Afghanistan's fragile future

While the United States is planning a decisive summer battle for control of Kandahar – heartland of the Taliban – neighbouring states are preparing for an endgame scenario with old rivalries renewed

UNITED STATES

President **Barack Obama** has set a July 2011 deadline to start withdrawing troops. **U.S. strategy is firstly to weaken Taliban militarily before bringing them to negotiating table**

AFGHANISTAN

President **Hamid Karzai** fears U.S. abandonment. Russia is allegedly supplying arms to Tajik-led **Northern Alliance militias** that oppose Taliban and Karzai's weak coalition government

RUSSIA

Fears of instability spilling from Afghanistan into Central Asian **"Stans"** – former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. **Bloody revolt in April deposed Kyrgyzstan's president. Kremlin fears Uzbekistan could be next**

CHINA

Seeks vast untapped mineral deposits in Afghanistan. New highway from Kashgar to Khorog will open up route for Chinese goods. **Wants Afghan stability, even if it means Taliban in government rather than Western-style democracy**

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100 miles
160km

Pashtun populations

Pakistan **28 million**
Afghanistan **12 million**

KAZAKHSTAN
Tashkent

Manas airbase: Only U.S. base in Central Asia

KYRGYZSTAN

Bishkek

RUSSIA

UZBEKISTAN

Kashgar

C H I N A

Al Qaeda has called on China's Uighur Muslim rebels to start new front

TURKMENISTAN

TAJIKISTAN

Dushanbe

Khorog

Chinese controlled

Ashgabat

AFGHANISTAN

I R A N

Kabul

K A S H M I R

India-Pakistan Line of Control

I N D I A

Islamabad
Peshawar
Lahore

Al Qaeda's 313 Brigade has threatened Commonwealth Games in October

Kandahar

Tribal areas

Quetta   **P A K I S T A N**

Troops in Afghanistan

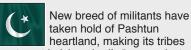|	
U.S.	94,000
UK	9,500
Germany	4,665
France	3,750
Italy	3,300
Canada	2,830
Poland	2,515
Netherlands	1,885
Turkey	1,795
Australia	1,550
Spain	1,270
Romania	1,010
Other *(34 nations)*	6,025
Total	134,095

IRAN

Since 2005 election of President *Mahmoud Ahmadinejad*, Tehran has adopted more aggressive stance against U.S. role in Afghanistan. Iran wants to expand its non-oil exports to Kabul, currently worth $500 million a year

PAKISTAN

New breed of militants have taken hold of Pashtun heartland, making its tribes a prime target in Islamabad's "war against terror." Unheard of in Pakistan before 9/11, suicide bombers claimed around 3,000 lives last year, most blamed on Al Qaeda-linked *Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)*. **Pakistan's poor counter-terrorism record has raised concern over safety of its nuclear arsenal**

INDIA

Deadly attacks on India's embassy in Kabul have been blamed on Pakistan-based *Haqqani* militants and *Inter-Services Intelligence* directorate. Al Qaeda and *Lashkar-e-Taiba* – blamed for 2008 Mumbai attacks – are accused of trying to restart guerrilla war in Kashmir which has been dormant since 2004. **Some 68,000 people have been killed in region since 1989**