

U.S. lawmaker calls plan to evacuate allies from Afghanistan complete disaster

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Many compare the evacuation of U.S. supporters from Afghanistan to the disastrous evacuation of the U.S. embassy in Vietnam in 1975

Washington, August 1 (RHC)-- A U.S. lawmaker has described the Biden administration's plan to evacuate Afghans, who worked with US forces in Afghanistan, a "complete disaster." The Joe Biden administration decided to grant special visas to Afghan interpreters, drivers, guides, and other locals after

Biden vowed to withdraw American troops from the country.

However, a U.S. lawmaker, who was involved in the congressional process for granting special visas to the Afghan interpreters and their families, said the Department of Defense (DoD) had not fully anticipated the move, describing the DoD's plan in this regard as a "complete disaster".

"When they finally made the decision of a hasty surrender and withdrawal, they didn't anticipate some of the unintended consequences or really play out a lot of the details — [visas] among them," according to Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-Wis.).

At a classified briefing with top national security officials on Capitol Hill, US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin was asked to detail the U.S. military's plan to evacuate thousands of Afghan nationals who aided the American invasion and occupation of the country.

Austin didn't have a plan, according to two people in the room and a military official familiar with the April meeting as cited by Politico. "We'll get back to you on that," Austin replied.

Gallagher said Austin's reply showed a lacking plan which has resulted in a "complete disaster." "This whole thing is just a complete disaster, and it's not getting better any time soon," Gallagher lamented.

Meanwhile, the Biden administration is still seeking to pave the way for the evacuation of some 20,000 interpreters and their families, fearing retribution at the hands of Taliban militants after the complete exit of US forces from Afghanistan.

Earlier, 200 Afghans out of an initial group of 2,500 -- roughly 700 visa applicants and members of their immediate families -- arrived in the U.S. as part of "Operation Allies Refuge." The others are still in Afghanistan, waiting for exit from Afghanistan and possible entry to the United States.

The process could take years and some 300 interpreters have already died waiting, according to a report. "These people stood up and fought shoulder and shoulder to [US forces]... and we're closing our eyes and leaving them there, leaving them to die," said one interpreter who had in the past received the Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) issued by the U.S. State Department.

The Biden administration has asked Congress for one billion dollars of emergency funding to expedite the SIV process for the Afghans. In the meantime, U.S. military and intelligence sources have warned that the Afghan Taliban militants have made huge territorial gains and could retake the country within months.

"At the moment the fighting is ongoing in the south and southeast," Governor Qani said. According to the US military sources the group now controls more than 200 of the country's 419 district centers.

Under a deal with the Taliban, which was signed last year, the United States has pulled out most of its troops from Afghanistan. The U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 ousted the Taliban from power, but it also worsened the security situation in the war-torn country.

The United States has been blamed for the surge of violence as it has failed to stabilize the security situation after two decades of war and occupation.

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