

LEAVING THE PAST BEHIND: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON AFGHANISTAN

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

Two events in Central Asia last week, which India attended, saw Afghanistan's neighbours seeking solutions to the conflict there. The first was a meeting in Dushanbe, of the Contact group on Afghanistan of SCO Foreign Ministers, and the second, a Central and South Asia connectivity conference in Tashkent. The meetings also took on a special salience due to their timing. Just days after the U.S. and NATO completed their pullout from the Bagram air base, and most other key locations, it is clear that the [Taliban are making advances](#) to return to power, by force if necessary. Of particular concern are the Taliban's attacks on border posts, particularly the border with Central Asian countries, and the Spin Boldak-Chaman border with Pakistan, which are for territorial control and to cut off crucial supply chains to the government in Kabul. At such a time for the SCO Ministers' grouping that includes Russia and China, India and Pakistan, and four Central Asian countries to have issued a joint statement, albeit without naming the Taliban directly, that decried the violence by terrorist groups, was significant. At Tashkent, the host, Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, also gave Afghanistan President [Ashraf Ghani the opportunity to confront Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan](#) for Pakistan's failure to keep its promises on stopping the Taliban from crossing over and ensuring the Taliban conduct peace negotiations in earnest. Despite Mr. Khan's protests, the message is that the region, and global players, will not support the Taliban to enforce its brutal regime in Afghanistan through violent means. For India and the Central Asian States, the worries are about the violence at the frontiers and the resultant refugee influx, extremism, and support to transnational groups such as al Qaeda, LeT, JeM, ETIM and IMU, as it happened earlier under Taliban rule.

As External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said, Afghanistan's past cannot be its future, and [in an interview to The Hindu](#), Mr. Ghani made it clear that the Afghan forces will not simply crumble this time. The emergence of the regional consensus to shun any attempt to take power by force will also give the Taliban and its backers in Pakistan reason to pause, and the high-level intra-Afghan talks in Doha over the weekend, and the Taliban's Eid announcement that they will pursue a political solution "seriously" and to assure neighbours they will not allow Afghan territory to be "used against any other country" may be evidence that the message has been received. As the future of Afghanistan is decided in the weeks ahead, it is necessary for the neighbourhood's voice, Central and South Asia included, to emerge more united and determined to protect the gains the nation has made over two decades.

[Our code of editorial values](#)

From the abrogation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, to the landmark Ayodhya verdict, 2019 proved to be an eventful year.

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com