

Quote of the Day

If you aspire to the highest place, it is no disgrace to stop at the second, or even the third, place.
Cicero

Pak Role Crucial in Afghan Peace: US



WASHINGTON - Calling Pakistan an important player in the Afghan puzzle, the White House has said that its role in facilitating reconciliation process between Taliban and Afghanistan will be discussed during US President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in their meet next week.

"We already know that Pakistan has played an important role in trying to facilitate reconciliation talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government," White House Press Secretary, Josh Earnest told reporters on Thursday. In fact, one of the early rounds of those talks actually took place in Pakistan, were hosted by the Pakistani government, he said.

"I don't want to be in a position of speaking for the Pakistani government, but it's the President's view that everybody in that region recognises the important benefits associated with progress on reconciliation talks," he said in response to a question.

The president is going to continue to use the influence that he has with the Afghan government to encourage them to pursue those talks.

"I think that is, frankly, something that the Afghan government doesn't need a lot of encouragement to pursue. That's something that they themselves are interested in," he said.

At a ...*(More on P4)...*(1)

Gen. Dostum, Russian Envoy Discuss Moscow's Support to ANSF



KABUL - The First Vice President Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum has met with the Russian Ambassador to Kabul Alexander Mantytskiy to discuss Moscow's support to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and the Afghan Air Force.

The meeting was reportedly held following Gen. Dostum's return from Russia where he met with the country's defense minister and other government officials,

according to the State-owned Sputnik International news agency. Briefing the Russian Ambassador regarding his visit to Russia, Gen. Dostum requested delivery of lethal military equipment including heavy weapons and Mi-35 gunship helicopters. Gen. Dostum had also requested Moscow to help Afghanistan in maintenance of the Afghan Air Force helicopters fleet. This ...*(More on P4)...*(2)

Ministry of Economy Drafts PPP Strategy

KABUL - Minister of Economy, Abdul Sattar Murad announced his ministry has drafted the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) strategy which is aimed at boosting joint investments by the government and private sectors on the country's mega economic projects.

The draft of the strategy has been dispatched to the Council of Ministers (COM) for their approval, he told TOLONews. He said the key



purpose of the strategy is to encourage both the government and private sectors ...*(More on P4)...*(4)

Russian PM Says Defending 'National Interests' in Syria, Not Assad

MOSCOW - Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said Saturday that Russia is fighting for its national

interests in Syria, not for President Bashar al-Assad. "Of course we are not fighting for ...*(More on P4)...*(5)

Abdullah, NATO Commander Discuss Military Cooperation

KABUL - Chief Executive Officer of the National Unity Government (NUG) Abdullah Abdullah met with the commander of U.S and NATO forces in Afghanistan General John Campbell on Saturday where they discussed a number of issues with the main focus being on the future of military cooperation between Afghanistan and the international forces.

Abdullah ...*(More on P4)...*(3)



Karzai Criticizes Ongoing US Military Presence

KABUL - Former Afghan president Hamid Karzai on Saturday criticized the decision of U.S President Barack Obama to delay the draw down in troops and maintain current levels through 2016.

In a statement issued by Karzai he said the presence of foreign troops

had not only failed to stamp out terrorism but is in fact adding to the problem in war-ravaged Afghanistan.

Karzai said the Afghan people have had 14 years of foreign troop presence in their country and hoped for lasting peace and the

elimination of terrorism but that this has not happened. Instead insurgency has strengthened.

In reference to the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) signed between the Afghan government and US in September 2014, Karzai said the ...*(More on P4)...*(6)

Javad Zarif Iran Won't Allow KSA to Exclude Iran from Regional Equations

TEHRAN - Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says the Islamic Republic will never allow Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) to exclude Iran from regional equations.

Speaking at a joint presser with his German counterpart Frank-Walter Steinmeier in the Iranian capital, Tehran, on Saturday, Zarif said Iran is after good neighborly ties with its neighbors.

"Security must be provided for all as we all live next to each other in the region," he said.

"We are not after eliminating Saudi Arabia, and, on the other hand, do not allow Saudi Arabia to eliminate Iran from the region," he said.

Saudi Arabia's "attempt to eliminate Iran has led to bloodshed and the stoking of confrontations in the region, and this has to stop," he said. (Agencies)

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