

# CENTRE FOR JOINT WARFARE STUDIES



## AFGHANISTAN WATCH

**16-31 JUL 2022**

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## **AFGHANISTAN**

### **We are not Speaking Enough About Pakistan: EU Envoy to Afghanistan During EFSAS Conference in EU Parliament**

**(<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/we-are-not-speaking-enough-about-pakistan-eu-envoy-to-afghanistan-during-efsas-conference-in-eu-parliament20220716185949/>)**

The European Foundation for South Asian Studies (EFSAS) held a conference on Wednesday regarding 'Situation in Afghanistan and future trajectories for the region and the West' in the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium, in recognition of the importance of a comprehensive and coherent European response to the situation in Afghanistan. Women's Rights Defender Award, HoriaMosadiq, labeled Pakistan to have "never ceased to support the Taliban", Bashir Ahmad Gwakh, a journalist, accused Pakistan of playing the 'good' and 'bad' Taliban.

PetrasAuštrevičius, the MEP, expressed concern about the growing terrorism in the region, especially Central Asia, stated that given Pakistan's GSP+ status, EU will keep checking Pakistan, while calling on Afghans to "consolidate" their opinions and raise their "voice".

**Comments.** The fall of Kabul (15<sup>th</sup> August 2020) can also be attributed to Pakistan's relentless support to Taliban through constant supply of men, means & materials. It is vital for EU & NATO member nations to see through Pakistan's propaganda & its tendency to play the cards of 'good' & 'bad' Taliban in regional & international politico-economic forums. Its continued support to Sunni terror factions will result (sooner or later) in regional-socio political instability, if prolong, may escalate to a multi-ethnic conflict.

### **69 % of Afghan People Chose India as Afghanistan's Best Friend**

**(<https://newsonair.com/2022/07/21/69-of-afghan-people-chose-india-as-afghanistans-best-friend/>)**

India and Afghanistan have very ancient historic and cultural ties. Despite all the efforts of Pakistan, relations between two countries at the people-to-people level have remained good, surviving Taliban rule in the 1990s and since August last year. India also has strong stakes and strategic interests in Afghanistan. India has been the largest donor in Afghanistan among the countries in the region, doling out about 3 billion dollars. India is the fifth largest donor for Afghanistan in the world. India's help to Afghanistan has been diverse, ranging from building infrastructure to sending teams of medical staff and food.

**Comments.** India and Afghanistan share a strong relationship based on historical and cultural links. Despite efforts undertaken by Pakistan to destabilise Indo-Afghan relations, people to people connectivity continues to grow (more strengthened than it was during Taliban's rule in the 1990s) since Taliban's takeover in 2020. That said, fewer strategic agreements, economic engagements & limited bilateral dialogues have resulted in a vacuum at the diplomatic levels, fading the memory of goodwill & friendship in the hearts & minds of local Afghans. With China, Pakistan & Iran looking for investment opportunities and Turkey, UAE & Qatar aiming for deeper people to connect, India must retain its focus on socio-economic development initiatives in the interest of local Afghans, in a time when natural resources & economic prospects diminish local/regional economic prosperity, denying progressive opportunities to Afghan masses.

## **India Takes Part in Tashkent Meet on Afghanistan**

[\(https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-takes-part-tashkent-meet-afghanistan-8051413/\)](https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-takes-part-tashkent-meet-afghanistan-8051413/)

India on Monday participated in a two-day conference hosted by Uzbekistan in its capital Tashkent to discuss the situation in Afghanistan. Attended by about 20 countries, India was represented at the conference by joint secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, in charge of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, J P Singh. Sources said Afghanistan's acting Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi is attending the conference titled 'Afghanistan: Security and Economic Development'. The conference is aimed at developing a set of measures and proposals for the approaches of the world community to promote stability, security, post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan and its integration into regional cooperation processes," it had said in a statement.

**Comments.** India's participation at Tashkent not only renews its commitment to restore peace & stability in Afghanistan but also reflect in New Delhi's acceptance to a new world order. This is further resonated in India re-opening its embassy in Kabul enabling politico-strategic leaders to establish direct connect with Taliban's supreme command. This reflects India's commitment to set aside traditional *characters of an ideal foreign policy* and embrace policy based on realistic principles with a focus on national security.

## **IS Terrorists in Afghanistan Increased to 6,000 since Taliban Takeover: Russia**

[\(https://theprint.in/world/is-terrorists-in-afghanistan-increased-to-6000-since-taliban-takeover-russia/1059644/\)](https://theprint.in/world/is-terrorists-in-afghanistan-increased-to-6000-since-taliban-takeover-russia/1059644/)

The number of Islamic State terrorist organization members in Afghanistan increased three times to 6,000 since the Taliban came to power last year, Zamir Kabulov, the head of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Second Asian Department, said on Thursday. "As far as we understand, their approximate estimated number has reached 6,000. If you remember, after the Taliban came to power and took tough steps against the IS, their number was about 2,000 more or less. That is, even approximately, a three-fold increase," Kabulov said at a press conference at the Rossiya Segodnya international media group.

**Comments.** Since taking power, Taliban continues to face numerous challenges including internal power struggle, disagreements in policy decisions largely due to inter-ethnic rivalry. This statement is further validated by the UN Security Council (UNSC) report which cites al-Qaida, the Islamic State, and insurgency in the northern district of Panjshir as some of the serious challenges to Taliban. The decision to release 1,800 ISIS terrorists from Bagram and Pul-e-Charkhi prisons, after the attack on Seh Dokan Mosque in Mazar-e-Sharif and a separate attack in Kunduz were both claimed by Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP) points towards their intent to destabilise not only Afghanistan but also instigate ethnic tensions in the region.

## **Afghanistan, Pakistan Hold Talks to Facilitate Bilateral Trade**

[\(https://theprint.in/world/afghanistan-pakistan-hold-talks-to-facilitate-bilateral-trade/1047414/\)](https://theprint.in/world/afghanistan-pakistan-hold-talks-to-facilitate-bilateral-trade/1047414/)

Afghan Minister of Commerce Haji Nooruddin Azizi on Tuesday said that the country is holding talks with a Pakistani delegation to sign an agreement to facilitate bilateral trade. A trade delegation from Pakistan led by Pakistan's Commerce Secretary Saleh Farooqui arrived in Kabul on Monday evening to hold a discussion on coal imports along with transit and barter trade between the two countries, TOLO News reported.

**Comments.** Sending a trade delegation for a 3-day visit to Afghanistan, Pakistan is inclined to negotiate a deal to resolve trade, transit and transportation challenges including night time operations for coal imports. Pakistan has signed an agreement in a bid to facilitate bilateral trade, particularly coal for use in power generation to overcome the shortage in electricity production following the high price of furnace oil in the international market. The coal imports will be utilized for 1,320MW Sahiwal Coal Power Project and 1,320MW China-Hubco Coal Power Plant in view of record making coal prices in the international market. Islamabad, in return granted duty-free imports from Afghanistan mainly food items to prevent inflation of food prices in the region.