US Condemns Attack on Voter Registration Centre

WASHINGTON - The United States has condemned the attack on a voter registration centre for the upcoming elections, and hoped the process would continue peacefully.

“The US condemns the attack on a voter registration centre in Afghanistan on Wednesday,” State Department spokesperson Heather Nauert said.

“We strongly support Afghanistan’s efforts to conduct democratic elections and the Afghan people’s efforts to achieve peace and prosperity,” she tweeted.

Earlier, three Independent Election Commission (IEC) employees and two policemen were kidnapped by the Taliban in Ghor province.

Taliban, Haqqanis Not Our Friends: Pakistani Diplomat

PESHAWAR - Haqqanis and Taliban militants have been a source of tensions between Islamabad and Kabul, a senior Pakistani diplomat said.

“They have both brought stress to our relations with the US and Afghanistan,” Pakistan’s Ambassador to the United States Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry said on Wednesday.

Addressing an event organised jointly by the John Hopkins School and LUMS, he said Pakistan’s policy had been aggressive against the terrorist groups.

The Taliban and the Haqqanis have such a big territory available to them in Afghanistan. They do not represent the views of Pakistan shared by the Pakistanis.

“They have not our bet, they are not our nudge, and they are not our brother. The ambassador reminded, pointing towards Pakistan’s progression in the light against terrorism.

He said Islamabad, having squabbled with the insurgent groups, had told the Taliban to move out of Pakistan and join mainstream politics in Afghanistan.

Chaudhry added Pakistan wanted the Taliban to act as the Taliban coming to power by force. The only way the Taliban would gain power was through the political mainstream, he added.

Aizaz with Kabul, he explained.

24 Taliban, Uprising Leader Killed in Farahvy

Clashes

MIRANSAH - At least 24 Taliban militants and a key uprising commander have been killed during separate clashes in Kohistan and Dasht-e Badakhsh districts of northwestern Panjshir province, officials said Thursday.

Abdul Rahman Piri, the Kohistan district administrative chief, told AFP that Afghan National Army (ANA) forces have killed 24 Taliban militants and a key uprising commander.

He said Suleiman Rahmani, an uprising commander, was killed in the clash.

Another seven attackers were wounded. (More on P.40)

KABUL - Governors of 14 provinces, security and Independent Election Commission (IEC) officials attended the conference from the Tashkent Mili video conference hall at Presidential Palace, the palace said in a statement.

The president asked Minister of Hajj and Religious Affairs and Imam Farooq and Abdullah Abdullah’s spokespersons addressed the IEC.

Ghani asked government to provide all necessary facilities to women voters’ registration centers. The president also directed security personnel to ensure security of registration centers.

Earlier, Chief Executive Officer Abdul Lateef expressed concern over the slow-paced process of registration. Common people, and experts have criticised the IEC for not conducting seminars and other awareness creating programs regarding the registration process.

KABUL - A local investor has hired at least 2,000 farmers and farmers to farm and process damask rose for perfumery industry.

A local firm in Nangarhar province, in the east of Afghanistan, has lowered 300 hectares of land to grow rose and process it for perfumery industry.

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