Problematic: Intra-Afghan government.

First time coordination was seen for the Afghanistan peace process. He said Khalilzad recent trip to Qatar for the US-Taliban deal, indicated the peace agreement between the government and the Taliban would complete their talks after the US-Taliban deal.

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A number of political experts are upbeat about the prospects of peace talks. But they express concern that intra-Afghan talks would become contentious post-US-Taliban deal. Kabul University teacher and peace expert Mohammad Zaland said the US and Taliban would complete their talks over the next one week and they would reach an agreement.

He told Pajhwok Afghan News after the US-Taliban deal, the intra-Afghan talks would be difficult and President Ghani would not agree to a power transfer without US pressure.

He said politicians, tribal elders and the international community should play their role in making the intra-Afghan talks a success. He said the second most important issue was consultative and reduction of violence, which was not possible without international and regional pressure.

Another peace activist Murtaz Rahim said he had closely monitored the peace process between the government and the Hadi-lahkzad Afghanistan and he was hopeful about recent developments with regard to the peace process. He said Khalilzad recent trip to Afghanistan was well for the future of Afghanistan and Afghanistan between him and the Afghan government. (More on P4.)

Top Afghan elected officials are optimistic about the outcome of the US-led talks, but they believe that their intra-Afghan talks would be highly problematic and contentious.

Talks between the US and Taliban, which have been ongoing in Qatar for the last many months, have entered a crucial phase and it is believed an agreement between the two sides will be signed within next few days. The analysts are expected to agree on a timeline for foreign troops’ withdrawal from Afghanistan, anti-terrorism fight, intra-Afghan dialogue and permanent ceasefire. Other things in the agreement would become known later.

US special envoy for peace in Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad had been in Kabul for the last 10 days before leaving for Qatar. During his stay in Kabul, Khalilzad met six times with President Ashraf Ghani and CEO Abdullah Abdullah.

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KABUL - The media report about likely withdrawal of some 5,000 U.S. troops from Afghanistan amid fragile peace process on Friday drew a mixed response of cautious optimism and anxious concerns.

As the U.S. and Taliban brace for a potential final phase of the marathon round of peace negotiations in Qatar, the Washington Post on Thursday reported that the proposed agreement, which would require the Taliban to begin negotiating a larger peace deal directly with the Afghan government, could cut the number of American troops in the country from roughly 14,000 to between 8,000 and 9,000. That number would be nearly the same as when President Trump took office.

Additional cuts to U.S. forces would be negotiated as part of discussions involving the Taliban and the Afghan government, the report said.

Afghan officials at the presidency were not available for comments, but "(More on P4.)

UN Renews Support to Afghan Elections

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KABUL - Disagreements continue to prevail among members of Mohammad Haneef Atmar's election campaign team as former vice president Mohammad Yusuf Qanooni who had backed Atmar's first running mate to bridge the gap between Atmar and Atmar's former, the governor of Balkh province - a key figure in the team.

On Wednesday, the political office of Atta Mohammad Noor confirmed reports of differences within the campaign and said the disagreements broke out after Mr. Atmar backtracked from his original position on the post of the premiership.

According to Noor's aides, Atmar had committed in a written document to route the post of prime minister once he wins the presidential elections.

"In some cases when deputies of the president quit during the elections or become the victim of untimely illness or die, in that case, they can appoint new deputies 22 days before the elections," said Habibullah Nang, head of the IEC secretariat. (More on P4.)

KABUL - The UN mission in Afghanistan and the election commission on Thursday signed a project document based on which the UN reaffirmed its technical and financial support to the upcoming presidential poll.

Speaking at ceremony on signing of the UN Electoral Support Project for 2019 Presidential election at the Independent Election Commission (IEC), the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan, Tadamichi Yamamoto said that at least four internationally-recognized electoral experts are working with the electoral bodies on areas pertaining to the process so that the next election in the country is held in a legitimate way.

"We are also grateful to have the expert advice of four international commissioners to reach in the IEC and the ECC. The United Nations is fully committed in working towards ensuring an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned political process," said Yamamoto.

Yamamoto called on the Afghan people to use their right of voting. (More on P4.)

"There are 43 international and 134 national election support project experts from the United Nations working in the IEC and the ECC as well as adviser in all provinces and those people provide technical assistance and advice," he said.

"The leadership of the independent election commission has done its best to ensure transparence of the election by considering the principles of fairness, transparency from the beginning and safety of the process without considering any threats from anyone," said Javed Hayat Anjum.

Yamamoto has been constantly saying that incumbent president Ashraf Ghani and his CEO Abdullah Abdullah are trying to manipulate the government resources to secure re-elections in the September poll.

"The independent electoral complaints commission (More on P4.)