

Taliban capture first Afghan provincial capital city

8th August, 2021

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The Taliban have captured an Afghan provincial capital city for the first time since 2001. Police in the city of Zaranj, capital of the southern Nimroz province, said Taliban forces are now in control.

Nimroz is on the border with Iran. The police there were unable to fight because there were too few government soldiers to help. A Taliban official said it was an important day for the group. He said the victory would increase the morale of his fighters in other provinces. He added: "This is just the beginning. Other provinces will fall into our hands very soon." There is currently heavy fighting in the cities of Lashkar Gah, Kanduz, Herat and Kandahar. They may fall before the Taliban fight for the nation's capital Kabul.

The Taliban are fighting to take control of Afghanistan for the first time since 2001. This is when US-led forces defeated them after the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York. The USA and other western powers have spent 20 years trying to train an Afghan army and police officers to keep the country peaceful. However, the Taliban never gave up their fight to take the country back. The USA and the UK are currently pulling their forces out of Afghanistan. They are ending their time in the country after 20 years. The UN's special envoy for Afghanistan, Deborah Lyons, said the war there had entered "a new, deadlier, and more destructive phase". She warned that the country was heading for "catastrophe".

Sources: cnn.com / bbc.com / aljazeera.com

Writing

United Nations soldiers should try to keep the peace in Afghanistan.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

capital city / province / control / border / government / soldiers / important / soon / the first time / 2001 / train / army / police / western powers / war / catastrophe

True / False

- 1) The Taliban are in control its first provincial capital since 2001. T / F
- 2) The province the Taliban took borders Iran. T / F
- 3) The Taliban said the taking of Zaranj was not so important. T / F
- 4) The Taliban said it would take other provinces soon. T / F
- 5) The Taliban were beaten by US-led forces in 2001. T / F
- 6) The Taliban gave up their fight for a decade. T / F
- 7) The UK is currently pulling its forces out of Afghanistan. T / F
- 8) A U.N. envoy said things would now be more peaceful in Afghanistan. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------|
| 1. captured | a. presently |
| 2. province | b. confidence |
| 3. important | c. disaster |
| 4. morale | d. conquered |
| 5. currently | e. countries |
| 6. defeated | f. ambassador |
| 7. powers | g. region |
| 8. ending | h. beat |
| 9. envoy | i. finishing |
| 10. catastrophe | j. momentous |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about Afghanistan?
- b) What do you know about the Taliban?
- c) What are the Taliban fighting for?
- d) What do you think the Afghan people think of the Taliban?
- e) Would you like to visit Afghanistan?
- f) Why isn't the Afghan army defeating the Taliban?
- g) What would life in Afghanistan be like if the Taliban take over?
- h) What advice do you have for the Afghan people?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. captured an Afghan provincial capital | a. control of Afghanistan |
| 2. Taliban forces are now | b. of his fighters |
| 3. too few government | c. forces out |
| 4. victory would increase the morale | d. soldiers to help |
| 5. There is currently heavy | e. for catastrophe |
| 6. The Taliban are fighting to take | f. city for the first time |
| 7. pulling their | g. in the country |
| 8. They are ending their time | h. fighting in the cities |
| 9. entered a new, deadlier, and more | i. in control |
| 10. the country was heading | j. destructive phase |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you know about the attacks on the World Trade Centre?
- What did the western powers achieve in Afghanistan?
- What do you think of the US and UK pulling out of Afghanistan?
- Do you think the Taliban will take full control of Afghanistan?
- What will Afghanistan be like in ten years?
- What would 'catastrophe' look like in Afghanistan?
- What questions would you like to ask a Taliban leader?

Spelling

- capital of the outhernhs Nimroz province
- Taliban forces are now in rntcolo
- Nimroz is on the derrbo with Iran
- increase the rmaeol of his fighters
- Other penvsicor will fall into our hands
- There is tuerlrync heavy fighting
- US-led forces fteeaedd them
- other nestewr powers
- keep the country faeupehc
- The UN's special yenov for Afghanistan
- a new, deadlier, and more riuervedtsc phase
- the country was heading for oacsathrpte

Answers – Synonym Match

1. d	2. g	3. j	4. b	5. a
6. h	7. e	8. i	9. f	10. c

Role Play

Role A – Afghanistan

You think Afghanistan is the country most in need of help. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their countries aren't as high on the list. Also, tell the others which is the least deserving of these (and why): Somalia, Lebanon or Myanmar.

Role B – Somalia

You think Somalia is the country most in need of help. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their countries aren't as high on the list. Also, tell the others which is the least deserving of these (and why): Afghanistan, Lebanon or Myanmar.

Role C – Lebanon

You think Lebanon is the country most in need of help. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their countries aren't as high on the list. Also, tell the others which is the least deserving of these (and why): Somalia, Afghanistan or Myanmar.

Role D – Myanmar

You think Myanmar is the country most in need of help. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their countries aren't as high on the list. Also, tell the others which is the least deserving of these (and why): Somalia, Lebanon or Afghanistan.

Speaking – Help

Rank these with your partner. Put the countries that need help the most at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-----------|---------------|
| • Lebanon | • Afghanistan |
| • Ukraine | • Syria |
| • Myanmar | • South Sudan |
| • Yemen | • Somalia |

Answers – True False

1	T	2	T	3	F	4	T	5	T	6	F	7	T	8	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.