Serena Hotels Wins Big on the World Travel Award Forum

Serena Hotels - South and Central Asia was honoured with huge accolades by the World Travel Awards at the Asia & Australasia Gala Ceremony 2013 held at the Inter-Continental Grand Stanford in Hong Kong on Thursday 28 October 2013. Kabul Serena Hotel was awarded Afghanistan’s Leading Hotel of the Year, a big honour for the country. Dushanbe Serena Hotel was awarded Tajikistan’s Leading Hotel and the Islamabad Serena Hotel was named as the best in the region. It was awarded Pakistan’s Leading Hotel & Pakistan’s Leading Hotel Suite. The World Travel Awards™ are voted for by travel and tourism professionals worldwide, and the awards recognise industry leaders in tourism and hospitality.

Mr. Zahir Boobani who spoke at the ceremony said, "Serena Hotels’ philosophy centre around its guests, associates and the neighbouring communities where we are located. We aim to maximize comfort and luxury in traditionally hospitable settings. These awards are a testament to our guests’ continuing trust in one of the World’s Leading Hotel Brands. Thank you for continuing to support us."

Serena Hotels across the world, work under the umbrella of the Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development. They are a hospitality brand of international repute, owned and operated by Tourism Promotion Services, that has within its portfolio a collection of 35 luxury hotels, resorts, safari lodges, resorts and heritage properties in Afghanistan, Kenya, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tajikistan, Tanzania and Uganda.

The Islamabad Serena Hotel, Kampala Serena Hotel and Nairobi Serena Hotel are members of the prestigious Leading Hotels of the World and Zanzibar Serena Hotel and Khirona Serena Camp are members of Small Luxury Hotels of the World.

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Jihadi Council Intensifies Call for Convening Loya Jirga

KABUL - The newly-established council of former Jihadi figures on Saturday called on the government for an urgent holding of the traditional Loya Jirga to amend the Constitution.

Based on the political agreement between now-President Ashraf Ghani and former Jihadi Abdullah Abdullah to form a power-sharing National Unity Government (NUG), the two leaders must convene Loya Jirga (Grand Council) within the first two years of their office to amend the Constitution. The council, the joint group of the post of Prime Minister. The Jihadi Council - which was established after security situation deteriorated over the past few months - called.(More on P.1.0).

Parliament Wants Security Accord with US Reviewed

KABUL - Referring to growing insecurity across Afghanistan, members of the House of Representatives demanded the government on Saturday to review the security accord it signed with the United States. A number of members at Wolesi Jirga (Lower House of Parliament) said the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) signed between Kabul and Washington has not been useful for the nation.

(More on P.1.0).

US to Send Special Forces to Syria, Powers Divided on Assad

WASHINGTON - The United States announced Friday its first sustained deployment of ground troops to Syria to help the anti-jihadist fight, as major powers remained divided over President Bashar al-Assad's fate.

The decision came amid renewed fears that a small special forces team marks an evolution in Washington's efforts to defeat the Daesh group, which has seized Syrian territory despite more than a year of US-led air strikes. The White House rejected accusations that it was a "proxy war".

(More on P.1.0).

Zia Massoud Calls Talib an 'More Brutal than Before'

KABUL - President’s special representative for reforms and good governance, Ahmad Zia Massoud said Saturday that today’s Taliban are wider than they were before.

(More on P.1.0).

US Attacks Massive Al-Qaida Camps in Southern Afghanistan

WASHINGTON - The U.S. military official in charge of the U.S. war effort in Afghanistan says U.S. forces have attacked what he believes to be the largest al Qaeda training complex found in the course of the 14-year Afghan war. Army Gen. John Campbell told The Washington Post on a visit published Friday that some 160 al-Qaida members were reported killed in the attack, which involved dozens of American air-strikes and 200 Special Operations forces. He said the operation that took place on or around October 11, but military officials covered the breach of 90 square miles.

(More on P.1.0).