



Taliban Delegation in Pakistan

Why in News

Recently, a **Taliban delegation visited Pakistan** to discuss the way forward in the Afghan peace process.

- The Taliban delegation was led by their political chief Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar.

Key Points

▪ Pakistan Stand:

- It had played a facilitating role on the Afghan issue, which led to a peace agreement between the U.S. and the Taliban.
- The next step it seeks is intra-Afghan peace dialogue, to which Afghanistan has also agreed.
- It has reiterated its commitment to further deepen the ties with Afghanistan and enhance cooperation in all fields.

▪ Issues Involved:

- The Taliban visited Pakistan in the backdrop of stalled intra-Afghan peace dialogue over the issue of **prisoners release**.
- The Taliban also want to speed up the intra-Afghan peace dialogue.
- Earlier, to resolve the issue the Afghanistan government had convened [Loya Jirga \(grand assembly\)](#), which also approved the release of prisoners and further the peace process.

▪ Background:

- The [USA signed a deal with the Taliban](#) that paved the way towards a full withdrawal of USA troops from Afghanistan and also represent a step towards ending the 18-year-war in Afghanistan.
- The peace deal was expected to **kick-off two processes- a phased withdrawal of US troops and an 'intra-Afghan' dialogue**.
- The deal is a fundamental step to deliver a comprehensive and permanent ceasefire and the future political roadmap for the Afghanistan peace process.

▪ India's Interests in Afghanistan:

- India has a [major stake](#) in the stability of Afghanistan. India has invested considerable resources in Afghanistan's development. **E.g.** the **Afghan Parliament, the Zaranj-Delaram Highway, Afghanistan-India Friendship Dam (Salma Dam)** among others.
- India favours the continuation of the current Afghanistan government in power, which it considers a strategic asset vis-à-vis Pakistan.
 - An increased political and military role for the Taliban and the expansion of its territorial control should be of great concern to India since the Taliban is widely believed to be a protégé of Pakistan.
- Afghanistan is the **gateway to Central Asia**.
- Withdrawal of US troops could result in the breeding of the fertile ground for various anti-

India terrorist outfits like Lashkar-e-Taiba or Jaish-e-Mohammed.



Way Forward

- India should support any genuine peace process in Afghanistan. However, the peace process in Afghanistan appears to be **one-sided and pushed by the U.S.A. and Pakistan**.
- India should not recognise or publicly engage the Taliban until it recognises the Afghanistan government.

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