



UN Report on the Taliban Regime

For Prelims: Afghanistan, Taliban, Islamic State, Location of Afghanistan

For Mains: India and its Neighbourhood, Effect of Policies & Politics of Countries on India's Interests, Crisis in Afghanistan and its Implications

Why in News?

According to the [United Nations Security Council \(UNSC\)](#)'s **Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team**, foreign terrorist organisations continue to enjoy safe haven under the new Taliban regime.



What is the Mission of the UNSC's Monitoring Team?

- The monitoring team **assists the UNSC sanctions committee** and its report, circulated among committee members, informs the **formulation of UN strategy in Afghanistan**.
- **India is currently the chair of the sanctions committee**, which comprises all the 15 UNSC members.
- This report is the **first since the Taliban returned to power** in August 2021.
 - This is the **first of its reports not informed** by official Afghan briefings.

- The **team collected data by consulting with UN member states**, international and regional organisations, private sector financial institutions, and the work of bodies such as the **United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)**.
 - UNAMA is a **UN Special Political Mission established to assist the state and the people of Afghanistan** in laying the foundations for sustainable peace and development.

How has India approached Afghanistan since the Taliban Regime?

- **Ways of Engagement:**
 - After the Taliban takeover, India is caught in the middle of this dilemma divided between restoring Afghanistan as a strategic priority in its policy and the practical hurdles on the ground.
 - Currently, **India is assessing three broad ways of potential engagement with Afghanistan:**
 - providing humanitarian assistance, exploring a joint counterterrorism effort with other partners, and engaging in talks with Taliban.
 - The end goal of all these is to **restore people-to-people links and prevent backsliding** of the gains Delhi's developmental aid has made in Afghanistan in the past two decades.
 - India has undertaken more than **400 key infrastructure projects** in all 34 Afghan provinces and has signed strategic agreements to enhance trade and bilateral relations.

How has Terrorism affected the Relations between the two?

- India's policies toward Afghanistan have been underpinned by the terrorism threat that emanates from Pakistan.
 - India is cautious about a terror corridor that might be facilitated from eastern Afghanistan leading up to Kashmir, should a land-based link be established.
- India has **consistently reaffirmed its support for UNSC Resolution 2593** and staunchly maintains that Afghan soil should not be used for anti-India terrorist activities.
- Counterterrorism is likely to play an increasingly pertinent role in shaping India's policies vis-à-vis Afghanistan, even as India seeks an alignment in its broader Indo-Pacific obligations and its immediate South Asian goals.
- India has demonstrated a growing interest in developing more robust counter-terror approaches across various multilateral fora, including the UNSC and the [Shanghai Cooperation Organisation](#).

Why is Afghanistan Significant for India?

- **Economic and Strategic Interest:** Afghanistan is a gateway to the oil and mineral-rich Central Asian republics.
 - Afghanistan's main advantage is its geography, as anyone who is in power in Afghanistan controls the land routes connecting India with Central Asia (via Afghanistan).
 - **Located at the heart of the historic Silk Road**, Afghanistan was long the crossroads of commerce between Asian countries connecting them to Europe, and enhancing religious, cultural, and commercial contacts.
- **Developmental Projects:** The massive reconstruction plans for the country to offer a lot of opportunities for Indian companies.
 - **Three major projects:** the Afghan Parliament, the Zaranj-Delaram Highway, and the Afghanistan-India Friendship Dam ([Salma Dam](#)), along with India's assistance of more than USD3 billion in projects, hundreds of small development projects (of schools, hospitals and water projects) have cemented India's position in Afghanistan.
- **Security Interest:** India has been the **victim of state-sponsored terrorism emanating from Pakistan supported terrorist group** operating in the region (e.g. Haqqani network). Thus, India has two priorities in Afghanistan:
 - to prevent Pakistan from setting up a friendly government in Afghanistan, and
 - to avoid the return of jihadi groups, like al Qaeda, which could strike in India.

Way Forward

- In its wait and watch policy, India's stance on the official recognition of Afghanistan under the Taliban and engaging Kabul finds resonance with most international and regional countries.
- India is reluctant to draw sharp conclusions on the nature of the Taliban rule.
 - However, there is a realisation that **India should stay relevant and preserve its influence in the region.**
- While Delhi sought to convene critical stakeholders and pave a new political roadmap for a unified regional response to the Taliban, it experienced multiple hurdles in convincing the South Asian neighbourhood to align with its leadership.
 - For instance, Pakistan and China chose to attend the [Troika-plus deliberations](#), instead of joining India.
- These competing approaches to Afghanistan will be a reality going forward. A realistic assessment of its goals, both long-term and short-term, together with readjustments, is the need of the hour in framing a strategically sustainable Afghanistan policy.

[Source: TH](#)

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