

THREE NEW 'RED LINES'**Prelims- International****Mains- GS2 - Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.****Context-**

- + India draws new 'red lines' for talks on Afghan peace process.
- + These new "red lines" are going to be India's new mantras, even as it pushes for a peace process which is Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled.

The Three New Red Lines declared by India:

- + All initiatives and processes must include all sections of the Afghan society, including the legitimately elected government.
 - ❖ In the past, the Afghan government was often sidelined by international interlocutors when they engaged with the Taliban.
- + Any **process should respect the constitutional legacy and political mandate.** establishing democratic processes and human rights, including women's rights, should be respected.
- + Any process **should not lead to any ungoverned spaces** where terrorists and their proxies can relocate.
 - ❖ This is crucial for India, as it points out the threat from terrorist groups including the Haqqani network, Al Qaeda, Islamic State, which must not be allowed to operate there.
 - ❖ Also, the Pakistan-based terrorist groups like the Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jamaat-ud-Dawa, and Jaish-e-Mohammed must not be allowed to relocate.

India and Afghanistan Relations:**Heart of Asia Conference (HoA):**

- + HoA conference is a part of the Istanbul Process established in 2011 which provides a platform to discuss an agenda of regional cooperation with Afghanistan at its centre.
- + It seeks to provide a platform to discuss regional issues, particularly encouraging security, political, and economic cooperation among Afghanistan and its neighbours
- + Its three main elements are

- ❖ Political Consultation involving Afghanistan and its near and extended neighbours.
- ❖ Achieving sustained incremental approach for implementation of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) identified in the Istanbul Process document.
- ❖ Seeks to contribute and bring greater coherence to work of various regional processes and organisations, particularly as they relate to Afghanistan.

Amritsar Declaration:

- ✚ The sixth edition of 'Heart of Asia- Istanbul Process of Afghanistan' conference was held in Amritsar, Punjab (India). It concluded with adaptation of Amritsar Declaration with its prime focus on terrorism.
- ✚ **Terrorism:** It is the biggest threat to peace and security. It is needed to end all forms of terrorism and all supporting financial activities and safe havens providing sanctuary to it.
- ✚ Expressed concern over violence caused in Afghanistan and region by terrorists' groups like Al Qaeda, Lashkar-e-Toiba, Daesh (ISIS) and Jaish-e-Mohammed. It also mentions Haqqani Network.
- ✚ **Drug menace:** There is urgency to respond to the nexus between drug menace and its financial support for terrorist entities in Afghanistan.
- ✚ **CCIT:** Early finalisation of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism (CCIT).
- ✚ Early meeting of experts must be held to discuss a draft regional counter terrorism framework strategy, recently prepared by Afghanistan for its early finalisation.
- ✚ **Connectivity:** Reiterated strong support from Heart of Asia countries for use of Afghanistan's location to enhance wider and regional economic cooperation.
- ✚ Specific initiatives for regional connectivity including Iran-India-Afghanistan trilateral agreement on developing Chabahar were acknowledged.

TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) pipeline:

- ✚ To address its energy needs to sustain its economic growth, pipelines from Iran and Central Asia would be extremely important.
- ✚ The general fear in India is that an unstable Afghanistan would hurt the this pipeline and the subsequent flow of gas.

Why Afghanistan is important to India?

- ✚ **Regional Balance of Power:** Afghanistan is tied to India's vision of being a regional leader and a great power, coupled with its competition with China over resources and its need to counter Pakistani influence.
 - ❖ India's ability to mentor a nascent democracy will go a long way to demonstrate to the world that India is indeed a major power, especially a responsible one.

❖ India's interest in Afghanistan relates to its need to reduce Pakistani influence in the region.

- + **Energy Security:** The pipeline project TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India), which seeks to connect an energy-rich Central to South Asia, will only see the light of the day if stability is established in Afghanistan
- + **Strategic Location:** For access to the landlocked Central Asian countries that border Afghanistan.
- + **Natural Resources:** The country is home to resource deposits worth one trillion dollars, according to the US Geological Survey.
- + **Regional Security:** A stable Afghanistan is important for regional security in South Asia including India.

