Afghan Delegation Set to Hold Second Round of Talks with Taliban in Qatar

Afghan Delegation - An 80-member Afghan delegation is expected to hold the second round of talks with the Taliban representatives in Doha, the capital of Qatar next month. Former Afghan vice president Dr. Abdul Rashid Dostum said that the delegates would be leading the delegation which is comprised of Afghan politicians, former Taliban leaders, and political & civil activists.

Some of the members of the delegation said that the government has also been asked to include in its team of negotiators, but the president has not responded positively. “Preparation has been made for the meeting in Qatar so that U.S. and the Taliban reach into a final agreement with the help of China,” said Abdullah Islam, a former presidential advisor. The representatives of the U.S. and some other countries including Qatar are also expected to attend this round of intra-Afghan dialogue in Doha.

According to Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, the intra-Afghan negotiations are part of the ongoing peace process.

Afghanistan Beat Ireland for Historic First Test Victory

DEHBASAN - Afghanistan’s cricket team claimed a historic first Test win on Monday as they beat Ireland by seven wickets. Rahmat Shah and Shadab Khan scored fifties for the winning country as they chased down 110 for victory on day four in Dehradun, India.

Afghanistan were steered to their target by a 139-run partnership between Shah, who made 76, and debutant Janat, who hit an unbeaten 139 for victory on day four in Dehradun, India.

Afghan Refugees to Attend Consultative Loya Jirga

KABUL - Senior officials from President Ghani’s administration, including Second Vice President Mohammad Sarwar Danish, marked the Journalists National Day at a ceremony in the capital on Monday.

Addressing the event, Danish said freedom of the press, which is one of the biggest achievements of Afghanistan in the past 18 years, should be preserved in the peace talks with the Taliban - who were once against freedom of the press during their rule in Kabul between 1996 and 2001.

He said the Afghan people and government are supporting peace in order to preserve the past 18 years’ achievement, especially the freedom of the press.

International refugees also took part in the meeting with Danish. Danish further said that the Afghan refugees and non-refugees should support the Afghan peace process.

“Taliban representatives also took part in the meeting with Danish. Taliban furthermore said that the Afghan refugees and non-refugees should support the Afghan peace process,” Danish said.

KABUL - A delegation of Afghan refugees from Pakistan, including members of the Afghanistan’s High Peace Council (HPC), on Monday met with representatives of the Taliban in Qatar to attend the upcoming Consultative Loya Jirga on peace. 

KABUL - In a bid to revive bilateral trade ties, Afghanistan will open a direct air corridor with Sri Lanka in the near future, a news site reported on Monday.

Afghan Ambassador M. Ashraf Haidari was quoted as saying Kabul would like to extend the air corridor launched two years ago to Sri Lanka. According to the Colombo Page, Haidari also expressed the hope of an investment protection and promotion (IP) pact with Colombo.

The ambassador, at a meeting with Sri Lanka’s Minister of Industry and Commerce Bathiudeen, on Friday, Afghanistan had signed memoranda of understanding worth $5 billion through the corridor.

“We would like to extend this corridor to Sri Lanka, via a new corridor through which, all the way to Colombo,” Haidari said, explaining the air link would have to be operated through Mumbai or New Delhi.

Preserving Freedom of Press in Peace Talks

Danish says Afghans are supporting peace in order to preserve the achievements of the past 18 years.