



Vice- President holds talks with Afghan Second Vice President Mohammad Sarwar Danish

We should actively confront the policy of state support to terrorism being practiced by our common neighbour: Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu

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The Vice-President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu held talks with the visiting Second Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Mohammad Sarwar Danish here today.

During their meeting the Vice President said that India has commenced supply of 1,70,000 tonnes of Wheat grain assistance to Afghanistan via the Chabahar Port in Iran, since the recent inauguration of the first phase of the strategic port with Indian investment and funding. Shri Venkaiah Naidu also mentioned that more than 50 flights have been undertaken from Afghanistan to India since the launch of the Air Freight Corridor in June 2017.

The Vice-President said India has provided assistance to Afghanistan to the tune of US\$ 2 billion till last year. In September 2016, our Prime Minister announced an additional assistance of US\$1 billion for the people of Afghanistan. All these led to the "New Development Partnership" in September 2017, he added. Shri Venkaiah Naidu said under this Partnership, already 116 'High Impact Community Development Projects' have been identified in 31 of 34 provinces in Afghanistan and several other Medium to Large New Projects announced. He said Afghanistan can truly emerge as an important Trade, Investment and Connectivity junction for the entire Asian and Eurasian Region.

Voicing concern over the huge challenges facing Afghanistan and confronting issues of safe havens and other forms of cross-border support enjoyed by terrorists, the Vice-President said we should actively confront the policy of state support to terrorism that is being practiced by a certain neighbour of ours. Pointing out that last year was the most violent year since 2001 for Afghanistan with over 10,000 casualties of whom 25% are civilians, Shri Venkaiah Naidu said we must work for setting up of an international verification mechanism for action taken in fighting terrorism and elimination of safe havens and other support, he added.

Stating that India is aware of the New US Policy in Afghanistan, Shri Venkaiah Naidu said New Delhi remains committed towards reconstruction and development of Afghanistan ever since the transition in 2001 as a valued neighbour and strategic partner. India supports Afghanistan in all its efforts to emerge as a united, sovereign, democratic, peaceful, stable, prosperous and pluralistic nation. Recent months have seen intense and positive activity in the bilateral relationship between our two countries, he added.

The Vice-President said India completely supports the National Unity Government and also wishes to see an inclusive and united Government in the future of Afghanistan. India supports Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled reconciliation efforts which should comply with internationally accepted red-lines. Shri Venkaiah Naidu said these conditions should not be diluted.

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