



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

16th – 21st Dec, 2017

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### Joint Body Endorses Ghani Decree on E-ID Cards

A joint commission, representing both branches of the parliament on Monday approved the recent decree issued by President Ashraf Ghani about the inclusion of nationality and ethnicity in the new computerized identity cards or.

The move put an end to months of controversy over the much-awaited process.

Abdul Hai Akhundzada, a senator and member of the joint commission has called on the relevant department swiftly launch distribution of E-ID Cards to the citizens.



This comes after members of the Wolesi Jirga, or the Lower House dismissed the President's legislative decree to amend the population registration law, requiring inclusion of nationality and ethnicity in the identity cards.

Following the disagreements on the issue, a sixteen-member parliamentarian joint commission was formed to debate on the presidential decree.

Akhundzadai went on to say that: "The decree was approved by the twelve members present. Nationality and ethnicity will now be included on the ID cards."

Another member of the commission, Hashim Alokzai, said: "We were able to approve the decree with nine members attending, but today twelve of the members were present. We now call on the population registration department to kick start the distribution process of these cards."

A number of lawmakers, however, rejected motives behind the rejection of Ghani's order.

A Wolesi Jirga member, Asadullah Saadati, said: "From the political perspective, the inclusion of nationality increases the differences."



### **MPs Ask Gov't to Fix the Draft Budget**

The Wolesi Jirga or Lower House on Wednesday rejected the draft budget for the next fiscal year worth 360 billion Afghanis.

As per the draft, AFN 267 billion are earmarked for expenditures and AFN 93 billion for development projects. Up to AFN 161 billion are forecasted to come from domestic revenue and AFN 179 billion via foreign aid. The budget deficit is around AFN 10 billion, which is AFN 69

million less than the previous year.

Abdul Rauf Ibrahim, speaker of the house, said on the occasion that the draft has shortcomings in at least 12 segments, and that is why except of just five green cards, rest of the present members have rejected it.

He urged the Ministry of Finance not to delay salaries of public sector employees, and release fund for the previous year's projects.

Amir Khan Yar, head of the WJ committee on financial affairs and budget, said on the occasion that a complex draft has been formulated, and it has not highlighted employment opportunities.

Highlighted that a decrease of AFN 68 billion, not incorporating previous year's projects in it, addition of 22,000 new posts and creating two new budget heads without the approval of the house are the reasons why it has been rejected.

He added there are a number of other technical errors and violations and uneven development approach in the draft budget.



### **Law on Foreign Military flights Management Ratified**

The Wolesi Jirga or the Lower House on Tuesday approved the draft law on management of foreign military flights in Afghanistan airspace.



Earlier, reports surfaced that some unidentified helicopters were landed in Sar-I-Pul, Nangarhar and other areas of the country.

Shayesta Baz Nasari, head of the defense commission of the Lower House said the bill over managing foreign military aircraft flights was prepared under a legislative decree. It consists four chapters and 27 articles.

He said that joint body held talks on the law and there were no any conflicting parts in it.

However, Ramazan Bashardost, a lawmaker from the Kabul, said that Afghanistan's airspace was under the control of the US. The government was unable to avoid movements of foreign military planes.

Haji Hasham Faryabi, a legislator from Faryab, said: "Such laws are meaningless if our airspace is out of our control."

He added the United States used Afghanistan's airspace so it should stay accountable for it because the country's airspace is controlled by the US.

Ali Akbar Qasemi, deputy head of the defense commission of the lower house, also said that the country's airspace was in others' control and the draft law was prepared for the future.

He said that there was no such law in the past in Afghanistan. This law is developed after some reports about movements of unknown military aircrafts in Afghan territory.

The draft law was finally come under approval by 107 lawmakers of 118 present in today's session.

### **3 Cabinet Members MPs on Budget Under-Spending**

Three cabinet ministers on Monday have given clarification to Wolesi Jirga members about the expenditure of their development budgets last fiscal year. But the Lower House could not make a decision on their fate due to the lack of quorum.

The lower house had summoned the ministers of Haj and Islamic affairs, counternarcotic and water and energy to brief lawmakers about spending less than 50 percent of their development budget.

According to the lower house, the Ministry of Counternarcotic has spent 47 percent of its development budget, the Ministry of Water and Energy 48 percent and the Ministry of Hajj and Islamic Affairs 56 percent last fiscal year.



While speaking to MPs, Salamat Azimi, counternarcotic minister, said that his ministry had been allocated \$23.3 million development budget for 1395 solar year, but donors cut \$7.3 million from the amount later.

He said the counternarcotic ministry had organized 58 projects in total and 35 projects were mentioned in the expenditure report of last year.

The report of 19 projects worth \$4 million (20 percent of the budget) had not been added to the expenditure report, he said.

According to the statistics, the Ministry of Counternarcotic spent 70 percent of its budget, he added. Eleven projects that cost 9.5 percent of the development budget could not be implemented due to security reasons, Azimi said.

Ali Ahmad Usmani, water and energy minister, said that insecurity, problems in acquisition of land for projects, failure of contracted companies, problems in planning of budget, social problems and late approval of projects' money were reasons behind the low budget spending by his ministry.

Without providing more information, he said: "We cannot award projects to companies that fail, there are some companies who took big projects but they failed to complete them, a project that has to be completed in three years remains uncompleted even in five years."

Fiaz Mohammad Osmani, Hajj and Islamic affairs minister, said that his ministry was given \$3.7 million in development budget which was spent all last year.

He said the government had added an additional \$2 million to the ministry's budget in August last year, which was not spent.

"The money was added without a foreknowledge, the ministry then started work on mosques' construction, which is still underway", he said.

Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahimy, after hearing arguments from the three ministers, said the house could not make a decision due to incomplete quorum.

He said the house would make a decision about the three ministers in next sessions.

The summoning process of officials who spent less than 60 percent of their development budget would continue, he added.



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## 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.

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