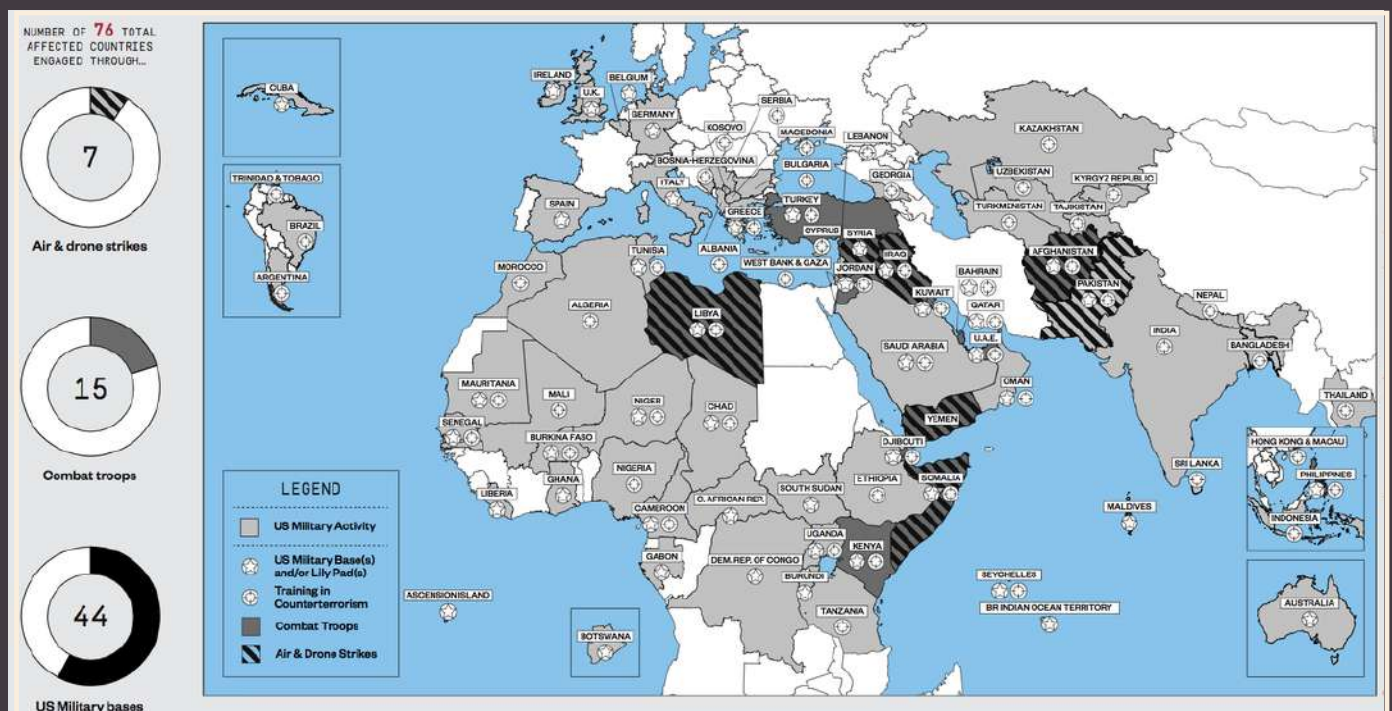
The US continues to take proactive and successful steps against its major terrorist adversaries, as well as several other violent radical groups that constitute a real and ongoing threat. They're going after these terrorists' ability to operate successfully both at home and overseas.

## Deny terrorists entry to the United States and disrupt their travel internationally.

Denying their adversaries the ability to move globally, as well as across and inside their borders, limits their mobility and can reduce their impact. Terrorists frequently get fraudulent identity credentials through theft or in-house forging activities, and they rely on illicit networks to enable travel. Through a tiered system of safeguards at their borders, ports, highways, and railroads, in the sky, and with their foreign allies, the United States will continue to improve the security of the American people as well as their allies.

## Deny WMD to rogue states and terrorist allies who seek to use them.

Terrorists possessing weapons of mass destruction is one of humanity's most serious risks. To keep ahead of this constantly evolving threat, the US has made aggressive efforts to deny terrorists access to Weapons of Mass Destruction and related materials, equipment, and know-how. The Worldwide Initiative to Confront Nuclear Terrorism was established in July 2006 by the United States and Russia to develop an international framework for enhancing collaboration, building capacity, and acting to combat the global danger of nuclear terrorism. This program concentrates worldwide attention and action on ensuring that the international community is doing everything possible to avoid nuclear weapons, materials, and weapons of mass destruction in the hands of terrorists.



# EU's Counter Terrorism strategy in the current context

The EU's Counter-Terrorism Strategy commits the EU to fighting terrorism across the world while preserving human rights and allowing its inhabitants to live in a safe, secure, and equitable environment. After the Charlie Hebdo incident, the Commission suggested establishing a European Counter Terrorism Centre (ECTC) to strengthen information sharing and operational assistance for Member States' investigators in its European Agenda on Security.

The European counter-terrorism center gathers specialized resources, expertise, and information on foreign terrorist fighters, explosives, firearms, and financial intelligence to support Member States' law enforcement and counter-terrorist units.

The European Commission established a new EU Security Union Strategy for the period 2020 to 2025 on July 24, 2020. The strategy lays out methods and measures to be devised over the next 5 years to ensure protection in our physical and digital environments, from combating terrorism and organized crime to preventing and detecting hybrid threats. It also aims at increasing the resilience of critical infrastructure, promoting cybersecurity, and fostering research and innovation.

Having analyzed various policies adopted by these organizations in their fight against terrorism. We want to explore that what was the reaction of these organizations after the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban which itself is a terrorist organization in the next section.



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# THE AFGHAN CASE STUDY

Having understood the concept of terrorism, the cost of fighting terrorism as well as the counter-terrorism policies adopted by International Organizations and countries against terrorism, we proceed to do a case study on Afghanistan's Taliban Crisis.

We wish to explore the current situation in Afghanistan after the retreat of the US troops. After understanding the region's history in brief, we will shed light on the economic condition in Afghanistan and the prevailing humanitarian crisis and atrocities against women. We also study the funding of terrorist activities in the country and support to Afghanistan by the US and UN in terms of economic and military support. Here we will also scrutinize the differences between their counter-terrorism ideas explored previously and the counter-terrorism steps undertaken by them in the current context of the Taliban Crisis.

Finally, we will highlight the Indian Perspective after the Taliban takeover, majorly focusing on the following two themes; the threats to India and the role it can play.

This case study will thus help us understand:

- The existing Economic, Humanitarian and Political challenges created by terrorism in the modern world.
  - The gap between existing policies to minimize terrorism and their real-life implications of them.
  - The role a "Global World" can play in helping combat this pressing issue.
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# THE AFGHAN CASE STUDY

## Current Situation in Afghanistan

After the retreat of US troops from Afghanistan in August 2021, marking the end of a 2-decade long war, the situation in Afghanistan that is back under the Taliban command has turned extremely volatile. According to the Global conflict tracker, the situation in Afghanistan has been worsening ever since the withdrawal of US troops. Afghanistan is in a state of civil war. Other than the mass exodus of refugees from the country that has exacerbated the crisis, several thousand people have been internally displaced within the country too.

According to the latest available data, the number of US troops in Afghanistan is 0, there have been 1,11,000 civilian casualties since 2009, and Aid provided to Afghanistan amounts to \$104.5 Billion. Casualties in the first half of 2021 were at a record high.

The war in Afghanistan has been destroying lives for decades, and both the Citizens and the government have to face the consequences of violence and the war-induced breakdown of public health, destruction of infrastructure, and threat to security.

Civilians had been killed by crossfire, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), assassinations, bombings, and night raids into houses of suspected insurgents. In Afghanistan, These terrorist attacks intend to inflict as much damage and suffering as they can and consequently attract much national and international media coverage. In the age of social media, it augments people's fear.



An estimated 11,000 terrorists entered the country in 2015-16. And as a result of the conflict in 2016 alone, 3,498 civilians died and 7,920 civilians got injured; 26 percent of these fatalities were children. Every new year sets new records. For the past years, Afghanistan continually remained among the most dangerous places in the world to be a civilian, with casualties caused by explosive violence rising from 4,268 in 2018 to 4,630 in 2019. And there is no improvement in 2020, with the situation getting devastating after the Taliban takeover. Afghanistan was the country worst impacted by explosive weapons in August 2020, when the Association of official analytical collaboration recorded 353 civilian casualties.

People are constantly on edge as common activities such as meeting up in a restaurant or commuting have turned into risky undertakings.

## Brief history

Ever since the announcement of the withdrawal of US troops by the American President Joe Biden, the Taliban began advancing into the country, gaining control from the hinterland regions to the main cities. The Afghan army, assumed to be equipped enough to deal with the prospective advancing Taliban, lost instantly and the Afghan government collapsed. Once Afghanistan's president Ashraf Ghani fled the country, this allowed the Taliban further to take control of the entire country. Since then, Afghanistan has been facing several crises all at once, on the economic front, political front, human front, etc.

## Economic conditions

Ever since the crisis in Afghanistan has been exacerbated, there has been uncertainty regarding international help, especially in monetary terms. The US aid in the form of frozen assets that was reserved as humanitarian aid for Afghans who are now on the brink of famine, civil war, conflict, and drought has been allocated to the families of 9/11 survivors. This uncertainty in terms of help, especially economic and financial, stems from the fact that the western countries, by providing aid to Afghanistan, don't want to legitimize the Taliban.

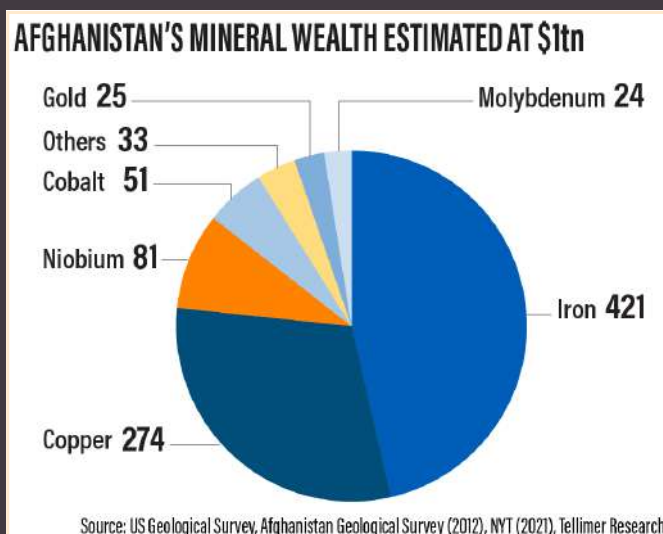
The economic impact of terrorism in Afghanistan reached 22% of GDP in 2018. As per the Global Poverty Index 2021, Afghanistan had the highest total number of deaths due to internal conflict. The index also reported that Afghanistan suffered one of the highest proportional economic costs due to violence in the world.

Global Poverty Index 2021 found that the economic impact of war and violence in Afghanistan was 40.3% of the total national GDP. This made Afghanistan the third most affected country, with only Syria and South Sudan having a higher relative impact.

There have been many terrorist attacks by the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2021, which worsen the current data even more severely. The recent data by the UN International Labor Organization indicated that more than one million people had lost their jobs since Afghanistan took over. Women's employment in Afghanistan has already been extremely low, but it is estimated to have decreased by 16% in the third quarter of 2021 and it could fall by 21% by mid-2022.

The currency of Afghanistan fell record low against the US dollar. Withdrawals from banks have been limited to only \$200 per month. Since the banking system has completely collapsed and the banks have been shut since 15th August, it has made it extremely difficult to provide humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. Concerning the worsening situation, Pakistan organized a summit of Islamic countries to mobilize help for Afghans. It was decided to de-link aid to Afghanistan and provide access to frozen currency reserves abroad. No recognition of the Taliban was made during the summit.

Afghanistan's vast untapped mineral wealth, resources that can transform its economic prospects if ever developed, has also been brought into focus after the fall of Afghanistan to the Taliban.



Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world. But in 2010, US military officials and geologists revealed that "the country, which lies at the crossroads of Central and South Asia, was sitting on mineral deposits worth nearly \$1 trillion. For instance, Peter Frankopan citing the US Geological Survey, reports that "Afghanistan is rich in copper, iron, mercury, and potash. The nation also has major reserves on what is known as "rare earth". These "earth" include lithium, beryllium, niobium, and copper." When Taliban forces took control over Kabul on August 15, they didn't just gain control of the Afghan government. They also got the ability to seize control over huge deposits of minerals having the potential to the global clean energy economy. These minerals have the potential to make the Taliban incredibly rich. Now, with the fall of Kabul, these rare minerals and valuable substances are in the hands of the Taliban. The US government has reportedly estimated that "lithium deposits in Afghanistan could rival those in Bolivia, home to the world's largest known reserves."

## Humanitarian Crisis

A humanitarian crisis has been triggered by the swift fall of Afghanistan to Taliban fighters, with thousands trying to flee the country. As far as human rights are concerned, "Taliban leaders in Afghanistan are regimenting large scale and systematic gender-based discrimination and violence against women and girls", warned independent UN human rights experts.

Since the Taliban took over Kabul, it has set up an all-male interim government. The Ministry of Women Affairs is not a part of the new regime, which has brought back the Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, ensuring that Sharia law is implemented throughout the country.

Many Afghan women especially, in urban areas fear that their hard-gained freedoms might be limited, remembering the 1996-2001 Taliban regime that saw women largely confined to home.

It was indicated by the official data of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) that as a result of the military operation between the Anti-Government Element (AGE) and the government army in 2015, the total number of civilian casualties has been 9431 persons. These figures include 3129 dead and 6302 injured. These people have lost their lives as a result of suicide bombing (34.7%), land shelling (20.7%), assassination (15.6%), landmine cultivation (14.38%), and missile shelling (12.98%) and air attack (1,98%).

## Psychological Crisis

The ongoing Taliban crisis in Afghanistan has left the impact on mental health to be pervasive, long-lasting, inter-generational, and often distressing to families and communities. The International Psychosocial Organization (IPSO) predicted that 70% of Afghanistan's 37 million human population need psychological assistance. One study discovered that out of the 699 non-disabled respondents within the survey, 67.7% had signs and symptoms of depression, 72.2% had suffered from anxiety, and 42% had symptoms of PTSD. According to an examination by the United Nations, in 2017, 81% of casualties arising from the explosive remnants of conflict had been children. Afghanistan has been known as a 'trauma state'; consistent with this theory, trauma resulting from war and terror fuels more conflict, in turn causing further trauma—and the cycle continues.

## Situation of Girls and Women in Afghanistan

After the Taliban's takeover in Afghanistan, it had internationally made statements about how this time around, the Taliban would respect the rights of women within the frameworks of Islam, and the situation will be better, at least as compared to the 90s.

The record, however speaks differently. For one, the new Taliban cabinet has no women. Furthermore, there are instances where women are not asked to leave home without a male relative, and a lot of women's protection centers are being attacked.



## Why is helping Afghanistan Necessary?

Due to the current dire circumstances and the increased likelihood of the Afghan war descending into a full blown civil war, it is believed that it is an issue of global importance, hence a global responsibility to help Afghans through the crisis.

Fears of migration, human suffering, suffering of women and girls alike, hunger and poverty loom large which creates a greater need to help Afghanistan.

The crisis in Afghanistan is not stand alone and with increased exodus of afghans from their home country, as well as general decline in consumption patterns and consumer behavior the entire world is likely to suffer. Many humanitarians believe that helping Afghans is a matter of "doing the right thing". Without help, they say, Afghanistan may break apart, even Balkanize into clashing ethnic and regional factions, finally descending into a wider conflict that could well destabilize Central and South Asia.

## Why is helping Afghanistan tough?

The largest humanitarian and aid organizations majorly backed and led by the US Agency for International Development were responsible for rebuilding Afghanistan from rubble into a stable nation over the last 2 decades has massively failed in doing their job.

The project funding and aid for redevelopment was sent through Afghan warlords that could not have been entrusted with the same. The warlords funneled the aid money into international financial channels, thus leaving Afghanistan and Afghans helpless.

Secondly, the UN has its hands tied when it comes to the concerned issue. Known as the de facto "chief humanitarian fundraiser", it provided its unspoken support to the US government during its invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, and the establishment of the US chosen government which happened to be no less corrupt than the previous one.

The UN must now grapple with the how's and why's of helping Afghans to serve and protect human rights, through a Taliban that has shown not much stomach for universal human rights, such as gender equality and free speech.



U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres humbly conceded to Reuters news agency last week that any suggestion the world body can solve Afghanistan's problems is "a fantasy" and that the U.N.'s capacity to mediate the creation of a more inclusive Taliban government is limited.

Thirdly, it is a harsh reality that the lion's share of the funding received by Afghanistan for reconstruction purposes came from the US. The US willingly spent billions of dollars in Afghanistan for the fulfillment of their strategic purpose of 'countering terrorism.' While many international assistance providers, including those based in Europe, the United States, and Asia, never subscribed to U.S. goals, they are nevertheless caught in the uneasy circumstances of having supported them in ancillary ways over the past two decades.

It is internationally agreed that if direct aid and assistance are provided to Afghanistan, the international community will not have much leverage on the Taliban. However, this is not the solution. The aid as well as the distribution of it has to be nuanced.

## Fears of Countries in helping Afghanistan

One of the major fears of the international community is that a large amount of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan funded via the government could entrench an already authoritative government. They say that aid is political in essence, and it will help solidify the regime. "Now, it seems we're condemned to helping some of the world's most infamous terrorists – whose credentials include providing shelter and logistical support for the al-Qaida network, which launched the 9/11 attacks – and has now established itself as the government," said Jonathan Terra, a conflict analyst and former U.S. State Department official in Afghanistan.

## Different Perspectives

I see it through a pure cold and calculated gaming theory perspective," said Mustafa, who moved to a neighboring Central Asian country last year after witnessing years of the former Ghani government's incompetence.

The world can help the Afghan people through U.N. and World Bank platforms and associated distribution chains already established in the country, but this effort needs to contain a mechanism to minimize the Taliban's benefit and maximize the public's benefit. It must also predict the Taliban's expected efforts to benefit from it in advance and prepare ways to counter this. The mechanism can and should be revised based on the reality on the ground."

Since the Taliban took control, the international world has focused on evacuations, the migrant crisis, humanitarian relief, and advocating for girls' education.

However, she stated that Afghans' well-being can only be realized through political stability.

"Without it, we are just having a pause to the war, not an end to it," she said, noting that the Taliban's existing political power arrangements exclude all other Pashtuns, as well as other ethnic groups and prior political actors.

Aid alone will not be enough to save the economy, which is on the verge of collapse. As a result, the Security Council must find a solution to the current banking crisis while continuing to spare humanitarian and service-delivery operations from sanctions. Furthermore, the dormant Doha peace process needs to be resurrected. The international community must hold the Taliban accountable for past and ongoing crimes of human rights, as stated in different General Assembly resolutions. It must also engage Afghans as stakeholders in forging a lasting peace in Afghanistan, rather than as victims.

# Funding of Terrorist Activities In Afghanistan

## Taliban

The rule of the Taliban does not seem to cease as a terrorist organization. Despite the rule of the Taliban, which was overthrown in 2001 after five years of rule in Afghanistan by the US military, which accounted for tens and thousands of deaths of human beings, their group's territorial and military strength has increased. According to the US authorities, by mid-2021 Taliban had an estimated 70,000-100,000 fighters, up from their 30,000 personnel a decade ago.

The group's annual income from 2011 has been estimated to be around 400 million dollars and by the end of 2020, it may have reached or even crossed the mark of 1.5 billion dollars, as estimated by the United Nations.

Let us focus on how the Taliban has developed its significant revenue streams to finance its insurgency as it gained control of the country:

There have not been direct links to the accusations made by my authorities to certain countries, including Pakistan, Iran, and Russia, of giving financial aid to the Taliban. These have been frequently denied by the concerned countries, Institutions, or individuals.

However, the largest number of individual contributors to the Taliban are private citizens from Pakistan and Gulf countries, including Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Qatar. These sources are impossible to track and provide proof against, but there is a direct link between these parties when it comes to financial aid. These links are long-standing. A classified US intelligence report estimated that in 2008 the Taliban received \$106m from foreign sources, from the Gulf states.





## Drug Trade

Afghanistan is the largest producer of opium (which can be refined into heroin) and has been estimated to procure funds worth 1.5- 3 bn dollars for the Taliban. The drug trade accounts for up to 60% of the Taliban's annual revenue. Taliban have dominated the supply of heroin worldwide, resulting in the bizarre amount of funds generated, which also resulted in 120000 job opportunities in 2019 for Afghanistan, according to the UN.

Taliban also cover their insurgent operations by getting hold of the taxation system of Afghanistan. According to Afghan government officials, a 10% cultivation tax is collected from opium farmers. Taxes are also reportedly collected from the laboratories converting opium into heroin, as well as the traders who smuggle these drugs. It is estimated that the Taliban's annual earnings from the illicit drug economy range from \$100m-\$400m. The Taliban often deny their involvement in the drug industry and take pride in having banned opium poppy cultivation for a period while in power in 2000.

## Expanding areas of control

To diversify its sources, The Taliban's network of funds extends beyond the drug business and taxation. Back in 2018, the Taliban warned Afghan traders to pay their taxes on fuel, and construction material, among many others when traveling through areas they control. After overthrowing the US and the Afghan government, the Taliban is in control of all major and minor routes as well as border crossings and seaports, which leads to creating more potential sources of revenue from imports and exports. Along with the significant amount of money intentionally or unintentionally ending up in Taliban pockets, they have taxed the development and infrastructural projects, among which schools, Roads, and clinics are being funded by the western countries. Secondly, the Taliban have managed to generate tens and millions of dollars annually from taxing truckers supplying international forces stationed in different parts of the country. And there is also income generated directly from conflict. Each time the Taliban captures a military post or an urban center, they empty treasuries and seize scores of weapons, as well as cars and armored vehicles.



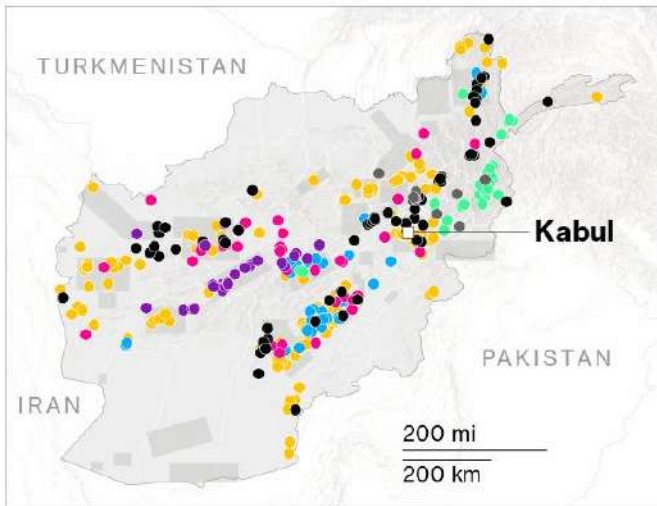
# Mines and minerals

Afghanistan is rich in minerals and precious stones, much of it under-exploited as a result of the years of conflict. The mining industry in Afghanistan is worth an estimated \$1bn annually, according to the Afghan government. Most of the extraction is small scale and much of it is done illegally. The Taliban have taken control of mining sites and extorted money from ongoing legal and illegal mining operations. Taliban's control over these sources can prove to be very saddening as now the exports of these minerals and stones can become a source of income that can bear billions of dollars in revenue.

Afghanistan is estimated to have more than \$1 trillion in deposits

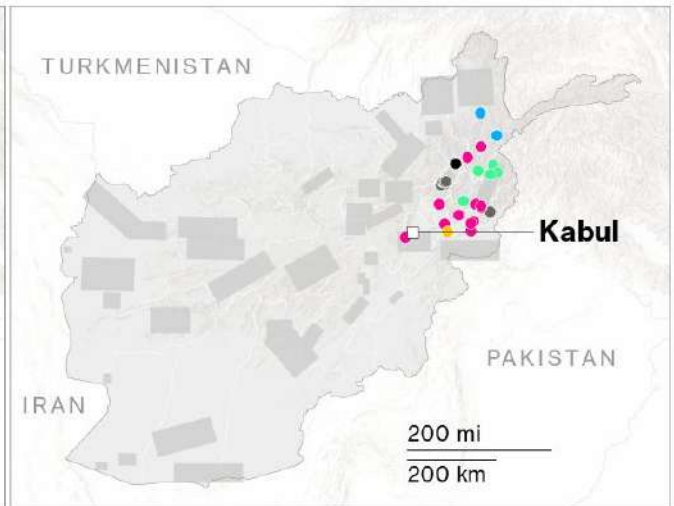
## Industrial and building minerals

- Iron ● Lead ● Tantalum ● Tungsten
- Copper ● Lithium ● Mercury



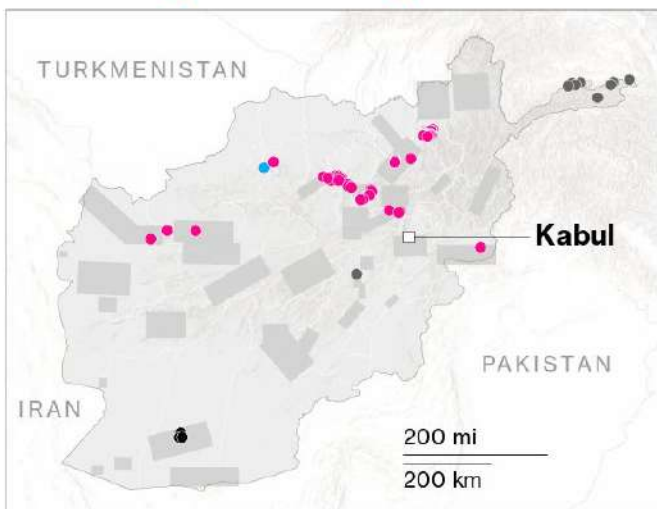
## Gemstones

- Amethyst ● Beryl ● Emerald ● Lapis lazuli
- Ruby ● Tourmaline



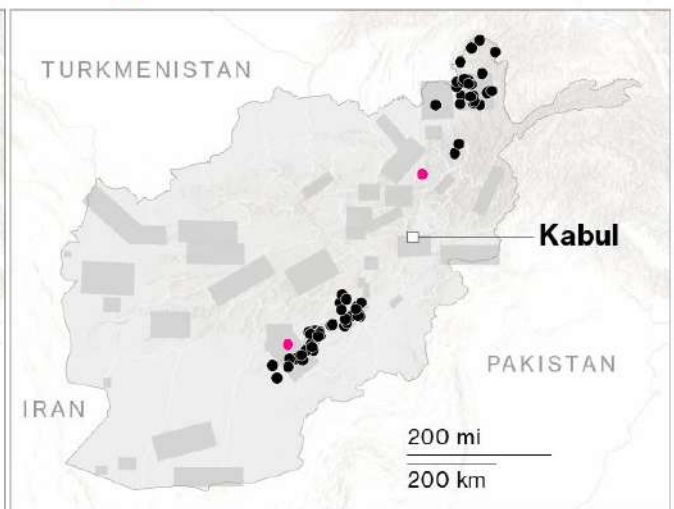
## Fuel minerals

- Uranium ● Coal ● Peat ● Petroliferous



## Precious metals

- Gold ● Silver ● Mineral resource areas (MRA)





## Pakistan: How it has approached the Taliban crisis

Shifting our attention towards Pakistan and how it has left loopholes in banking sectors to help finance these terrorist organizations is outright appalling. Pakistan has deliberately left loopholes in small savings accounts to help finance terrorist groups, many of whom enjoy the patronage of the state to dodge the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) scrutiny. The FATF has requested and advised the Pakistani authorities to comply with international standards and rules of anti-money laundering and anti-terrorist financing laws and regulations, to which Pakistan has complied with some conditions with great reluctance.

Furthermore, look at the small savings accounts in Pakistan, which is an area not paid due care to generate rupees 4 trillion in over 8 million accounts held by individuals, which equates to 28 percent of all bank deposits. The possibility of these accounts being held by terrorists and their organizations is quite high, given the number of links that are tracked back to the nation of Pakistan. By P.M. Imran Khan's admission, Pakistan is home to 40000+ terrorists.

These shortcomings were flagged by FATF in its two recent compliance reports – in October 2019 and September 2020. The October 2019 report clearly stated that a large section of the banking sector, both formal and informal, were either out of the ambit of any anti-money laundering law or did not cater to any existing regulations for identifying suspicious accounts and transactions. In the follow-up September 2020 report, the FATF referred to the new set of rules issued by Pakistan following the October 2019 report, but provisions for prosecution were still missing from the rule book, which allows the banking sector to be lax in identifying suspicious accounts and transfers, reported The Times of Israel.

The problem lies with the new rules – National Savings Schemes (AML and CFT) Rules, 2019, which calls for scrutiny of all account holders – seven million of them – in six months and risk profiling of the account holders in a similar period. The All Pakistan National Savings Officers Association (APNA) has flagged several reasons why Pakistan was unlikely to fulfill the FATF obligations regarding the small savings sector.

The first problem arises as the printed copies of KYC ( Know Your Customer) were not present in the national savings center. The consumers as a mechanism were not identified despite such a tight and almost impossible deadline. This mismatch between intention and action on the ground, according to the banking officers, is the result of the inefficiency on the part of the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Supervisory Board, and misuse of powers. The officers point out that the supervisory authority, which was a critical stakeholder, had simply failed to plan and implement any steps that would help Pakistan comply with Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing stipulations (AML and CFT), reported The Times of Israel.

The authorities have not tweaked the software application of National Savings to keep up with the new provisions. The banking staff is yet to be provided with adequate equipment and protocols to verify data, check KYC documents and use biometric data. Guidelines for the banking staff and customers alike are missing as of now. With these massive problems in just one segment of the financial sector, Pakistan's efforts at complying with FATF are likely to remain inconclusive when the international watchdog meets next time.

# US INVOLVEMENT AND ITS RESPONSE TO TALIBAN

The Geneva Accords officially ended the Soviet-Afghan War, bringing a long-drawn gruesome battle to a peaceful end. These accords included a bilateral agreement between Pakistan and Afghanistan, based on the principles of non-interference and non-intervention, as well as a Declaration on International Guarantees signed by the US and the Soviet Union, undertaking to respect the sovereignty of Pakistan and Afghanistan. After the Taliban rose to power, they imposed arbitrary laws and strict, discriminatory regulations in accordance with Sharia law. In 1999, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1267, creating the Al-Qaeda and Taliban Sanctions Committee, which links the two as terrorist entities and imposes sanctions on their funding, travel, and arms shipments. With the subsequent 9/11 attacks, the world was once again reminded of the threat that the Taliban posed to the national as well as international citizens. The United States took it upon itself to apparently rebuild Afghanistan, establish regional stability and prevent its use for further terrorism.

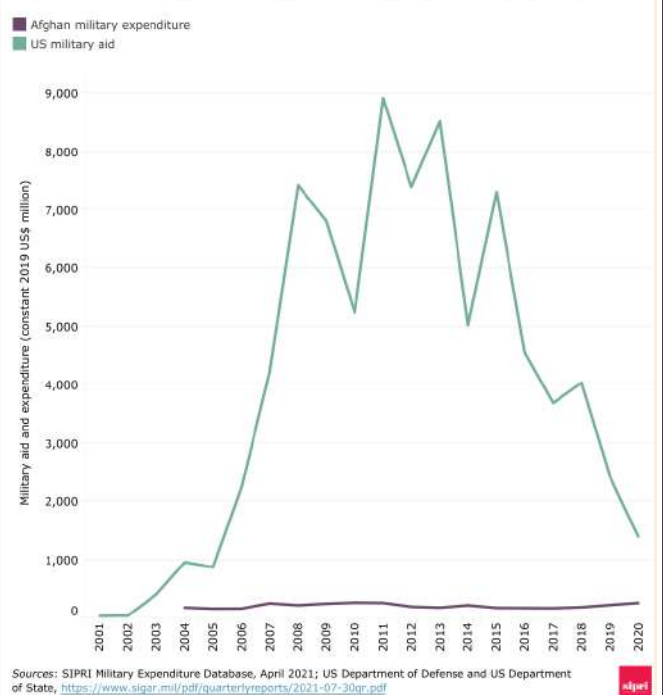
## US Military Aid to Afghanistan

Between 2001 and 2020, disbursements to Afghanistan amounted to \$72.7 billion, almost 20 times the Afghan military expenditure. Nearly all (99.2 percent) of this was channeled via the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF; \$71.7 billion in current dollars) and a separate Train and Equip Fund (\$440 million in current dollars). The budget furnished the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) with supplies, equipment, services, training, investment for salaries, and facility and infrastructure repair, renovation, and construction.

Military aid to Afghanistan from the Department of State (DOS) amounted to about \$564 million in current dollars. According to the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), between 2005 and 2021, around \$18.6 billion worth of military equipment was disbursed to the ANDSF. Afghan military expenditure in the period was only a fraction of total US military aid to Afghanistan. Between 2004 and 2020, the Afghan government's military expenditure totaled \$3.7 billion in current dollars or \$3.6 billion in constant 2019 dollars, equivalent to only 4.6 percent of all US military aid disbursed to Afghanistan. Afghanistan's average annual spending in 2004–20 was \$219 million and, in constant 2019 dollars, never exceeded \$270 million.

Despite the extensive military aid and nation-building exercises, within hours of US withdrawal from Afghanistan led to recapture by the Taliban, an outcome that had been anticipated by many.

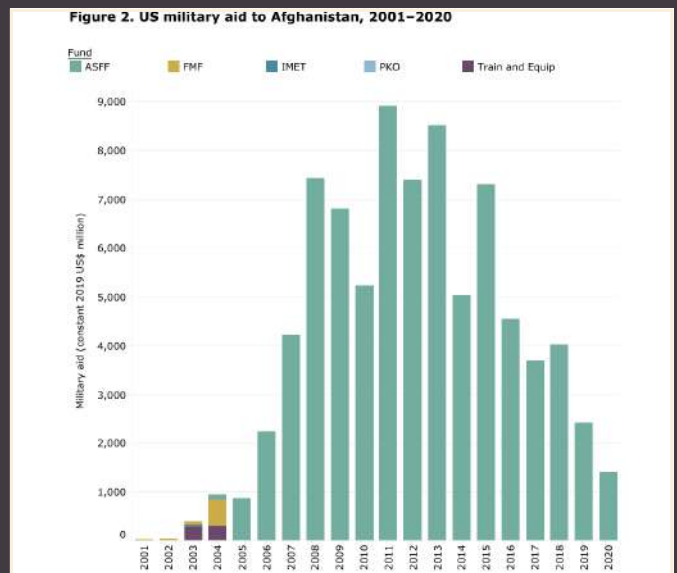
**Figure 3. US military aid and Afghan military expenditure, 2001–2020**



Instead of offering an explanation, the United States put the entire blame on the Afghanistan government and military, stating that it was their unwillingness to fight that led to the rapid collapse of the government and subsequent takeover.

The vision of peaceful withdrawal was nowhere near fruition, as right after the US withdrawal, the media was flooded with heart-wrenching scenes from the Kabul Airport. The US was supposedly leading the war against terror. However, the 2021 policy developments have exposed the shallow nature of its commitments, as its hypocrisy glares at the helplessness of Afghans.

Besides, the façade of rebuilding Afghanistan was doomed to fail right from its inception because it wasn't sustainable over the long run and had no clear plan of action or strategy. This, coupled with breeding corruption, inefficient implementation, and alienation of local masses, caused the failure of 20 years of US intervention in Afghanistan, trying to rebuild its security forces, civilian government institutions, economy, and civil society.



The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) identified at least \$15.5 billion in waste, fraud, and abuse, representing almost 30 percent of the \$52.7 billion in public spending for Afghanistan reconstruction efforts that the SIGAR studied. The SIGAR report explains that this \$15.5 billion total comprises \$3.5 billion associated with 643 instances of waste, fraud, and abuse, as well as \$12 billion “spent on two whole-of-government reconstruction efforts that appear to have failed and resulted in wasted U.S. taxpayer dollars.”

# UN Support

## International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) AND Resolute Support Mission (RSM)

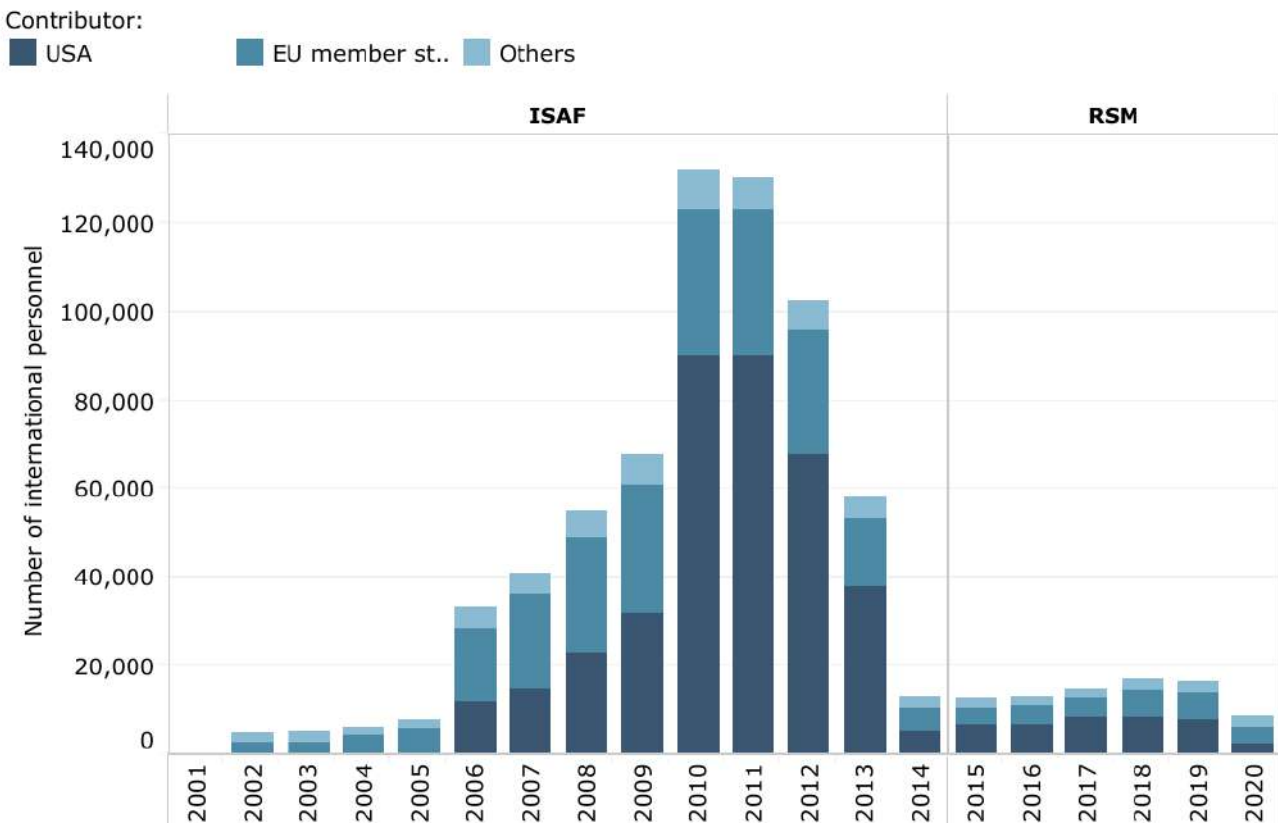
The United Nations Security Council authorized ISAF in December 2001. ISAF's initial mandate as a multinational ad hoc operation with rotating command was to assist the Afghan Interim Authority, which was founded in December 2001 following UN-brokered discussions in Bonn, Germany, in maintaining security in Kabul and its environs. ISAF had about 5000 personnel a year after it was established. NATO assumed command of ISAF in August 2003, at the request of the then-renamed Afghan Transitional Authority. In October of that year, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1510, which enlarged ISAF's mandate to include all of Afghanistan 'as resources permit, 'providing security assistance for reconstruction and humanitarian initiatives,' as well as 'other responsibilities in support of the Bonn Agreement.'

Between September 2021 and January 2022, according to UNOCHA:

- Food aid was provided to more than nine million people.
- More than 200,000 people were served by water trucks in drought-stricken areas.
- Malnutrition was treated in about 276,000 youngsters.
- Medicine and other supplies were flown in by the World Health Organization to help 1.6 million people.

In January, NGOs provided cash for meals to more than 15000 people in Badakhshan, Hirat, Ghor, Logar, Hilmand, Nangarhar, Laghman, Nuristan and other provinces. 545+ persons were given wheat, seed and instruction in the districts of Baharak, Jorm, Shahada, Keshem, and Warduj. More than 18,000 people in Faizabad and the districts of Taloqan received food as part of a seasonal support program.

**Figure 1. Number of international personnel in ISAF and RSM, by contributing country, 2001–20**





Emergency outpatient health treatments were provided to 6,461 returnees and displaced individuals, and 452 children were inoculated against polio and measles. The Nangarhar Regional Hospital was given five Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) kits and medical equipment to treat SAM cases. It also received a complete Trauma Emergency Surgical Kit and five Complete Interagency Emergency Health Kits.

## The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

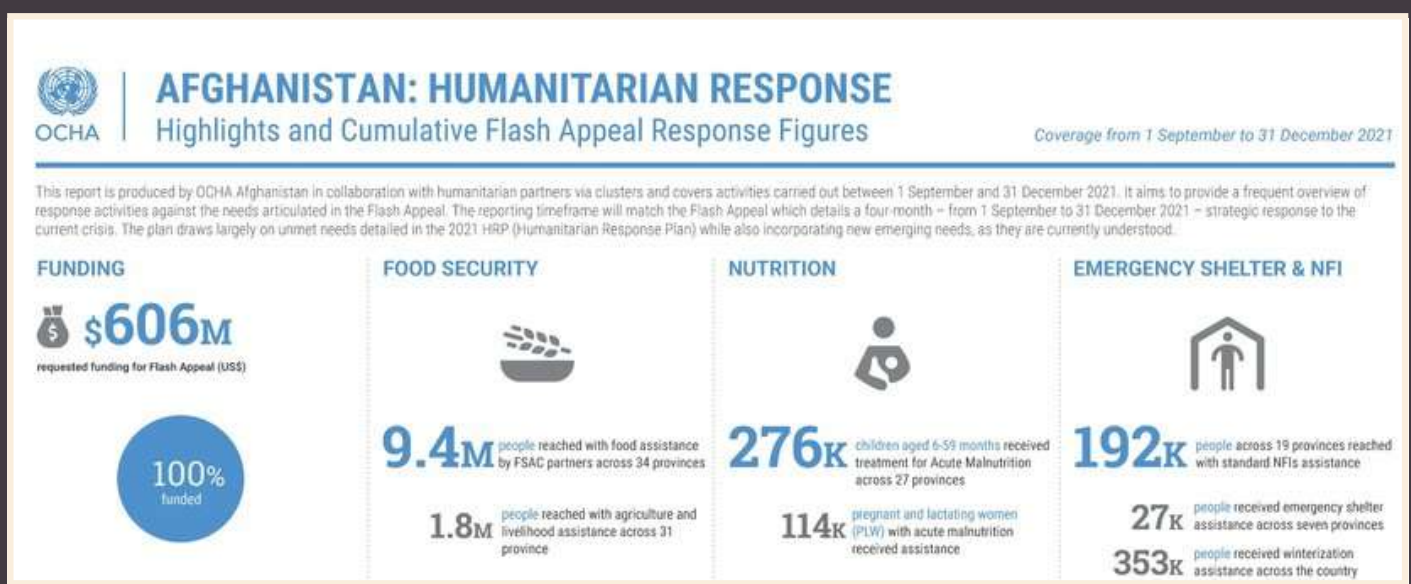
The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has also aided with the transfer of supplies, including things to improve tent installation, and to keep displaced Afghans warm during the winter months. Within Afghanistan, UNHCR activated its emergency response to protect the most vulnerable and provide life-saving shelter, support to insulate and warm homes, water and health facilities, essential relief supplies, and psycho-social support. During the winter, the UNHCR greatly increased its outreach, providing targeted support to help families survive.

Household items such as blankets, stoves, solar lights, insulation kits, and support for heating, clothing, and essential household supplies were among the critical aid items.

UNHCR provided buckets and jerry cans to displaced families in its aid supplies to help prevent the risk of COVID-19 spreading as much as possible. These supplies were particularly vital in locations where clean water was scarce. In addition, the UNHCR set up hand-washing stations and distributed hygiene kits.

## The United Nations Security Council

The UN Security Council urged the new Taliban 'government', if it can be called that, to act responsibly, maintain human rights, especially that of women, and prove that it can be a part of the global community. However, as is pretty evident, this is just an elusive dream. The UN can go on as long as it wants, appealing to the Taliban to respect international security, international law, and global peace. However, it fails to realize that the Taliban is a terrorist organization.



They've been notoriously known for the past two decades for their atrocities against women and children, orthodox laws, and deep-rooted links with dangerous terrorist organizations. Appealing to a terrorist organization to maintain world peace is a clear indication that the efficacy of the United Nations has been fading for a while now. The UN is helpless as it has no other way out but appeasement policy. 20 years of advocacy for women's rights, economic progress and freedom from terrorism will

all disappear, as the Taliban have started to reverse. The Taliban is carrying out killings of former Afghan National Security Forces, peace campaigners, and cultural icons. The UN International Labour Organisation has said that around half a million jobs have been lost since the takeover, owing to restrictions on women regarding employment, the sacking of Afghan forces, and lack of cash flow in the economy. The future for a Taliban-led Afghanistan looks bleak.



# The Indian Perspective

## Threats emerging from the Afghan takeover

Firstly, the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban exacerbates the situation in Jammu and Kashmir. Kashmir has a history of attacks on the members of the minority community, which has its origin in Afghanistan in the latter part of the 1980s. The Kashmir insurgency started around the time of the USSR-Afghanistan Mujahideen conflict. The Pakistan secret service along with the army and the fighters from Afghanistan, trained Kashmiri insurgents. The Taliban after wresting control from the Soviet troops in the 1990s, provided shelter to the insurgents. The wider intelligence community in India expects a noticeable boost to the tensions that had gripped Kashmir before.

Secondly, certain groups that are based in Pakistan and are hostile to India could derive strength and legitimacy from the success of the Taliban in Afghanistan and shift their focus to India. LeT and JeM, which were responsible for the Indian Parliament attacks on December 13, 2001, and the Pathankot and Uri attacks have been involved in such operations in India. These groups are also responsible for disseminating anti-India propaganda and India would be keeping a close eye on them. ISI, along with the Taliban fighters have been linked to the destruction of Indian infrastructure. This was partly responsible for India's decision to evacuate its personnel from Kandahar after the takeover.

Thirdly, the presence of terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State in the Khorasan.

Province has already applauded the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan and the withdrawal of the United States and its allies. In the first months of 2021, they renamed their magazine *Nawai Ghazwat ul Hind* (Voice of the Conquest of India) from *Nawai Afghan Jihad* (Voice of the Afghan Jihad). This portends the change in focus after the Afghan takeover. The Taliban has indulged in tokenism and promised to defeat Al-Qaeda, and it is expected to grow stronger shortly. These organizations released videos urging Kashmiris to take up arms against the state, particularly in Kashmir. This indicates that the refuge provided to these parties' upper echelons has borne fruit, resulting in a greater focus on India by these groups.

## India's Muddled Response

Amid the pandemonium wrought by the Taliban takeover, India has faltered and fumbled. The approach India has adopted is characteristic of ambiguity, incoherence, and perplexity. Till June 2021, India was reluctant to recognize the ground reality and even refuted the claim put forth by the Qatari authorities that the Foreign Minister of India, S Jaishankar had met the Talibani delegation in Doha. India maintained the position that the Taliban was not an acceptable stakeholder even though the ground reality was in favour of the Taliban. But a couple of months later, India officially changed its policy when the ground reality became so painstakingly obvious and the South Block officially accepted that it had started discussions with the Taliban leadership. When the Taliban besieged Kabul and entered it on 15th August, India evacuated its embassy and left no support for the Indians who were trapped

in Afghanistan. To give an example, around 150 Indians were stopped from boarding their flight by the Taliban. But perhaps something which is much more disappointing and equally concerning is the situation surrounding the grant of e-visas for the desperate Afghans fleeing their country. India initially granted visas but then arbitrarily canceled them and rolled out a new scheme. But then, only a few visas were granted under the new e-visa scheme. This back-and-forth, as well as a policy-action mismatch, has eroded India's goodwill among Afghans.

## The Role India can play in the Current Context

The Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in 2021 puts a question mark on the ongoing as well as future projects committed by India's development cooperation and other countries that have committed the same. In July 2021, India closed its consulate in Kandahar, Mazar-e-Sharif consulate, and embassy in Kabul, which means there is no on-ground presence of Indian diplomatic personnel. Therefore, Indian assistance to Afghanistan can only be in terms of humanitarian aid. This is only feasible by creating a humanitarian aid corridor. It also needs to be kept in mind that Pakistan does not allow free transit between India and Afghanistan. This is plausible only by involving the United Arab Emirates (UAE) authorities via Dubai or even through Islamabad, but that would require serious intervention from international agencies like the United Nations.

India might still find it implausible to transport commodities like wheat and rice through the humanitarian aid corridor via Dubai. India is evaluating options to transport around 50,000 metric tonnes of wheat to Afghanistan along with

medical supplies. But as was reiterated by India's Foreign Minister S Jaishankar at the UNGA, this ability to send humanitarian aid is contingent upon whether or not international agencies like the UN can create an "enabling environment." The same was reiterated by the Indian PM Narendra Modi in his G20 address when he stressed the importance of "unhindered and urgent humanitarian assistance for the Afghans." India can coordinate and cooperate with the European Union (EU) or the United Kingdom (UK) to create a synchronized international response to engage with the Taliban.

## Female Education: Role of Indian EdTech

During the earlier rule of the Taliban, it banned women from public life and gave them virtually no access to education and other rights and privileges. This new Taliban regime, i.e. Taliban 2.0, does not appear to be any different, as validated by the fact that there is no representation of women in the leadership. Even though the Taliban announced the reopening of high schools, there is no mention of women or girls. And there is a lot of evidence to show that there is palpable fear and anxiety among women to break the taboos imposed by the Taliban. In this situation, digital education can emerge as a gamechanger and a potential lifesaver, allowing girls to access some form of education. As a consequence of the pandemic, the online education sector has grown by leaps and bounds and this can provide some form of assistance to Afghan girls. These ed-tech platforms can become instrumental in assisting school students and professionals to learn, upskill and train. As Afghanistan's traditional partner, friend, ally, and crucial player in the region, India can play a significant role in supporting the Afghan education sector.





# CONCLUSION

Terrorism is a complicated phenomenon that necessitates the use of a variety of tactics to combat it, including security (military and policing), politics and diplomacy, economic and social policies, and so on. Nonetheless, the security issue is typically stressed above all others. When a terrorist incident happens, governments normally respond by retaliating in kind, followed by a succession of subsequent measures aimed at punishing and weakening the offenders. There are several advantages to using this punishment/deterrence formula. It delivers a sense of immediate gratification since the shock of being attacked is swiftly followed by the joy of punishing the perpetrators. This gives the government legitimacy because it has "done something" to meet the citizens' yearning for a visible response.

Of course, this is exactly what happened after the 9/11 attacks. However, there is another aspect to evaluating strategies: the proportional benefits that can be acquired. While retaliating in kind in the face of terrorist attacks may be psychologically and politically fulfilling, it is unclear whether it is effective. Of course, assessing success is challenging since it is difficult to quantify the number and size of terrorist activities that are not carried out as a result of effective deterrence. There are considerable economic costs connected with terrorism, but there are also significant expenses involved with counter-terrorism strategies. Society benefits from the reduction or elimination of the threat of terrorism, just as it benefits from the reduction or elimination of the threat of crime. Terrorism has certain economic foundations, but they have more to do with the incentives and restrictions that individuals and organizations confront than with any single set of easily quantifiable elements that drive people to join terrorist organizations. As a result, governmental responses to terrorism should be multifaceted and adaptable.

For example, security measures must be more cost-effective to obtain achievements while also limiting the negative economic repercussions of allocating excessive resources to security. Aid strategies, likewise, must focus on attainable goals to achieve positive results and create a more representative and bright future perspective. Policies must be aimed at filling in the gaps left by weak states and altering society's incentive structures away from the use of violence. However, such regulations will never be complete, just as crime-fighting policies can never reduce crime to zero. There are far too many potential sources of violence for legislation to address of them, and incentive-based policies will never force people to ignore the ideological or psychological dispositions that lead them to use violence.

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