

# US to Engage in 'Hit and Run' War in Somalia

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The United States is involved in preparatory military operations in Somali for a 'major' offensive against Somali fighters, report says.

US is providing military assistance to Somali government in order to retake capital Mogadishu from Somali fighters, a recent report in The New York Times indicates.

The American military is conducting nighttime surveillance in the Al-Shabab-controlled areas of the capital and training Somali intelligence officers and forces in addition to providing logistical supports for the government, the report adds.

All the preliminary efforts, including reconnaissance and logistic operations, are meant to help launch a major assault on what US government dubs the 'al-Qaeda' branch in Somalia within 'a few' weeks.

"It's the Americans ... helping us," the US newspaper quoted Somali military chief General Mohamed Gelle Kahiye as saying.

Meanwhile, a US official who spoke on condition of anonymity was quoted in the report as saying that American 'covert forces would get involved if the offensive fails to dislodge al-Qaeda terrorists.'

"What you're likely to see is airstrikes and Special Ops moving in, hitting and getting out," noted the official.

The report also refers to secret US military and intelligence involvement in the Horn of Africa conflicts in the aftermath of the overthrow of Somalia's junta leader Mohamed Siad Barre in 1991.

It also mentions the US Central Intelligence Agency's failed collaborations with Somali warlords to stop the fighters in 2006 which led to a US-backed invasion of the impoverished African state by Ethiopian forces in the effort to kill top leaders of Somali fighters.

In summer 2009, the American government hastily shipped in millions of dollars of weapons in order to save the Somali government, it went on to say.

Recently, there have been reports of the arrival of US defense contractors in Somalia in order to support 'peace efforts' there.

American officials claim that between 6,000 and 10,000 trained Somalia troops would fight in the offensive against an estimated 5,000 Somali fighters.

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