

Taliban enters Afghanistan's capital; US diplomats evacuate: LIVE UPDATES

Taliban fighters entered the outskirts of the Afghan capital on Sunday and said they were awaiting a “peaceful transfer” of the city after promising not to take it by force, but the uncertainty panicked workers who fled government offices as helicopters landed at the U.S. Embassy.

FAST FACTS

- The White House said Friday that 5,000 U.S. troops will be involved in the withdrawal of US and allied personnel, up from the 1,000 troops already there and 3,000 announced Thursday
 - Former CIA director General Petraeus calls situation in Afghanistan ‘catastrophic’
 - Taliban executions, beheadings in Afghanistan strike fear among those stuck inside country
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US embassy in Kabul to close “any day now” as Pentagon weighs further action in Kabul



A U.S. Chinook helicopter flies over the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan, Sunday, Aug. 15, 2021. Helicopters are landing at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul as diplomatic vehicles leave the compound amid the Taliban advanced on the Afghan capital. (AP Photo/Rahmat Gul)

The full evacuation and closure of the U.S. embassy in Kabul is expected, “any day now,” a U.S. defense official tells Fox News.

“We are going to do whatever we need to do to protect our people,” the official said Sunday.

The Pentagon is weighing sending additional troops to Kabul to help secure the airport on top of the 5,000 announced by President Biden yesterday.

Fox News’ Lucas Tomlinson contributed to this report.

Posted by Peter Aitken Share

1 hour(s) ago

US evacuating staff from Kabul embassy that could close ‘any day

now': officials



Smoke rises next to the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan, Sunday, Aug. 15, 2021. Wisps of smoke could be seen near the embassy's roof as diplomats urgently destroyed sensitive documents, according to two American military officials. (AP Photo/Rahmat Gul)

The U.S. has started evacuating embassy staff in Kabul, officials confirm to Fox News' Lucas Tomlinson.

The U.S. Embassy remains open, but could close "any day now," one official said now that Kabul is surrounded by the Taliban and video on social media shows some fighters entering the Afghan capital.

Flights of American diplomat personnel back to the United States from Kabul have also started, the official added.

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2 hour(s) ago

Taliban negotiators heading to

presidential palace to prepare for a 'transfer' of power: AP

An Afghan official has told the Associated Press that Taliban negotiators were heading to the presidential palace in Kabul to prepare for a 'transfer' of power on Sunday.

Posted by Fox News Share

2 hour(s) ago

Taliban enter Kabul outskirts, await 'peaceful transfer' of Afghanistan capital



A U.S. Chinook helicopter flies over the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan, Sunday, Aug. 15, 2021. Helicopters are landing at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul as diplomatic vehicles leave the compound amid the Taliban advanced on the Afghan capital. (AP Photo/Rahmat Gul)

Taliban fighters entered the outskirts of Kabul on Sunday, with a spokesman for the terror organization saying they were expecting a "peaceful transfer" of Afghanistan's capital city to their control.

Spokesman Suhail Shaheen made the remarks to the Al-Jazeera English news channel in Qatar, according to The Associated Press.

Meanwhile, the foreign ministry of neighboring Uzbekistan claimed Sunday that 84 Aghan government military personnel had crossed into that country, seeking assistance as the Taliban continues to make gains ahead of a scheduled final pullout of U.S.-NATO forces.

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Afghanistan President Ghani makes first national address since Taliban advance



Afghan President Ashraf Ghani speaks at an extraordinary meeting of the Parliament in Kabul, Afghanistan, Monday, Aug. 2, 2021. (AP Photo/Rahmat Gul)

Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani said the country is in "danger of

instability” Saturday as the Taliban continued its advance on the capital, according to BBC News.

He also appealed for international help in his first public address since the Taliban intensified its efforts this week.

Ghani is backed by the U.S.

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8 hour(s) ago

Nancy Pelosi requests briefing

The Biden Administration will brief House members on Afghanistan virtually Sunday morning following a request by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and will be over unclassified material, according to reports.

An in-person classified briefing on the situation will reportedly be held next week.

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12 hour(s) ago

Sen. Cotton slams Afghanistan chaos

“The fiasco in Afghanistan wasn’t just predictable, it was predicted,” Arkansas Republican Sen. Tom Cotton said in a statement Saturday evening. “Joe Biden’s ill-planned retreat has now humiliated America and put at risk thousands of Americans left in Kabul. At a minimum, President Biden must unleash American air power to destroy every Taliban fighter in the vicinity of Kabul until we can save our fellow Americans. Anything less will further confirm Joe Biden’s impotence to the world.”

Posted by Michael Ruiz Share

12 hour(s) ago

Former CIA director General Petraeus calls situation in Afghanistan

‘catastrophic’

Former CIA director and retired Army General David Petraeus called the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan “disastrous” and “catastrophic” for not only the U.S. but the world, in a Saturday interview.

“This is an enormous national security set back and it is on the verge of getting much worse unless we decide to take really significant action,” Petraeus told Rita Cosby on “The Rita Cosby Show” on WABC Radio.

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12 hour(s) ago

Taliban executions, beheadings in Afghanistan strike fear among those stuck inside country

Afghan citizens face executions, forced marriages and other possible war crimes as the Taliban sweeps across the country, wresting control from ineffective government forces as the U.S. troop withdrawal nears, according to U.S. officials and watchdog groups.

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13 hour(s) ago

Sen. Mitt Romney ‘cannot understand’ hasty withdrawal from Afghanistan

“I understand but disagree with those who felt we should leave Afghanistan,” the Utah Republican tweeted Saturday evening. “I cannot understand why it has been done with such tragic human cost; without an effective strategy to defend our partners; and with inestimable shock to our nation’s credibility, reliability, and honor.”

The message comes as the Taliban has seized control of more than two thirds of the country, facing ineffective resistance from Afghan

government forces, and the U.S. prepares to withdraw by the end of the month.

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13 hour(s) ago

The State Department said Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani Saturday about the Taliban's violent offensive.

"They discussed the urgency of ongoing diplomatic and political efforts to reduce the violence," a spokesperson said. "The Secretary emphasized the United States' commitment to a strong diplomatic and security relationship with the Government of Afghanistan and our continuing support for the people of Afghanistan."

Posted by Michael Ruiz Share

15 hour(s) ago

1,000 paratroopers from 82nd Airborne heading to Kabul: officials

The 82nd Airborne Division's alert brigade will send 1,000 paratroopers to Kabul next week to reach the White House's goal of 5,000 troops in the city to protect the evacuation of U.S. personnel, Fox News' Lucas Tomlinson reports.

There were already 1,000 U.S. service members on the ground, according to defense officials. Another 3,000 Marines and soldiers will be in place by the end of the week.

The remaining two battalions of the 82nd Airborne Brigade Combat Team will stage in Kuwait as a ready reserve.

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15 hour(s) ago

State Department 'exploring options' for Americans looking to escape

Afghanistan

The U.S. embassy in Kabul sent a bulletin to Americans in Afghanistan Saturday informing them of repatriation assistance for U.S. citizens looking to leave the country as commercial flights are booked solid.

The aid is available for U.S. citizens and their spouses and children, the parents of minors who are citizens and, pending availability, lawful permanent residents.

Posted by Michael Ruiz Share

16 hour(s) ago

Biden announces a 5,000 troop deployment to Afghanistan to ensure 'orderly and safe' drawdown

President Biden has released a lengthy statement on the crisis in Afghanistan. He announces a deployment of 5,000 U.S. troops to the country to ensure an “orderly and safe” drawdown.

He also blames President Trump for the current situation, saying he “inherited” a deal “that left the Taliban in the strongest position militarily since 2001 and imposed a May 1, 2021 deadline on US forces.”

“I faced a choice—follow through on the deal, with a brief extension to get our forces and our allies’ forces out safely, or ramp up our presence and send more American troops to fight once again in another country’s civil conflict,” he says.

Full statement here:

“Over the past several days I have been in close contact with my national security team to give them direction on how to protect our interests and values as we end our military mission in Afghanistan.

First, based on the recommendations of our diplomatic, military, and intelligence teams, I have authorized the deployment of approximately 5,000 US troops to make sure we can have an orderly and safe drawdown of US personnel and other allied personnel and an orderly and safe

evacuation of Afghans who helped our troops during our mission and those at special risk from the Taliban advance.

Second, I have ordered our armed forces and our intelligence community to ensure that we will maintain the capability and the vigilance to address future terrorist threats from Afghanistan.

Third, I have directed the Secretary of State to support President Ghani and other Afghan leaders as they seek to prevent further bloodshed and pursue a political settlement. Secretary Blinken will also engage with key regional stakeholders.

Fourth, we have conveyed to the Taliban representatives in Doha, via our Combatant Commander, that any action on their part on the ground in Afghanistan, that puts US personnel or our mission at risk there, will be met with a swift and strong US military response.

Fifth, I have placed Ambassador Tracey Jacobson in charge of a whole of government effort to process, transport, and relocate Afghan special immigrant visa applicants and other Afghan allies. Our hearts go out to the brave Afghan men and women who are now at risk. We are working to evacuate thousands of those who helped our cause and their families.

That is what we are going to do. Now let me be clear about how we got here.

America went to Afghanistan 20 years ago to defeat the forces that attacked this country on September 11th. That mission resulted in the death of Osama Bin Laden over a decade ago and the degradation of al Qaeda. And yet, 10 years later, when I became President, a small number of US troops still remained on the ground, in harm's way, with a looming deadline to withdraw them or go back to open combat.

Over our country's 20 years at war in Afghanistan, America has sent its finest young men and women, invested nearly \$1 trillion dollars, trained over 300,000 Afghan soldiers and police, equipped them with state-of-the-art military equipment, and maintained their air force as part of the longest war in US history. One more year, or five more years, of US military presence would not have made a difference if the Afghan military

cannot or will not hold its own country. And an endless American presence in the middle of another country's civil conflict was not acceptable to me.

When I came to office, I inherited a deal cut by my predecessor—which he invited the Taliban to discuss at Camp David on the eve of 9/11 of 2019—that left the Taliban in the strongest position militarily since 2001 and imposed a May 1, 2021 deadline on US forces. Shortly before he left office, he also drew US forces down to a bare minimum of 2,500. Therefore, when I became President, I faced a choice—follow through on the deal, with a brief extension to get our forces and our allies' forces out safely, or ramp up our presence and send more American troops to fight once again in another country's civil conflict. I was the fourth President to preside over an American troop presence in Afghanistan—two Republicans, two Democrats. I would not, and will not, pass this war onto a fifth.”

Posted by Adam Shaw Share

16 hour(s) ago

Meghan McCain torches Biden admin for welcoming 'ISIS 3.0' with Afghan withdrawal

Former “View” co-host Meghan McCain went on a tear against the Biden administration Friday over the turbulent U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan - as the Taliban continued to gain more ground in the war-torn nation.

Reports that the capital city of Kabul could fall any day to the terrorist organization have sparked a panic in Washington with the Pentagon rushing 3,000 troops to help evacuate U.S. personnel from the American Embassy. McCain torched the execution of the military withdrawal and the turmoil that has been caused on the ground, taking a swipe at President Biden.

“Even if you thought leaving Afghanistan was the right decision -this is a reckless, dangerous, blundering, and embarrassing withdrawal,” McCain

began a series of tweets. “We left our translators, women, children, people who helped us for 20 years to be slaughtered & our president just called a lid until Wednesday.”

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more: <https://www.foxnews.com/media/meghan-mccain-biden-afghanistan-withdrawal>

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17 hour(s) ago

Afghanistan’s embattled President Ashraf Ghani on Saturday said he has started consultations on how to unite the country after the Taliban have seized large parts of the country ahead of the U.S. withdrawal.

“As a historic responsibility, I am trying to not let the war that has been imposed on the Afghan people cause the further killing of innocents, the loss of 20 years of achievement, the destruction of public institutions and longstanding instability,” Ghani said in a video message, according to the Wall Street Journal.

The Taliban has advanced through major cities including Herat and Kandahar, and control about 20 of Afghanistan’s 34 provinces. It is raising concerns that Kabul, held by the Western backed government, could fall soon.

Posted by Adam Shaw Share

17 hour(s) ago

McCarthy calls Biden’s Afghanistan withdrawal an ‘embarrassment to our nation’

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., has slammed President Biden’s “complete mismanagement” of the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan and called for the U.S. military to continue to provide “close air support” to combat the surging Taliban forces.

McCarthy spoke to Afghanistan’s ambassador to the United States, Adela Raz, on Friday and then lashed out at the Biden administration.

“The White House has no discernable plan other than pleading with the Taliban,” McCarthy said in a statement late Friday. “The bungled withdrawal, reminiscent of his failed withdrawal from Iraq, is an embarrassment to our nation.”

McCarthy said Biden must not abandon allies.

“President Biden must continue to provide the close air support necessary for the Afghan government to protect themselves from the Taliban and make sure al Qaeda and ISIS do not gain a foothold due to the Biden administration’s disastrous policies,” the top House Republican said.

Click <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/mccarthy-slams-biden-afghanistan-withdrawal> for more

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17 hour(s) ago

McConnell pushes Biden to ‘hammer’ Taliban with airstrikes as Afghanistan spirals

ICYMI: Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., on Friday pressed President Biden to order airstrikes against Taliban forces following what he described as an “urgent conversation” with Afghanistan’s ambassador to the United States, Adela Raz.

McConnell and other GOP figures have accused the Biden administration of botching a planned withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan in recent days. In a scathing statement, the Kentucky senator said the situation in Afghanistan was a “debacle” that was prompting a humanitarian crisis.”

“The Administration should move quickly to hammer Taliban advances with airstrikes, provide critical support to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) defending the capital, and prevent the seemingly imminent fall of the city.”

More

here: <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/mcconnell-biden-taliban-airstrikes-afghanistan>

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18 hour(s) ago

White House releases image of Biden's video conference on Afghanistan

The White House has released an image of President Biden's national security meeting on the efforts in Afghanistan, as well as the situation in Haiti.

"This morning, the President and Vice President held a video conference with the national security team to discuss the ongoing efforts to draw down our civilian footprint in Afghanistan. In addition, the President and Vice President were briefed on the earthquake in Haiti," the White House said.

<https://twitter.com/WhiteHouse/status/1426604078273077249?s=20>



White House releases image of Biden holding a virtual national security

meeting.

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18 hour(s) ago

Another Afghanistan city falls to the Taliban

The Associated Press reports that Mazar-e-Sharif, the fourth-largest city in Afghanistan, fell to the Taliban on Saturday.

Lawmaker Abas Ebrahimzada said the province's national army corps surrendered first, which prompted the pro-government militias and other forces to lose morale and give up in the face of the Taliban onslaught, the outlet reported.

The provincial installations, including the governor's office, are now under the control of the Taliban, the lawmaker said.

It is the latest dramatic advance by the Taliban ahead of the U.S. withdrawal of the last of its troops in less than three weeks.

The Taliban has advanced through major cities including Herat and Kandahar, and control about 20 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces. The western-backed government now holds Kabul and a smattering of other provinces.

Posted by Adam Shaw Share

19 hour(s) ago

Biden, Harris hold video conference with national security team on Afghanistan

A White House official tells Fox News that President Biden and Vice President Harris held a secure video conference with the national security team to discuss "the ongoing efforts to drawdown our civilian footprint in Afghanistan, evacuate SIV applicants, and monitor the evolving security

situation.”

The officials says Biden and Harris were joined by the secretaries of State and Defense, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the chief of staff, the national security advisor and homeland security advisor.

Posted by Adam Shaw Share

21 hour(s) ago

Second group of Marines arrives in Kabul ahead of full evacuation

From Fox News' Lucas Tomlinson: A second group of U.S. Marines have arrived at Kabul international airport on Saturday to begin evacuating Americans, a Pentagon spokesman tells Fox News.

Up to 3,000 U.S. troops, including a U.S. Army battalion, are expected to arrive by the end of the weekend.

Fox News has learned the U.S. military is preparing for a full evacuation from Kabul and closure of the U.S. embassy, if ordered by the State Department. For now, the embassy remains open.

Posted by Adam Shaw Share

22 hour(s) ago

Taliban approach Kabul's outskirts, attack north Afghan city



The U.S. Embassy buildings, center, are seen in Kabul, Afghanistan, Saturday, Aug. 14, 2021. The last-minute decision to send 3,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan to help partially evacuate the U.S. Embassy is calling into question whether President Joe Biden will meet his Aug. 31, deadline for fully withdrawing combat forces. The vanguard of a Marine contingent arrived in Kabul on Friday and most of the rest of the 3,000 are due by Sunday. (AP Photo/Rahmat Gul)

The Taliban seized two more provinces on Saturday and approached the outskirts of Afghanistan's capital while also launching a multi-pronged assault on a major northern city defended by former warlords, Afghan officials said.

The insurgents have captured much of northern, western and southern Afghanistan in a breakneck offensive less than three weeks before the United States is set to withdraw its last troops, raising fears of a full militant takeover or another Afghan civil war.

The Taliban captured all of Logar province, just south of the capital, Kabul, and detained local officials, said Hoda Ahmadi, a lawmaker from the province. She said the Taliban have reached the Char Asyab district, just 11 kilometers (7 miles) south of Kabul.

Posted by Peter Aitken Share

August 14th

Afghan president vows to “not give up” on achievements as U.S. troops arrive for evacuations

Around 3,000 troops will arrive in Kabul over the next 24 hours as Afghan President Ashraf Ghani vows to “not give up” on achievements, Fox News’ Lucas Tomlinson reports.

The Taliban have the capital surrounded after insurgents claimed control over half the provincial capitals in the country.

The U.S. has invested \$85 billion in the Afghan army, but that investment has failed to return dividends that officials had hoped for as the country’s situation continues to crumble.

The troops will help evacuate thousands of Americans from the embassy as officials destroy sensitive documents ahead of the evacuation.

The Pentagon has refused to call the operation a combat mission.

August 14th

Taliban seize province near capital, attack northern city



Smoke rises after fighting between the Taliban and Afghan security personnel, in Kandahar, southwest of Kabul, Afghanistan, Thursday, Aug. 12, 2021. (AP Photo/Sidiqullah Khan)

The Taliban seized a province just south of Afghanistan's capital and launched a multi-pronged assault early Saturday on a major city in the north defended by powerful former warlords, Afghan officials said.

The insurgents have captured much of northern, western and southern Afghanistan in a breakneck offensive less than three weeks before the United States is set to withdraw its last troops, raising fears of a full militant takeover or another Afghan civil war.

The Taliban captured all of Logar and detained its provincial officials, Hoda Ahmadi, a lawmaker from the province, said Saturday.

She said the Taliban have reached the Char Asyab district, just 11 kilometers (7 miles) south of the capital, Kabul. The Taliban also attacked the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif from several directions, setting off heavy fighting on its outskirts, according to Munir Ahmad Farhad, a spokesman for the provincial governor. There was no immediate word on casualties.

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August 13th

Former Navy SEAL says US policy in Afghanistan has been 'like a Star Trek cosplay convention' since

Blackwater founder Erik Prince condemned the potential collapse of Afghanistan, following orders by the Biden administration for a troop withdrawal by the end of the month, saying the Taliban's increasing resurgence is the product of 20 years of failed military policy.

Prince, a retired Navy SEAL who served in the Middle East, told "Tucker Carlson Tonight" that "half-baked politicians" in Washington are to blame for what is happening in Afghanistan.

"It's the same collection of national security elites in Washington that has failed for that entire 20 years. They took what was a brilliant victory by special operations and the CIA and the first six months after 9/11 and turned it into a massive failed nation-building exercise," Prince said.

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August 13th

The U.N. Security Council is mulling a statement that would condemn the Taliban's offensive in Afghanistan and warn that it would not support a government imposed by force or the restoration of the Taliban's failed state, which lasted from 1996 until the U.S. invasion after Sept. 11, 2001, according to the Associated Press, which obtained a draft of the document.

It follows a statement from U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urging the Taliban to step off the battlefield and back to the negotiating table, even as the Islamist militants are sweeping through the country and seizing tracts of territory from government forces.

Posted by Michael Ruiz Share



August 13th

Sen. Joni Ernst, first female combat vet in Senate, laments Afghan collapse

Sen. Joni Ernst, R-Iowa, the first female combat veteran elected to the U.S. Senate, condemned the potential collapse of Afghanistan to the Taliban, as the insurgent group gains control of one provincial capital after another in short order ahead of President Biden's August 31 troop withdrawal date.

Read more.

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August 13th

Pentagon pressed on whether Taliban has advantage in Afghanistan



Pentagon spokesman John Kirby listens as he is asked a question on Afghanistan during a briefing at the Pentagon in Washington, Friday, Aug. 13, 2021. (AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

The Afghan military needs to step up its efforts to counter the Taliban's rapid expansion of territorial control in Afghanistan, Pentagon spokesperson John Kirby said during a news briefing Friday.

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August 13th

US officials in Afghanistan are destroying sensitive docs at embassy in Kabul

As the Taliban closes in on the Afghan capital city of Kabul, sources have told Fox News that officials are destroying sensitive documents and equipment at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul.

Read more.

August 13th

US military to help evacuate Americans from embassy in Kabul: officials

The U.S. military will help evacuate Americans from the embassy in Kabul as the security situation deteriorates across Afghanistan, two officials confirmed Thursday to Fox News. The plans to evacuate the Americans were briefed to President Biden earlier Thursday in order to get his approval, one official added. The military will evacuate "thousands" of American citizens and Afghan interpreters from Kabul.

Read more.

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August 13th



Stranded people cross the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, in Chaman, Pakistan, Friday, Aug. 13, 2021. Pakistan opened its Chaman border crossing for people who had been stranded in recent weeks. Juma Khan, the Pakistan border town's deputy commissioner, said the crossing was reopened following talks with the Taliban. (AP Photo/Jafar Khan)

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August 13th

Pentagon spokesperson John Kirby pushed back against comparisons between the current situation in Afghanistan to the fall of Saigon in 1975 during a news conference Friday.

"We're not focused on the history of the Vietnam War," he said.

He also said he had no "crystal ball" and could not predict whether the Afghan government would succumb to Taliban offensives tearing across the country. However, he vowed that the U.S. would ensure that a terrorist threat would not reemerge in the region.

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August 13th



Taliban control of Afghanistan as of Aug. 13.

Posted by Fox News Share
August 13th



Pentagon spokesman John Kirby speaks during a briefing at the Pentagon in Washington, Thursday, Aug. 12, 2021. With security rapidly deteriorating in Afghanistan, the United States is evacuating some personnel from the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, and U.S. troops will be assisting at the Kabul airport. (AP Photo/Andrew Harnik)

Pentagon spokesperson John Kirby said U.S. air support was still an option to fight Taliban and Al Qaeda forces in Afghanistan but that Afghan forces would be the determining factor as the Taliban sweeps across the country and the U.S. draws down its military presence.

“It’s indigenous forces that can make the difference on the ground,” he said in a Friday afternoon news briefing.

But later in the news conference, he added: “We have noted with great concern the speed with which they have been moving and the lack of resistance that they have faced.”

He also said the Taliban is trying to “isolate” Kabul, the Afghan capital, but the city is not under imminent threat at the moment as the U.S. military assists State Department personnel in getting out.

Posted by Michael Ruiz Share
August 13th

KT McFarland: Afghanistan embassy situation is ‘completely desperate’

The former deputy national security adviser discusses President Biden’s troop withdrawal from Afghanistan and the larger foreign policy ramifications.

Posted by Fox News Share



August 13th

Biden State Department official deletes tweet about Afghan women



Internally displaced Afghans from northern provinces, who fled their home due to fighting between the Taliban and Afghan security personnel, take refuge in a public park in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Friday. (AP)

A senior Biden administration State Department official quickly deleted a tweet she posted warning that Afghan women “stand to lose everything” as the Taliban surges toward Kabul.

Deputy Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs Molly Montgomery posted a tweet early Friday morning as the Taliban continues to gain territory and power amid the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan.

“Woke up with a heavy heart, thinking about all the Afghan women and girls I worked with during my time in Kabul,” Montgomery wrote. “They were the beneficiaries of many of the gains we made, and now they stand to lose everything.”

Montgomery deleted the tweet soon after posting it. A spokesperson for the State Department told Fox News in a Friday email statement that Montgomery “deleted the tweet on her own volition.”

[Click here to read more on Fox News.](#)

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August 13th

NATO leader speaks out about situation in Afghanistan



Taliban fighters stand guard inside the city of Ghazni, southwest of Kabul, Afghanistan, on Friday. (AP)

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, following a meeting with NATO ambassadors, told reporters Friday that the “allies are deeply concerned about the high levels of violence caused by the Taliban’s offensive, including attacks on civilians, targeted killings, and reports of other serious human rights abuses,” according to the Associated Press.

He added that “the Taliban need to understand that they will not be recognized by the international community if they take the country by force,” and that NATO is “committed to supporting a political solution to the conflict.”

Posted by Fox News Share

August 13th



AP

Internally displaced Afghans from northern provinces, who fled their home due to fighting between the Taliban and Afghan security personnel, take refuge in a public park in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Friday.

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August 13th

Mike Pompeo: US needs to pivot to two things to make this work

Former U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, in an opinion column for FoxNews.com, gives his thoughts on what the U.S. now needs to do in Afghanistan.

“First, reduce the threat from radical Islamic terror in that country and make sure that we do all we can to prevent a repeat of the events, now almost exactly 20 years ago, that killed 3,000 people in the United States,” he says. “Second, get our brave young soldiers, airmen and Marines home and focus on terror all around the world and the great power struggle emanating from China.

[Click here to read more on Fox News.](#)

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August 13th

U.S. Marines heading to Kabul while fighting reported to be taking place 30 miles outside of it

Fox News' Lucas Tomlinson is reporting that the first of three infantry battalions (two Marine Corps, one Army) are now in the air heading to Kabul from their pre-staged base in Kuwait.

A total 3,000 Marines and soldiers will be landing at Kabul's international airport in the coming hours.

When asked how soon Kabul could fall, a U.S. defense official tells Fox News, "It could be tomorrow," and then added, "or it could be a month." Fierce fighting is now taking place 30 miles outside Kabul, the official added.

While there are no plans to close the U.S. Embassy in Kabul and evacuate all Americans right now, the U.S. military is preparing for that order to be given, the official said.

A former U.S. military official with years of combat time in Afghanistan was more blunt in his assessment and recommended to Fox News the following: "I would pull every American out of Afghanistan and then level the U.S. embassy."

Posted by Fox News Share

August 13th

Former CIA Station Chief weighs in on future of Afghanistan, Kabul

Former CIA Station Chief Dan Hoffman told "America's Newsroom" Friday that Kabul will be under siege within days and that the Biden administration did not plan effectively.

"Those major cities are falling like dominoes. Kabul is going to be under siege within days, probably, and so we have to factor in now the likelihood

that Al Qaeda will homestead with even greater impunity on the territory that the Taliban controls,” he said.

“We need to have a new plan for how we’re going to defend ourselves in the region, starting with our embassy and beyond here in the homeland from the attacks that Al Qaeda will plan on that ungoverned space,” he added. “There’s no question that the Biden administration did not plan effectively. The evidence of that is clear.”

[Click here to watch the interview.](#)

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August 13th



(AP)

A Taliban fighter stands guard over surrendered Afghan security member forces in the city of Ghazni, southwest of Kabul, Afghanistan, on Friday.

Posted by Fox News Share

August 13th

Germany reducing Kabul embassy staff while Denmark, Norway announce closures

A number of European countries are announcing changes to their current embassy operations in Kabul as the security situation is rapidly deteriorating in the Afghan capital.

Germany's foreign minister says a "crisis support team" is being sent to Kabul to ramp up security at their embassy there while its staffing will be curtailed to "the operationally necessary, absolute minimum," according to the Associated Press.

Denmark and Norway say their embassies will be closed, as all three countries are making plans to evacuate staff.

Posted by Greg Norman Share

August 13th

Taliban make territorial gains while nearing Kabul



Taliban fighters patrol inside the city of Ghazni, southwest of Kabul, Afghanistan, on Friday. (AP)

The capitals of Helmand, Zabul, Uruzgan and Ghor provinces are now reported to be under Taliban control Friday as the resurgent militant group's blitz across Afghanistan appears to be showing no signs of slowing down.

With these captures, the Taliban have taken over half of the war-torn country's 34 provincial capitals, including Herat and Kandahar — the second and third largest cities in Afghanistan.

The Taliban are now said to be within 50 miles of Kabul, the capital and largest city in Afghanistan.

[Click here to read more on Fox News.](#)

Posted by Greg Norman

Source:

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