

## **Chronology of Events in Afghanistan, May 2002\***

### **May 1**

#### **Fighting between Uzbek and Tajik factions near Mazar-i-Sharif, truce brokered (Reuters)**

The Afghan Defence Ministry sent negotiators to the country's north to calm a new outbreak of warlord fighting that has killed and wounded 12 people. A Defence Ministry spokesman said the fighting on April 30 was near the towns of Sholgara and Sari Pul, 80 and 120 kms south of the city of Mazar-i Sharif. He said the battles, which had mainly died down on May 1, were between forces loyal to deputy Defence Minister General Abdul Rashid Dostum, an ethnic Uzbek, and his long time rival in the area, General Atta Mohammed, an ethnic Tajik.

**Associated Press report on the same news:** Rival defense ministry commanders who have been waging fierce battles in northern Afghanistan said they have reached a truce with the help of the UN. Qodratullah Hormat, Atta's secretary, said that up to 30 people were killed or wounded. Atta's commander in Sari Pul, Hayatullah, said that six of his men were killed and 15 wounded in that town alone. Faizullah Zaki, a spokesman for Dostum, said he didn't have casualty figures. The fighting reportedly started after fighters loyal to Dostum refused to leave the towns after military parades held [on April 27] to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the end of communist rule.

UNAMA spokesman Manoel de Almeida e Silva said the two sides agreed to a truce that also prohibits weapons in Mazar-e-Sharif except for members of a new 600-man police force, made up of fighters from the different factions in the area. A similar agreement in February was never fully implemented. There are still questions about the loyalty of the Tajik-controlled Defence Ministry to Karzai, an ethnic Pashtun who sat out the fighting against the Taliban.

### **May 3**

#### **Peace and Democracy Council formed by four Afghan movements. (Iranian radio Voice of the Islamic Republic)**

Four organizations, namely the Peace and Democracy Movement, Hezb-e Jumhurikhohon [the Party of Republicans], Ittihodiyai Millie Azadikhohon [the National Liberation Union] and the National Party for Peace and Development of Afghanistan, have merged in Kabul into a Council of Defenders of Peace and Democracy in Afghanistan. The council's general platform is declared to be defending independence, territorial integrity, ensuring peace and democracy, strengthening national unity and the supremacy of law in Afghanistan. This new council reportedly

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includes some members of the intelligentsia and former “jihadi forces” of Afghanistan. Among them are Ziya Ariyoyi, Rahimollah Rome and Javid Kohestane.

### **May 5**

#### **Food coupons issued to government staff in Afghanistan. (Voice of the Islamic Republic)**

Food coupons have been issued for the benefit of the interim administration's staff. Foodstuffs such as wheat, sugar and also soap have been distributed from the first of Hout [February 19th] to coupon holders. The deputy head of the Food Department of the interim government, Mirajuddin Ziai, said that the department has now prepared 200,000-600,000 coupons, and the distribution process is going on in different provinces. With the application of the coupon process, the needs of Afghan officials and their families will be met to a great extent. Government employees were deprived of the advantages of having coupons for a long time.

### **May 7**

#### **Zadran given seven-day ultimatum. (Reuters)**

Padshah Khan Zadran, who had attacked Gardez in April, was given a seven-day ultimatum to either surrender or face war, the provincial governor said. Paktia governor Taj Mohammad Wardak stated that warlord Padshah Khan Zadran was “a spent force grappling with mass desertions”. “The Gardez tribal council has issued a seven-day ultimatum from [May 7] to Khan telling him to either surrender or face war,” Wardak said. Wardak praised the role of ex-king Mohammad Zahir Shah who had called for elders of the tribes from the majority Pashtun ethnic group to resolve the standoff. “The negotiations were done by Gardez elders under the guidance of the governor and at the request of the former king,” Wardak said.

#### **Afghan warlords agree to withdraw tanks from Mazar-i Sharif. (Agence France-Presse / AFP)**

The UNAMA spokesperson said that the two Afghan warlords agreed to withdraw their tanks from the streets of Mazar-i Sharif in a bid to ease a tense 10-day standoff. Both general Dostum and Atta Mohammad agreed that they would remove all tanks, armoured personnel carriers and troops in Mazar-i Sharif in line with a UN-brokered truce. Fears of fresh fighting had grown when Dostum refused to withdraw his tanks, deployed late April 2002 ostensibly to take part in celebrations commemorating the 10th anniversary of the mujahedin's capture of the city from pro-Soviet forces.

#### **Dispute between soldiers, police erupts in gunfire in Kandahar (Associated Press / AP).**

Shooting in a northern neighborhood of Kandahar between the 5th Garrison and the 7th Police Station caused the death of a soldier, according to official reports. The first quarrel apparently started over a personal dispute between a soldier and a police officer, officials said, adding that about 2,000 police officers were deployed to stop the shooting. Mullah Azizullah Akhund, chief of the 7th Police Station, said he was jailed overnight because he refused to turn in the killer. He said he was released [on May 6], but that five of his police officers were being held until the killer shows up.

## **May 9**

### **Afghan Commander Wahhabi assassinated. (Voice of the Islamic Republic)**

One of the jihadi commanders of Afghanistan was shot dead by a group of unknown men in the town of Nejrab, Kapisa Province. Shah Mahmud Wahhabi was the commander of 987th Najrab Company in Kapisa Province. He was a well-known figure of the jihadi groups. Last week, another military commander was assassinated in Charikar, north of Kabul. Also last week, a military commander was assassinated in Kabul city itself. No individual or group has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Editor's note: This news has not been confirmed by a major news source.

### **The interim administration appoints ex-governor as deputy governor of Khost Province. (Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press news agency / AIP)**

The interim administration in Kabul appointed the former governor of Khost Province, Dr Mohammad Ebrahim, to the post of deputy to the new governor, Mohammad Hakim Taniwal. It was said that the authorities have taken this step in order to remove tension and bitterness between the new and the former governors in the province. Dr Mohammad Ebrahim is among the supporters of Padshah Khan Zadran. The newly appointed governor by the Kabul administration had arrived in Khost on 1 May 2002 and had taken over the provincial affairs. But fighters belonging to Zadran had surrounded the governor's office as well as the radio station.

## **May 11**

### **Pakistan orders crackdown on "illegal immigrants". (Indian news agency Press Trust of India)**

The federal government of Pakistan directed the provincial governments to launch a crackdown on "illegal immigrants" and given the police a two-week deadline to arrest them. The decision to extend the ongoing crackdown on the militant groups to the "immigrants" was taken at a high security meeting presided over by President Musharraf to review the security situation. The meeting, according to the officials has given May 30 as the deadline for all police officials to account for the "immigrants". After the deadline, if any "illegal immigrant" was found in the country, the Station House Officers of the concerned area would face dismissal from service, while the Senior Superintendents of Police would also be served with "displeasure notice". The crackdown was directed against those "immigrants" who had not registered themselves and were staying in Pakistan illegally.

## **May 13**

### **One injured as a video shop was attacked (AFP)**

A youth lobbed a grenade at a video shop in the city of Khost, injuring the owner and badly damaging the premises. The sale of audio and video cassettes has increased in Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban regime, which banned them under its radical interpretation of Islamic law.

## **May 14**

### **Afghan minister concerned about Pashtun abuses. (Reuters)**

Afghanistan's minister for Tribal and Frontiers Affairs Amanullah Zadran voiced concern over what he called maltreatment of ethnic Pashtuns in the north of the country. Amanullah Zadran also criticised the interim government of Hamid Karzai for failing to stop violence in Afghanistan's northern regions, largely populated by ethnic minority Tajik, Uzbek and Hazara people.

## **May 16**

### **Some 500 "rebel" soldiers join government forces in Laghman Province. (AIP)**

Authorities in Laghman Province say that 500 fighters belonging to a rebel commander have joined the government. The security chief of Laghman Province Moalem Mohammad Zaman told from the provincial capital of Laghman Province, Mehtarlam, that 500 fighters, commanded by Commander Khaled, had joined the government. Moalem Mohammad Zaman said: "A rebel commander, Khaled, had set up a number of military posts at the Alisheng Valley, west of Mehtarlam city. In spite of the fact that he said he was a supporter of the central government, but he was opposing the local authorities in Laghman Province". He added: "As a result of lengthy talks with the fighters of Commander Khaled, 500 of the commander's fighters joined the government today, but Commander Khaled himself has succeeded in getting away." He says that a number of well-known commanders are among those who have joined the government. They include Daye Gol, Gol Faqir, Solayman Shah, Ahmad and Mokhles. The chief of the Laghman Province security command said: "No clashes have taken place in the area and the situation is normal".

## **May 19**

### **Government troops positioned in Laghman province after deadly clashes, but hundreds protest government troops. (AFP)**

Hundreds of Afghans staged a protest rally in eastern Laghman province against some 1,000 troops dispatched by the government to quell tribal conflicts. Around 800 people took to the streets in the provincial capital Mehtarlam chanting slogans against the arrival of the force from the nearby garrison city of Jalalabad. Shops remained closed in the city for a second day as local businessmen and transport companies and drivers joined in the demonstration, demanding the return of the forces. Commander Hazrat Ali of the Eastern Command said that he had rushed 1,000 troops to the area to restore peace after tensions were triggered by rivalry among some local commanders in Laghman.

The situation in Laghman was tense after clashes between rival warlords and fighting between forces of provincial governor Mohammad Hadi and supporters of a former mujahedeen commander Mohammad Alam Qarar claimed nine lives in the past few days. Several commanders had expressed their loyalty to the central government headed by interim leader Hamid Karzai but they are opposed to the provincial administration. There are fears of bloodshed if the situation is not brought under control.

### **Candidate for Loya Jirga assassinated in Chaghcharan. (AFP)**

A candidate for Loya Jirga was assassinated in the western district of Chaghcharan in Ghowr Province. Mohammad Raheen was shot dead after being elected in the first of two rounds of voting which will appoint delegates to the meeting, said a source from the commission charged with organising the assembly. "Mohammad Raheem, from Aodak village, was selected in the Chaghcharan district shura. When he went home in the evening, a group of people came into his house and shot him," the official said.

**May 20**

### **Afghan government blames the latest attack in Laghman province on Hekmatyar. (Reuters)**

Afghanistan's Defence Ministry said supporters of anti-government Gulbuddin Hekmatyar had launched an attack against loyalist forces in the eastern province of Laghman over the weekend. The assault by around 600 fighters near a main highway linking the Afghan capital Kabul to Pakistan was repulsed by forces loyal to the interim government. Some local reports say the fighting was between two pro-government commanders.

### **Karzai issues decree on voluntary recruitment to national army. (Afghan news agency Bakhtar)**

According to a Decree by the chairman of the interim administration of Afghanistan in connection with the call-up and recruitment of citizens of the country in the organization of the national army: "The formation of a national army is at the top of the duties of the interim administration of Afghanistan. Therefore, in order to establish the national army and defend freedom, territorial integrity and national sovereignty of the country and the sacred religion of Islam, the following steps are to be taken for the voluntary call-up and recruitment of citizens of the country, without consideration of their ethnic origin:

1. Male citizens of the country, aged between 22 and 30, can be enlisted to the army on voluntary basis under a contract for a period of four years.
2. The volunteers should be discharged after a continuous period of four years in service.
3. After their discharge from the service, those volunteers who wish to sign a contract for a second term in service will join the reserves after serving for a specific period.
4. In addition to food and clothing, the volunteers would be paid the equivalent in Afghan currency, afghani, of 30 [United States] dollars per month during their training and the equivalent in afghani of 50 dollars per month during the service.
5. Responsibility of sending the selected volunteers to the capital - in accordance with the plan and without carrying weapons - lies with the governors of provinces.
6. Commanders of the large units and companies of the army in every province are duty bound to provide one Kalashnikov along with four magazines of ammunition per selected volunteer through a board of assessors of weapons and transfer the weapons to the capital after taking security measures and officially hand them over to the educational centres.
7. Military commissars in the provinces are responsible for preparation of the dispatch documents and the health and physical conditions of the volunteers and should obtain the opinion of the head of Department of Public Health.

8. The selection of volunteers in the provinces is carried out by an authorized board composed of the following: Provincial governor, representative of the Ministry of National Defence, commander of large unit and company of the province, security commander of the province, head of national security of the province, military commissar of the province, director of the Department of Public Health of the province, and head of the council of representatives of the province.
9. The decree is valid from the date of the issue.”

**Nangarhar provincial forces seize control of the capital of Laghman Province. (AIP)**

The forces of Nangarhar Council, which went to Laghman two days ago to normalize the situation in that province, have seized control of Mehtarlam City now. The head of forces of Nangarhar Council, General Mohammad Moin, has taken control of the city, and all affairs are conducted under his leadership. Another important leader of the forces, General Sayd Agha, has been put in charge of security affairs of the city, and has begun his duty as security commander.

**Afghan Islamic Press news agency report on the same news [June 21]:** The situation is still not absolutely clear in Laghman Province. Local military officials speak of a major conspiracy in Laghman. Brig-General Esmatollah Mohabat, acting commander of Laghman 100th Division, today read out the following statement: "A few days ago a number of armed people were deployed in Mehtarlam to disrupt the city's security and threaten the lives of the people of Laghman. The personnel of the units and companies of Laghman 100th Division, with the cooperation of the people of Laghman, removed the armed men from the city, and ensured full security in Laghman. Unfortunately a number of people launched an attack against Laghman in the name of Nangarhar Council. A number of agents were earlier assigned in Laghman to stage a coup and establish an administration to their own liking here. At present we are fully in control of the situation. A number of brothers who have arrived here in the name of peace from Nangarhar Province have done so with our agreement, and at present we are in charge of their security too. The central government is aware of what we are doing here and we inform the government of the situation." He, however, accepted that the Defence Ministry instructed him today that he should obey the orders of General Mohammad Moin. He said: "I am the acting commander of 100th Division, but I obey the orders of General Mohammad Moin." He added: "Both Moalem Zalmai and General Sayd Agha are in charge of the security affairs." On the other hand, Moalem Mohammad Zaman said from Kabul that he was still the security commander of Laghman Province and that he would soon go to Laghman together with a commission appointed by Defence Ministry.

**Afghan women protest elections in Herat. (Voice of the Islamic Republic)**

The first stage of elections to the Extraordinary Loya Jerga was held in the principle mosque of the town of Herat. Religious scholars, officials, elders and influential local residents of Herat town, residents of sub-districts No 4, No 5 and No 6 of the town administration took part in the first stage of the elections. The elections were held openly, and people's representatives were elected. However, women protested the election procedure and said that women's elections had not been held properly. They lodged complaints with the Loya Jerga commission's board.

They also voiced another women's problem that they did not have identification cards. It is reported that some Afghan ladies, who have been elected as people's

representatives, do not have either identification cards or passports. Due to the previous governments' policy, women did not have identification cards.

### **Afghan rival "governors" dispute over Paktika province. (AIP)**

Shayesta Baz, who claims to be the governor of Paktika Province, declared himself to be the legal governor of Paktika. He mentioned that he had received letter No-284 7/11/1380 [27 January 2001] from the interim administration of Hamed Karzai, appointing him as governor of Paktika Province. He claimed that another person, called Mohammad Ali, who had introduced himself as the governor of Paktika, did not have any legal document.

Shayesta Baz had been appointed as the governor of Paktika first, but then, after a while, Mohammad Ali had a decree appointing him as governor of the province. Sharana, the capital of Paktika, is currently under the command of Mohammad Ali Jalali, while Shayesta Baz is staying in Kabul to clear up the dispute.

### **May 21**

#### **New security commander appointed in Char Kent, Balkh Province. (Afghan Balkh radio)**

In line with a request by residents and elders of Char Kent District of Balkh Province and an order by the leadership of Balkh Province, Serajoddin, son of Mowlawi Mohammad Halam, has been appointed head of the security command of Char Kent District.

### **May 22**

#### **Delegation from Laghman province stopped from going to Kabul. (AIP)**

A delegation of the people of Laghman was prohibited from going to Kabul by the Nangarhar council. Moalem Mohammad Zaman, who calls himself the security commander of Laghman, said that the delegation of the Laghman leaders and elders, which was going from Laghman to Kabul to meet the leader of the interim administration and the Defence Minister Mohammad Qasem Fahim, was prohibited from going to Kabul, in the area of De Mashale Kamar, between the areas of Sarobi [Paktia Province] and Sorkhakan. He added that some of the members of the delegation were sent back to Laghman, but a number of them were arrested. He also said that the Defence Ministry had appointed a delegation headed by Engineer Wasel to go to Laghman, and make inquiries about the events.

#### **National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan holds meeting to define agenda. (Afghan Balkh Province television)**

The first meeting of the central council of the National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan was held under the chairmanship of General Alhaj Abdorrashid Dostum. The central council's executive committee was formed with 26 people, including the deputies of the leader of the National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan and secretaries of the executive commission.

## **May 23**

### **Six killed as rival Afghan forces clash near Kunduz. (Reuters)**

At least six people were killed in fighting between forces loyal to Afghanistan's Defence Minister and his deputy in the fighting that erupted on the night of May 22 at Zal, 60 km west of the town of Kunduz. It was reported that the fighting was still raging between forces loyal to the Defence Minister, General Mohammad Fahim, and his deputy, General Abdul Rashid Dostum. Dostum's forces, backed by heavy artillery, attacked Zal Fort, controlled by Fahim's Jamiat-e-Islami group, which repulsed the attack. Jamiat sources said that 250 of its fighters had been sent to Zal to reinforce the town's defences and evict any Dostum troops.

## **May 24**

### **UNHCR: Afghan refugees in Pakistan complain of police harassment. (Associated Press / AP)**

UNHCR stated that it had registered a disturbing number of complaints from Afghan refugees in Pakistan of police harassment, forced evictions and extortion. "UNHCR has received reports that in recent operations in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, the police arrested more than 400 people and confined others to their homes in what seems to have amounted to house arrest," said Ron Redmond, the UNHCR's chief spokesman. "UNHCR has also received a number of reports about random police raids in slum areas inhabited by Afghans, during which police have been demanding money from refugees, and threatening them with jail if they fail to pay up," he added. He said refugees told to stay in their homes, and "were threatened with jail if they were seen on the streets." "An increasing number of Afghan women have been approaching UNHCR's voluntary repatriation center in Islamabad saying that their husbands have been jailed or held under house arrest," he said. "As a result, those who would like to return to Afghanistan say they are not even able to take the first basic steps for repatriation such as finding transport or pre-registering at the UNHCR voluntary repatriation center. Pakistani police began their arrest sweep of illegal Afghan immigrants two weeks ago, parallel to a roundup Islamic militants that began after the May 8 suicide bus bombing that killed 14 people in Karachi.

## **May 25**

### **Kabul curfew shortened. (AFP)**

The curfew in force in Kabul was pushed back an hour to 11:00 pm, to be finished an hour early, Kabul's police chief Mohammad Bassir Salangui said. "From now on, the curfew will begin every day at 23:00 hours, until 04:00 in the morning," he said. Previously, the curfew was in force between 10:00 pm and 5:00 am. Only those holding a password, which changes each night, have the right to move through the city during the curfew.



**May 27**

**Afghan Interior Ministry raids video shops, finds "immoral pictures". (Voice of the Islamic Republic)**

Officials from the Interior Ministry of the Afghan interim administration have collected a large number of "immoral pictures" from shops and hotels in the city of Kabul. The move came as officials received an order from the Interior Ministry in this regard. The Interior Ministry has asked the owners of video shops, with a view to "preserving the Islamic and national culture of the country", to refrain from distributing and disseminating such pictures, otherwise people who disobey will be dealt in accordance with the law.

**Eight Afghan Loya Jirga candidates killed in May. (AFP)**

UN spokesman in Afghanistan Manoel de Almeida e Silva stated that eight candidates for Afghanistan's Loya Jirga traditional assembly have been killed in May. Four of the murders were reported in southern Kandahar province, one in the capital Kabul and three in the central province of Ghor, the spokesman said. None of the men killed had yet been elected to represent their district at the Loya Jirga. However, two had been selected in the first of a two-stage process to elect district representatives. The other six were candidates for the first stage, the spokesman said. The Loya Jirga organising committee has informed the UN that three representatives selected in the first phase of the process had been arrested in the western province of Herat. De Almeida e Silva said the UN was concerned about the arrests which came "after a number of incidents and intimidation in several districts of the west". The UN also said that six people selected in first-phase elections in Karukh district received death threats from the district chief. "These people have since decided not to participate in phase two," the spokesman said.

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