Hoped for Peace Deal with Hekmatyar Sparks Mixed Reaction

KABUL - The hoped for peace deal between the Afghan government and Hizb-i-Islami Afghanistan party led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar has been received with mixed reaction and analysts argue they fear it will not help to improve the situation in the country. A number of Kabul residents said they expected government to end the crisis and disorder, but instead have brought “another jihad movement to Kabul”.

“Anyone that has committed oppression should be prosecuted”, said Farid, a resident of Kabul.

“All those who are in Kabul or abroad should come together and apologize to the people. This will clear the people’s hearts against them,” said Saeed, another resident of Kabul.

A resident of Nangarhar.

“We should know what has been included in the peace deal and how Hekmatyar will join the peace”, said Khalid, a resident of Jalalabad.

Meanwhile, Atta Rahimi, head of civil society organizations of Afghanistan, said he believes the peace deal will not benefit the country.

“I believe that the presence of Hekmatyar will not bring any changes in terms of quantity and quality. It will provide the opportunity for a number of corrupt figures that were under Karzai’s shelter over the past 10 years and now they will seek shelter under Hekmatyar’s”, (More on P4).

Survey Finds Rise in Self-Censorship among Social Media Users

KABUL - A new survey by Nai - an organization supporting open media in Afghanistan – reveals that self-censorship in social media has considerably increased and that 54 percent of social media users refrain from criticizing certain issues.

The survey indicates that 50 percent of social media users have said that they impose self-censorship due to the fear of facing threats by government organizations. According to the survey, among the target groups who were interviewed, sixteen percent think positively as media users refrain from criticism.

Among social media users, 25 percent think positively as media users refrain from criticism.

Two days back, eight Afghan National Police (ANP) officials were killed in the US raid on their checkpoint in Tirmend, the capital of Uruzgan. Senator Nazar Haddi has hit out at the so-called friendly fire incident. “We regret the loss of our eight police officers who were fighting terrorism,” he said. The security organ- ization's (More on P4).