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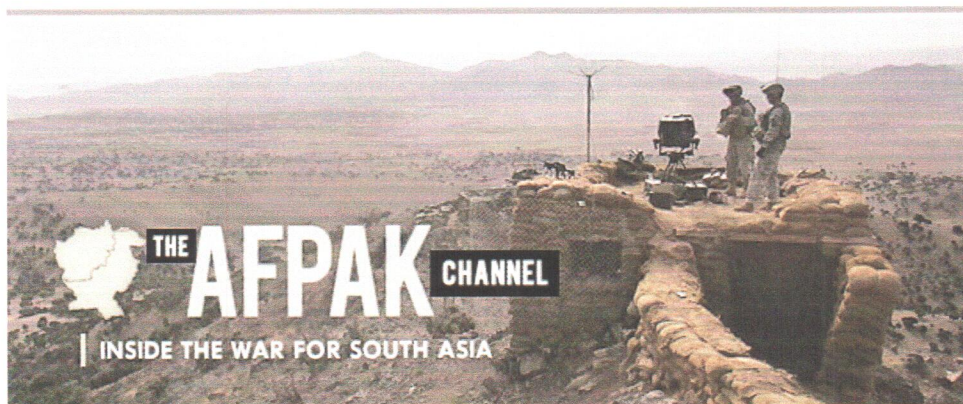


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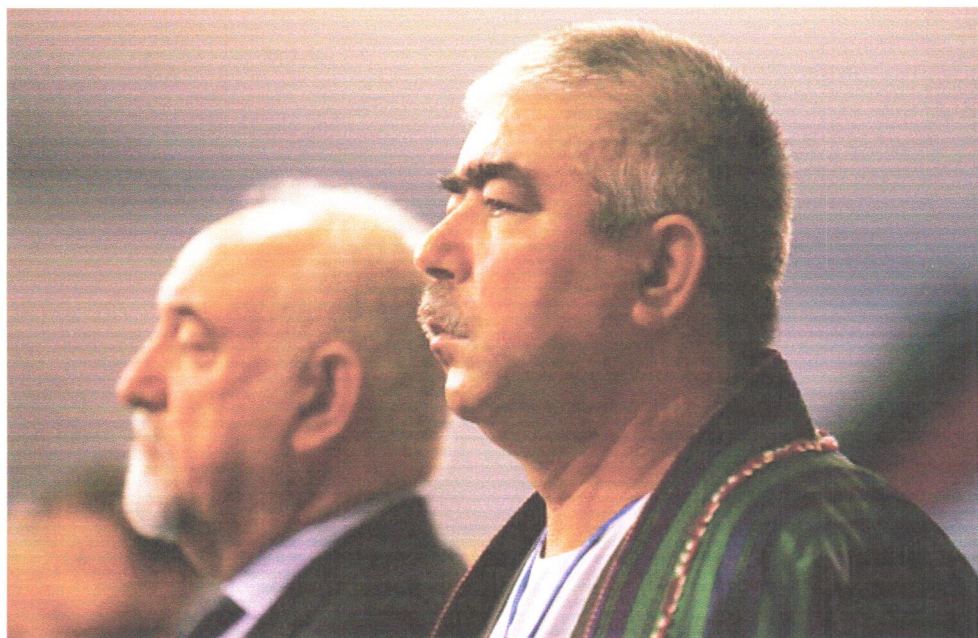
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## In Dostum's Debt

BY BRIAN GLYN WILLIAMS ■ Thursday, February 4, 2010 - 3:37 PM ■ [Share](#)

When the Karzai government announced last week that it would be reinstating Abdul Rashid Dostum, the controversial Uzbek general, as Chief of Staff of the Army, the cries of foul and protest rang loud. Though the position is largely symbolic, critics of the Karzai government openly accused the president of making a deal with the "notorious warlord."

When it comes to Afghan politics there is usually more than meets the eye, and Dostum's case is no exception. As usual in Afghanistan it involves some back room deals. The roots of which go back to August 2009 [when President Karzai allowed Dostum](#), the paramount head of Afghanistan's Uzbek community (which accounts for 10 percent of the country's population), back

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Deputy mayor of Kandahar slain (NYT)

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### THE BLOG

Edited by Peter Bergen &amp; Katherine Tiedemann

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### The million dollar question: Who killed Benazir?

BY HUMA IMTIAZ | APRIL 15, 2010



Benazir Bhutto has been dead for more than two years now. The U.N.'s report, which hardly tells us anything new, will not help assuage the grief of the PPP supporters who loved Ms. Bhutto, unless the Government of Pakistan steps up in an effort to truly investigate the million dollar question: "Who Killed Benazir?" and also probes who bungled up the investigation. Until then, conspiracy theories, rumors, and the blame game will continue.

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### Fashion week in Pakistan

BY SABA IMTIAZ | APRIL 14, 2010



into the country after several months of exile in Turkey. Dostum had been expelled (if only briefly) for kidnapping Akbar Bey, a political rival who had betrayed him. Akbar Bey who had previously worked for Dostum turned on him in 2006 and created his own party which aimed to steal members from **Dostum's Jumbesh Party**.

The condition of Dostum's return to the country was that he would bring tens of thousands of Uzbek votes for Karzai with him. The Uzbeks are intensely loyal to Dostum whom they see as an ethno-secular defender of their rights vis-a-vis the Taliban and Pashtun-Tajik-dominated central government. It was Dostum who rode on horseback alongside mounted U.S. Special Forces and brought down the oppressive Taliban regime in November 2001. Most Uzbeks see him as a *milli kahraman* (national hero). The Uzbeks tend to vote as a block as they are told to by Dostum and, upon his return, he urged them to vote for Karzai. By all accounts the Uzbeks came out in large numbers and voted for the incumbent president in last summer's election.

In return, Dostum's Jumbesh Party selected several Uzbeks for positions in the Cabinet Karzai was to choose in the fall. But then, in a surprise demonstration of its independence, on Jan. 2, 2010, parliament rejected 17 of Karzai's 24 nominees, two of which were Uzbeks. (Of those nominees that were approved, only one was an Uzbek, Wahidullah Sharani, an independent Uzbek unaffiliated with Dostum's Jumbesh Party. Ismail Khan, a Tajik warlord from Herat was similarly rejected as Minister of Power and Water.)

Several of those who were nominated for the Cabinet have been described as representatives of ethnic *jang salaran* (warlords). One member of parliament claimed that in rejecting the nominees of men like Dostum or Ismail Khan himself, they were freeing Karzai up to choose more qualified candidates who did not have allegiance to provincial power brokers.

This recent move by Karzai to reinstate Dostum to the position of Chief of Staff of the Afghan Army is an obvious effort to placate his warlord supporter who was obviously angry at not having a greater say in the government that he helped instate in 2001. The Afghan president still needs Dostum to continue his efforts to keep the Taliban out of the increasingly unstable flatlands of Afghan Turkistan, the northern third of the country.

For the time being at least Karzai has brought Dostum and his Uzbek coalition into his political fold. The president would seem to be continuing this delicate balancing act which has been described as "caving in to warlords" by outsiders who might not have his understanding of the importance of keeping the Afghan factions that destroyed Afghanistan in the 1990s in check. If Karzai had not reestablished his alliance with Dostum, he may have lost the trust of the strategically located Uzbeks who have supported his government thus far. As for the future, Dostum who was once an opponent of Karzai seems to have tested the winds and found that he gains more from working with the president, while Karzai is happy to keep his former enemy close at hand.

Paula Bronstein/Getty Images

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And while this type of "stereotypical" coverage of fashion being used as political tool has decreased this last year (as designers would say, "that's so last season!") there was a notable shift in the messages being delivered at this month's fashion week in Pakistan. Designers, presumably tired of being branded in heroic terms, attempted to turn attention to their craft and their plans to make Pakistani fashion a recognizable brand abroad.

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afpakchannel

Can someone please explain the 1972 PATA Regulation to me? Or tweet some reading links, even?

10:11 AM

Also, "Lumpkin" Mahomed, a long time The more you know

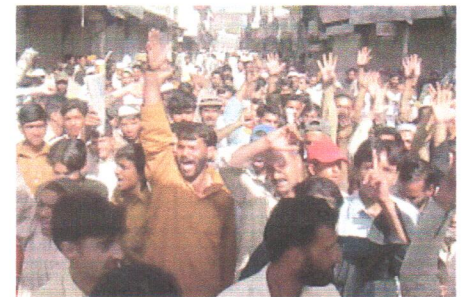
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## A province by any other name

BY KALSOOM LAKHANI | APRIL 14, 2010



The bumpy journey to Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa did not begin in the last few weeks. The Awami National Party (ANP), the secular Pashtun nationalist ruling political party of the province, has long campaigned for a change to Pakhtunkhwa, even passing a resolution in favor of the development in November 1997.

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## Karzai and confusion in Kabul

BY MARTINE VAN BIJLERT | APRIL 8, 2010



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Have There Been More Geological Disasters Than Usual This Year?

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**ADRIAN77**

9:54 AM ET

February 6, 2010

### what's the point?

I don't understand the point of this article. It seems like the author wants to come out and say "my old friend Dostum isn't such a bad guy, please don't call him a warlord," but just barely recognizes that he shouldn't.

The Uzbeks of Afghanistan need new leaders and should get beyond their blind loyalty to someone like Dostum who then accumulates for himself (not for them, except the ones who are his relatives) the fruits of their demographic strength. They should start using their brains a bit more. What has Dostum done for them? Ustad Atta Mohammad Noor may be a Tajik but at least he has some semblance that being a political leader means more than stealing and keeping oneself in power.

**ADRIAN77**

3:05 PM ET

February 6, 2010

### that being said

If I could choose between Dostum and Islam Karimov (or any member of his family) as President of Uzbekistan (a fantasy of course) I would take Dostum in a split second

**LUCKYBARKER**

4:23 AM ET

February 7, 2010

### That that "comprador"

That that "comprador" surround itself with national minorities it normally.

But

When "patriots" will expel "occupants" - poor Uzbeks for certain will receive the share of national hatred.



For the record: Karzai is not about to join the Taliban. He is an angry and frustrated politician and he is sending signals. To the Parliament that he is seriously upset and that they need to mend their ways; to the international actors, that he really minds that they keep meddling in his affairs; to the population that he is their president and that he has a mind of his own; and to the insurgency that he is closer to them than they think.

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## AFPAK PHOTO ESSAY



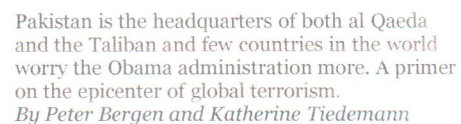
Into the Hornet's Nest: The battle for Kandahar is coming.

## AL QAEDA CENTRAL



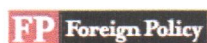
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