

Refugee Review Tribunal

AUSTRALIA

RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

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This response was prepared by the Country Research Section of the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RRT within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

Questions

1. With regard to Sebze Sang Jeghto village in Wardak province, can you indicate on a map where this is?
2. What is the general security situation and control there by the government now, and is it an area marked by Taliban activities?
3. Are there independent assessments available to indicate whether the security situation at present is improving, stable or deteriorating?
4. What is the situation there for Pashtuns?
5. What is the situation there for Sunnis?
6. What is the situation there for Ghalji tribe members?
7. What is the situation there for functionaries of the Karzai government and their families?
8. Is there any evidence of people being targeted by the Taliban or by members of the Northern Alliance in Sebze Sang Jeghto village in Wardak province?

RESPONSE

Note: For the purposes of this RRT Country Research Response the spelling is as per the source document because of spelling variations when translating into English.

1. With regard to Sebze Sang Jeghto village in Wardak province, can you indicate on a map where this is?

Sebze Sang Jeghto village in Wardak province was not found in the sources consulted. However, the following information may be useful.

Jaghatu district

Sources indicate that there is a Jaghatu district in Wardak province ('AIMS Geo-Codes with Updated Provinces and Districts' (undated), *AIMS and UNDP*, pp. 1-2 – Attachment 1); (UNHCR 2002, *District Profile: Wardak: Jaghatu*, 31 July – Attachment 2).

It is important to note information available in RRT Country Research, '7. Maps and Information on Provinces, Districts and Towns in Afghanistan' in the *Afghanistan Resource Guide* which states:

A large number of new districts have been created in many provinces and there are now 397 districts according to the UN AIMS website. In addition a number of districts have been allocated to different provinces, changing the province sizes and boundaries. In a number of cases, districts which changed province since 1990 have been moved back to their old province (eg. One of the 2 neighbouring districts confusingly both called Jaghatu has gone back to Wardak from Ghazni (the other Jaghatu appears to have been renamed); Kahmard has gone back from Baghlan to Bamyan and Azra has gone back from Paktya to Logar) (RRT Country Research 2005, '7. Maps and Information on Provinces, Districts and Towns in Afghanistan' in *Afghanistan Resource Guide*, 15 June – Attachment 3).

Although Jaghatu district is shown in the attached May 2002 map as being in Ghazni province, an AIMS update of provincial names and districts confirms the movement of Jaghatu district to Wardak province. In Ghazni, the second Jaghatu district is now known as Bahrami Shahid ('Jaghatu District: Located in Ghazni Province' 2002, *AIMS*, May – Attachment 4; 'AIMS Geo-Codes with Updated Provinces and Districts' (undated), *AIMS and UNDP*, pp.1-2 – Attachment 1).

Villages in Wardak

A village named Sabzsang is mentioned in the UNHCR district profile for Jaghatu; however, this village could not be located on a map (UNHCR 2002, *District Profile: Wardak: Jaghatu*, 31 July – Attachment 2).

A town Jaghatu, located in Jaghatu district (Wardak), is highlighted on the attached maps. For ease of reading this area has also been enlarged ('Afghanistan: Wardak Province' 2003, *AIMS*, December – Attachment 22; Afghanistan: Wardak Province' 2003, *AIMS*, December – Attachment 23).

One article mentions a village, Jaghatoo, in Wardak province. A map in the article identifies the village some 120kms north-west of Gardez, which appears to place it in Wardak (Baldauf, Scott 2002, 'A once-violent Afghan village trades guns for peace', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 5 August <http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0805/p07s01-wosc.html> - Accessed 16 August 2005 – Attachment 5).

Also, within Jaghatu district (Wardak) two villages are named Alaquadari Jaghatuy Wardak and Jaghatu Kunjghatu and are highlighted on the attached maps. For ease of reading this area has also been enlarged ('Jaghatu District: Located in Ghazni Province' 2002, *AIMS*, May – Attachment 4; 'Jaghatu District: Located in Ghazni Province' 2002, *AIMS*, May – Attachment 6).

2. What is the general security situation and control there by the government now, and is it an area marked by Taliban activities?

For the purposes of this RRT Country Research response the area researched is Jaghatu district, Wardak province. However, little information was found in the sources consulted on this question.

A March 2004 UNHCR advice describes Jaghatu as “relatively stable”. The UNHCR advice states:

The security situation is particularly unstable in Sayyed Abad, Nirkh, Jalrez, Chack. The situation is relatively stable in Behsud I, Behsud II, Jaghatu, and Dyrmerdad districts. Only small incidents of theft have been reported there. Travel from Kabul to the districts is not a problem for the local population. Nevertheless, the stag of aid agencies could be a problem, mainly in Jalrez districts (UNHCR 2004, UNHCR 2004, *Political groups and factional fighting, Hazaras, information on several provinces and land issues*, 11 March – Attachment 7).

In January 2004 one article reported that the Afghan military undertook a clean-up operation in Jaghatu district of Maydan Wardag province and seized weapons (‘Afghan military seize weapons in clean up operation in central provinces’ 2004, *BBC Monitoring Online*, source: Afghanistan Television, 24 January – Attachment 8).

Also in January 2004 a “commander” was said to have been arrested by coalition forces. The commander, Nangialay:

...has been reported to be a governor of Maidan Wardag in Mujahidin government, and a Taleban supporter during the Taleban [government] and now a supporter of the transitional administration. He had no position in the transitional administration (‘Coalition forces arrest Afghan commander west of Kabul’ 2004, *BBC Monitoring Newsfile*, source: Hindokosh news agency, 24 January – Attachment 9).

In August 2002 it was reported that weapons were “symbolically” handed over in Jaghatu (Baldauf, Scott 2002, ‘A once-violent Afghan village trades guns for peace’, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 5 August <http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0805/p07s01-wosc.html> - Accessed 16 August 2005 – Attachment 5; Fox, David 2002, ‘Calls for Afghan arms amnesty fall on deaf ears’, *Reuters News*, 3 August – Attachment 10).

Baldauf continued:

Today [August 2002], there are some 2,000 US Special Forces combing the region for pockets of Taliban and Al Qaeda resistance, and stalwart political and financial support for the current government...(Baldauf, Scott 2002, ‘A once-violent Afghan village trades guns for peace’, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 5 August <http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0805/p07s01-wosc.html> - Accessed 16 August 2005 – Attachment 5).

Question 2 in the attached recent RRT Country Research Response includes information on the security situation in Wardak province (RRT Country Research 2005, *Research Response AFG17457*, 15 August, quest. 2/pp.3-9 – Attachment 11).

3. Are there independent assessments available to indicate whether the security situation at present is improving, stable or deteriorating?

No assessments were found in the sources in respect of Jaghatu district, Wardak province.

Question 3 in the attached recent RRT Country Research Response provides assessments on Afghanistan generally (RRT Country Research 2005, *Research Response AFG 17438*, 3 August, quest. 3/pp.6-7 – Attachment 12).

4. What is the situation there for Pashtuns?

Little information was found in the sources consulted on this question in respect of Jaghatu district, Wardak province.

The UNHCR district profile estimates the total population of Jaghatu district at 50,000 with the ethnic composition being Pashtun (percentages were not stated) (UNHCR 2002, *District Profile: Wardak: Jaghatu*, 31 July – Attachment 2).

According to a map in a 2004 article Jaghatu, although not specifically identified, appears to be located in an area dominated by Pashtun culture (Baldauf, Scott 2004, 'Key to governing Afghans: the clans', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 24 June <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0624/p01s04-wosc.html#tableTop> – Accessed 16 August 2005 – Attachment 13).

An earlier August 2002 article by Baldauf noted:

Pashtuns, who dominate three of the five districts here, have had unsteady, and occasionally, violent relations with members of the Hazara minority, who practice the Shia version of Islam instead of the Pashtuns' Sunni variant. More recent fighting in Jaghatoo had to do with Pashtuns' reluctance to accept a new Afghan government dominated by the Northern Alliance, which has drawn most of its recruits from the northern Tajik minority (Baldauf, Scott 2002, 'A once-violent Afghan village trades guns for peace', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 5 August <http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0805/p07s01-wosc.html> - Accessed 16 August 2005 – Attachment 5).

According to the 2002 UNHCR district profiles, three districts in Wardak have a Pashtun majority: in Day Mirdad district, of an estimated population of 41,370, 63% are said to be Pashtuns; in Nirkh district, of an estimated population 57,000, about 80% are said to be Pashtun; in Maidan Shahr, of an estimated population of 40,707, 85% are said to be Pashtun (UNHCR 2002, *District Profile: Wardak: Day Mirdad*, 6 February – Attachment 14); (UNHCR 2002, *District Profile: Wardak: Nirkh*, 6 July – Attachment 15); (UNHCR 2002, *District Profile: Wardak: Maidan Shahr*, 6 July – Attachment 16).

Baldauf states that most Pashtuns are divided into two major tribes – the Ghalji and the Durrani. The Ghalji are larger in number but the Durrani have long been dominant (Baldauf, Scott 2004, 'Key to governing Afghans: the clans', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 24 June <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0624/p01s04-wosc.html#tableTop> – Accessed 16 August 2005 – Attachment 13).

Baldauf continues:

In parts outside Afghanistan's Pashtun-dominated south, tribal identity takes a backseat to broader ethnic, sectarian, and regional affiliations which form the backbone of support for many of the country's powerful warlords.

But in southern Afghanistan, where the tribal system has primacy, power is much less

concentrated. Within the two larger tribes there are numerous sub-tribes, conflicting claims to leadership, and small-scale militias. Each village has a tribal chief, and these chiefs choose from among their own ranks leaders who will represent the tribe in Kabul. Most tribes, however, have a number of factions claiming to represent the whole tribe, leading to rivalries and chaos. While the multilayered and fractious nature of tribal authority can be exploited by outsiders, those same traits make it a perilously complex game (Baldauf, Scott 2004, 'Key to governing Afghans: the clans', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 24 June <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0624/p01s04-wosc.html#tableTop> – Accessed 16 August 2005 – Attachment 13).

Further information on the Pashtuns may be found in:

Adamec, Ludwig W. 2003, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, The Scarecrow Press, Inc, 3rd ed. Lanham, pp.298-299 – Attachment 17;

Glatzer, Bernt, 'The Pashtun Tribal System' in Pfeffer, G. & Behera, D. K.(eds) 2002, *Concept of Tribal Society*, Concept Publishers, New Delhi, Vol. 5, Chapt. 10 http://www.inwent.org/v-ez/lis/afghanistan/glatzer_pashtun_tribal_system.pdf - Accessed 17 August 2005 – Attachment 18.

5. What is the situation there for Sunnis?

Adamec writes that "Except for the Turis and a few groups in Pakistan, all Pashtuns are Sunni Muslims" (Adamec, Ludwig W. 2003, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, The Scarecrow Press, Inc, 3rd ed. Lanham, pp.298-299 – Attachment 17).

See question 4 above.

6. What is the situation there for Ghalji tribe members?

No information was found in the sources consulted on this question in respect of Jaghatu district, Wardak province.

The Ghalji are also called Ghilzai and Ghaljai (Adamec, Ludwig W. 2003, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, The Scarecrow Press, Inc, 3rd ed. Lanham, p.136 – Attachment 20).

The Ghalji is one of the two major Pashtun tribes (Baldauf, Scott 2004, 'Key to governing Afghans: the clans', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 24 June <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0624/p01s04-wosc.html#tableTop> – Accessed 16 August 2005 – Attachment 13).

According to Adamec the Ghilzai and Durrani Pashtuns inhabit the south of Wardak and the Hazara in the north and west (Adamec, Ludwig W. 2003, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, The Scarecrow Press, Inc, 3rd ed. Lanham, p.387 – Attachment 21).

Rippenburg writes that the Ghilzai inhabit the southeast of Afghanistan, between Kabul and Kandahar. They also have large communities in the centre and north of the country due to coerced and fostered resettlement under Durrani rule (Rippenburg, Carol J. 2005, 'Ethnicity and Civil Society in Contemporary Afghanistan', *The Middle East Journal*, Winter, Vol. 59, No. 1 – Attachment 19).

She also states that:

...Ghilzai, who live in predominantly Durrani areas, complain of harassment, seizure of property, and discrimination from Durrani warlords...(Riphenburg, Carol J. 2005, 'Ethnicity and Civil Society in Contemporary Afghanistan', *The Middle East Journal*, Winter, Vol. 59, No. 1 – Attachment 19).

Glatzer mentions that the Ghilzay are scattered all over Afghanistan – there is no proper Ghilzay land. However, there are areas where certain of their sub-tribes predominate (Glatzer, Bernt, 'The Pashtun Tribal System' in Pfeffer, G. & Behera, D. K.(eds) 2002, *Concept of Tribal Society*, Concept Publishers, New Delhi, Vol. 5, Chapt. 10 http://www.inwent.org/v-ez/lis/afghanistan/glatzer_pashtun_tribal_system.pdf - Accessed 17 August 2005 – Attachment 18).

Further information on the Ghilzai may be found in:

Adamec, Ludwig W. 2003, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, The Scarecrow Press, Inc, 3rd ed. Lanham, pp.136-137 – Attachment 20.

7. What is the situation there for functionaries of the Karzai government and their families?

No information was found in the sources consulted on this question in respect of Jaghatu district, Wardak province.

8. Is there any evidence of people being targeted by the Taliban or by members of the Northern Alliance in Sebze Sang Jeghto village in Wardak province?

Little information was found in the sources consulted on this question in respect of Jaghatu district, Wardak province.

In August 2002 Baldauf wrote:

Pashtuns, who dominate three of the five districts here, have had unsteady, and occasionally, violent relations with members of the Hazara minority, who practice the Shia version of Islam instead of the Pashtuns' Sunni variant. More recent fighting in Jaghatoo had to do with Pashtuns' reluctance to accept a new Afghan government dominated by the Northern Alliance, which has drawn most of its recruits from the northern Tajik minority (Baldauf, Scott 2002, 'A once-violent Afghan village trades guns for peace', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 5 August <http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0805/p07s01-wosc.html> - Accessed 16 August 2005 – Attachment 5).

List of Sources Consulted

Internet Sources:

Google search engine

UNHCR *REFWORLD* UNHCR Refugee Information Online

Databases:

Public *FACTIVA* Reuters Business Briefing

DIMIA *BACIS* Country Information

RRT	<i>REFINFO</i> <i>ISYS</i>	IRBDC Research Responses (Canada) RRT Country Research database, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, US Department of State <i>Country Reports on Human Rights Practices</i> .
RRT Library	<i>FIRST</i>	RRT Library Catalogue

List of Attachments

- 1 'AIMS Geo-Codes with Updated Provinces and Districts' (undated), *AIMS and UNDP*, pp.1-2
- 2 UNHCR 2002, *District Profile: Wardak: Jaghatu*, 31 July
- 3 RRT Country Research 2005, '7. Maps and Information on Provinces, Districts and Towns in Afghanistan' in *Afghanistan Resource Guide*, 15 June
- 4 'Jaghatu District: Located in Ghazni Province' 2002, *AIMS*, May
- 5 Baldauf, Scott 2002, 'A once-violent Afghan village trades guns for peace', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 5 August (<http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0805/p07s01-wosc.html> - Accessed 16 August 2005)
- 6 'Jaghatu District: Located in Ghazni Province' 2002, *AIMS*, May
- 7 UNHCR 2004, UNHCR 2004, *Political groups and factional fighting, Hazaras, information on several provinces and land issues*, 11 March (CISNET Afghanistan CX90882)
- 8 'Afghan military seize weapons in clean up operation in central provinces' 2004, *BBC Monitoring Online*, source: Afghanistan Television, 24 January (CISNET Afghanistan CX88345)
- 9 'Coalition forces arrest Afghan commander west of Kabul' 2004, *BBC Monitoring Newsfile*, source: Hindokosh news agency, 24 January (FACTIVA)
- 10 Fox, David 2002, 'Calls for Afghan arms amnesty fall on deaf ears', *Reuters News*, 3 August (FACTIVA)
- 11 RRT Country Research 2005, *Research Response AFG17457*, 15 August, quest. 2/pp.3-9
- 12 RRT Country Research 2005, *Research Response AFG 17438*, 3 August, quest. 3/pp.6-7
- 13 Baldauf, Scott 2004, 'Key to governing Afghans: the clans', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 24 June (<http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0624/p01s04-wosc.html#tableTop> – Accessed 16 August 2005)
- 14 UNHCR 2002, *District Profile: Wardak: Day Mirdad*, 6 February

- 15 UNHCR 2002, *District Profile: Wardak: Nirkh*, 6 July
- 16 UNHCR 2002, *District Profile: Wardak: Maidan Shahr*, 6 July
- 17 Adamec, Ludwig W. 2003, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, The Scarecrow Press, Inc, 3rd ed. Lanham, pp.298-299 (RRT Library)
- 18 Glatzer, Bernt, 'The Pashtun Tribal System' in Pfeffer, G. & Behera, D. K.(eds) 2002, *Concept of Tribal Society*, Concept Publishers, New Delhi, Vol. 5, Chapt. 10 (http://www.inwent.org/v-ez/lis/afghanistan/glatzer_pashtun_tribal_system.pdf - Accessed 17 August 2005)
- 19 Riphenburg, Carol J. 2005, 'Ethnicity and Civil Society in Contemporary Afghanistan', *The Middle East Journal*, Winter, Vol. 59, No. 1
- 20 Adamec, Ludwig W. 2003, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, The Scarecrow Press, Inc, 3rd ed. Lanham, pp.136-137 (RRT Library)
- 21 Adamec, Ludwig W. 2003, *Historical Dictionary of Afghanistan*, The Scarecrow Press, Inc, 3rd ed. Lanham, p.387 (RRT Library)
- 22 'Afghanistan: Wardak Province' 2003, *AIMS*, December
- 23 'Afghanistan: Wardak Province' 2003, *AIMS*, December.