US to Transfer Part of $1.5b to Border Wall from Afghan Forces

WASHINGTON - Acting US Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan has approved the transfer of $1.5 billion to build more than 80 miles (130 km) of barriers on the border with Mexico, US officials said on Friday, including taking about $600 million from an account meant for Afghan security forces.

The latest move was opposed by congressional Democrats, who also criticized a March transfer of $1 billion in military money to fund Republican President Donald Trump’s wall. “The funds were drawn from a variety of sources, including cost savings, programmatic changes and revised requirements, and therefore will have minimal impact on force readiness,” Shanahan said in a statement. (More on P4)

Shaheen Wants Afghan Women to be Part of Talks

KABUL - An influential US senator has underlined the need for including women in negotiations to enforce peace in Afghanistan and chart a better future for the country. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen issued the call in response to a query at a foreign relations hearing on Wednesday as to how women would be included in governing a post-war Afghanistan.

WCAX TV channel quoted Shaheen as sharing experiences from her last month’s visit to Afghanistan. After 40 years of war, the Afghans wanted peace and desired to retain their rights, she added. (More on P4)

EU Envoy Stresses Women’s Key Role in Afghan Peace

KABUL - Officials from the European Union Delegation in Afghanistan at a ceremony in Kabul on Thursday marked the Europe Day 2019 under the theme of “Women of Afghanistan” where they stressed the need for women’s prominent role in the Afghan peace process.

“Peace agreement where women are massively part of the negotiating process, have 40 percent more chance of success than those where women are absent,” said Pierre Mayaudon, Ambassador and Head of European Union Delegation in Afghanistan. “On the EU side, nobody can doubt our determination to accompany these Afghan women in their struggle for more empowerment and a larger role in the peace process.”

“...audit on us of at least eight of April council conclusions of the 28 foreign ministers of...” (More on P4)

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