

India, Uzbekistan to work together to stabilise Af

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: India and Uzbekistan agreed to work together to stabilise Afghanistan following talks between Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the former's maiden visit to India.

Addressing the media after their discussions, Modi said, "Both India and Uzbekistan aspire towards a safe and prosperous external environment. We appreciate their efforts in maintaining regional peace and stability. I can assure you that India will help in your efforts. Both India and Uzbekistan wish a democratic, stable and prosperous Afghanistan."

Modi added that India would provide a \$200 million line of credit for low-cost homes and such other social infrastructure projects in Uzbekistan. "In addition, we welcome the proposals of Uzbekistan in line with \$800 million lines of credit and 'buyers credit' by Exim Bank."

Uzbekistan also used the occasion to indicate that it



PM Narendra Modi with Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev before their meeting at Hyderabad House in New Delhi on Monday

would join the International North-South Transport Corridor. The joint statement also records India's gratitude for Uzbek help in getting India to join the Ashgabat Agreement. Both sides committed to starting negotiations for India-Uzbekistan Preferential Trade Agreement by the end of 2018.

A joint statement between the two countries "reiterated support for efforts of the government and the people for a genuine Afghan-owned, Af-

ghan-led and Afghan controlled peace and reconciliation process that would allow for a peaceful, secure, united, inclusive and prosperous nation. The sides shared the view that countering terrorism in all its forms and manifestations without distinction is important for peace and security in Afghanistan."

India and Uzbekistan signed 17 agreements in various fields, spanning tourism, national security and training of diplomats.