Pak Role Crucial in Afghan Peace: US

WASHINGTON - Calling Pakistan an important player in the Afghan puzzle, the White House has said that its role in facilitating reconciliation process between Taliban and Afghanistan will be discussed between US President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in their next week.

"We already know that Pakistan has played an important role in trying to facilitate reconciliation talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government," White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest told reporters on Thursday. In fact, one of the early rounds of talks actually took place in Pakistan, were hosted by the Pakistan government, he said.

Gen. Dostum, Russian Envoys Discuss Moscow's Support to ANSF

KARUL - The First Vice President Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum has met with the Russian Ambassador to Kabul Alexander Mantratov to discuss Moscow's support to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and the Afghan Air Force.

The meeting was reportedly held following Gen. Dostum's return from Russia where he met with the country's defense minister and other government officials, according to the State runed "Soviet Telecommunications news agency. During the Russian Ambassador's meeting with the Gen. Dostum had also requested Moscow to help Afghanistan in maintenance of the Afghan Air Force helicopters. This, "(More on P-13)

Abdullah, NATO Commander Discuss Military Cooperation

KARUL - Chief Executive Officer of the National Unity Government (NUG) Abdullah Abdullah met with the commander of US and NATO forces in Afghanistan General John Campbell on Saturday where they discussed a number of issues with the main focus being on the future of military cooperation between Afghanistan and the international forces.

"(More on P-13)

Karzai Criticizes Ongoing US Military Presence

KARUL - Former Afghan president Hamid Karzai on Saturday criticized the demands of US President Barack Obama to delay the drawdown in troops and maintain current levels through 2016.

"In a statement issued by Karzai he said the presence of foreign troops had not only failed to stamp out terrorism but was in fact adding to the problem as war is spreading. Afghans have had 14 years of foreign troop presence in our country and hoped for lasting peace and the elimination of terrorism but that has not happened. Instead insurgency has strengthened," Karzai said.

"In reference to the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) signed between the Afghan government and US in September 2014, Karzai said "(More on P-13)

Ministry of Economy Drafts PPP Strategy

KARUL - Minister of Economy, Abdul Satar Masood announced his ministry has drafted the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) strategy which is aimed at boosting current arrangements by the government and private sector in the country’s mega economic projects.

The draft of the strategy has been deposited to the Council of Ministers (COM) for their approval, he told TOLOnews. He said the key purpose of the strategy is to encourage both the government and private sector. "(More on P-14)

Russian PM Says Defending 'National Interests' in Syria, Not Assad

MOSCOW - Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said Saturday that Russia is fighting for its national interests in Syria, not for President Bashar al-Assad.

"Of course we are not fighting for..." (More on P-15)

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