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## Militant leader switches sides for 3rd time

11/14/2015

A Taliban commander and his 22 fighters joined the peace process for a third time in northern Sar-i-Pul province, officials said on Saturday.

Khal Mohammad, hailing from Sheram area on the outskirts of Sar-i-Pul city, had previously twice surrendered to the Afghan government – once in August and once earlier -- but rejoined insurgents.

Speaking at a press conference here, Sar-i-Pul Governor Mohammad Zahir said Khal Mohammad had once again joined the peace process along with his 22 fighters, but this time he had promised he would never return to the insurgency.

Before Mohammad could join the peace process, insurgents became aware of it and tried to prevent him and a clash erupted between Mohammad's supporters and the rebels, the governor said.

He said local police personnel had been sent to the aid of Khal Mohammad against the insurgents.

The two days of clashes with Taliban resulted in clearing Takht-i-Sharqi and Takht-i-Gharbi areas from their presence. A local policeman was killed during the clashes, the governor said.