

# 'India will support Afghan initiative'

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
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Both India and Russia will support any initiative by the Afghan Government which helps in Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process, deputy national security adviser Pankaj Saran said Wednesday. Mr Saran's remarks come in wake of India attending a meeting in Moscow where Taliban representatives were also present.

While addressing the second round of Indian Council of World Affairs-Russia International Affairs Council international conference, Mr Saran said India and Russia were in touch on Afghanistan.

"India had participated at an unofficial level in the Moscow format on Afghanistan. Both India and Russia support the Afghan government's efforts towards the realisation of an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process," the deputy NSA said. When asked about the meet Russian ambassador to India Nikolay Kudashev said any level of India's participation is



Pankaj Saran

welcome. During the address Mr Saran stressed on the need for significantly enhancing the economic content in Indo-Russia ties. He said India and Russia were exploring new areas of co-operation such as railways, information and technology, innovation and infrastructure, besides strengthening traditional areas of collaboration such as defence, space and nuclear.

The deputy NSA said more high-level exchanges are expected before the end of this year. He also highlighted the memorandum of understanding signed between India and Russia by which Moscow would help India's human space flight programme 'Gaganyaan'.