



Extraction of Afghanistan's gemstones and its adverse effects on the economy of Afghanistan

Mohammad Zaman Samoon

Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Faculty of Education, Paktia University, Paktia, Gardiz, Afghanistan

Abstract

In the northern part of the southwest and south of Afghanistan, there are many areas of precious stones that are found in acceptable colorful monuments and precious stones in their areas, and have been extracted from non-technical and illegal times since ancient times, and this process is still in progress. The political and social crises of the country have made this process faster, these non-technical and illegal processes will continue until the government has established its rule over the entire territory of the country and does not allow the defendants to pay heavy penalties that will cause the economy to shine every day. The country suffered a lot of damages has done.

Keywords: mining, non-technical and non-chemical, damage to the country, strengthening of MAFIA groups, Deflation of the economy of the country

Introduction

Afghanistan is mountainous and geologically very complex country and it is famous for gemstones and other precious stones. Descriptions of all these stones are available in many cultural and literature of Afghanistan. Due to those important gemstones and precious stones Afghanistan is the homeland for the extraction and finding of these gemstones. The best stones or minerals are the emerald of Punjshir and Jagdalak, Beryl of Kuner and Nooristan, Lapis of Badakhshan and Ruby-mineral Spreading on the River of Amo. Tourmaline in the Kuner Province, Aquamarine and consert of Nooristan.

In short we can say that the best places for finding expensive and precious stones are at the East and North East of the country and it can be produce by pegmatite's of the Salangs of Kunar, Nangrahar, Laghman, Kapisa, Nooristan, Badakhshan and Panjshir. The ancientness of Lapis is more than three thousand years. And also Semi precious stones or gemstones and minerals can be found under endogenic and exogamy conditions in different places of the country. This is true that the prize of a thing can be known by its wisdom but at the other side the demand and supply of market are the main economic factors for the deflation of products.

These gemstones and minerals are very rare and in low amount naturally but at the other side its chemical/physical qualities and technical abilities there is more Industrial demand. These colored and precious gemstones and minerals are divided in different categories in the world; the simple division is of two types

- 1) Gemstones
- 2) Decoration stones

The social and political violence in the country provided opportunities for selfish and greedy people to take the capital of nation. Illegally and non-technically by the help of local Mafia. At the other side the process, polishing and business of these mineral resources and stones plays a big role in the economy of country, but modern techniques and technical experience should be needed for it. Which we do not have till now and the government should take care of it.

Importance of research

Young pegmatite's raised in all the mountains of Hindukush, which formatted beautiful colored gemstones and minerals, beside that less available elements resources are also founded which have high prizes at international markets.

Value of research

Those places which are far from the cities and effected by the war and faces lot of violence's and sorrows are many time not in the reach of government. So these beneficial expensive resources are steal and looted non-technically and illegally by local warlords, Mafia and some groups of neighboring countries.

Aims of research

1. To stop the loot and stealing of these expensive national riches.
2. Due to non-technical extraction, those resources which are next to that should must been protect from damages.
3. Resistance environment should not be harm.

Research question

What is non-technical and illegal extraction?

Methods and materials

For reaching the aims and importance of this subject and on the basis of research question it is needed that to find historic feedback, social, economic and physical effects of the gemstones and semi expensive stones and minerals, non-technical and illegal extraction and the activities of anarchists, situation of mines, reasons and research on the legal extraction of mines. Feedback of the illegal and nontechnical extraction of the expensive and semi expensive gemstones in the country. Extraction of gemstones in our country is not new, but it is mentioned in ancient text and writings. From the ancient Pharaohs of Egypt, the Remises IV (1352-1336) years BC, in the statue of the queen of Nefertiti wife of Remises IV) the eyes of the statue were made from the Lapis of Afghanistan. Some academic

sources also says that Afghanistan is the first country of central Asia having ancient history of mines extraction. The lapis of Badakhshan were sending by Caravans to the different places of the world thousands years ago. (63-9)

The extraction of this mines is having the history of 4000 years and few other sources i.e. the history of Tebari, Hadodolalam, Char maqalaarizi, history of behiqi, Tabaqat e Nasari also shows the history of extraction of mines in Afghanistan some 2000 years back (68:5). An ancient history the Nooristan were called Beloristan which means the place of Crystals and until today the gemstones of Nooristan are precious and best in the world crystals (8:8)

The Beryl of Afghanistan is also mentioned in some Arabic poem and writings i.e. Astakhari (951), Al Talibi (961-1038) Ibnhogal (978 AD), IbnBatota (1325-1354) and Amir Temor also get benefits from the beryl of Afghanistan, in 14th century these mines were under the control of Mugham empire (3:43).

Social, economic and physical effects of illegal and non-technical extraction

Unemployed, greedy and selfish people of certain place can make groups for the illegal and non-technical extraction of gemstone and minerals. Everybody taking oath of honesty and truthfulness but above mentioned structure do not allow then to work sincerely because to their own self benefits. Their controversial division of benefits and shares results in division of their relations, the problems reaches to the common public. At the other side the Mafia and looters of gemstone resources making the security verse in the area to protect government officials to enter in the area and make way for their own selves.

Economic Aspects

The anarchist extraction groups making three types of contract

The group leader invest in every single expense and will get everything if he achieve. The leader will also pay all residential equipment expenses, wages, shares of local forces, keeping security and salaries of all the workers

The leader invests in all the expenses but every member will have its share in income, the leader provides residential facilities, purchases equipment's but gives share to every member in income, but large part of income belongs to leader.

The expenses and income shares between the members, they all share their work and participation, for solving external issues and problems the leader get more share in income.

It is necessary or mentions that behavior of illegal and non-technical extraction of gemstones belongs to the smugglers of the gemstones of that area and traders. They will not contact others without permission. At the other side the extracted gains will also not sold to others and will not transfer to international markets, but Mafia Traders put their own prizes. The scale of the expensive jewelries also belongs to Mafia dealers. Unfortunately those workers who works for weeks and months and waits for some good income in return of their hard work are not able to reach or transfer their produce to a normal market, because every time they are under the eyes of Mafia and smugglers and there are lot chances for looting on the way if they wish to transfer. So now this belongs to Mafia dealers that on how much Pakistani rupees they want to buy? And then the dealers transfer it to the jewelry market of Namak Mandi in

Peshawar and sold it on the prizes of international markets on Dollars. (157:3)

Physical and health protection issues

What do you think that working in dark, narrow mountains, breaking stones and boring will affect the health of worker? These caves are much narrow that no one can freely move inside, the workers must adjust their body by banding in caves but still their elbows, head and hands touches with stones and rocks, consistent injuries, the pressure of darkness on their eyes and also they do not get proper sun energy, there is no vitalization system, few people only breath in limited area and the most worst is that they use diesel boring machines which decreases oxygen and from other side increases smokes and dust of rocks, which makes breathing difficult and the sound of boring machines effects the ears and mind which cause headache even at night. As we know that gemstones and semi-precious stones have selenic structure and during the boring of these selenic stones they produce selenic dust and smoke in which the workers must breath. The breathing of this selenic dust decrease the function of lungs, this disease is now common in all workers. During extraction there is more chance of being effected by radiations. (69:1).

Working equipment and search

First they search for the pegmatite at the site and search for natural cut stones (geologically cut), under the supervision of experienced instructors are looks minerals with loop and mirrors to find out what other minerals should be there.

The move here and there for weeks and months to search rocks and pegmatite, break rocks and stones, so they can find salted shaped minerals which are the mother rock of precious stones. Small boring machine making holes for the filling of explosion powder and also spreading explosion connections to explode form far.

After explosion if they find any sign, then they broke small rock blocks with mallet and hammer, so they can bring out original minerals. So a gem broke up by hitting of hammer on it, and spreading in pieces, like a mirror. Then the workers felt sorry for those utter sorrowful words on tongue, but didn't get any benefit likewise, a group found beautiful bright and unbroken tourmaline crystals. And given to a dealer and get a good and high prize for it.

By blasting in resources, pieces and blocks tourmaline spreading in pieces, hitting of the hammers done safely but no crystals are bring out safely, cracks are being created in crystals and the same dealer is not buying one-third prize.

Division and Recognition of precious (gemstones), Minerals, semi-precious stones (Decoration stones)

Most of the colored minerals and stones having beautiful color, technical abilities and qualities and according to the production of market comes in the above three mentioned category, time and place are also other factors in division which allow the colored stones and crystals to put in above mentioned division, these beautiful colored stones and minerals have different indigenize, exogamy and meta morphogenetic sources. Before this there were some more different divisions. Kevelenko. E.Y 2000 is the best classification of modern times which have more value in market and which can be further divided in three types.

1. Precious gemstones

Jewelry, gemstones are having the characteristics of beauty,

Stability and the lack of existence or their less weight and volumes is other aspect. High industrial (physical) value and high price of these gemstones cause for supporting countries money notes and people measures these gemstones or minerals by carat.

- 2. Beautiful crystals and gemstones** are used to build rocks and called it gemology. The price of these stones are less than gemstones. These stones are precious and have interacting colors, but don't have good market or these stones are so much in market. These stones measures or scale on Kg (kilo gram).
- 3. Gracious Stones with art** are used for Decoration, because of their beautiful and attractive colors, and for their granular structure.

We can make office and home dishes and equipment from these stones. Some societies use it for jewelry. These stones are measures with ton. (6:278).

The legal extraction of gemstones from mines Afghanistan constitutional law, article 9, chapter 1 says: Mines and other subterranean resources as well as historical relics shall be the property of the state. Protection, management and proper utilization of public properties as well as natural resources shall be regulated by law.

This article is common for that reason. Ministry of Mines and Petroleum monitor the law of mines. This code of conduct is structured with 20 chapters and 117 articles in 1393. And published with official magazine, series article 1143rd volume. Some of these article are doing apply from people.

Article Eighteen: Mining contracts

- Mining Contracts shall be implemented upon the approval of the government.
- The government may delegate such powers to the cabinet of ministers.
- The [Mining] Contract shall be prepared in accordance with this law and shall guarantee the stability, the term and conditions related to the party to the Mining Contract, and shall be valid with regard to taxes and customs duties, Mineral Royalties and other conditions upon the date of conclusion of the Mining Contract.
- Upon effectiveness of a Mining Contract, the party awarded the Mining Contract shall be deemed the Holder of Mineral Rights. The Ministry of Mines and Industries shall register [in favor of such party] and grant the relevant Licenses or Authorizations.

Article sixteen: Eligibility to obtain mineral rights

- (2) The following are not eligible to obtain Mineral Rights:
- High ranking state officials, magistrates, members of the Armed Forces, the Police and the Security Services, other public employees;
 - Any individual who does not have legal capacity;
 - Any Person that is bankrupt;
 - Any Person convicted by a valid conclusive [non-appealable] judgment of the authorized court, for a period of two years of imprisonment; and
 - Any Person who's Mineral Right has been prematurely withdrawn, cancelled or terminated.
- (3) Any person with a foreign citizenship as referred in

paragraph one of this article shall be obliged to establish and maintain a permanent representative office in Afghanistan or to appoint [and maintain] an authorized agent resident in Afghanistan.

Also the law of mines says in its 23rd, 29th, 41st, 68th, 69th and 72nd articles about mines clearly. They says: mines are related to government and no one can't extract it illegally and without legal permission/permit.

Illegal extract and its reasons

As you know every mine and natural resource are the property of government and no one can extract it without permission and legal license. Who extract it without legal permit, it's called illegal extraction.

We count below reasons for illegal extraction

- Location of mines, where are mines discovered, is a way from government vision.
- Insecurity
- High economic value
- Unemployment
- The Relief and Geological Structures of earth, which shows mineral of the earth surface.
- Compare to other metal metrology, it doesn't wants more process.
- The tools and equipment of extraction are simple and ordinary.
- The transport of stones are easy and comfort to hide.
- The doer of these actions are didn't get punished. (4:78).

The extraction of country's few mines

After arbiter extract of mines, during transfer to cities. On the way there are several illegal obstacles in front of them. They pay illegally to ministry of interior Affairs, ministry of finance, ministry of defense and transport authorities, and comfort their traffic and transferring process of mines. Also, governments have some contracts with some persons in insecurity areas, and they can't control and observe the process of mines' extraction.

When someone get legal contract, they also extract some other mines illegally, than they forget government benefits. They transfer gemstones to other countries, when they arrive to government area, just shows the legal permit and hide their illegal extraction materials. When someone get legal permit, they misuse it, and extract other mines.

The governments don't have any kind of supervision and control on mines. There is so much corruption, gunmanship, and misuse of power. The ruling of warlords, and there is still a flow of illegal extraction. (1:30).

The organization of monitoring on Afghanistan mines and natural resources reported in 2013, says: there are occurs so much conflict in Kohi-Safi, Badakhshan and Khost between warlords and police, national senate members, parliament members and other parties are also involved. (1:154).

There are 720 extract places in Kabul; these are still progress illegal extraction. (1:50)

The ministry of Mines and petroleum reported in their website, says: Punjshir have 9 places of emerald extraction, also Aqlat, Zahra khailgechari and Paryan's emerald mines still extracting in 50 parts.

People and especially warlords extract these mines illegally. One of gemstone seller from Kabul city says: the people bring gemstones from Punjshir and Badakhshan and sold it secretly.

The technical and non-technical extraction

Technical extraction are the extraction with the modern science (Geology, Mechanic and the science of Rocks) to extract minerals and rocks with low expense and high quality, with less investment without affecting work environment health and other natural resources (8:92).

But, non-technical extraction is to extract are source by few people without care and to avoid side effects on health and when they find something; they don't think and care about their measure and proportion.

They just find the mineral and resource and extract it, but they don't think about environment and workers health. They use simple tools and use heavy bomb blast to extract a mine, but there they just mix every mineral with different rocks and then spread everywhere. They don't care about rock's new and little cracks, and these cracks make the value of rocks low.

Reasons of non-technical extraction

With all other reasons, in our society we can see below reasons accordingly:

1. The ugly hands of local MAFIA, who just think about their own benefits.
2. The lake and un presence of technical education.
3. Lake of investment on mines, usage of old ordinary tools, which can't exactly extracts the crystals of mineral.
4. The competition of competence groups for getting more, for that reason they blast in every main rock's cracks to bring mentioned things in their ownership.
5. low cost workers, worse quality tools, which results less work and restlessness cause them to try for more and they lose their experiences and this process are still in progress.
6. Often the warlords take some technical and able persons to extract mines under their control. Then they burned them under mines rocks or they stole and kill them on the way.
7. Those kind of illegal and non-technical groups have conflict every day between each other's by swearing and have verbal conflicts.

Conclusion

1. As we know from previous four decades there is an affection of non-technical and illegal extraction of minerals and gemstones above our social stability and national natural economy. Incomes of these mines are still flow in to gunman pockets and mafia groups instead of government income.
2. Also with these illegal and license extract groups, there are a lot of professional and experience abroad persons or workers who comes from Peshawar and they extracts pegmatite in east and north east of Afghanistan, and that's the vulnerable doing for our country.
3. For legal extraction of minerals and mines, there is a very comfortable system of making license or registration, and that need just 10000 Afghanis. But every person can't take mines license legally.
4. Present law is misuse for mines stealing empowerment and improvement conspiracy. These mines are misused by government's opposition and armed groups and MAFIA. And that's a very big back kick to Afghanistan economy.

Recommendation

1. We proposed to government to improve their power in those areas of mines and punish them for illegal extraction of mines.
2. Those of contracts which is against mines law's article: 16 should be discard.
3. The permits of those should be discarded where the empowerments of government is not exist.
4. For increasing of income, the organization of procurement and contracts should avoid corruption and should observe, and control the process of incomes.
5. We have recommend the ministry of foreign affairs, who have strategic contracts with common-wealth countries and UN to look after afghan mines and band the illegal trading of our country mines and mines particles.

References

1. Alleni, Abdul Rais. The technical and non-technical extraction of Afghanistan gemstones and precious stones, nature magazine, volume 43, Afghanistan Science Academy, 1396.
2. Taniwal, Mohammad Zarif, Afghanistan general Geography, Karwan publication, 1389.
3. Zaki, Mohammad Anwar, Afghanistan mines, 1394.
4. Zarlatoon, First year, first volume, 1393.
5. Zarlatoon, First year, Second volume, 1393.
6. Sahak, Naqibullah, Non-metal mines Science, Kabul, Poly technic University (KPU), 1391.
7. Samon, Mohammad Zaman. The historical and Geographical importance of Lajward way, Seminar, Paktia University, 1397.
8. Ezatullah. Geomorphology, Ministry of Higher Education Publication, 1397.
9. Ghubar, Ghulam Mohammad, Afghanistan in the way of history, 1368.