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Taliban rejects reports on peace talks with Afghan government

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The Taliban militants group in Afghanistan has rejected reports that the group has agreed to hold preliminary peace talks with the Afghan government.

“There have been many rumors swirling around in the media lately about the latest developments in Afghanistan and negotiations with the Kabul administration, these are nothing more than the views and assumptions of these outlets,” the group’s spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid said following a statement.

Mujahid further added “We have repeatedly declared that every report which is not published or confirmed by the official channels of Islamic Emirate are false and hold no value.”

The remarks by Mujahid comes as informed sources close to the Taliban group have said the group’s leadership has approved preliminary peace talks with the government of Afghanistan in a bid to find a solution to the ongoing violence in the country.

The sources further added that a delegation of the Taliban group leaders affiliated with the group’s political office in Qatar are due to visit Pakistan in the near future to hold talks on how to explore ways for the proposed peace dialogue and the re-opening of the Taliban office in Qatar.

Two senior Taliban representatives including Qari Din Mohammad and Abbas Stanikzai are among the delegation who will visit Pakistan, the sources said, adding that Qari Din Mohammad,

who had led a team of negotiators in meetings with Chinese officials in Beijing in November, recently visited Pakistan in connection with the proposed talks.

The sources also added that during his visit, Qari Din Mohammad also met Chinese diplomats for a “follow up discussions” as Beijing is playing a key in encouraging the Taliban to join the intra-Afghan dialogue.

This come as President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani also said Saturday that he is optimistic regarding the peace talks with the Taliban militants group.

Ghani said Afghanistan is moving on the right track to achieve peace and stability in the country but did not disclose further information regarding any breakthrough in peace talks with the anti-government armed militant groups.