

PM-Karzai talks focus on Indians' safety, terrorism

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India and Afghanistan on Thursday discussed regional security situation, bilateral relations, safety and security of Indians there and scourge of terrorism during talks between visiting Afghan President Hamid Karzai and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh here. Karzai is here for two days to take part in Delhi Sustainable Development Summit.

The two leaders stressed the fact that terrorism ran counter to the aspirations of their peoples and agreed that the strategic partnership between India and Afghanistan is a "positive factor" for peace and stability in the region, a joint statement, issued after their meeting said.

Singh also voiced India's concerns over proposed reintegration of the Taliban and reiterated New Delhi's position on 'Afghan-led and Afghan-owned' peace deal.

India has already made clear its concern over Pakistan's increasing involvement in Afghanistan's transition process, saying "any external interference in the reintegration process would be detrimental to its success and for the future of democratic, stable, pluralistic and prosperous Afghanistan."

India reiterated its long-term commitment to the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan and to the efforts of Karzai's Government's to build a strong, independent, democratic, peaceful and prosperous nation.

The Afghanistan President, Hamid Karzai, underlined the need for the two countries to work together in close cooperation in the interest of the people of the two countries and stability in the region at large, the statement said. Singh accepted an invitation from President Karzai to visit Afghanistan at an early date.

"The visit reflected the close friendship between the people of India and Afghanistan and the continuing tradition of high-level and frequent consultations between the leaders of the two countries," the statement said.