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TALIBAN'S HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE, SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE AND IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA

BY

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ORGANISED BY CENJOWS
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The event focused on India's evolving relationship with Afghanistan, with a strong emphasis on the challenges and opportunities arising from the Taliban regime and the strategic interests of China in the region. A significant portion of the discussion delved into Afghanistan's historical and cultural ties with India, which have been shaped by centuries of interaction, including past conflicts and border divisions. Despite these deep-rooted connections, the current situation under Taliban rule presents numerous challenges for India, particularly given that most countries, including India, have chosen not to recognize the Taliban government due to its strict interpretation of Sharia law and its oppressive treatment of women. The government in Afghanistan operates with a visible political structure, featuring a prime minister and ministers, but also has an invisible layer of leadership led by a supreme leader who wields ultimate power.

China's increasing involvement in Afghanistan was another major concern discussed during the event. China seeks to establish a strong foothold in the country, primarily to exploit Afghanistan's abundant natural resources and to curb India's influence in the region. This growing Chinese presence is a strategic challenge for India, which must now navigate its relationship with Afghanistan while balancing the regional power dynamics shaped by China's ambitions. Despite these difficulties, participants in the meeting stressed that India should maintain engagement with Afghanistan, particularly focusing on the welfare of the Afghan people, without officially recognizing the Taliban regime. A critical security challenge identified was the transfer of weapons from Afghanistan to terrorist organizations, which threatens both regional stability and India's national security.

Another significant issue raised was the role of the media and public perception. It was highlighted that there is a need to address the negative perceptions surrounding India's role in Afghanistan, and efforts should be made to improve India's image in the country. Media outlets face challenges in maintaining balanced reporting on

Afghanistan, further complicating India's communication and influence efforts in the region.

To protect India's strategic interests, the event concluded with recommendations for proactive measures. These include staying connected with Afghan locals to maintain a strong grassroots relationship, gathering more intelligence on the internal power dynamics of Afghanistan, particularly the influence of factions like the Taliban and the Haqqani network, and monitoring economic developments in Afghanistan, especially China's role in sustaining the Taliban regime. Participants also emphasized the importance of addressing perception issues, continuing humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan, and taking preventive actions to safeguard India's security interests in the region.

Overall, the event underscored the complexity of India's engagement with Afghanistan under Taliban rule and the pressing need for a balanced approach that includes humanitarian engagement, intelligence gathering, and strategic planning, all while navigating the broader regional implications of China's growing influence in the country.