

US WAR IN AFGHANISTAN GETTING OVER?



Issue

As US troops prepare to leave Afghan soil for one last time, the question arises whether the war is really over.

Background

Under the decision taken by US President Joe Biden, US troops will leave the country by September 11th.

Details

- The preparations for departure and also handover of critical Bagram airbase have already taken place but the command remains with US forces until September.
- There are real fears about the state of affairs in Afghanistan once US leaves and Taliban returns. The country is expected to dive deeper into civil war.
- The rejuvenated Islamic militants have their hopes high due to the state of affairs in the country, which has already lost about 30 percent of its territory to Taliban.

Combat missions

- US forces last engaged in a ground combat battle in 2014. Since then, majority of US offensive has been air strikes.
- These air assets now no longer exist. In future, if any air missions have to be launched, they will be done from outside the country with support from Afghans.

- A large US contingent of Special Forces will protect US embassy compound in Kabul. A similar contingent will protect Kabul International Airport with the help of Turkish forces.
- US is expected to give special immigrant visas for Afghans wanting to leave the country, who had helped in US war efforts. They may be vulnerable to Taliban offensive.

NATO mission

- NATO forces were equally involved in the war effort. The US mission was declared over in 2015, followed by handing security back to Afghans. However, the Afghan government is dependent on US aid for survival.
- The NATO forces have now started to withdraw. But the final mission will not be declared over until NATO completely withdraws.
- The US has made it clear that it will have all authority to conduct airstrikes and counter-terrorism operations against Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups.

NOTES

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