US Said to be Taking 2nd Look at Afghan Troop Reduction Plan

BRUSSELS - U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter has told NATO allies that the U.S. will take another look at withdrawing thousands of American troops from Afghanistan by the end of the year, a British official said.

British Defense Secretary Michael Fallon said "Carter told us the troop numbers and the dispositions are being looked at again. The current U.S. plan is to reduce the number of troops from 9,800 to 5,500 by the end of 2016, but Carter told reporters that President Barack Obama has indicated that Obama will do that as the year goes on. Carter's comments came as NATO allies agreed to extend the Afghanistan training mission and keep troops in all four sections of the country in 2017.

Afghanistan Signs Contract for A Major Dam

KABUL - The Afghan government signed another contract for the construction of a dam in western Farah province of Afghanistan. The contract for the construction of Dam, Bakhtshabad Dam, was signed in ARG Presidential Palace today in the presence of President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani. The Minister of Energy and Water Ali Ahmad Osmani said the reservoir of the Dam will have a capacity of 1,360 million cubic meter and the construction work will be completed in 18 months. He said the Dam will irrigate more than 100,000 acres.

Wolesi Jirga Tresses Diplomatic End to Torkham Unrest

KABUL - The Wolesi Jirga on Wednesday condemned 'Pakistan border forces' attack on Afghan forces in Torkham border, asking the Afghan government to resolve the issue through diplomatic channels. Reports say Afghani stan and Pakistan have increased the number of troops on their sides of the Torkham border after clashes between the two sides over the issue of fencing the border and constructing a new gate by the Pakistani forces. The skirmish erupted on Sunday when an Afghan border guard was killed and five others were wounded and intermittent exchanges of fire continued until last night when another Afghan border guard was killed and five others wounded. Pakistani forces have also suffered casualties during the cross border firing. Local officials in Nangarhar province said the two Afghan border police officers and two children were killed in the clashes.

Zakhilwal to Meet Aziz on De-Escalating Border Tension

KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani's special envoy and Afghan Ambassador to Pakistan Hazrat Omar Zakhilwal will meeting Pakistan's military and civilian leadership on recent border clashes in Torkham. Pakistani forces tried to construct a gate at the border to check what they called terrorist movements, but Afghan border guards resisted their attempts, as the government in Kabul does not accept the Durand Line as an international boundary. For the past three days, troops have exchanged intermittent firing, leaving several security personnel dead and wounded on both sides. A Pakistani Army major succumbed to the wounds on Tuesday in Peshawar he had suffered in the...