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## In Uruzgan, demo staged against ISAF

Ahmad Omeed Khpalwak - May 25, 2009 - 15:34

TIRINKOT (PAN): More than one hundred people in central Uruzgan province late Sunday rallied against the NATO-led ISAF forces for arresting 18 people including tribal elders and a candidate in the provincial council elections.

The protest demonstration came a day after the ISAF soldiers during a raid detained 17 locals and Mirakhan, a nominee of the Barakzai tribe in the provincial councils' elections in provincial capital, Tirinkot.

Mirakhan, who was later released by the foreign soldiers, participated in the protest rally. He alleged that the troops deprived him of his money and jewelry during the raid on his house.

He added he was released by the troops and apologized to him. However, he said several others arrested people were still in their custody.

The Barakzai tribesmen would boycott the elections if government did not react on the issue, Mirakhan warned.

He said the people arrested by the foreign troops were innocent.

A similar incident of arrests by the ISAF troops also took place in the central province last month.

Uruzgan governor Eng. Asadullah Hamdam also confirmed the detention of locals by the ISAF.

He told this scribe that chief of the provincial council had promised with the protestors to discuss the issue with the ISAF soldiers.

The protestors also warned of complain to the Human Rights Commission and the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

In a statement emailed to this news agency from Bagram Airbase, the ISAF troops confirmed the arrest of the locals during a joint operation of the ISAF and Afghan National Security Forces ANSF in the area.

The statement said the captured locals would be released, if proved innocent.

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HELMAND, May 27 2009: British ISAF soldiers patrol in Garmser District of the province. PAJHWOK/Zainallah Astanikzai

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