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Taliban Official Claims ‘Deal’ With US on Qatar Talks

By Jason Ditz

July 6, 2012

Pakistani media is quoting an unnamed Taliban leader as [saying](#) that a deal “in principle” has been reached between the Afghan insurgent faction and the United States that would lead to the resumption of the stalled Qatar reconciliation talks.

The claim seems to be related to last week’s report from the Associated Press, in which the Obama Administration was considering [transferring](#) an unknown number of Guantanamo Bay detainees to Bagram as a conciliatory measure of sorts.

A transfer of detainees from Guantanamo to house arrest in Qatar was the initial plan, in March, but was stalled by the Karzai government [sending](#) delegations to try to insinuate itself into the talks. The negotiations ended just days later, when a US soldier [massacred](#) 16 Afghan civilians in Kandahar and the Taliban announced that they no longer considered negotiations to be practical.

The new round of talks, if they prove to be confirmed, may be off to a similarly rough start, as the change to transferring the prisoners to Bagram, nominally under Karzai government control, will give them another chance to force their way into negotiations.