

Quote of the Day

Nothing gives one person so much advantage over another as to remain always cool and unruffled under all circumstances.
Thomas Jefferson

Gen. Campbell

Taliban Leadership Issues Likely to Delay Afghan Peace Talks

KABUL - Disarray within the Taliban leadership could delay peace talks with the Afghan government for a few months, but up to 70 percent of the militant group may ultimately be reconciled with Kabul, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan predicted on Thursday.

"I think it's going to take a good couple of months before we see them kind of back to any kind of peace negotiation," U.S. Army General John Campbell told a hearing of the Armed Services Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives.

"I think reconciliation talks will con-



tinue, but it's going to take some time to bring the right people to the table to do that," he said.

The Afghan Taliban attended a round of peace talks with the government in July, but later disavowed the negotiations after the disclosure that Mullah Omar, the elusive leader of the militant group, had died two years earlier in neighboring Pakistan.

Mullah Mansour was chosen as the new Taliban leader, but some factions of the group opposed his selection and called for a new leadership vote. ...*(More on P4)...(1)*

Russia Estimates Some 3,500 ISIS Militants Operate in Afghanistan



KABUL - The Russian intelligence estimates some 3,500 militants loyal to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group are operating in Afghanistan.

Speaking to a security conference in Moscow, a senior Russian diplomat, has said

militants from Russia are also trained by ISIS instructors in Afghanistan.

Zamir Kabulov, President Putin's special representative for Afghanistan, quoted by Russia Today, said "There are several camps operated by ...*(More on P4)...(2)*

Afghans Mobilized Against Terrorists: Rabani



KABUL - Foreign Minister, Salahuddin Rabani said that Afghan people have been mobilized against terrorists and would not allow any country to rule Afghanistan.

In continuation of trips to Badakhshan, Takhar and Kunduz and meeting with Jihadi leaders and security forces now the foreign minister in Baghlan stresses on mobilization of Afghan people against terrorists. Rabani praised the presence of tribes among the front line of troops and considered it the unity of Afghan people but criticized the sanction statements of some elders, lawyers and other people.

Meanwhile, Baghlan inhabitants say that the northern part of Afghanistan is on fire and the government should take effective step to eliminate the terrorism. (ATN)

Ghani, Obama Discuss Afghanistan Security

KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani and United States' President Barack Obama spoke on the phone on Wednesday night and discussed the MSF Kunduz hospital bombing and the current security situation in Afghanistan.

According to a statement issued by the Presidential Palace the two leaders also discussed the issue of continued cooperation with Afghanistan.

Obama expressed his deep condolences over the deaths of MSF staff, doctors and civilians in the Kunduz attack, the statement read.

The U.S. president said the



MSF hospital bombing was not intentional and he ordered a full investigation into the attack.

Meanwhile Ghani spoke to him about the security situation - especially in the north - and on Kunduz and the achievements of the security forces.

Obama stated that Afghanistan people had dealt with a difficult week and assured Ghani the U.S. government and the U.S. people will stand by the Afghan people. ...*(More on P4)...(3)*

Ghani Assigns Task Team to Review Kunduz Situation

KABUL - At a meeting with elders of Kunduz province in Kabul on Thursday, President Ashraf Ghani assigned a fact-finding team to review the Kunduz situation, the Presidential Palace said in a statement.

Members of the new task team include former chief of National Directorate of Security (NDS) Amrullah Saleh, former minister of education Ghulam Farooq Wardak, Fazl Karim Emaq, Ayoub Rafiqi and Abdullullah Mohammadi, the press release read.



It stated that government will consider reforms in Kunduz in line with the report of the fact finding delegation. Meanwhile, speaker of the

Lower House of Parliament Abdul Rauf Ibrahimy has asked Ghani to extend military operations in all Regions of the province. (Tolonews)

Pakistan Ready to Arrange Talks of Afghan Authorities, Taliban: Pak MoFA

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan is ready to act as a mediator in organizing the negotiations between Afghanistan's authorities and the Taliban movement, spokesman for the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Qazi Khalilullah said.

"Pakistan is ready to once again act as a mediator in arranging the talks between the Afghan authorities and the Taliban provided that both sides show interest in this dialogue," local mass media quote the spokesman as saying. Khalilullah's remarks came amid the recent events in neighboring Afghanistan, where the Taliban movement captured and controlled for several days the city of Kunduz, the administrative center of the province of the same name.

Pakistan earlier acted as a mediator in arranging the contacts between Kabul and the Taliban. The informal talks between the Afghan government and the this movement took place in the Pakistani mountain resort town of Murree on July 7. The second round of talks was expected to be held on July 31. However, the scheduled talks were disrupted.

Afghanistan has repeatedly accused Pakistan of supporting the Taliban movement. Islamabad vehemently denies such accusations. On August 10, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai once again sharply criticized the leadership of Pakistan after a series of explosions in Kabul that claimed the lives of more than 50 people. "Pakistan continues to harbor mercenaries, from where they send us the war message," he said. (Monitoring Desk)

Int'l Community Reaffirms Commitment to Seeking Lasting Solutions for Afghan Refugees



GENEVA - The international community on Thursday reaffirmed its commitment to seeking lasting solutions for millions of Afghan refugees, in a bid to end one of the longest displacement situations in recorded history.

In a statement issued during the United Nations refugee agency UNHCR's executive committee meeting, member states pledged support to Afghanistan into creating the conditions necessary for its refugees to repatriate and reintegrate in their own country.

"To ignore Afghanistan would be dangerous, regardless of the urgency and scale of other new crises," said UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres.

According to UNHCR, some 2.6 million Afghans have been seeking refuge around the world, the vast majority in neighboring Pakistan and Iran.

More than 1.5 million Afghan refugees are in Pakistan while government figures show that some 950,000 Afghans are registered as refugees in Iran, many of them second or third generation refugees who have never lived in Afghanistan.

The High Commissioner acknowledged that the path ahead would be challenging, especially in light of the intensifying instability in Afghanistan, most recently in Kunduz, that ...*(More on P4)...(4)*

Uzbek, Turkmen Presidents Mull Situation in Afghanistan



BAKU - Presidents of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, Islam Karimov and Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov met in Tashkent to discuss the current state and prospects of further development of the two countries' cooperation. Earlier, Berdimuhamedov arrived in Uzbekistan for an official visit.

During the meeting, the presidents exchanged views on pressing regional and international issues, said the Uzbek president's press service Friday.

While discussing the situation in Afghanistan, they reiterated the impossibility of establishing peace in that country through the use of

military force. The presidents also discussed cooperation in the fight against threats such as terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking. The parties also discussed the use of water of transboundary rivers.

During the meeting, it was stressed that issues related to water and energy sector should be reviewed on the basis of universally recognized norms and principles of international law, taking into account the interests of all states in the region and with participation of international organizations.

It was noted that in dealing with ...*(More on P4)...(5)*

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