

## Taliban joins forces with al-Qaida

by UPI

KABUL, Afghanistan - The Taliban is working with al-Qaida in Afghanistan and learning attack and media techniques from the terror network, Afghan and former Taliban officials said.

"The Taliban have changed immensely in the last year due to the mentoring they are getting from leading Arab jihadists in Pakistan with al-Qaida, both in the realm of battlefield tactics and media operations," Lutfullah Mashal of the Afghan National Security Council told The Washington Times.

A former Taliban official said the group has learned how to use media, such as videotape, in its battle against U.S.-led and NATO forces.

"When the Taliban were in power, they were not focused on this important thing but they have learned from al-Qaida the importance of media in their operations," Abdul Salam Zaeef, the Taliban's former ambassador to Pakistan now under house arrest in Kabul, told the Times.

The Taliban, which once banned television in Afghanistan, now takes a cameraman on its major operations. The group has also improved its media relations and is quoted regularly in Afghan newspapers, the Times reported.

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