

Enhancing India's Role in Afghanistan

Why is the issue?

\n\n

India must expand its development role in Afghanistan further to enhance its security profile.

\n\n

What are the geo-political developments?

\n\n

\n

- India recently hosted both U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani for separate bilateral meets.

\n

- Also, USA & Afghanistan for the first time have been explicit in censoring Pakistan for its soft approach towards terrorism.

\n

- USA's new South Asia policy has proposed to increase its military footprint in Afghanistan.

\n

- Contrary to the past, the policy has underscored India's centrality in the 'Af-Pak' theatre.

\n

- These developments present an opportunity for a formidable tri-lateral alliance in the subcontinent between Washington, Kabul & New Delhi.

\n

\n\n

What has been Kabul's response?

\n\n

\n

- Kabul has viewed these developments positively - thereby making a clear pro-India shift as opposed to Pakistan.

\n

- Mr.Ghani even suggested that Afghanistan would restrict Pakistan's access to Central Asia if it is not given access to India.

- \n
- Indo-Afghan air corridor is also seen as an effective response to circumvent Pakistan's obstructionism.
- \n
- Notably, India was even promptly briefed on the in the sixth Quadrilateral Coordination Group meeting.
- \n
- The meet was between Afghanistan, U.S., China & Pakistan for reviving peace talks with the Taliban.
- \n

\n\n

What has been India's role currently?

\n\n

- \n
- In recent years, India has taken a high-profile role in Afghanistan.
- \n
- It is one of the biggest donors to Afghanistan, having committed \$3.1 billion since 2001.
- \n
- Recently, it announced that it will be working on 116 new development projects over the next 30 areas.
- \n
- India also envisions enhancing the capacity of the Afghan state and its security forces to fight their own battles more effectively.
- \n
- This is in line with the requirements of the Afghan government as well as the international community.
- \n
- Also, the current conducive conditions have demanded an increase in Indian activities - an opportunity that needs to be effectively capitalised.
- \n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Hindu

\n