

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
Sent: Sunday, February 26, 2012 1:35 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Afghan ministers cancel trip to Washington (AP)

From: OpsNewsTicker
Sent: Sunday, February 26, 2012 01:28 PM
To: NEWS-Mahogany
Cc: SES-0
Subject: Afghan ministers cancel trip to Washington (AP)

WASHINGTON - (AP) A Pentagon spokesman says a visit by senior Afghan officials, including the country's defense and interior ministers, won't happen this week as planned.

Pentagon Press Secretary George Little says the delegation has called off its trip to Washington because they are consulting with other Afghan officials and religious leaders on how to quell the latest wave of violence and protect NATO employees. Protests erupted last week after U.S. officials said they inadvertently burned Qurans and other religious materials at an air base.

The Afghan officials had planned to meet with Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey. Little issued a statement Sunday saying that Panetta understood and that he would welcome the group at the Pentagon "in the near future."

NewsTickers alert senior Department officials to breaking news. This item appears as it did in its original publication and does not contain analysis or commentary by Department sources.