



Joint Actions in Afghanistan: China-Pakistan

Why in News

Recently, **China and Pakistan have decided to launch Joint Actions in Afghanistan** to stop the war-torn country from becoming a hotbed for terrorism.

- The recent [withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan](#) has been matched by the swift **advance of the Taliban across the nation**.



Key Points

- **Joint Action:** It has been outlined in **five areas**:
 - To **avoid the expansion of war** and prevent Afghanistan from falling into a full-scale civil war.
 - To **promote the intra-Afghan negotiations between the government and the Taliban** and establish “a broad and inclusive political structure”.
 - To resolutely **combat terrorist forces** and push all major forces in Afghanistan to draw a clear line against terrorism.
 - To **promote cooperation among Afghanistan’s neighbours** and to explore the construction of a platform for cooperation among them.
 - To **closely work on international fora** on the Afghan issue.

▪ Need:

◦ Terrorism in Pakistan:

- Pakistan is concerned over the **Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)**, which has been waging an insurgency against the country for several years.

◦ Rise in Uyghur Militants:

- China is worried over the regrouping of the **Uyghur** militants from Xinjiang, China who operate under the aegis of **East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM)**, which Beijing alleges has links with Al-Qaeda.
 - The recently released 12th report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team of the **United Nation** has **confirmed the presence of the ETIM militants in Afghanistan.**

◦ Economic Interests:

- If the situation in Afghanistan further deteriorates, Pakistan as well as the **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)** will be in danger. Also many other Chinese projects in Afghanistan and Pakistan will be in danger.
 - There was a recent **bomb attack on a shuttle bus carrying Chinese engineers** at Dasu area of Upper Kohistan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Pakistan where a **Chinese company is building a 4320-mw dam on the Indus river.**
 - **India has opposed** the CPEC, which **passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK)**, although China has pushed ahead with projects and stepped up its investments in PoK.

▪ Background of Situation in Afghanistan:

- On **11th September 2001, terrorist attacks (9/11) in America** killed nearly 3,000 people.
 - **Osama Bin Laden**, the head of Islamist terror group al-Qaeda, was quickly identified as the man responsible.
- The Taliban, radical Islamists who ran Afghanistan at that time, protected Bin Laden, and refused to hand him over. So, a month after 9/11, the **US launched airstrikes against Afghanistan** (Operation Enduring Freedom).
- After the attacks, the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** coalition troops declared war on Afghanistan.
- The **US** dislodged the Taliban regime and **established a transitional government in Afghanistan.**
- In July 2021, the **US troops departed** from the biggest airbase in Afghanistan after the 20-year-long war, effectively ending their military operations in the country.
- The US withdrawal has **turned the balance of power in the battleground in favour of the Taliban.**

▪ India's Interests:

◦ Investments:

- Protecting its **investments**, which run into billions of rupees, in Afghanistan.

◦ Taliban:

- **Preventing** a future **Taliban regime** from being a pawn of Pakistan.

◦ Pakistan's Terror Base:

- Making sure that the **Pakistan-backed anti-India terrorist groups do not get support from the Taliban.**

Way Forward

- **India's Afghan policy** is at a major crossroads; to **safeguard its assets there as well as to stay relevant** in the unfolding 'great game' in and around Afghanistan, **India must fundamentally reset its Afghanistan policy.**
- India needs to **re-evaluate its decisions and be more omnidirectional in its approach** to deal with all forces that are central to the future of Afghanistan.
- India must, in its own national interest, **begin 'open talks' with the Taliban** before it is too late. The time for hesitant, half-embarrassed backchannel parleys is over.
- The **changing political and security situation requires India to be more open** to adapting its maximalist position and starting a dialogue with the Taliban.

Source: IE

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