



د افغانستان د ټاکنو او روڼتيا د څار مؤسسه  
مؤسسه دیده بان انتخابات و شفافیت افغانستان  
Election & Transparency Watch Organization of Afghanistan

# Weekly Monitoring Report of Wolesi Jirga

13th – 18th Jan - 2018

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## Lawmakers Approve Next Year's Draft Budget

The Wolesi Jirga, or the Lower House of Parliament on Wednesday approved the next Afghan calendar year's budget draft.

This comes just days before the parliamentarians are set to break for their winter recess of 45 days.



A month back, the legislators rejected the draft budget, citing issues including lack of balance and significant lower allocation for development spending.

They argued that the budget was not balanced and there were many complexities in the document.

The total value of 1397 national budget is 377.011 billion afghanis, comprising of 266.133 billion afs

ordinary budget and 110.878 billion afs development budget.

At least 188 billion afs of next year's budget will be provided from international aid and 183 billion afs from the national revenues, according to government officials.

## MPs Link Currency Devaluation to Internal, Foreign Elements

A parliament member said that devaluation of the Afghani against US dollar was affected by both domestic and foreign elements.

The value of Afghani witnessed an unprecedented fall against the US dollar in recent weeks, causing people's concerns and a big jump in the price of essentials particularly foodstuff.

Monawar Shah Bahadori, a member of economic committee of Parliament, said: "If the government does not pay attention to the elements of the decrease of Afghani value against dollar, one dollar will be dealt up to 75 AFN by the new Afghan calendar year."

He said one element was the existence of a mafia circle in the Central Bank who is hoarding dollar.

He said: "The Central Bank puts 50 million dollars in auction every week, but the mafia circle inside the bank smuggle the money to abroad."



Parliament's economy committee calls insecurity, political problems, reduction in international aids, reduction in investment and increase of imports as the elements of Afghani devaluation against foreign currencies.

But, Khalil Seddiq, the Central Bank governor said that political tensions, fluctuations of the foreign currencies in the neighboring countries and completion of the government budget at the end of fiscal year were behind the decrease. "Political tensions have directly affected our currency price," he said.



### **MPs Ratify Draft Law on Medical Council**

The Wolesi Jirga, or Lower House of Parliament on Saturday approved a draft law on creation of the Medical Council. If approved by the Meshrano Jirga or Senate, the council would be created as new organizational unit.

The Medical Council was created in early October under a presidential order. Based on Article 90th of the Constitution, the Wolesi Jirga has the right to create, amend or cancel organizational units.

Saleh Mohammad Saljoqi, who heads the lower house committee on public health, while explaining the draft law for Medical Council, said the legislation was approved with a majority of vote today.



"Medical Council is a professional organization and is a need for the medical society of the country, its goal is to ensure healthcare services and support doctors," he said.

He said such councils were active in 50 countries of the world including 10 regional countries. A number of lawmakers had tried to create the council in Afghanistan in the last seven years.

Saljoqi said: "Creation of this council would not only improve the quality of health services, but also give credit to the health services system of the

country.”

Fatima Azizi, who favored the Medical Council draft law, said: “Doctors and medical students would suffer more problems if this draft law is not approved.”

However, Niamatullah Ghafari, one of the only four lawmakers who voted against the draft law, said: “Creation of Medical Council has no base in the constitution; its creation would be interference in the Ministry of Public Health.”

At the end of the meeting, Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahimy asked lawmakers to vote on the draft law. Of 124 lawmakers present, 120 voted in favor of the law.



Public Health Minister Ferozuddin Feroz had said many people were concerned about the quality of health services but the Medical Council would help accredit the system.

He asked the upper house of parliament to approve the draft law as it would address doctors’ problems, prevent violations and protect doctors and patients.

### **MPs Rejects Ghani’s Decree on Protests, Strikes**

Lawmakers in the Lower House of Parliament dismissed a controversial decree recently issued by President Ashraf Ghani on the regulation of public gatherings, strikes and demonstrations, calling the order in contrast with the Constitution and democratic values.

The house speaker, Abdul Rauf Ibrahimy, said: “The decree is rejected.” But some lawmakers said the decree contravenes Afghanistan’s Constitution.

Fawzia Kofi, an MP from Badakhshan said: “Individual liberties have been dealt dictatorially and no Afghan citizen will be able to come and protest for his peaceful purposes.”

Her colleague, Massouda Karokhail, said: “All conditions predicted in the draft are quite restricted in practical manner.” Other legislators meanwhile argued that the decree was in the interests of the county as it has been witnessed that some people are misusing civil freedoms under the name of demonstrations and protests.

“In the face of the miseries and dangerous situations which are currently prevailing in Afghanistan, everything is misused in Afghanistan; therefore, there is a need for more debates to be carried on the law,” said another lawmaker Humaira Ayubi.



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“I don’t understand why the (parliament) committee has brought this issue to the house,” said Lailuma Hakmi, a member of the Lower House.

The decree is now expected to be put for further debates in Meshrano Jirga, the Upper House of Parliament.

The decree bans holding any kind of protests and demonstrations near government institutions and public roads

### **ETWA’S MONITORING AND ITS PURPOSE:**

Monitoring of the work of the Parliament for the purpose of informing citizens and promoting cooperation between the parliament and civil society is an effort that ETWA believes contributes to the development of the political system of Afghanistan and strengthens the highest representative institution of the country, the Parliament.



**ETWA’S EMPLOYEES**

To this end, ETWA has started a program to observe the work of the Wolesi Jirga and provide reporting and analysis that would help this institution to expand and advance its work. Collecting information on the work of the Parliament and disseminating it to the people and electorate of Afghanistan will promote this institution and has the potential to build closer links between the elected and the electorate.

ETWA will remain impartial and neutral throughout its work, in particular in its observation and reporting, and will adopt a code of conduct for its observers and analysts, as well as with full preparation to successfully implement this initiative in conjunction with Wolesi Jirga.

[www.ETWA.org.af](http://www.ETWA.org.af)

Contact: 0706706720

[ETWA.afghanistan@gmail.com](mailto:ETWA.afghanistan@gmail.com)