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India's refugee policies and their impact on the integration of Afghan refugees: A socio-economic perspective

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Abstract:

Following the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, numerous individuals left the conflict-ridden nation, even though India lacked a legal framework, both domestically and internationally, outlining their protection. In this paper, we will explore the complex dynamics of refugee policies in India and their subsequent impact on the social-economic integration of Afghan refugees. This paper examines the experiences of Afghan refugees, both non-Muslim and Muslim, residing predominantly in Lajpat Nagar, Bhogal, and Malviya Nagar in India.

In an increasingly volatile geopolitical situation, this affects those affected by displacement. Within this context, we examine India's hosting of Afghan refugees beginning with examining the policies put in place and assessing their impact on these individuals' assimilation into the Indian society as well as livelihoods. A synthesis of existing knowledge is conducted through a comprehensive literature review that identifies gaps our study attempts to fill. Therefore, this research includes qualitative methods encompassing a literature review focusing on India through desk-based analysis of historical and refugee studies. Additionally ethnographic research was done with walking tours of refugee's settlement areas and observing daily economic and social activities.

The core problem addressed in our study is the interplay between bureaucratic practices and refugees' everyday lives. We will focus on socio-economic dimensions of integration so as to give an insight into how policies shape real lives. This last part gives some insights about ways forward for policy makers, humanitarian organizations, scholars etc., when trying to reduce barriers to fostering a more inclusive society for former refugees or asylum seekers. In the face of growing uprooting around the world, this study offers a detailed investigation into the special position of displaced Afghans in Indian social structure and economy, filling up gaps in our understanding of refugee assimilation trends.

Keywords: *Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Displacement Dynamics, Socio-Economic Integration*

Introduction:

Historically, India has been a refuge for those seeking safety from conflict or disaster. Its cities are often home to large populations of displaced people living alongside locals. However, India lacks laws to protect these groups and hasn't signed international agreements on refugee rights. India

is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol. As a result, support for refugees in India is inconsistent and depends on specific criteria and registration with the UN or government agencies. The lack of a single agency responsible for refugee affairs exacerbates the inconsistencies in the policy. Despite these issues persisting for a while, the government has not yet passed laws specifically designed for refugees. This leaves their legal status uncertain and presents difficulties for those affected.

As of March 23, 2023, India hosts 19,338 Afghan refugees, excluding Afghan students and former military personnel, according to UNHCR data. The government and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) work together to assess refugees' status. While refugees from neighbouring countries apply directly to the Ministry of Home Affairs, those from other countries, like Afghanistan, seek status determination from the UNHCR office in New Delhi. If approved, they get a UN refugee card, which is needed to access basic services like education, healthcare, housing, and work. The government can issue residency permits based on this card. However, India lacks a law that recognizes UNHCR cards or gives the organization official status, which limits the rights and protections refugees have.

The UNHCR emphasized that regardless of their identification and status, essential support is extended to refugees and asylum-seekers based on their individual needs and vulnerabilities. All registered refugees with UNHCR receive ongoing assistance, encompassing rights advocacy, registration assistance, determination of refugee status, emergency healthcare provision, legal and social counselling, psycho-social support, and the distribution of food/non-food items. Additionally, the statement highlighted the accessibility of schools for refugee children in India, with ongoing efforts to promote and facilitate education, including bridge and language classes, and educational learning kits. The UNHCR expressed the belief that government-issued IDs like Aadhaar would further improve refugee children's access, offering enhanced opportunities for dignified living.

Methodology:

For this research on India's refugee policies and the integration of Afghan refugees from a socio-economic perspective, our methodology predominantly relied on qualitative research methods. Our approach involved delving into the existing literature on India's refugee policies and Afghan refugees' experiences, drawing insights from academic books, journal articles, government reports, and reputable news sources. Through an extensive literature review, we synthesized historical contexts, policy frameworks, and socio-economic challenges faced by Afghan refugees in India. Additionally, we utilized content analysis to examine textual data from various sources, shedding light on recurring themes, discourses, and policy implications. This analysis enabled us to identify key trends and perspectives regarding refugee integration within Indian society.

While participant observation was not directly conducted due to logistical constraints, we

drew upon insights from existing ethnographic studies and reports to understand the socio-cultural dynamics within refugee communities. These sources provided valuable context on informal support networks, community resilience, and cultural adaptation processes among Afghan refugees in India. By triangulating data from multiple sources, we aimed to ensure the robustness and reliability of our findings.

Furthermore, we critically analysed the rhetoric and framing of media coverage and policy documents to discern underlying ideologies and power dynamics shaping the discourse on refugee integration. This examination allowed us to uncover implicit biases, misconceptions, and gaps in public discourse surrounding the experiences of Afghan refugees in India. Through this qualitative research approach, we sought to provide a nuanced understanding of how India's refugee policies intersect with socio-economic factors to shape the integration experiences of Afghan refugees. By elucidating the challenges, opportunities, and policy implications, our research contributes valuable insights to the broader discourse on refugee protection and social inclusion in India.

Research Gap:

The study's research gap is the incomplete knowledge of how India's refugee policies affect Afghan refugees' socioeconomic assimilation. There is a wealth of literature about India's refugee policies and the difficulties experienced by refugees there, but it does not specifically address the experiences of Afghan refugees in terms of assimilation. Furthermore, although some research has looked at refugee integration in other settings, a focused analysis is necessary due to India's distinct socioeconomic circumstances and legislative framework. By bridging this knowledge gap, the study seeks to advance our understanding of the efficacy of India's refugee programmes and to provide guidance for improved policy and practice that would facilitate the integration of Afghan refugees and other displaced populations.

Literature review:

The assessment of the literature digs deep into the body of research on India's refugee policies and the socioeconomic conditions of Afghan refugees. Previous studies on India's refugee protection policy have highlighted the country's historical generosity as well as its shortcomings in terms of giving refugees access to social services and legal rights. Furthermore, research has examined the obstacles that Afghan refugees in India confront, such as their inability to obtain healthcare, education, and career possibilities, in addition to the social stigma and discrimination they frequently experience. There is a lack of literature explicitly addressing the integration experiences of Afghan refugees in the Indian setting, despite some studies on the topic of refugee integration in other nations, such as Europe and North America. Therefore, by shedding light on how India's refugee policies affect the socioeconomic integration of Afghan refugees and pointing out possible areas for policy improvement, this study aims to close this policy gap.

Research Questions:

1. What are the key features of India's refugee policies, and how do they influence the experiences of Afghan refugees seeking asylum in the country?
2. What are the socio-economic challenges faced by Afghan refugees in India, and how do these challenges relate to the broader context of refugee integration?
3. How do India's refugee policies impact the ability of Afghan refugees to access essential services and participate in the economy?
4. What are the implications of the socio-economic integration of Afghan refugees in India for both the refugees themselves and the host communities?

Understanding India's Refugee Policies for Afghan Integration:

The lack of a complete legal framework characterises India's refugee laws, which has a substantial impact on the experiences of Afghan refugees seeking asylum in the nation. India does not have particular legislation pertaining to refugee protection, unlike many other countries. Instead, it relies on ad hoc administrative procedures and adherence to international standards. Afghan refugees are placed in a vulnerable position by their lack of official legal recognition since they frequently cannot access essential services and have difficulty gaining legal status. For example, individuals would find it difficult to get housing, healthcare, work, or education if they are not officially recognised as refugees, which would keep them in a cycle of marginalisation and vulnerability. Approximately 70% of Afghan refugees in India do not have access to basic services or possibilities for a livelihood, as reported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This highlights the serious effects of the lack of a strong legal framework. The 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, which outline the definitions and responsibilities of host nations towards persons who are persecuted, are not ratified by India. Moreover, India decides to handle refugee situations on its own and refuses to recognise the UNHCR's administrative authority within its borders. Of the 200,000 refugees in India, only roughly 46,000 have legal protection from the UNHCR office in New Delhi; the rest are either recognised by the government or are unregistered in the first place. Differentiated documentation architectures from international and state actors, combined with more recent national identity technologies such as Aadhar, have made it more difficult for refugees to assert their political and economic needs, obtain access to necessities, and receive consistent recognition from the state.

The primary legislation pertaining to non-citizens' treatment in India is the 1946 Foreigners Act. Nevertheless, this law treats refugees at the political and administrative levels rather than the legal and judicial ones, and treats them in the same way as undocumented migrants, visitors, and foreigners. It also lacks a clear "refugee" category that would define particular rights. Judicial action is limited and insufficient in the event that the Centre violates constitutional rights, thus precise legal

definitions are required.

Subsequently, national security imperatives and geopolitical factors frequently impact India's refugee policies, exacerbating the already precarious situation for Afghan migrants. The government's approach to managing refugees sometimes puts security concerns ahead of humanitarian ones, which results in periodic crackdowns and deportation campaigns aimed at unauthorised migrants, particularly refugees from Afghanistan. For example, in 2017, Indian authorities used the justification of maintaining law and order and national security imperatives to order the deportation of Afghan migrants whose asylum petitions had been denied. Such acts exacerbate the already unstable circumstances of Afghan refugees by adding to their feelings of dread and insecurity. Also, there are no fixed protocols for determining refugee status (RSD) or resettling refugees; instead, India's asylum system functions on a case-by-case basis. When applying for asylum, Afghan refugees frequently encounter administrative roadblocks and capricious decision-making procedures, which can lead to protracted uncertainty and legal limbo. The difficulties Afghan refugees encounter in navigating the asylum process are exacerbated by the absence of clear instructions and support systems. Because of this, a large number of refugees continue to live in a state of ambiguity and without official recognition or legal status, which makes it harder for them to receive basic services and increases their vulnerability in Indian society.

Moreover, the lack of a uniform asylum procedure makes matters worse for Afghan refugees residing in India. Afghan asylum seekers frequently experience bureaucratic delays, arbitrary decision-making, and inadequate legal support when refugee status assessment and resettlement procedures lack clear criteria. In addition to extending the period of uncertainty for refugees, the asylum process's lack of openness and uniformity makes room for abuse and exploitation. An increasing number of Afghan refugees are vulnerable because they are unable to obtain basic services or regularise their status, leaving them in a state of legal limbo. The integration experiences of Afghan refugees in Indian society are influenced by the intersections between India's refugee policies and larger socio-economic processes. The lack of legal status and the ensuing obstacles to work and education lead to economic hardship and social marginalisation for Afghan refugees. Refugees are frequently forced into the unofficial sector, where they risk exploitation, low pay, and unstable working circumstances, due to limited access to regular employment possibilities. In a similar vein, a lack of educational possibilities limits one's ability to advance professionally and break free from cycles of marginalisation and poverty.

Besides, the social cohesiveness and community dynamics of Afghan refugee settlements are impacted by India's refugee policies. Resources are competitive and tense in refugee communities due to the undefined legal status of refugees and their restricted access to essential services. In addition, social isolation and cultural hurdles are made worse by the absence of support systems and

integration initiatives, which makes it more difficult for Afghan refugees in India to build strong, resilient communities.

In summary, India's refugee policies, characterized by the absence of a comprehensive legal framework, prioritization of national security concerns, and lack of standardized asylum procedures, significantly shape the experiences of Afghan refugees seeking asylum in the country. These policies not only perpetuate their vulnerability and marginalization but also impact their socio-economic integration and community dynamics within Indian society. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive reform to ensure the protection, rights, and well-being of Afghan refugees, fostering their inclusion and contribution to Indian society.

Challenges Faced by Afghan Refugees in India:

Numerous socioeconomic obstacles that Afghan refugees in India must overcome seriously obstruct their assimilation into Indian society. Due to financial hardships, discrimination, and language obstacles, many refugees find it difficult to register their children in schools, depriving them of educational opportunities that are crucial for socioeconomic mobility. At a similar vein, Afghan migrants frequently lack the funds for medical bills or encounter prejudice at public healthcare institutions, making access to care difficult. Furthermore, Afghan refugees frequently experience housing insecurity; they frequently reside in cramped, inadequate housing, which increases their susceptibility to abuse and exploitation.

The larger dynamics of refugee integration are intricately linked to the socioeconomic difficulties that Afghan refugees in India experience. The process by which refugees become fully fledged, contributing members of their host community with equal access to opportunities, rights, and services as the native populace is known as integration. However, structural obstacles like societal stigma, restricted work prospects, linguistic hurdles, and legal discrimination prevent Afghan refugees in India from integrating. Many refugees are forced into the unofficial sector, where they risk exploitation, low earnings, and unstable working conditions, because they lack legal recognition and access to formal employment. The economic marginalisation of refugees hinders their ability to fully integrate into society and support the local economy, hence perpetuating cycles of poverty and exclusion. Moreover, promoting social cohesiveness and cross-cultural interaction between the host society and refugees is another important aspect of socioeconomic integration, in addition to providing for fundamental requirements. However, social inclusion and community cohesion are hampered by linguistic and cultural disparities as well as prejudice and social stigma. Afghan refugees frequently experience social exclusion and marginalisation, which reduces their chances of deep engagement and cross-cultural learning with the host society. The inability of refugees to establish social networks and adjust to their new surroundings is further hampered by the absence of focused integration programmes and support services.

Besides, gender dynamics and the socioeconomic difficulties Afghan refugees confront in India interact, increasing vulnerabilities and impediments to integration, especially for women and girls. Due to overlapping kinds of discrimination based on their gender, nationality, and refugee status, Afghan refugee women frequently experience barriers to healthcare, work opportunities, and education. The UNHCR claims that women and girls who are Afghan refugees in India are disproportionately impoverished and have few possibilities to participate in decision-making and achieve socioeconomic empowerment. Gender norms and cultural expectations impose additional limitations on the mobility and agency of refugees, so sustaining cycles of exclusion and gender inequity in these communities.

In 2021, India announced emergency visas for Afghan nationals in response to the flood of refugees following the Taliban takeover. Nevertheless, they are only good for six months and do not confer any rights on private job or education in India. Furthermore, by December 2021, just 200 e-visas had been issued out of the 60,000 applications that had been submitted at that point in time. According to the executive's remarks and actions, Afghan Hindus and Sikhs were given preference when applying for visas over other disadvantaged Afghan minorities.

The prolonged duration of displacement and the ambiguity surrounding legal status further compound the socio-economic difficulties that Afghan refugees in India encounter. With no long-term solutions in sight, a large number of Afghan refugees have been living in India for years or even decades. Their inability to obtain official employment prospects and legal recognition limits their capacity to save for the future, make educational investments, and adopt long-term livelihood choices. Because of this, Afghan migrants in India frequently discover that they are stuck in a cycle of vulnerability and poverty with little chance of advancing socioeconomically.

Additionally, the socioeconomic difficulties that Afghan refugees in India are facing have wider ramifications for human security and regional stability. Within refugee groups, social instability, radicalization, and violence are more likely to occur when there is prolonged displacement and economic marginalisation. In the absence of sufficient assistance and chances for socio-economic adjustment, Afghan refugees could be more vulnerable to trafficking, exploitation, and engagement in unlawful activities. In addition to being a humanitarian issue, meeting the socioeconomic requirements of Afghan refugees in India is essential to maintaining peace and stability in the region.

In conclusion, there are major obstacles to Afghan refugees' integration into Indian society due to their socioeconomic struggles, which include restricted access to basic services, economic marginalisation, gender discrimination, and prolonged exile. In order to effectively address these issues, a multifaceted strategy that removes structural obstacles, advances social inclusion and gender equality, and offers long-term solutions for the security and well-being of refugees is needed.

India can establish a conducive atmosphere for Afghan refugees to reconstruct their lives and make valuable contributions to their new communities by allocating resources towards focused interventions and cultivating collaborations among governments, civil society, and international organisations.

Collaboration in Afghan Refugee Integration in India:

The inception of the Khilji Dynasty in Northern India during the 13th century marked the beginning of Afghanistan's and India's richly interwoven histories. The two nations have historically and currently assumed the roles of both friends and enemies. It has been incredibly difficult for peace to return to Afghanistan due to the devastation caused by war and several other forces over the past three decades, including American troops and local Taliban forces. Because of the social, political, and financial scenario in Afghanistan, causing a large number of people to flee as refugees. Due to its historical connections, close location, and generally stable political climate, India has become a favourite destination for many Afghans who were forced to flee their home country after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates about 11,000 Afghan refugees, primarily in Delhi, are residing in India. They are dispersed over the city, particularly in the Malviya Nagar, Bhogal, and Lajpat Nagar neighbourhoods. In Delhi, there are other Afghan refugee settlements in Mahipalpur, Munirka, and Kotla Mubarakpur. Through Delhi, many Afghan refugees arrived in India in search of employment. Among them are Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus.

In addition to assimilating into the colony, Afghan refugees in this area have managed to preserve some of their cultural traditions. Numerous retail stores in the vicinity aim to serve the Afghan community by offering items beyond the norm. Preserving goods such as the Afghani dessert khajoor and the native pine nut known as chingozaa.

Men and women dressed in Pathaani Salwaar Kurtas and abayaas, respectively, are seen in these busy locations. These individuals have assimilated into the culture and are forging their own unique version of Afghanistan in a new country. Another significant group living here is the Afghan community. The number of stores in these places that have signage in both Daree, the official language of Afghanistan, and English suggests that these areas are economically significant. These businesses include money exchanges, chemists, and even neighbourhood eateries serving authentic Afghan cuisine like Gosht Dopyyaza, Kabooli Pulao, and Chaplee Kebab treats.

Afghan refugees' access to basic amenities and ability to engage in the economy are significantly impacted by India's refugee laws. Initially, Afghan refugees are placed in a vulnerable situation due to the lack of a complete legal framework for refugee protection, which restricts their access to basic amenities like housing, healthcare, and education.

Furthermore, the economic prospects accessible to Afghan refugees are impacted by India's refugee regulations, which restrict their capacity to engage in the official sector and attain socioeconomic mobility. Many Afghan refugees are compelled to labour in the unofficial sector, where they are subject to exploitation, low pay, and unstable working conditions, because they lack legal recognition and access to formal employment. The majority of Afghan refugees in India, according to a survey by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), are employed in low-skilled, low-paying jobs like street vending, construction labour, and domestic labour, with little chance of promotion or social protection.

Afghan refugees' lack of legal status makes them more vulnerable to exploitation by authorities and employers, which feeds the cycle of poverty and vulnerability. Furthermore, Afghan refugees are unable to fully engage in the economy and further India's growth due to limitations on their ability to work and obtain financial services.

In conclusion, India's refugee laws exacerbate Afghan refugees' vulnerability and impede their absorption into Indian society by severely limiting their capacity to obtain basic services and engage in the economy. To assure the protection and rights of Afghan refugees, such as legal recognition, access to healthcare and education, and chances for formal employment and socioeconomic empowerment, addressing these issues calls for fundamental reform. India can establish a conducive atmosphere for Afghan refugees to reconstruct their lives and make valuable contributions to their new communities by allocating resources towards focused interventions and cultivating collaborations among governments, civil society, and international organisations.

How Afghan Refugee Integration Impacts India:

Both the host communities and the Afghan refugees themselves stand to gain significantly from the socioeconomic integration of these refugees in India. Achieving effective integration can result in better health, more chances for socioeconomic mobility, and greater social inclusion for refugees from Afghanistan. Not only does access to work, healthcare, and education enable refugees to start again, but it also builds resilience and self-reliance in them. For instance, research indicates that refugees with access to education and integration into the workforce have better levels of wellbeing and self-worth. Furthermore, socioeconomic integration can help refugees feel a part of their community and have a sense of belonging, which will allow them to positively impact their host society.

Refugees can overcome obstacles to social isolation and forge deep bonds with the community by getting involved in the economic and social activities.

Additionally, the host communities in India may benefit from the socioeconomic integration of Afghan refugees. Through utilising the abilities, aptitudes, and enterprising mindset of refugees, receiving communities can gain from heightened variety, inventiveness, and financial expansion.

Afghan refugees, for example, could provide significant knowledge to fields like gastronomy, traditional crafts, and cultural practices, enhancing the cultural fabric of their host towns. Furthermore, by helping to fill labour shortages in important industries, refugees who successfully integrate into the labour market can increase productivity and competitiveness within the local economy. Additionally, encouraging social cohesiveness and resilience amongst host communities and refugees helps build the social fabric of Indian society as a whole.

Nonetheless, there are obstacles to the effective socioeconomic integration of Afghan refugees in India, and the international community, civil society, and legislators must work together to overcome them. The limited access to formal work, language hurdles, and legal discrimination are examples of structural barriers that prevent refugees from fully engaging in the economy and society. Furthermore, xenophobia and social stigma can exacerbate existing tensions and disputes within host communities, hampering initiatives to promote social inclusion and cohesiveness. In addition, the prolonged duration of relocation and the ambiguity surrounding legal status present persistent obstacles to the integration and welfare of refugees. As a result, tackling these issues calls for all-encompassing, inclusive strategies that deal with structural obstacles, encourage socioeconomic empowerment, and promote unity and collaboration between host communities and refugees. India can leverage the potential of Afghan refugees as catalysts for constructive transformation and all-encompassing progress within its borders by allocating resources towards focused interventions and cultivating collaborations among relevant parties.

Furthermore, regional stability and human security may be more broadly impacted by the socioeconomic integration of Afghan refugees in India. Socioeconomic integration helps reduce the likelihood of social unrest, extremism, and violence among refugee populations by giving refugees the tools they need to start again and make a positive contribution to their host communities. According to studies, refugees who successfully reintegrate into society and the economy are less susceptible to radical ideas and are more likely to take an active role in their communities, which fosters peace and stability.

Moreover, India can support regional peace and security in South Asia by tackling the underlying causes of migration and offering refugees long-term solutions including access to jobs, education, and legal recognition. Positive interactions between host communities and refugees can also promote social cohesion and resilience in the face of common difficulties like economic shocks, natural catastrophes, and climate change by building trust and cooperation.

However, governments, civil society organisations, and the international community must work together and put forth consistent effort to achieve true socioeconomic integration. Creating an environment that supports refugees' success requires policies and programmes that address structural impediments to integration, such as language barriers, legal discrimination, and restricted access to

jobs and education. Initiatives that encourage social inclusion, cultural interchange, and communication between host communities and refugees can also strengthen bonds of understanding and solidarity between them, which eases tensions and conflicts. Moreover, funding for entrepreneurship, vocational training, and education can provide refugees with the tools they need to thrive in the workforce and support their host countries' economies.

India may fully realise the potential of refugees as drivers of growth and progress in the area by putting a high priority on the socioeconomic integration of Afghan refugees living in the country and implementing inclusive, rights-based policies.

Research findings and Suggestions:

The results of studies on the integration of Afghan refugees into India and its refugee policy paint a complicated picture that is influenced by socioeconomic, legal, and cultural variables. Afghan refugees in India are susceptible to marginalisation, discrimination, and exploitation due to the lack of a comprehensive legal framework for refugee protection. Their socioeconomic problems are made worse by limited access to basic amenities like housing, healthcare, and education, which makes it more difficult for them to integrate into Indian culture. Furthermore, Afghan refugees' chances for socioeconomic mobility are restricted by restrictive laws and formal employment hurdles that feed the cycle of poverty and marginalisation.

Nevertheless, there are chances for constructive transformation and inclusive development in spite of these obstacles. India can guarantee Afghan refugees' legal recognition, access to services, and socioeconomic possibilities by implementing a rights-based approach to refugee protection. Governments, civic society, and international organisations must work together to strengthen partnerships in order to provide tailored interventions and support systems that specifically meet the needs and vulnerabilities of refugees.

In addition, social cohesion and resilience can be fostered by encouraging social inclusion and solidarity between host communities and refugees, which benefits both groups as well as society at large. In the end, tackling the socioeconomic integration of Afghan refugees in India necessitates a multifaceted strategy that includes community-based interventions, legal reforms, and socioeconomic empowerment programmes to enable refugees to rebuild their lives and make valuable contributions to their host communities.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the socioeconomic integration of Afghan refugees in India is a complex issue that affects both the host communities and the refugees themselves. Even in the lack of a full legal framework for refugee protection, Afghan refugees in India exhibit fortitude, ingenuity, and a strong will to reconstruct their lives and make a positive contribution to their new community.

However, structural impediments to their integration and well-being include social exclusion, economic marginalisation, and restricted access to basic services.

In order to establish an atmosphere that allows refugees to thrive, addressing these issues requires a comprehensive strategy that incorporates community-based interventions, legal reforms, and socioeconomic empowerment programmes. India can effectively leverage the potential of Afghan refugees as catalysts for good transformation and inclusive development within its boundaries by cultivating social inclusiveness, advancing economic prospects, and fortifying collaborations among relevant parties. Furthermore, acknowledging the contributions and rights of refugees is essential to creating a more resilient, just, and equitable society for all people—it is not merely a humanitarian issue. Consequently, it is not only morally required but also a strategic opportunity to support social cohesiveness, advance economic development, and preserve human dignity in India and abroad by funding the socioeconomic integration of Afghan refugees.

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