**India’s Security Challenges and Options in the Post-Taliban Afghanistan**

**India’s Challenges in Afghanistan**

* Presently, India’s decades-old political, economic and strategic ground has contracted in Afghanistan.
* In the immediate future, India does not appear to have a role in the training of Afghan armed forces and police.
* The Taliban victory could be an impetus for increased turmoil and security threats for India in IIOJK
* India’s Hindu nationalist government fears that the new suppressed generation of Kashmiris would get inspired by the Taliban’s victory.
* Indian outreach to the Taliban so far has remained inconclusive as there are some persons in the interim set up who are regarded close to Pakistan.

**Future Options and Opportunities for India**

* India will try to increase its inroads into Afghanistan by engaging the Taliban.
* It will try to resume its projects in Afghanistan by posing as a constructive playerin re-construction.
* It may try also try to engage Afghanistan via regional organizations.
* Indian investment and their people to people engagements for the past two decades with Afghans are still strong and they may capitalize on these.
* India will continue to increase the rhetoric about Pakistan’s duplicity and blame it for all the misfortunes of Afghan society and government.
* India can blame the unrest in IIOJK on Pakistan’s collusion with elements of the Taliban.
* India can explore the fault lines in Pakistan by engaging with terrorist outfits and their Afghan assets to stir instability in vulnerable areas of Baluchistan.

**Recommendations**

* It will be naïve to think that India will remain isolated in Afghanistan. Pakistan should closely monitor the Indian outreach and out maneuver it.
* Pakistan has to build trust with all Afghan ethnic political forces and the people and dispel the image that it promotesTaliban.
* Pakistani policymakers need to assess security and border management for future threats emerging from regrouping of ISIS and other proscribed groups.
* Pakistan must highlight the two-facedIndian policy towards Afghanistan and expose Modi’sposing as a friend of Afghans while offering only the Afghan Hindus and Sikhs a refuge in India.
* Pakistan must be prepared to provide some economic and humanitarian assistance to Afghans.
* Pakistan must also try to fill the space which has become available by the Indian exit, in development and training sectors sector which may be short and needs to be capitalized.

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