



Impact of US Involvement & Withdrawal from Afghanistan on Afghan Refugees in Pakistan

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received: December 26, 2024
Revised: January 18, 2025
Accepted: January 22, 2025
Available Online: January 24, 2025

Keywords:

US Involvement in Afghanistan,
Withdrawal, Impact on Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

This article analyses the socio-economic and security issues presented by Afghan refugees in Pakistan, especially in the aftermath of U.S. engagement and eventual withdrawal from Afghanistan. The research examines the historical context of Afghan migration to Pakistan, emphasising the effects of the Afghan Jihad and the War on Terror, which resulted in the arrival of millions of refugees. The article examines the pressure on Pakistan's resources, infrastructure, and security, emphasising the increase in militancy and social unrest in regions accommodating refugees. The research used an exploratory design to assess the broader implications of this issue for Pakistan and Afghanistan. The results indicate that return, conducted under secure and voluntary circumstances, is the most feasible approach to mitigate Pakistan's burden while facilitating the return of refugees to a stable Afghanistan. The article advocates for collaboration among the Afghan government, Pakistan, and the international community to establish favourable conditions for the restoration process, emphasising infrastructure, security, and economic prospects. The resolution of the refugee problem is deemed essential for promoting peace, stability, and development in the region.

Introduction

Afghanistan and Pakistan both are South Asian neighbour countries, have a lengthy boundary of around 2670 km. Afghanistan shares borders with Iran, Pakistan, and the Central Asian countries of Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Similarly, Pakistan's neighbouring countries include Iran, India, China, and Afghanistan. Afghanistan is a landlocked country lacking maritime access, while Pakistan possesses the Arabian Sea to the south. Both countries have similarities in religion

and culture yet have been suffering strained relations. The term "Pakistan" was coined in 1933, representing many ethnic groups: P for Punjab, A for Afghan, K for Kashmir, S for Sind, and tan for Baluchistan. (Chua, 2018)

At the founding of Pakistan, Afghanistan refused to acknowledge the Durand Line and opposed Pakistan's independence and membership to the United Nations. Afghanistan promoted the integration of Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa into "Pashtunistan," a region it considered to be part of the Pashtun ethnic region.

A pivotal transformation in this region occurred in 1979, altering Afghanistan's standing in its relationship with Pakistan. It is essential to note that Afghanistan contains several ethnic groups and extensive diversity. The principal ethnic groups are Pashtun, Tajik, Uzbek, and Hazara. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 caused significant political turmoil and led to a substantial influx of refugees into Pakistan. Since that time, Afghanistan's history has diverged both within and abroad. (Chua, 2018)

Refugees are those compelled to leave their homeland in search of safety in a foreign nation. They cannot return to their homeland because to anticipated persecution caused by their identity, beliefs, expressions, or due to armed conflict, violence, or significant public unrest.

Numerous individuals have been compelled to escape with scarcely anything beyond their clothes on their bodies, abandoning their residences, belongings, employment, and beloved ones. They may have experienced human rights abuses, had injuries during their escape, or seen the murder or violence of family members or friends. (UNHCR, 2024)

Following the First World War (1914 - 1918), millions of individuals abandoned their native country in pursuit of refuge. Governments developed a series of international agreements to issue travel permits for individuals who were, in basic terms, the first recognized refugees of the 20th century. Their population grew significantly during the Second World War (1939-1945), when millions were forcibly displaced.

The international community systematically developed a framework of principles, regulations, and agreements to safeguard the fundamental human rights and treatment of individuals compelled to escape conflict and persecution.

The effort, which was initiated by the League of Nations in 1921, ended in the 1951 Convention, which consolidated and expanded upon earlier international instruments concerning refugees, and remains the most comprehensive codification of refugee rights at the international level.

In July 1951, a diplomatic conference in Geneva approved the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Initially, the 1951 Convention was essentially limited to protecting European refugees in the aftermath of the Second World War: The document contains the words "events occurring before 1 January 1951" which are widely understood to mean "events occurring in Europe" prior to that date. Since then, it has gone through only one update, namely the 1967 Protocol. The 1967 Protocol, enacted on 4 October 1967, eliminates geographic and temporal restrictions, therefore broadening the Convention's application to completely safeguard everybody escaping violence and persecution. (UNHCR, 2024)

"The world will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them without doing anything" by **Albert Einstein**

For years, Afghan refugees have experienced displacement due to apprehension of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, military conflict, and political ideology. Over the past decade, over 5.7 million refugees have voluntarily returned to Afghanistan, primarily with the assistance of the UNHCR. Nevertheless, 2.7 million Afghans continue in residing in exile in neighbouring countries, with the rate of returning refugees remaining notably low since 2011. (Amini) The U.S. military presence after 2001 intensified this pattern, while the years 2009 to 2021 experienced notably severe surges of refugees resulting from increasing violence and instability. Pakistan's closeness to Afghanistan, cultural connections, and porous borders made it an ideal refuge for displaced Afghans. This influx stretched Pakistan's resources, as the country attempted to give shelter, food, healthcare, and education to refugees. Throughout these problems, Pakistan's humanitarian initiatives were crucial, even though international assistance frequently failed to satisfy the requirements of both refugees and host populations. Refugees have persisted in Pakistan since long, as well as during previous instances when Pakistan was required to accommodate them, including the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and subsequently during the War on Terror (WoT). Here is an overview of Afghan refugees in Pakistan presented in a table:

Table 1: Afghan Refugees in Pakistan

Afghan Refugees	Proof of Registration (PoR) Card Holders	Afghan Citizen Card Holder (ACC)	Unregistered/Undocumented
Arrival to Pakistan	Arrived in Pakistan before 2005	Arrived in Pakistan before 2018	Arrived in 2021 or later
Registration	Registered between 2006 and 2007	Registered between 2017 and 2018	Not Registered (Some have provided their basic information to NGO society for Human Rights and Prisoners SHARP and or UNHCR)
Number of Refugees	1.32 million	840,000	1.375 million
Living in	KP and Baluchistan	KP and Baluchistan	Unknown

Source: (Cone & Khan, 2023)

Afghan refugees are classified into three categories: PoR card holders, ACC holders, and unregistered migrants. The table indicates that the majority consists of unregistered Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

Literature Review

(Khalid, Hussain, & Mahmood, 2023) Khalid, Hussain & Mehmood (2003) explains that Afghanistan, having been a central state for major powers, has been a region overwhelmed by conflict since the 19th century. The geopolitical significance of this country cannot be disregarded since it serves as a link between South Asia and Central Asia. Given its geographical proximity to Pakistan, Afghanistan holds great importance for India. The peaceful or violent conditions in Afghanistan have a significant impact on Pakistan. Pakistan bore the substantial financial burden

of the battle against terrorism in Afghanistan. Pakistan, despite providing complete cooperation to the United States, was considered an untrustworthy state by the US, which accused Pakistan of sponsoring all the terrorists operating inside its borders. However, Pakistan, as the ally of the United States, cannot be relied upon by the Taliban. Paradoxically, the United States acknowledged Pakistan as a crucial mediator between the Taliban and the US during the peace process. Pakistan has always been a steadfast companion of the United States. On the contrary, Pakistan could face significant expenses following the withdrawal of the US. Upon the Taliban's assumption of power, Pakistan initiated the provision of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan and offered protection to Afghan refugees. China, a growing global power, has implemented measures to strengthen its relationship with Afghanistan. Once again, it was China that need Pakistan to effectively achieve its objective. Pakistan's dominant position in the South Asian area cannot be disregarded. The maintenance of regional peace and stability is crucial for the own sustainability and economic success of Pakistan.

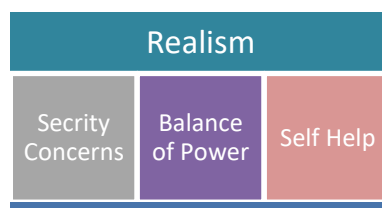
(Musharraf, 2006) Musharraf (2006) the author describes important events of Indo-Pak history i.e. war of 1965, fall of Dhaka, the atomic tests, Soviet invasion in Afghanistan, provision of safe havens to Afghan refugees, Kargil war 1999, 9/11 incidents. The incident of 9/11 shook the whole world dramatically during which Pakistan was declared as front-line state in the war on terror. General Pervez Musharraf got call by US secretary of state where he was asked “you are either with or against us”. Musharraf replied that Pakistan always stood against terrorism and still will support US against the same. It was decided Pakistan to be major part in war in terror, due to a plethora of reasons, the reasons were in accordance with the national interest of Pakistan. Similarly, abundance of advantages became the logic that pushed Pakistan to jump into war on terror as it was in its national interest. The purpose to be a part of war on terror that Pakistan wanted to bring peace in Afghanistan by pursuing Mullah Omar to make Osama bin Laden and top lieutenants leave Afghanistan then it would avoid strike. The speciality of this book is that author shared his own experience during his official work that is helpful to understand things with clarity.

Research Methodology & Theoretical Framework

This study employs an exploratory approach to investigate the impact of U.S. engagement and withdrawal from Afghanistan on Pakistan, specifically addressing the issues posed by the influx of Afghan refugees.

Secondary sources were used to collect the data. Books, scholarly journal articles, periodicals, trustworthy newspapers, and magazines are just a handful of instances of the wide range of items that could potentially be classified as secondary sources. This method makes it easier to comprehend US involvement in and exit from Afghanistan as well as the wider implications for Pakistan. This topic has complex implications for Pakistan, which are concisely summarized.

Realism clarifies Pakistan's defensive actions in reaction to external challenges arising from the Afghan issue.



Pakistan's emphasis on border protection and counterinsurgency aligns with realism's focus on state sovereignty and security. The measures seem to be efforts to mitigate the instability caused by United States military operations and the emergence of militant groups in Afghanistan. Due to restricted international assistance for refugee management, Pakistan implemented strategies such as border fencing and military operations to safeguard its national security.

Security Concerns

The refugee issue put considerable pressure on Pakistan's infrastructure and economy. Refugee camps required significant financial support, while urban settlements saw heightened strain on housing, healthcare, and educational infrastructures. In cities including as Peshawar and Quetta, educational institutions and medical facilities became overwhelmed by the combined needs of resident populations and refugee groups. Economically, although several refugees contributed to informal labour markets, the overall burden exceeded the advantages. This resulted in heightened tensions between refugees and host communities, further complicating Pakistan's internal dynamics. (Follorou, 2024)

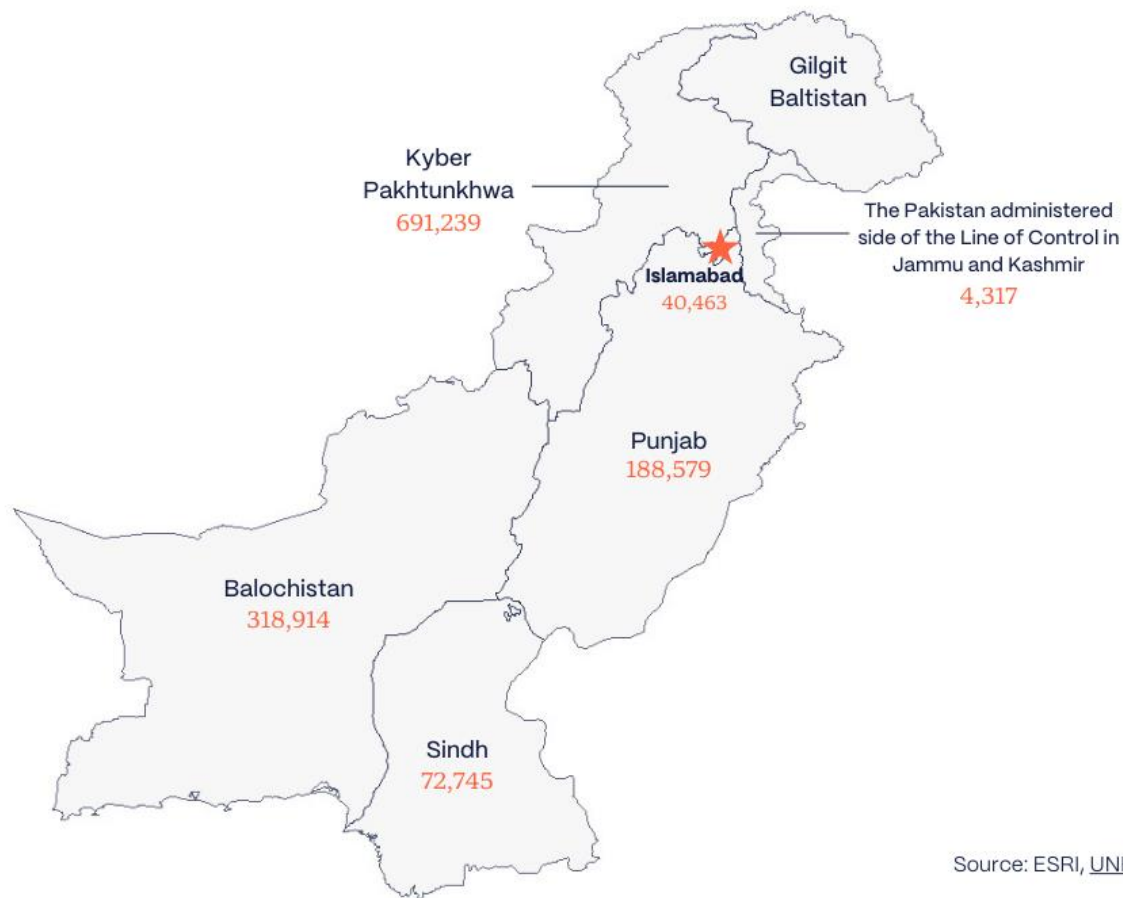
The influx of refugees also presented considerable security concerns. Open borders and insufficient supervision of refugee camps facilitated the exploitation of the circumstances by violent organizations. The border districts of Pakistan, especially next to the Durand Line, emerged as focal points for smuggling and insurgency operations. These dynamics intensified internal security issues and hindered Pakistan's activities to sustain peace while addressing humanitarian requirements. (Mohseni & Gailani, 2024)

The migration of Afghan refugees into Pakistan has exacerbated pollution and traffic jams in the country. Refugees have replaced locals in the workforce for less wages, consequently impacting the country's employment rates. Post 9/11, the local sentiment towards Afghan migrants shifted significantly, as there was a desire for the Afghans to be returned owing to diminishing living spaces. The refugee camps have been characterized as secure locations for terrorist recruiting, training, and lodging, resulting in diminished protection from Pakistani officials, who have conducted random interrogations that compel refugees to return mass. The Taliban have effectively entered the Pashtun-dominated camps and blended with the refugees, complicating identification by authorities. Crucially, data regarding refugees in the FATA region is limited due to the prohibition of UNHCR officials from entering these tribal areas, which complicates the comprehensive repatriation of Afghan refugees. As part of the ongoing repatriation from Pakistan, primarily due to the expiration of Proof of Registration PoR cards, returnees are receiving repatriation aid of \$117 per individual, in addition to a travel allowance ranging from \$10 to \$40.
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Approximately 89,000 refugees deported to Afghanistan from Pakistan last year as a result of strict laws. Furthermore, the overall decline in foreign support for refugees has substantially heightened the economic strain on Pakistan. The administration has asserted that the country lacks sufficient infrastructure to accommodate the remaining Afghan refugees and to deter further infiltration by terrorism and non-state actors into Pakistan. In 2006, the Pakistani government shutdown 32 camps due to their perceived threat to national security. The migrants were compelled to relocate to different camps or return to Afghanistan, after some camps in Baluchistan shut down despite escalating protests.

A map of Pakistan depicts the distribution of Afghan refugees possessing Proof of Registration (PoR) cards throughout different provinces.

Figure 1: Number of Afghan Refugees (Proof of Registration PoR Cardholders) in Pakistan Provinces



Source: (Cone & Khan, 2023)

The initial phase of Afghan migration occurred shortly after the 1978 military revolution that overthrew the Daoud administration, executed by the Afghan Marxist political organization, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). Amid escalating regional tensions, the Soviet Union intervened in Afghanistan in 1979 to prevent political fragmentation. The presence quickly led the US and its allies to characterize the invasion as a threat to regional security, leading them to provide financial and military assistance to the Afghan fighters, the Mujahideen, to facilitate the departure of the Soviets from the country. The conflict in Afghanistan generated significant instability in the region, compelling Afghans to relocate to neighbouring countries like Pakistan and Iran. The proliferation of violence across the country, coupled with recent alterations in property ownership, social norms, and matrimonial practices, with shifting leadership, compelled numerous individuals to leave their birthplace. (Jazayery, 2003)

The dominant group among these migrants included Pashtuns, mostly consisting of peasants, farmers, minor landowners, and clerics, who perceived a threat to their traditional and cultural way of life. The second phase of Afghan mass migration transpired concurrently with the Withdrawal of Soviet soldiers from 1986 until 1989. The withdrawal resulted from an escalation in the internal power conflict among the Mujahideen factions, which subsequently generated two simultaneous migrant movements.

Following Najibullah's installation, the United Nations (UN) committed to aid. The UNHCR commenced resettlement and reconstruction activities via 'Operation Salam' which sought to establish the foundations for the rehabilitation of refugees, encompassing mine clearance, health initiatives, rehabilitation of critical infrastructure, and the provision of services such as healthcare and education. (Schöch, 2008)

Nevertheless, the program encountered numerous financial, logistical, political, and security challenges, compounded by restricted UN access to aid in Pakistan and Iran. Although numerous Afghan refugees were urged to return, others chose to remain abroad due to escalating turmoil. The exiles primarily consisted of urban business professionals (Dari-Persian speakers) who were forced to flee due to being perceived as supporters of Communism by the warlords. A significant number established residence in Nasir Bagh Camp located in Pakistan's Peshawar province. (Schmeidl, 2002)

Ethnic and language differences between the Pashtun and Dari-speaking refugees promptly led to conflicts within the camps. By 1993, the rate of return had diminished. The following struggle for dominance over Kabul and Kandahar led to the devastation of the cities and the displacement of around 100,000 residents of Kabul. (Pakistan: Widespread Abuses Force Afghans to Leave, 2023) Numerous individuals who had just returned to Afghanistan after 13 years in exile were compelled to return to Pakistan or Iran once more. (Abraham, 2013)

The third phase of Afghan mass migration transpired following the Taliban's ascendance to power in 1996. During the Taliban era, numerous Pashtun refugees returned, perceiving a sense of security with the Taliban's arrival. The emergence of a totalitarian administration, accompanied by political instability and economic difficulties, subsequently resulted in a drought that caused extensive food and water shortages during the 1990s. A huge number of individuals were forced to migrate due to these conditions, primarily consisting of non-Muslim religious minorities and Shia Muslims, who perceived a danger from the Wahhabi Taliban administration. As famine and disease proliferated, more individuals were compelled to move to Pakistan and Iran. (Khattak, 2003)

The Taliban's capture of Mazar-e-Sharif in 1996 prompted a significant migration of Afghans, predominantly Tajiks, who fled in fear of ethnic cleansing by the Taliban. Throughout during this period, around 2 million Afghan refugees sought asylum in Pakistan, while another 1.5 million were compelled to relocate to Iran. Others relocated to various countries in South Asia, West Asia, North America, and Europe. The fourth wave of Afghan mass migration occurred during the US global war on terrorism in 2001, which exacerbated socio-economic and political instabilities, resulting in significant outflows of Afghan refugees. By 2001, 900,000 Afghans were internally displaced because of severe conflict in the area.

It is noteworthy that, after the Taliban's removal in 2001, a limited number of refugees returned to Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the three-way agreement executed with Pakistan, Afghanistan, and UNHCR likewise, in 2002, Iran sponsored the return of around 1.5 million refugees to Afghanistan.

Most Afghan families in Pakistan arrived during the initial years of the refugee crisis. Additionally, owing to conventional migratory pathways, several Afghans who resided in the Northwest Frontier province NWFP in Pakistan, there were second and third generation Afghan migrants. (Margesson, 2007)

The Afghan refugees in Pakistan, predominantly from southern and eastern Afghanistan, consisted of Sunni Pashtuns (82 percent) who predominantly moved to areas with existing Pashtun ethnic communities, while other ethnic groups such as Sunni Tajiks (8 percent), Shia Hazaras (2 percent), and Sunni Balochis (1.7 percent) migrated in smaller numbers.

Pakistan's policies for Afghan refugees have changed from open-door welcome to increasing restrictions. Initially accommodating, Pakistan progressively restricted its refugee policies, especially due to internal economic and security challenges. International assistance, however available, was inadequate to confront the magnitude of the situation. The United States, despite its pivotal involvement in Afghanistan, offered limited direct assistance to Pakistan for refugee management. This disparity highlighted the wider disparities in the global community's distribution of the Afghan displacement burden. (Doughty, 2024)

In 2006, the Pakistani government initiated a registration campaign that resulted in the registration of approximately one million Afghans, who were issued official identification (Proof of Registration cards) allowing them to reside in Pakistan for an initial duration of three years, subsequently extended until 2012. (Doherty, 2013)

In 2009, the UNHCR and Pakistan reached an agreement permitting approximately 1.7 million refugees to stay in the country. By 2006, over 2.8 million Afghan refugees have departed from Pakistan through a UNHCR-supported voluntary repatriation program. Regrettably, due to escalating security threats in Pakistan, including unemployment and poverty, the validation of refugee identification will conclude by July 2013, at which point the rights of all Afghan refugees to reside in Pakistan will be suspended, leading to enforced deportation by Pakistani authorities.

Afghans have one of the greatest refugee populations globally, with about 90 percent residing in Iran and Pakistan. From mid-September to mid-March 2024, more than 531,000 Afghans returned from Pakistan, primarily following the Government of Pakistan's declaration regarding the deportation of unauthorized foreign nationals residing in the country. The sudden influx of hundreds of thousands of Afghans has exacerbated the humanitarian crisis and imposed excessive pressure on already scarce resources in danger regions. Since January 2023, UNHCR has aided over 94,000 returns.

Despite a decline in recent years of new conflict-related displacement, Afghanistan continues to struggle with one of the most significant humanitarian crises globally. Over fifty percent of the population need humanitarian aid, the healthcare system is deteriorating, the escalating effects of climate change are intensifying poverty and food insecurity, and women and girls face restricted access to essential human rights, including education and employment opportunities.

Many Afghan refugees who resettled in Pakistan possessed established social networks, kinship ties, and business connections within the country, facilitating their move. A significant majority of refugees were employed as hourly wage labourers, while those in Karachi predominantly participated in business and trade. The refugees predominantly relied on aid funds to supplement their small earnings resulting from their insufficient primary education. Afghan refugees in Pakistan still lack access to formal employment, with a significant part including children and youngsters under the age of 18, totalling over 1.7 million.

During the migration, Afghan refugees in Pakistan lived designated settlements or compound areas referred to as 'villages,' which facilitated administration and identification while offering essential services. (Closed Door Policy, 2002)

Those who fled were prohibited from purchasing land and property or participating in Pakistani politics, but they were permitted to establish their own political organizations. Relief operations conducted in the initial phases were financed by the government, administered, and revised in 1984 to include self-reliance initiatives for the refugees.

Distinct entities known as 'Commissionerate' were created in Peshawar and Quetta to oversee refugee assistance, encompassing registration, camp settlement, and the provision of essential facilities. International organizations, such as the UNHCR and the World Food Programme, played a crucial role in coordinating the refugees in Pakistan.

Findings

1. For decades, Afghan refugees in Pakistan have frequently been perceived via a security perspective. This securitisation has shaped narratives portraying Pakistan as both a victim of regional instability and a contributor to it. These impressions affected international dialogue and informed domestic policy responses, where refugees were increasingly linked to risks such as militancy, smuggling, and arms trafficking.
2. The hosting of Afghan refugees intensifies Pakistan's financial problems, placing additional pressure on public services such as healthcare, education, and housing, while heightening employment rivalry.
3. Networks of Afghan refugees are regarded as associated with cross-border insurgency and terrorism, exacerbating Pakistan's security concerns.
4. With the Taliban in power, Pakistan believes Afghanistan is now secure enough for refugees to return, and that the Taliban bear responsibility for their welfare.
5. The absence of refugee integration strategies and the substantial population of illegal refugees hinder monitoring and assistance, leading to deportations.
6. Pakistan's security concerns were exacerbated by perceived deficiencies in Kabul's capacity to manage its border areas. In response, Pakistan implemented stricter border control protocols, including the installation of a border fence, the enforcement of visa guidelines, and the execution of extensive deportations. These measures intended to restrict unauthorized movements and reduce cross-border militancy, although they also provoked humanitarian concerns regarding the treatment of refugees.
7. The influx of Afghan migrants into Pakistan frequently coincided with heightened militant activities, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan. The increase in assaults associated with organizations like Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) during times of intensified refugee movements underscored the complex connection between migration and security.

Discussion

Pakistan suffered greatly from the 2001–2021 U.S. engagement in Afghanistan, especially due to Afghan refugees. Pakistan hosted millions of Afghans fleeing the war and instability in Afghanistan due to its proximity and cultural ties. This humanitarian attempt showed Pakistan's readiness to help its neighbors, but the refugee crisis caused economic, social, and security problems. Pakistan, already limited for resources, had to house, treat, and educate millions of refugees. In deprived areas with poor infrastructure, this pressure increased, straining the national budget and labor market competition, marginalizing local populations. Refugees often exacerbated community conflicts over resources and opportunity. Cultural and ethnic commonalities originally encouraged togetherness, but overcrowded refugee camps and increased unemployment caused animosity and societal division.

Security worries complicated matters. A porous border between Pakistan and Afghanistan allowed extremist groups to gain access to refugee movements, escalating terrorism and violence in Pakistan. Pakistan's internal security issues were exacerbated by extremist organizations recruiting in underfunded and poorly managed refugee camps. Pakistan has little financial and administrative help managing the refugee problem due to weak international support. The international community, including the U.S., failed to build an effective refugee resettlement strategy, worsening Pakistan's situation. After the Taliban returned in 2021, many refugees stayed away due to fears about governance and human rights in Afghanistan, prolonging Pakistan's difficulty. These issues highlight the connected effects of U.S. policy in Afghanistan and the necessity for global accountability to address the refugee problem. Pakistan's history shows surrounding states' long-term costs of external crises, underlining the need of national stability and resources.

Recommendations

1. Facilitate a secure and dignified repatriation process for Afghan refugees through collaboration with the Afghan government and the Taliban.
2. Strengthen border security protocols to deter cross-border militancy while enabling lawful movement of individuals.
3. Establish biometric systems and thorough registration for all refugees to properly monitor their activities.
4. Promote enhanced financial and logistical assistance from the international community for addressing the refugee problem.
5. Encourage global stakeholders to aid Afghanistan in reconstructing infrastructure and establishing stability to facilitate the return of refugees.
6. Mitigate economic pressure by promoting international assistance for communities in Pakistan that welcome refugees.
7. Advocate for public awareness initiatives to diminish animosity towards refugees and cultivate comprehension of the collective responsibility.
8. Promote dialogues to secure enduring peace and stability in Afghanistan, therefore diminishing the probability of future displacement.

Conclusion

The U.S. engagement and eventual withdrawal from Afghanistan have created a legacy in Pakistan, with the refugee crisis serving as one of its most prominent and persistent repercussions. The influx of Afghan migrants in Pakistan has created considerable hurdles in economic, social, and security spheres, exacerbating a country already contending with its own issues. Although Pakistan has aided millions of displaced Afghans throughout the years, it is evident that the country can no longer shoulder this responsibility independently. The resolution involves enabling the secure and voluntary return of Afghan refugees to their country of origin. Repatriation not only corresponds with Pakistan's urgent requirement to confront its domestic issues but also emphasizes Afghanistan's responsibility to care for its people. The Taliban's current authority presents a distinct chance for Afghanistan to establish stability and facilitate the reintegration of its population, creating a conducive climate for refugees to reconstruct their lives. This intricate situation necessitates collaborative endeavours from the Afghan government, Pakistan, and the global community. Afghanistan must establish the requisite conditions for the repatriation of refugees, while international partners must offer financial and technical assistance to both nations throughout this transition. The enduring refugee dilemma can only be resolved by collective action. The resolution of this issue presents hope for a stable and self-sufficient Afghanistan and a

Pakistan free from external pressures. Both countries stand to gain from a renewed emphasis on growth and wealth, facilitating a harmonious and collaborative future in the region.

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