

No doubts that Taliban leadership is in Pak: Afghanistan

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New Delhi: Afghanistan Defence minister Mohammed Masoom Stanekzai today said there should be "no doubts" that the base of Taliban leadership is in Pakistan.

He also said that the terror group is active and still functioning because it is supported by various "foreign elements."

"It is quite clear. When Mullah Omar's death became public, there was a total denial that the Taliban leadership was in Pakistan. Now it is absolutely clear in the media that when they had a gathering, they appeared in Quetta, Karachi and Peshawar," the minister said in an exclusive interview to a news channel.

"So there is a clear evidence where all the Taliban leadership is based, that is one (Pakistan)," he said.

"If they are based in Pakistan, who is helping them, who is coaching them, from where they are getting all the support?" he added.

"I think we should not have any doubts. This kind of fighting cannot be conducted without the support of any foreign elements. They are there, they are helping them and they are supporting them," he told CNN-IBN.

Emphasising that Afghanistan is committed in flushing out the terrorism from their country, the minister said the Afghan National Security forces is fighting all International terror groups like Uighurs, Chechens, Arabs and Punjabis.

On asked about Kunduz, the strategic city in northern Afghanistan, which is being occupied by Taliban, Stanekzai said, "In the past two years, a large concentration of foreign fighters have moved in Kunduz after operation conducted in tribal areas in Pakistan. Afghan forces are fighting the terror groups."

On the help from India in lethal defence equipment, he said, "I will not ask them that I want them, but what they can do whether they are ready to do something, whether they can do something. Any country who can help in a speedy manner, we will accept."

On the role of US and NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in the country, Stanekzai said that "we need enablers, not the kind of role they had before on preparedness of Afghan forces. We suffered a setback. Afghan army is ready to manage the situation."

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