

Headlines:

- **Will Ghazni also fall to the Taliban?**
- **China's Voyage to Syria**

Details:

Will Ghazni also fall to the Taliban?

After catching both the Afghan government and US forces on the back foot in Kunduz, the Taliban have now turned their attention to the strategically important city of Ghazni. The fall of Ghazni, in the southeast of the country, would confirm of the rehabilitation of the group who were ousted from power in 2011. In fact this would be the most territory they have controlled in 14 years. Ghazni is a smaller city than Kunduz, but more important as its located on the nation's main highway, connecting the capital city of Kabul to the rest of the nation. The loss of the city would dramatically strengthen Taliban sway over the south. Ghazni's Deputy Governor is claiming they have the upper hand in the latest fighting, but with similar confidence preceding the fall of Kunduz locals don't seem to be taking any chances, and many are fleeing toward Kabul, or toward other districts they believe are safer.

China's Voyage to Syria

A Chinese frigate and then Chinese lone aircraft carrier entered the Mediterranean waters this week, leading to some to speculate China could be laying a stake in the Syrian escalation. This is significant for China as it rarely travels beyond its region due its lack of military capability to do so. Over the past two years, China achieved a number firsts as its navy ventured to areas no Chinese vessel had ever been before. China's Navy travelled to the Caribbean Islands as well as Latin America. It was the timing of China's entry into the Mediterranean that gripped most of the world's media. China recently committed 8000 troops to the UN peace keeping mission in order for its solders to gain experience in offensive roles and for Chinese servicemen to undertake long range missions as well as the requirements that come with it. But it is unlikely China will play a role in Syria, as aside from the lack of any political influence in Syria, China's aircraft carrier is not a nuclear carrier and thus must call into port regularly. The Loning, was a refitted old Soviet carrier and is its only aircraft carrier available. The demands of air warfare and the huge maintenance and repair capability needed so far from home, is well beyond Chinese capabilities.