India’s Afghanistan Strategy

Why in news?

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- The government has plans to train Afghani police officers in India.
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- This expanded security assistance to Kabul also sends a strong geopolitical message to various stakeholders.
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What is Afghanistan’s position?

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- The country saw the highest civilian casualties last year since the 2001 U.S.-led invasion.
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- Increasingly, these casualties are coming not from Afghanistan’s border areas but its cities and villages.
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- Only a professionally trained police force can maintain peace in such situations.
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- India has also announced 116 smaller “new development projects” across Afghanistan.
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- Hence, a Police force with strong fundamentals also becomes mandatory for protecting such projects in irrigation, housing and schools from the terror groups.
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What geo-political message does India convey?

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- **For Afghan -** India plans to expand its security assistance to Afghanistan by training police officers, as part of a UNDP project.
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- This indicates a continued commitment for Afghan's security & stability by active capacity building.
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- **For Pakistan** - and other countries in the region that deal with the Taliban, India's action conveys that it will not be deterred.
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- This is reinforced by New Delhi's decision to send engineers to refurbish several non-functional Soviet-era planes and to repair the helicopters that India donated to Afghanistan last year.
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- **For U.S -** and its NATO allies, India makes it clear that will play a part in putting Afghanistan back on its feet in its own way.
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What message does Trade convey?

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- The decision to enhance security training comes on the heels of an India-Afghanistan trade fair in Delhi.
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- Regardless of actual transactions made, it will demonstrate a determination in exploring business possibilities.
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- Overcoming transit obstacles posed by Pakistan will be discussed.
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- The India-Afghan-Iran trilateral arrangement to circumvent geographical hurdles and the commitment to complete the 'Chabahar port' development project soon is another reassurance.
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- A sustainable trade route from South Asia to Central Asia is therefore clearly in the making.
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Source: The Hindu

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