

U.S. freezes Afghan central bank's assets of \$9.5 billion

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Shipments of dollars to Afghanistan will stop [File: Victor J Blue/Bloomberg]

Washington, August 18 (RHC)-- The U.S. has frozen nearly \$9.5 billion in assets belonging to the Afghan central bank and stopped shipments of cash to the nation as it tries to keep a Taliban-led government

from accessing the money, an administration official confirmed Tuesday.

The official said that any central bank assets that the Afghan government has in the U.S. will not be available to the Taliban, which remains on the Treasury Department's sanctions designation list.

Ajmal Ahmady, acting head of Da Afghan Bank, the nation's central bank, early Monday tweeted that he learned on Friday that shipments of dollars would stop as the U.S. tried to block any Taliban effort to gain access to the funds. DAB has \$9.5 billion in assets, a sizeable portion of which is in accounts with the New York Federal Reserve and U.S.-based financial institutions.

U.S. sanctions on the Taliban mean that they cannot access any funds. The vast majority of DAB's assets are not currently held in Afghanistan, according to two people familiar with the matter. The U.S. Treasury Department declined to comment.

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