

NEWSLETTER



CENTRE FOR AFGHANISTAN STUDIES

The Centre for Afghanistan Studies (CAS) through its research intends to provide a window into complex yet fascinating dynamics shaping socio-cultural, geo-political and economic landscape of Afghanistan. CAS would contribute to cutting edge, policy oriented research on Afghanistan and its implications for the region at large. It would also provide a platform for collaborative exchange programs and transmission of knowledge to students and scholars.

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ABOUT US

The Centre for Afghanistan Studies (CAS) is a dedicated interdisciplinary platform committed to deepening understanding of Afghanistan's complex and evolving realities. Through rigorous research and dynamic engagement, the Centre aims to unravel the intricately woven socio-cultural, political, and economic fabric that shapes the country's identity and global positioning. From analyzing local governance and tribal dynamics to studying transnational issues such as conflict, migration, and trade, CAS provides a nuanced lens into Afghanistan's historical legacies and contemporary challenges. CAS positions itself as a space for critical inquiry, dialogue, and dissemination of knowledge on Afghanistan, while emphasizing its interlinkages with regional and global developments.

MISSION

- Dive into the complex and evolving political, social, and cultural landscape of Afghanistan to better understand its role in shaping regional and global affairs.
- Spark meaningful conversations—both academic and policy-related—around the changes happening within Afghanistan and how they affect its ties with the world.
- Work together with researchers, practitioners, and local communities to share knowledge, build capacity, and learn from one another.



OBJECTIVES

- To serve as a comprehensive resource hub for students and scholars on Afghanistan and the larger region, offering access to relevant research, data, and academic materials.
- To contribute to cutting-edge research through publications, seminars, and collaborative academic initiatives.
- To promote the exchange of knowledge, ideas, and people through interdisciplinary dialogue, academic partnerships, and cultural interactions.

ACTIVITIES



RESEARCH

Engage in trans-disciplinary research, drawing on, but not limited to fields of history, anthropology, sociology and political science. Examine the impact of prolonged armed conflict on the social, cultural, political and the geo-political landscape of Afghanistan. Establish a first of its kind resource centre on Afghanistan in India, in collaboration with the Afghanistan Centre at Kabul University.

INSTITUTIONAL NETWORKING

Collaborate with research-based and educational institutions in Afghanistan and Central Asia, and promote active exchange of research scholars and students.

COURSE(S) OFFERED

South and Central Asia: Key Issues and Perspectives Dari Language.

OUTREACH

Disseminate research findings in academic and policy circles through organization conferences and research publications.



LETTER FROM DIRECTOR



The Centre for Afghanistan Studies was established in March 2016 with the aim of fostering critical engagement on Afghanistan and the wider region through its research, academic coursework, dialogue and outreach. Our work at the centre is a reflection of our vision and commitment to provide in-depth insights into the complex yet fascinating dynamics that color Afghanistan's socio-political, cultural and economic landscape. Despite the formidable challenges posed by the political changes underway in Afghanistan since August 2021 we have strived to continuously engage with a range of voices on Afghanistan from the inside and outside.

Our cutting edge research, carried by publishers of international repute alongside our initiatives at hosting dialogues and partnership events with members of the Afghan community in India are a testament to our commitment to fostering a spirit of critical enquiry, collaboration and exchange of ideas. This newsletter will provide you insights into some of the work executed by our team over the course of the Spring 2025 semester. We hope you will enjoy reading this newsletter and hopefully join us in our future endeavors.

LETTER FROM CO-DIRECTOR



Professor Bilquees Daud is currently an Assistant Professor at the Jindal School of International Affairs, O.P Jindal Global University, India. She has extensive work experience with local and international organisations, universities and research centres in Afghanistan and abroad. She is the author of analytical research and analytical articles published by different sources, including Project for Democratic Union, BBC Pashto ACKU Journal and IIC Quarterly. Her research interests include Religious extremism, Nonviolence movements, the social impact of conflicts, peace education, politics of identity and refugee crisis. Recently, she has published a book on ‘Education for Peace: Rehabilitating NonViolent Discourses in Afghanistan’. In this book she drew upon the legacy of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan who made pioneering efforts in working to provide education to men and women in the tribal areas of modern-day Pakistan and used non–violence as a potent tool for socio–political mobilization



LETTER FROM THE TEAM



It is with great excitement and gratitude that we welcome you to this latest edition of the Center for Afghanistan Studies (CAS) newsletter. As a team deeply committed to fostering thoughtful engagement with Afghanistan’s past, present, and future, we are proud to share the voices, reflections, and efforts that have shaped our work in recent months. At CAS, we strive to go beyond headlines—to uncover the layered narratives, cultural richness, and human stories that define Afghanistan. Whether through academic inquiry, creative expression, or student-led initiatives, our community continues to explore the country’s complexity with curiosity, empathy, and critical thought. This issue brings together a range of contributions that reflect our collective journey: from conversations on political dynamics and regional history, to spotlights on Afghan art, poetry, and identity. In particular, we are inspired by the resilience and creativity that continues to emerge from Afghan communities both within the country and across the diaspora. We are also proud to highlight the dedication of students, whose passion and perspectives are the lifeblood of this center. Their work reaffirms our belief that education and dialogue are powerful tools for building understanding and solidarity. Thank you for joining us in this ongoing exploration. We hope this newsletter informs, provokes, and perhaps even inspires—and we’re grateful to have you as part of the CAS community.

Warm regards,
The Team, CAS



ODITI PATGIRI
Centre coordinator



VASATIKA SARASWAT
Editor-in-chief

MEET THE TEAM



SIMRAN KAUR



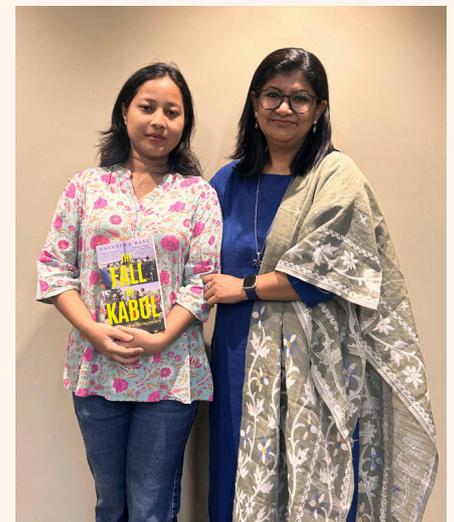
TANISHI RANJAN

EVENTS



NAYANIMA BASU ON THE RETURN OF THE TALIBAN: A FIRSTHAND ACCOUNT OF THE FALL OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN

“We are disengaging from discomfort; we are not engaging with the people.” – Nayanima Basu Senior journalist Nayanima Basu’s session felt like more than just journalism. It was a wake- up call. It wasn’t another distant tale of Taliban terror; it was a raw, unfiltered, first-person reality check. She called out not just the humanitarian crisis that unfolded in Afghanistan in 2021 but India’s complete diplomatic absence from the scene. She didn’t mince words when she said that India’s foreign policy is too elite-driven and obsessed with security to bother with people’s voices on the ground. While the BBC and the New York Times were there reporting Kabul’s collapse, where were we? She asked the question many of us hesitate to even think. Her travel to Kabul right before the fall wasn’t for thrill but because India lacked “on-the-ground voices.” Her visuals from deserted beauty parlours to dying hope at Kabul airport, cut deeper than headlines ever could. Her interview with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the Butcher of Kabul, exposed how the Taliban use translation and Twitter to rebrand without reforming. She slammed the discriminatory evacuation, sidelining Afghan students and minorities while India boasted official evacuations. Basu asked the big questions: Why are we okay with a disengaged diplomacy that hides behind red tape and ideology? Her criticism of India’s handling of Afghanistan, Kashmir, and even Kailash Mansarovar made one thing clear: denial is not a strategy. Her narrative wasn’t just about Afghanistan. It was a mirror to India’s foreign policy laziness and its ignorance of neighbourhood duties. Her call was simple but urgent. India needs to get out of its comfort zone, listen beyond the corridors of power, and realise that foreign policy is not just about borders and governments. It’s about people.



MALAIZ DAUD ON NON-VIOLENT ACTION IN THE AGE OF DIGITAL REVOLUTION AND AUTOCRATIC RESURGENCE

The Centre for Afghanistan studies had the honour of hosting Mr. Malaiz Daud on October 1, 2024, for a compelling guest lecture titled "Nonviolent Action in the Age of Digital Revolution and Autocratic Resurgence." Mr Daud, being a distinguished former government advisor in Afghanistan and a key figure in the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM), is currently engaged in academic research and teaching in Germany. The lecture explored a powerful observation of the evolving strategies and significance of nonviolent resistance in today's complex global geopolitical landscape. Mr. Daud outlined the two-tiered structure of political engagement, i.e., formal leadership and grassroots mobilisation, drawing from theorists like Giddens, Tarrow, and Chenoweth. He explained that nonviolent action (NVA) is statistically more successful than violent campaigns, along with being more ethically grounded. They foster more democratic, tolerant and economically stable societies. By referencing movements like the PTM, he painted a picture of how nonviolent strategies can flourish even under state suppression, supported by digital tools and community resilience. The lecture also delved deep into the dual role of technology as a medium for mobilisation and a weapon for surveillance. Mr. Daud contested that in the event of internet blackouts, activists tend to adapt through alternative communication channels and global solidarity. He dismissed the myth of spontaneity in protest, underscoring the need for diligent planning, training and leadership development. While responding to questions on the role of globalisation, online activism and power asymmetry, Mr. Daud maintained his stance on the fact that the strength of nonviolent resistance lies in its adaptability. He concluded that nonviolence remains a vital force for sustainable change, despite rising authoritarianism. The lecture reinforced the Centre's commitment to amplifying voices and scholarship that challenge reductive narratives about the region and illuminate its traditions of resistance, resilience, and hope.



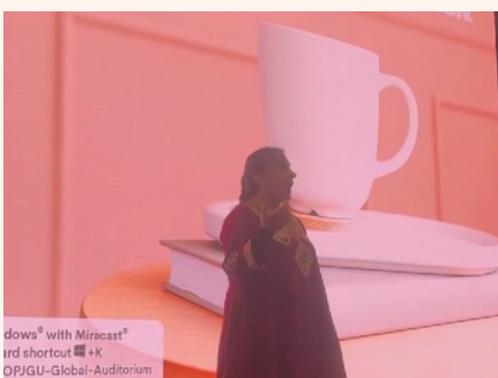
WAJMA – A LOVE STORY SHATTERED BY HONOUR

MOVIE SCREENING



“You said you loved me. Was that a lie?” – Wajma

Seeing *Wajma: An Afghan Love Story* at the Global Auditorium was an eye-opener that made me ponder how love can be destroyed by society's strict rules. Directed by Barmak Akram, the movie takes us through the life of Wajma, a woman in Kabul, who falls in love with Mustafa. It is sweet and thrilling at first, but things start to turn ugly when Wajma gets pregnant. Rather than sticking with her, Mustafa vanishes and leaves her to face all this by herself. The most heartbreaking part is when Wajma has to face her father. Instead of helping her, he sees her as someone who has brought shame to the family. The movie does not give us a happy ending or any easy answers. It just shows the reality of how women are often punished for things that men can walk away from. Wajma's pain is shown in her silence and the way she tries to stay strong even when everything is falling apart. What really struck me was how real everything felt. There are no dramatic rescues or big speeches. The film just shows what happens to so many women who are judged by their families and society for choices that should be their own. It is not just about Wajma and Mustafa. It is about all the women who have to suffer in silence because of traditions that value family honour over their happiness and safety. In the end, Wajma is more than just a sad love story. It is a powerful reminder of how much still needs to change so that women can live without fear and make their own choices. The film stays with you because you realise that for many people, this is not just a story but real life.



PAST LESSONS AND FUTURE PATHS

PANEL DISCUSSION

On 24 February 2025, the Centre for Afghanistan Studies hosted a panel titled Past Lessons and Future Paths at O P Jindal Global University, comparing the Taliban resurgence in 2021 with the swift gains of HTS in Syria. Held in the Big Bang Conference Room from sixteen hundred to nineteen hundred hours, the discussion attracted academics, diplomats, analysts, and students from multiple schools. Their diverse questions kept the dialogue lively and grounded in practical regional concerns throughout the entire evening. Professor Raghav Sharma welcomed participants and called both upheavals critical tests of regional order. Professor Abdul Fatah Ammourah added diplomatic and historical context, linking language, politics, and shifting alliances. Keynote speaker Kabir Taneja stressed that both groups cultivate a modern image through social media while retaining rigid ideology. He lamented the absence of sustained Indian field reporting and urged narrative ownership rooted in neighbourhood realities. Brigadier Saurabh Sharma, recently posted in Kabul, offered a stark frontline perspective. He listed intelligence gaps, the fragility of externally supported regimes, and security lessons India must adopt. His testimony showed that a policy crafted only in capitals ignores ground risk. During open discussion, panellists urged moving from state-centric frameworks to people-focused engagement across South and West Asia. They argued that an effective strategy demands listening to local voices, cultivating field intelligence, and balancing caution with proactive outreach. Professor Bilquees Daud summarised that credible diplomacy grows from empathy, informed presence, and timely action. Ms Oditi Patgiri delivered a vote of thanks. The event closed with the consensus that silence is no strategy. Regional engagement must be immediate, practical, and sustained to prevent future collapses of both structures and assumptions.



SHAB-E-NOWRUZ: ENHANCING DANCE, MUSICAL PERFORMANCES AND POETRY READING



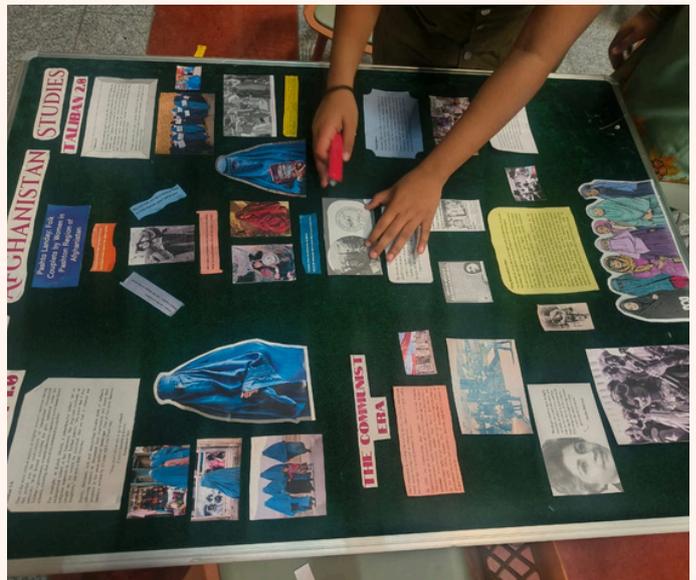
The Centre for Afghanistan Studies welcomed the Persian New Year with Shab-e-Nowruz, a vibrant celebration that blended tradition, scholarship, and community spirit. Nowruz is an ancient festival that marks the arrival of spring and the beginning of the new year in Persian culture. The event brought together students, faculty, and performers for an evening of meaningful festivity. The celebration opened with the beautifully arranged Haft-Seen table by the professors, a traditional Nowruz display. Each item on the table symbolised a different hope for the year ahead—health, prosperity, rebirth, and love. A series of performances followed, beginning with symphonic poem recitations that evoked the rich literary and cultural heritage of the region. One of the students, Aditya, delivered a compelling presentation tracing the history of Nowruz and its varied customs across Afghanistan and beyond, offering a cross-cultural perspective that grounded the celebration in deep historical roots.

SHAB-E-NOWRUZ: ENHANCING DANCE, MUSICAL PERFORMANCES AND POETRY READING



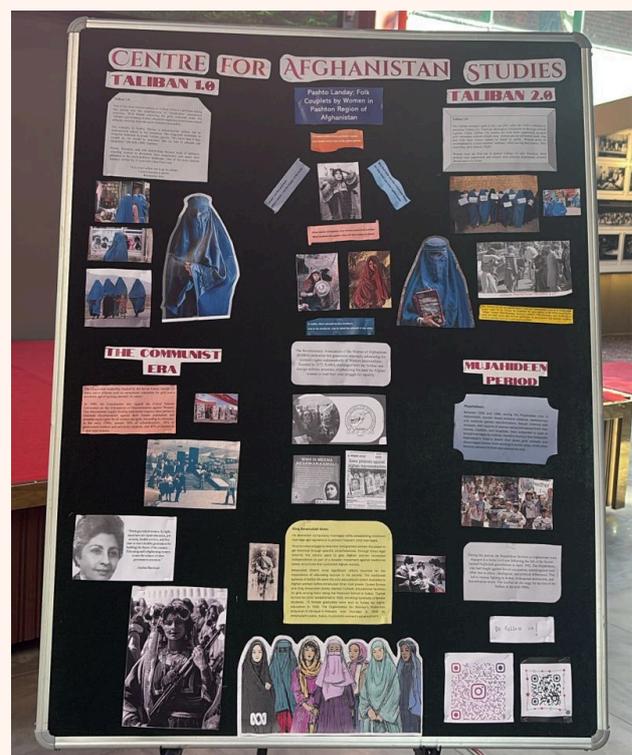
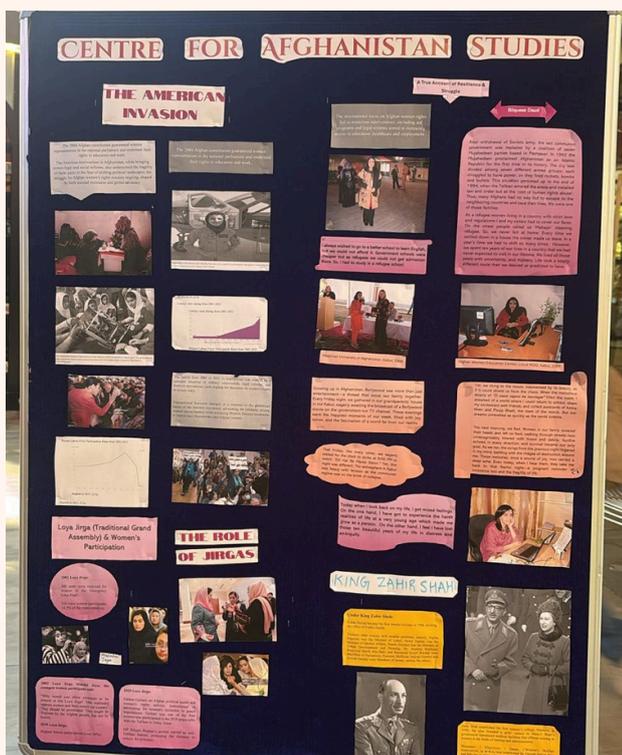
Fellow student Adhikshita moved the audience by reading soulful poetry, adding a personal touch to the evening’s artistic expression. In a beautiful collaboration, the classical dance society Tadheem from JGU performed a captivating Kathak piece, effortlessly blending Indian classical dance with Afghan musical rhythms, bringing a creative tribute to cultural exchange. The evening also featured a lighthearted Q&A session with professors, drawing laughter and insight in equal measure. As the night progressed, students and faculty alike joined together in spirited dancing to Afghan songs, creating an atmosphere of joy, unity, and shared celebration. Shab-e-Nowruz was not only a festive occasion but also a reminder of the enduring beauty of cultural dialogue and the joy of celebrating traditions, old and new, together.

WOMENS DAY CONVENTION



WOMENS DAY CONVENTION

The Women's Day Convention took a closer look at the changing roles and rights of Afghan women in different political regimes. Students analyzed the time periods of Taliban 1.0 and Taliban 2.0 regarding woman's suppression cycles, which was enhanced during the reign of the Taliban of the Taliban era. During Taliban 1.0, formal education for girls was banned; however, women teachers continued to run secret home-based schools. During the 2nd Taliban, the promises kept eluding reality as secondary education alongside civic participation was still restricted for women, additionally media censorship increased. The convention concentrated on more progressive eras in Afghan history as well. Women's legal rights under the rule of Amanullah Khan and Zahir Shah included education and even representation in the government. They also saw the emergence of institutions such as Esmat School and women's welfare associations, female ministers were even appointed. Additional Jirga assemblies (notably in 2019 from which over 30% female participation was recorded) were mentioned as thematically different where women's representation improved. International interventions (though temporary) combined with the never-ending bravery of Afghan women allowed patience to shine through. Women's rights are hard-women are never defeated, and in most instances find a way through oppressive circumstances.



PUBLICATIONS

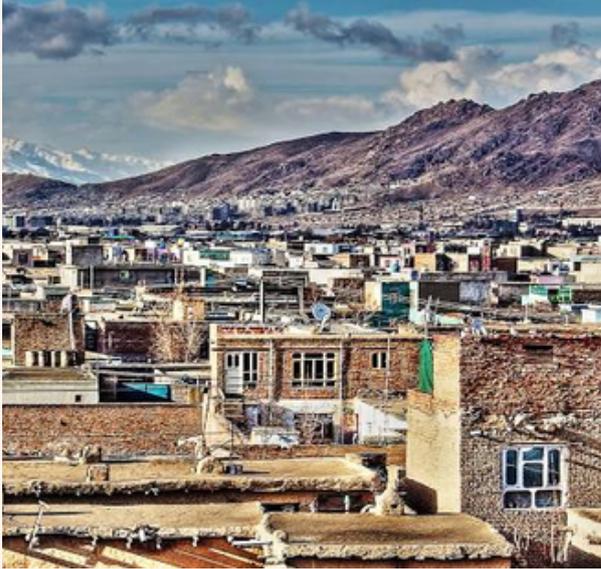


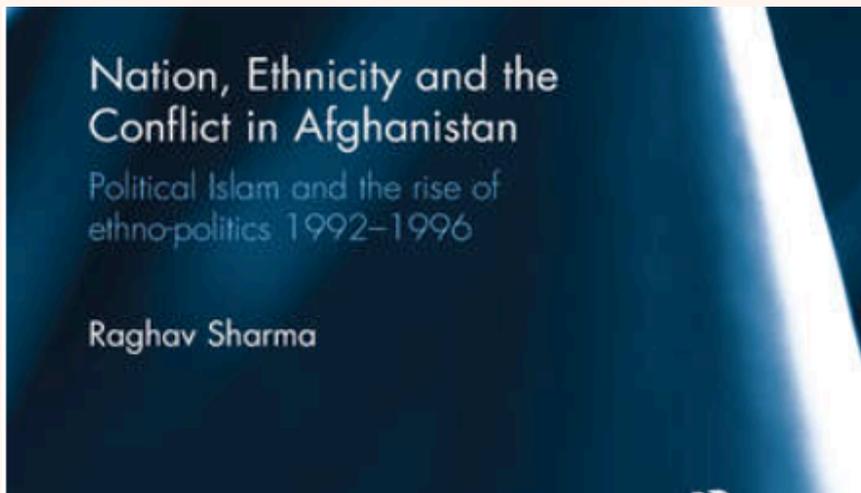
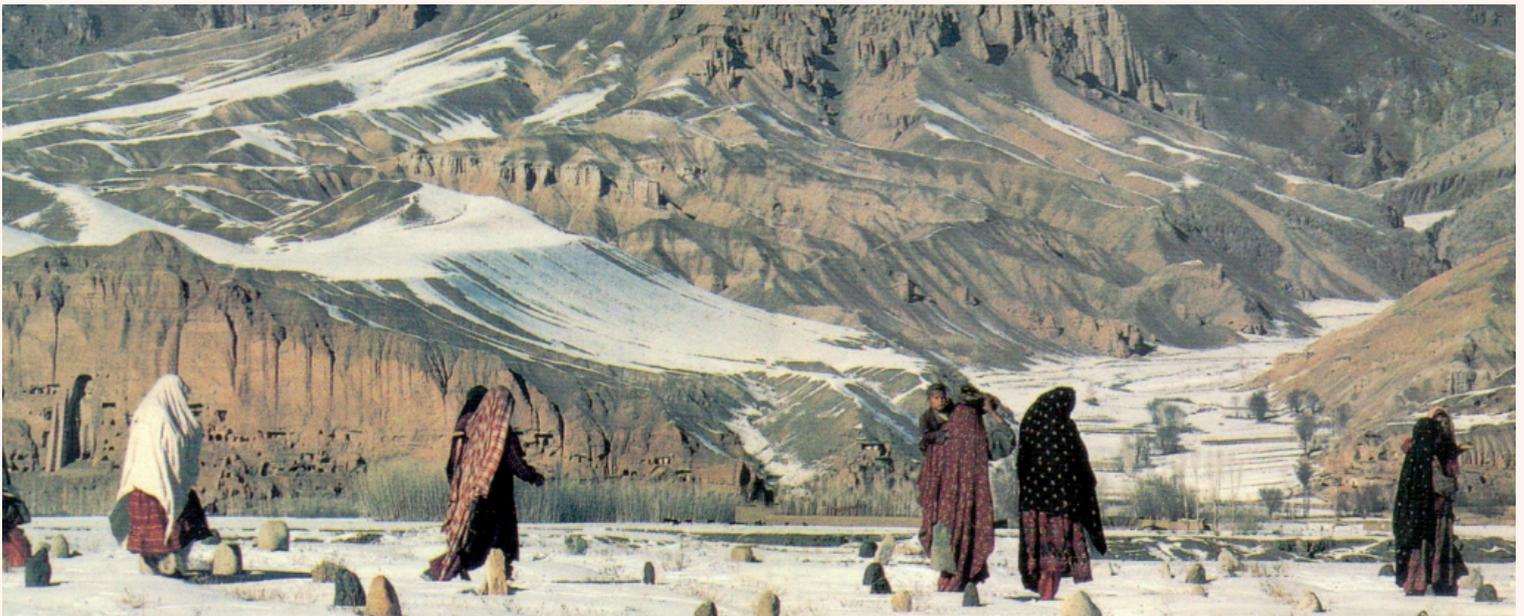
Image credit: [Afghanistan](#) by [i postcross/Flickr](#); Licence: [CC BY 2.0](#).

Written by [Raghav Sharma](#).

My darling, you are just like America!
You are guilty, I apologise

A dead crow fell from the power line. Falling, the blackbird struck a woman's arm. In the street, whispers began that the crow had bitten her bloody. The rumour spread of crows gone mad. Headlines read that citizens far from the city have locked themselves up in their rooms fearing mad crows. Is it the army's duty to perform a rescue*?

Writers and nations are both capable of betrayal. As liars, they are frequently interchanged in traditional Afghan poetic form of the 'landay'. The sardonic and apposite landay reproduced above and all of Mustafa Saalik's poetry, make for a stinging commentary which offers lucid insights into changing contours of the current socio-political landscape in Afghanistan as perceived by ordinary citizens.



BILQUEES
DAUD

For me, autumn is the season of sorrow because of the memory attached to it. When I was a child, my mother used to tell me stories of Sarawza—our village—a place I have never visited. My siblings and I were born and raised in Kabul. My mother would recall that autumn was considered the sad season because, come autumn, the men would go away to India to make a living, leaving the village empty, dry and gloomy. Only the women, children and some old men would remain behind. For days, people would sit together and talk about their young men in places far away. Women would recite poems in remembrance of their men migrating in search of work. These poems are called *Landay*. Here is one such poem, recited by a lady:

زخمې نولمېده داته هو سرروصه ناته ام لگد امر
ان مې اړوخ شوه چېنه

Za Ma De Gul Pa Shan Surat Wo....
Sia De Bilton Pa Khazan Mrawe Sho Mayana

I had a beautiful face but your [husband]
separation made it dry like the season of autumn.

AFGHANISTAN IN TRANSITION

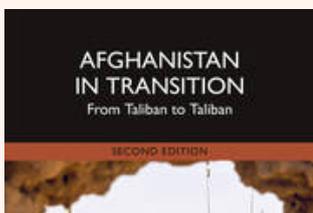
BY PROFESSOR RAGHAV SHARMA



Is the Past a Prologue? Deciphering India's North-West Engagement

This paper examines the evolving nature of interactions between Afghanistan and the Indian subcontinent from the late 1800s to the present day. It focuses particularly on how the rise, expansion, dominance, and eventual decline of the British Empire in the region influenced the geopolitical relationships among New Delhi, Rawalpindi, and Kabul. The analysis contends that imperial strategies for control and expansion played a foundational role in shaping these interactions.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of understanding historical developments as a crucial framework for interpreting the policy decisions of these three states.



PROPAGANDA, COMMUNICATION AND EMPIRE

BY PROFESSOR RAGHAV SHARMA

The Rise and Fall of the Taliban

The chaotic and humiliating U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan on August 30, 2021—following the rapid collapse of the Western-backed Kabul government just two weeks earlier—marked the end of a 20-year U.S.-led military campaign. In a dramatic turn, the Taliban swiftly took control of the country, declaring the war over and asserting dominance across Afghanistan’s political and military landscape. The Taliban’s resurgence, following their earlier fall, is deeply linked to shifting regional dynamics. This chapter explores the evolving political alliances and realignments in the region, particularly as Beijing, Moscow, and Tehran increasingly align their interests with the Taliban and Pakistan’s military establishment in Rawalpindi. It argues that growing tensions with Washington and the emergence of Daesh as a key security and ideological threat drove these regional powers to support and rebrand the Taliban as local resistance fighters who had successfully ended foreign occupation. In turn, the Taliban welcomed these relationships to gain diplomatic clout and enhance their quest for international legitimacy. However, this mutual alignment is riddled with contradictions, given the Taliban’s ideological stance often clashes with the internal political frameworks of their new partners.



KABUL TO PAHALGAM: A JOURNEY OF PAIN AND LOSS

BY PROFESSOR BILQUEES DAUD



Opinion Piece named
"Kabul to Pahalgam: A Journey of Pain and Loss"
published in VIF India on 2nd May 2025

Having seen rocket attacks and massacres of civilians with her own eyes, Prof. Bilquees shares the common agony of terror across geography and religion. In this raw and personal piece of writing, she weaves eerie comparisons between the latest massacres in Pahalgam and the massacres in Kabul during the civil war days. This article takes on the polarising consequence of the Pahalgam attack and demands a response more human in kind, condemning violence without indulging in collective guilt. It invites Muslim societies to tackle radicalisation, and reminds India of what's lost if pluralism turns to hate.

Access the full article:

<https://www.vifindia.org/2025/may/01/Kabul-to-Pahalgam-A-Journey-of-Pain-and-Loss>

AFGHANISTAN: A PROXY BATTLEGROUND FOR INDIA - PAKISTAN RIVALRY? IN PERSPECTIVE FROM AND WITHIN INDIA AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD

BY PROFESSOR BILQUEES DAUD

**Upcoming book chapter on "Afghanistan: A proxy
battleground for India - Pakistan rivalry? in ' Perspective
from and within India and its Neighbourhood ' by Chintan
Research Foundation**

This forthcoming chapter examines how Afghanistan has long been caught in the crossfire of India–Pakistan rivalry. While both nations publicly espouse Afghan sovereignty, actions—veiled and unveiled—tend to reflect strategic calculus for regional domination. In drawing on history, diplomacy, and security studies, the chapter unpacks the ways in which proxy dynamics have destabilized Afghanistan and made peace efforts more complex. A timely consideration of why regional peace needs more than territorial diplomacy—it needs trust, restraint, and a geopolitical imagination shift.



DEMOCRATISING KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION: AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

BY PROFESSOR BILQUEES DAUD

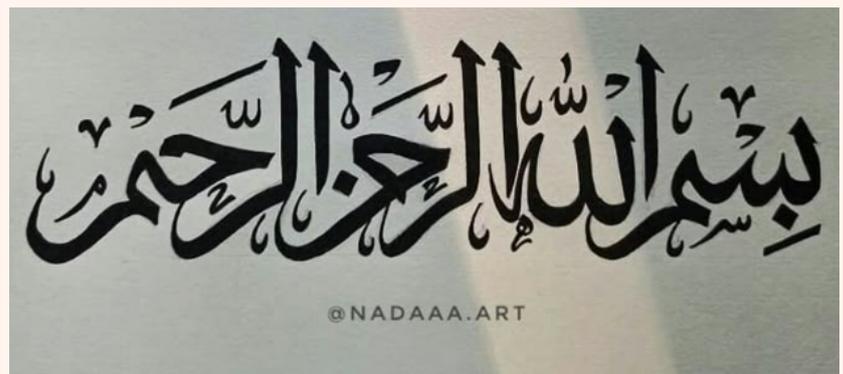
The Islamization of knowledge is a pivotal concept that has shaped the trajectory of Islamic civilization and its educational systems. This approach seeks to integrate Islamic principles and values into various fields of knowledge, including science, philosophy, and social sciences, to ensure that they align with Islamic teachings and contribute to the development of a coherent Islamic worldview. This abstract explores the impact of the Islamization of knowledge on Islamic civilization and education, examining its historical roots, contemporary significance, and implications for the future. Historically, the Islamization of knowledge emerged as a response to the challenges posed by modernity and Western influences on Islamic societies. It aims to preserve and promote the unique intellectual and cultural heritage of Islam while addressing contemporary issues through an Islamic lens. This approach has led to the establishment of educational institutions and scholarly programs that emphasize the integration of Islamic values with academic disciplines. In Islamic education, the Islamization of knowledge has influenced curriculum development, teaching methodologies, and research agendas. Educational institutions have adopted frameworks that incorporate Islamic ethics, jurisprudence, and worldview into their academic programs, aiming to produce scholars and professionals who are well-versed in both their fields and Islamic principles. This approach seeks to create a balance between traditional Islamic knowledge and modern scientific advancements, fostering a holistic understanding of the world. The impact of the Islamization of knowledge extends beyond education to broader aspects of Islamic civilization. It has contributed to the development of a distinct intellectual tradition that reflects the values and priorities of Islamic societies. This intellectual tradition encompasses various fields, including the sciences, humanities, and social sciences, and plays a role in shaping cultural and social policies.

Keywords: Islamization of knowledge, Islamic civilization, education, Islamic principles, intellectual tradition, curriculum development, modernity, scholarly programs, Islamic worldview, cultural heritage.

**Upcoming book chapter on
"Democratising Knowledge Production:
An Islamic Perspective" in 'Indic
Philosophies of Education' six volume
set of Philosophy of Education in Asia
by Bloosmsburry.**

Editors Liz Jackson & Duck Joo Kwak

Slated for publication in the upcoming Bloomsbury series *Philosophy of Education in Asia*, this chapter reframes international educational debate from an Islamic epistemology. It is critical of Eurocentric epistemological hierarchies and proposes a framework for rethinking education that is pluralistic, tradition-based, and epistemically resistant to erasure. By unifying Islamic philosophy with decolonial education theory, the article promotes an authentic worldwide conversation—one in which knowledge from the Islamic world is no longer ancillary, but central.



YOUTUBE VIDEO 1

Carrying Home in Their Hearts: Untold Stories of Afghan Refugees

The film delves into the rich but much-misunderstood lives of Afghan women, defying simplistic Western projections of them as victims. Afghan women were themselves historic agents of change. Queen Soraya Terzi and reforms in the early 20th century by King Amanullah introduced major advances, prohibiting child marriage, deterring polygamy, and encouraging education. These advances were not exported from the West but led by Afghan initiative and women themselves. But these gains were undone during the Mujahideen and then Taliban uprising, when their ultra-orthodox interpretation of Sharia law drastically limited women's rights. The international community, particularly the West, reacted to the post-2001 savior story, with the return of women to public life celebrated. But this story tended to overlook the richly complex and varied Afghan women's reality, most are torn between tradition and modernity, and their decisions are a reflection of that complexity. Autonomy is the concept at issue here. Taking a cue from Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen, the video discredits the notion of "adaptive preferences", where women internalize oppression unaware of the existence of options. It also discredits the belief that obedience automatically translates to passivity. Afghan women strategically make choices within patriarchal structures, cognizant of repercussions and dangers. Farukhunda Malikzada's 2015 lynching is a prime example of this complexity—her act of resistance ignited protest and also condemnation, exposing divided opinions even among Afghan women. In the end, the video makes a case for seeing Afghan women as reasonable, thoughtful agents struggling against oppression with strength. Respecting their autonomy implies working with their lived experience, not projecting external ideals onto them. Autonomy, it concludes, is relative and influenced by cultural, historical, and individual circumstances—on the need for empathy, not paternalism.



YOUTUBE VIDEO 2

Beyond the Headlines: The Complex Realities of Afghan Women's Lives

This film recounts the intimate and shared story of Afghan refugees, those who departed and those who remained behind. Trapped in decades of war, from Soviet occupation to Taliban tyranny, millions of Afghans had to leave their homes, taking memories, identity, and aspirations with them. Refugees experienced unimaginable terror, particularly women, who were the primary targets of violence and loss but came out as guardians and survivors rather than victims. The story is interspersed with individual testimonies: a father who held firm on principle during periods of political upheaval, a mother who covered herself up as a boy to stay alive, a bureaucrat whose world reduced overnight under the Taliban. Education, which had long been a lifeline, was lost to war, schools shut down, girls muzzled. For some, education in foreign lands became an act of defiance, keeping knowledge and optimism alive. The refugee experience bridges continents, from Pakistan and Iran to Europe and the U.S., but Afghanistan endures in language, food, festival, and narrative. In India, particularly at Jindal University, horizons were broadened for many Afghan students, introducing critical thinking and ambition. But success is a double-edged sword, with each step forward reminding them of the sacrifice that lay behind. Afghan refugees are not just displaced individuals. They are students, mothers, physicians, and kids who carry Afghanistan with them everywhere they go. Home for them is not a physical location but a vision of return, a promise of belonging and a future recreated from memory, suffering, and strength.



HOW TO CONNECT WITH US



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