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European Languages

زبان های اروپایی

Pajhwok

Iran accused of assisting Afghan Taliban

By Danish Karokhel

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LONDON - A senior British official has said Iran was actively involved in deteriorating security scenario in Afghanistan, a country devastated by decades of strife.

Irans Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Ramin Mehmanparast, said on Wednesday that Iran will not take part at the London summit on Afghanistan.

The conference on Thursday is aimed at renewing the international communitys commitment to stabilising Afghanistan, in the face of a mounting Taliban insurgency.

Talking to Pajhwok Afghan News during an exclusive interview, British armed forces minister, Bill Ramiell said they had sufficient evidence of Iran's involvement in assisting Taliban fighters since 2007. He said his country, in cooperation with international community, wanted to put pressure on Iran in this regard.

About strengthening Afghan forces, he said his country was mentoring Afghan security forces to enable them to take responsibility of their country's security.

In response to a query about Taliban's infiltration into the ranks of Afghan forces, the minister said: "We will tackle this issue."

On the reintegration of some Taliban into the national mainstream, he said the process would help distinguish moderate Taliban from the extremists.

Citing a poll, Ramiell said 67 per cent of Britons were in favour of their country's military presence in Afghanistan.

He promised British forces in Afghanistan would stay until the country's own forces stood on their own feet.

Under NATO command, UK has 9,500 service members in Afghanistan, mostly stationed in volatile southern Helmand province. Up to 250 British soldiers have so far been killed in the war against terrorism since 2001.