



Province: Panjshir

Governor: Hajji Bahlul

Chief of Police: Waliullah

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Population Estimate: ¹ over 300,000 | Urban: | Rural: |
| Area in Square Kilometers | 3,610 | Capital: Bazarak |
| Names of Districts: | Panjshir, Hisa-I-Awali Panjshir, Hisa-I-Duwumi Panjshir ² | |
| Composition of Population: | <u>Ethnic Groups:</u> Tajik, Hazara, Pashai, Nuristani, Ghilzai Pashtun | <u>Religious Groups:</u> Primarily Sunni with some Shia Muslim <u>Total # Mosques:</u> 544 |
| Occupation of Population | Major: Agriculture, animal husbandry, day labor | Minor: Business |
| Crops/Farming/Livestock: | Sheep, goats, cows | |
| Literacy Rate Total: | 27% ³ | |
| Number of Educational Institutions: 46 | <u>Schools:</u> Primary: Secondary: | <u>Colleges/Universities:</u> |
| Number of Security Incidents, Jan-Jun 2007: None reported by BBC Monitoring | | |
| Poppy (Opium) Cultivation: | <u>2006:</u> 0 ha | <u>2007:</u> 0 ha |
| | | <u>Percent Change:</u> 0% |
| NGOs Active in Province: | IMC, Emergency, RRA, HT, MDC, CARE, ACTED, ICRC, MSF, ACF, AMI, WFP, WSD, SCA, UNICEF, AVACINA | |
| <u>Provincial Aid Projects:</u> ⁴ Total Projects: 413 Planned Cost: \$11,157,412 Total Spent: \$1,632,127 | Total PRT Projects: 14 Planned Cost: \$1,168,014 Total Spent: \$260,214 | Other Aid Projects: 413 Planned Cost: \$9,989,398 Total Spent: \$1,371,913 |
| Transportation: | <u>Primary Roads:</u> One major provincial road Charikar-Bazarak-Deh Parian; other secondary roads and tracks ⁵ | |
| Electricity: | <u>Estimated Population w/access:</u> | |
| Health Facilities: | <u>Hospitals:</u> 3 | <u>Clinics, etc.:</u> 15 |
| Primary Sources/Availability of Drinking Water: | River water through channels, wells, springs | |
| Rivers: | Panjshir River and tributaries | |
| Significant Topographic Features: | The province is dominated by the Panjshir Valley and surrounding mountains; Panjshir Range to the north and the Kuhestan Range to the south. The mountains peaks are covered permanently in snow; small areas of rainfed crops. ⁶ | |

¹ Sgt. Timothy Dinneen, USA, "Progress Continues in Afghanistan's Panjshir Province," *Special to American Forces Press Service*, (March 28, 2007), at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=32619>, accessed on 28 September 2007.

² Some sources indicate that Salang district is part of the Panjshir province as well.

³ UNDP Afghanistan, *Afghanistan Human Development Report 2007*

⁴ ISAF and CJTF 82, *Afghanistan Comprehensive Stability Project*, June 2007.

⁵ Nelles Verlag, *Afghanistan*, 2006.

⁶ AIMS, *Afghanistan Paktika Province Land Cover Map*, April 2002 and Nelles Verlag, *Afghanistan*, 2006.

Political Landscape:

Political Leaders:

Governor Hajji Bahlul:



Appointed governor in May 2005. Ethnic Tajik. Former Northern Alliance commander. Born in Panjshir. Attended the Military Academy.

Deputy Governor Abdul Rahman Kibiri:

Appointed in May 2005. Ethnic Tajik.

Chief of Police Waliullah:



Ethnic Tajik. Graduate of the Military Academy. He is not from Panjshir.

National Defense Service Chief, Muhammad Salim:



Appointed June 2006.

Ahmad Zia Masood, First Vice President:



Elected First Vice President to Hamid Karzai in 2004. He is a brother of Ahmed Shah Masoud. He studied at Kabul Polytechnic Institute for three years. At the start of the Soviet invasion he went to the Panjshir Valley with his brother and fought with other mujahedin. He spent 12 years as a representative of the Panjshir front and of his brother in Pakistan, working with groups and countries supporting the Afghan resistance. Throughout the late 1990s he worked to represent the Northern Alliance and highlighted the fight against the Taliban. In 2002, under the auspices of the interim government, he was appointed Ambassador of Afghanistan to the Russian Federation, a low-profile posting that limited his influence in Afghan national politics. He returned to Afghanistan in July 2004 to run for Vice-President at the invitation of Hamid Karzai. Zia's experience during the 1980s and 1990s as an advisor to his brother, Ahmed Shah Masoud, the slain Northern Alliance leader and Afghan national hero, combined with his Tajik ethnicity, made him a strong, unifying vice-presidential running mate for President Karzai. Zia's strong relationship with prominent Tajiks—including his father-in-law, Berhanuddin Rabbani—helped Karzai win the election, but may limit his ability to push government reforms unpopular with his fellow Tajiks. He was sworn in as the First Vice-President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in late December 2004.⁷

Yunus Qanuni:



An ethnic Tajik from the Panjshir Valley, Qanuni served in the anti-Soviet jihad under the command of Ahmed Shah Masoud. When the mujahedin took control of Kabul in 1993, Qanuni was appointed joint defense minister under President Burhanuddin Rabbani. During the rise and rule of the Taliban, Qanuni represented the interests of the Northern Alliance abroad. In 2001, following the assassination of Masoud, Qanuni

⁷ Abdullah Qazi, *Members of Hamid Karzai's Cabinet*, (Afghanistan Online, 25 September 2007), at http://www.afghan-web.com/politics/cabinet_members.html#firstvicepresident, accessed on 1 October 2007.

inherited the position of political head of the Jamiat-e Islami of the Northern Alliance. He was appointed interior minister when the Northern Alliance entered Kabul in November 2001 and served the senior Jamiat-e Islami leader representing Northern Alliance interests at the Bonn Conference in November 2001. Hamid Karzai, as interim president, reduced Qanuni's political influence by moving him from the interior to the education ministry. With the broad support of Afghanistan's Tajik population, Qanuni ran against Karzai in the 2004 election, placing a distant second. Qanuni's presidential candidacy may have increased his influence among many Tajiks—gathering the support of Fahim Khan and Dr. Abdullah. However, his loss to Karzai has significantly diminished his influence in national politics. Following his loss in the presidential election, Qanuni formed a coalition of 11 different parties (National Understanding Front/Jabha-ye-Tafahum-e-Milli) to oppose Karzai and attempt to change the constitution in an attempt to weaken the presidency. Qanuni was elected speaker of Afghanistan's Parliament after facing serious competition from Abd al-Rabb Sayyaf and former president, Burhanuddin Rabbani. Rabbani eventually threw his support to Qanuni, giving him the victory over Sayyaf by a margin of 122 to 117. Following his election to be speaker, Qanuni resigned his position as head of the opposition parties.⁸ Qanuni also leads his own political party, Hezb-e Afghanistan-e Nawin (New Afghanistan Party). He is closely aligned with Mohammad Qasim Fahim and is a likely contender for the presidency in the next election.⁹

Field Marshal Mohammad Qasim Fahim Khan (retired):



An ethnic Tajik from the northern Panjshir Valley, Fahim graduated from high school in Kabul. During the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Fahim was a member of the secret police of the communist government (KHAD), then joined the Islamic uprising against the communists in the late 1980s. A short time later, he joined the anti-Soviet resistance under Ahmed Shah Masoud's command and continued the fight against the Taliban as Ahmed Shah Masoud's intelligence chief. He was later confirmed as senior military commander and the Northern Alliance's "Defense Minister". Following Masoud's assassination in September 2001, and the fall of the Taliban regime, Fahim parlayed his influence within the Northern Alliance into a successful bid for ATA Defense Minister. He was appointed Defense Minister and Vice President in the Afghan Transitional Administration in 2002, during which time he continued to lead his own militia. Leading up to the 2004 Afghan elections, Karzai dropped Fahim as his running mate. In an attempt to curtail the developing power struggle between himself and Fahim, Karzai granted Fahim special privileges as a Marshal in the Afghan military. However, Karzai's decision to remove Fahim from the presidential ticket clearly reflected a downturn in Fahim's level of influence. Fahim subsequently withdrew his support for Karzai and gave his support to Yunus Qanuni. Due to his past experience and strong administrative skills, he remains a powerful contender and player in Afghan politics.¹⁰

⁸ Amin Tarzi, "Afghanistan: Qanuni Brokers His Way to Parliament Speaker," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* (29 December 2005), at <http://rferl.org>, accessed on 1 October 2007.

⁹ BBC News, "Profile: Yunus Qanuni," (9 October 2004), at <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk>, accessed on 1 October 2007 and Salima Ghafari, "Coalition Seeks to Challenge Karzai," *Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, (6 May 2005), at <http://www.turkishweekly.net/comments.php?id=1030>, accessed on 1 October 2007.

¹⁰ Abdullah Qazi, *Mohammad Qasim Fahim*, (Afghanistan Online, 4 May 2005), at <http://www.afghan-web.com/bios/today/fahim.html>, accessed on 1 October 2007 and Global Security, *Mohammad Qasim Fahim*, at <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/afghanistan/fahim.htm>, accessed on 1 October 2007.

Dr. Abdullah (Abdullah Abdullah):



Fluent in Dari, Pashto, Arabic, English and French, Dr. Abdullah is an ophthalmologist and senior Jamiat-e Islami figure. Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, son of Ghulam Mahy-yod-Din Zmaryalay (senator of the last period of Parliament), was born in 1960 to a religious family in Kabul. His primary education was at the Mohammad Ayob Khan School; he then graduated from Naderia High School in 1976. He joined the medical faculty in 1977 and earned his degree in 1983. He was at service in Noor hospital as an eye doctor until 1984. He immigrated to Pakistan in 1984 and worked at Syed Jamal-ud-Din Hospital. From 1992 to 1996 he was the Chief of the staff and spokesman for the Defense Ministry under the government led by Burhanuddin Rabbani. In 1997 he was named deputy foreign minister, and then in 1999 he was named acting foreign minister. Abdullah also continued to serve as Masoud's leading spokesman until the latter was assassinated on September 9, 2001. Following the assassination of Massoud, he became one of the three most influential Northern Alliance figures along with Fahim Khan and Qanuni. Abdullah assumed the role of Foreign Minister again under Karzai's transitional administration after the fall of the Taliban regime. However, he consistently worked against Karzai during the Constitutional Loya Jirga in December 2003, and was a vocal support of Karzai's chief political rival, Yunis Qanuni, during the presidential campaign of 2004. Abdullah served in Karzai's cabinet until he was replaced in 2006 by Dr. Rangeen Dadfar Spanta. Abdullah is half Tajik and half Pashtun. It is likely his prowess in the Northern Alliance has weakened somewhat since his removal as Foreign Minister.¹¹

Ahmed Shah Massoud (deceased):



Known as the Lion of Panjshir, Masoud and his Jamiat-e Islami were among most successful mujahideen groups who fought against the Soviets. In 1992, when the mujahideen captured Kabul, he was appointed defense minister. When the Taliban took Kabul, Masoud withdrew his forces to the north-east. As commander of the Northern Alliance, he was one of the few military leaders to hold out against the Taliban. On September 9, 2001, just prior to the terrorist attacks against the United States, Masoud was assassinated by suicide bombers posing as journalists. He was replaced as military commander by Mohammad Qasim Fahim. Yunus Qanuni assumed political leadership of Jamiat-e Islami.¹²

Wolesi Jirga:¹³

Salih Mohammad Registani:



Tajik; politically associated with Qanuni. Legislation committee. May have completed a BA in Law. He was an associate of Masoud and a military attaché to Moscow. Former Northern Alliance commander.

¹¹ BBC News, "Profile: Abdullah Abdullah," (22 March 2006), at <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk>, accessed on 1 October 2007 and BBC News, "Afghan Foreign Minister Loses Job," at <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk>, accessed on 1 October 2007.

¹² Kate Clark, "Profile: The Lion of Panjshir," *BBC News* (10 September 2001), at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/south_asia/1535249.stm, accessed on 1 October 2007 and Sgt. Timothy Dinneen, USA, "Progress Continues in Afghanistan's Panjshir Province," *Special to American Forces Press Service*, (March 28, 2007), at <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=32619>, accessed on 28 September 2007.

¹³ US Embassy Kabul Afghanistan Election Observation Team and Joint Election Management Board, 2005.

Qazi Rahila Saleem:



Female Tajik; politically associated with Qanuni. Legislation committee. BA in Law and Political Science (Kabul University). Seventeen years experience on Supreme Court and Attorney General’s office.

Meshrano Jirga:¹⁴

Marshal Mohammad Qasim Fahim Khan:

Tajik; politically associated with Qanuni. Former Minister of Defense.

Engineer Arif:



Associated with Sedaqat. Chair of the Internal Security committee. Former Director of NDS.

Al-Haj Mohammad Alam Izdyar:



Politically independent. Secretary of the International Relations committee. BA in Political Science.

Provincial Council Members:

| | | | |
|--|----------------------|--|------------------|
| | Ghulam Naqshband | | Awlia |
| | Abdul Samad Bahaduri | | Zahida (female) |
| | Najmuddeen | | Huma (female) |
| | Abdul Wajib | | Humaira (female) |
| | Mawlawi Ehsanullah | | |

Primary Political Parties:

Hezb-e Islami Khalis (HiK):

Originally a mujahedin group which split with Hekmatyar’s Hezb-e Islami under the leadership of Yunus Khalis. HiK was dominant in Nangarhar. Khalis died in 2005 or 2006, resulting in an internal power struggle for control of the party between Khalis’ son Anwarul Haq Mujahid and Hajji Din Mohammad. It appears that Mohammad was successful in consolidating his control over much of the party. Recent and active political players in Nangarhar have connections to HiK. Led by Hajji Din Mohammad, current governor of Kabul.

Hezb-e Afghanistan Naween (New Afghanistan Party/Qanuni):

Led by Mohammad Yunus Qanuni. Part of a political alliance called Jabahai Tafahim Millie (National Understanding Front). Qanuni was the primary contender against Karzai for the presidency. He is a Tajik who fought alongside Ahmed Shah Masoud as a mujahedin, spokesman for Ahmed Shah Massoud, and Minister of Interior and Education. He was elected to parliament in 2005 and was chosen to lead the Wolesi Jirga. Support for him and his party may be a political counter-weight to Karzai.

¹⁴ US Embassy Kabul Afghanistan Election Observation Team and Joint Election Management Board, 2005.

Hamnazar

One of the most important parties of the Meshrano Jirga, Hamnazar (Alliance), It mainly consists of pro-Karzai MPs, who are Western sympathizers. The group numbers some thirty parliamentarians and is led by Amin Zai. A doctor by profession, he is closely allied with Karzai who strongly supported him for this position.¹⁵

Hezb-e Islami Gulbuddin (HiG):

Mujahedin party active since the Soviet invasion; led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. Actively opposed to US-led and Afghan national forces. Politically active in Sherzad, Surk Rod and Pachir Wa districts. Hekmatyar is a Kharoti Ghilzai and, therefore, less influential than the much more respected and powerful Khogianis, such as Hajji Din Mohammad and Anwarul Haq Mohammad.¹⁶

Public Attitudes toward Political/Religious Leaders:

According to survey data, shuras and elders are considered the most respected leaders by 48% of the provincial population; mullahs by 25%, mawlawis by 9% and district authorities by 5%.¹⁷

Human Terrain:

Tajik:

Ethnic Tajiks have a presence in every district in Panjshir and are the majority in Salang. Tajiks are the second largest ethnic group in Afghanistan, after the Pashtuns and comprise between 25-30% of the population. The Tajiks in Afghanistan tend to live in settled communities as opposed to a nomadic lifestyle. They are of Iranian descent and primarily speak Dari. The majority of Tajiks are Sunni Muslims. Tajiks made up the majority of the Northern Alliance, both in terms of membership and leadership. Tribal ties have largely broken down among the Tajiks; therefore, social organization is defined primarily by geography. Despite their lack of cohesiveness the Tajiks are often brought together due to the perceived common threat posed by the Pashtuns.¹⁸

Hazara:

There are some Hazara mixed with Tajiks in the Hisa-e Awali Panjshir and Hisa-e Duwumi Panjshir districts.¹⁹ The Hazara, a distinct ethnic and religious group within the population of Afghanistan, have often been the target of discriminatory and violent repression. Most likely descended from the Mongols of Genghis Khan, (there is also a strong argument that they are of Eastern Turkic origin), the Hazara are noticeably different in physical appearance when compared to the Pashtun majority. In terms of religion, the vast majority of the Hazara are of the Shia Muslim faith, again in contrast to the Pashtuns who are Sunni Muslim. Due to these differences, "the Hazara have experienced discrimination at the hands of the Pashtun-dominated government throughout the history of modern Afghanistan."²⁰ As the traditional underclass of Afghan society, Hazara were exploited and made to work as servants and laborers. As a result there tends to be an anti-government and anti-Pashtun bias among the Hazara. In present day Afghanistan, the Hazara are divided geographically into two main groups: the Hazarajat Hazara and those who live outside the Hazarajat. The Hazarajat is located in the Hindu Kush Mountains in central Afghanistan and is "centered around Bamiyan province and include[s] areas of Ghowr, Uruzgan, Wardak, and Ghazni province."²¹ The Hazara living outside of the Hazarajat live in and around Kabul, Herat,

¹⁵ "The New Parliament: an Afghan Way to Democracy," *CeMiSS Quarterly*, Centro Militare di Studi Strategici, April 2006, available from www.difesa.it/NR/rdonlyres/0FA44F42-56BC-4D58-9F93-46A7F42CC8DE/11177/quart_spring_06.pdf (accessed September 25, 2007).

¹⁶ Chris Mason, *Tora Bora Nizami Mahaz*.

¹⁷ Altai Consulting, *CEE: Cognitive Effects Evaluation*, 9 March 2007.

¹⁸ US State Department Afghanistan Culture and Ethnic Studies, 2004.

¹⁹ MAM Computer Graphics, *National Atlas of People's Democratic of Afghanistan*, at <http://www.hazara.net/hazara/geography/ethnic/ethnic.html>, accessed on 28 September 2007.

²⁰ US State Department Afghanistan Culture and Ethnic Studies, 2004.

²¹ US State Department Afghanistan Culture and Ethnic Studies, 2004.

Mazar-e-Sharif and Samangan province. Due to atrocities committed against them by the Taliban, the Hazara by and large are opposed to the Taliban. In August 1998, the Taliban massacred approximately 4,000 Hazara in Mazara-e-Sharif; this massacre was followed by another the next month when the Taliban killed another 500 Hazara in Bamiyan. The Hezb-e Wahdat (Islamic Unity Party of Afghanistan) is an umbrella political organization which commands the support of large numbers of Hazara. The Hazara are also often at odds with the Kuchi population within the Hazarajat.

Nuristani Tribes:

The Nuristani in Afghanistan primarily live in high elevations in northeast Afghanistan. They trace their genealogy back to either the Greek forces of Alexander the great or to the tribes of Mecca which rejected Islam. For centuries the Nuristanis were known as “kafirs”, or infidels. This has changed as most have converted to Islam. There are fifteen Nuristani tribes with numerous sub-groups. Five languages and numerous dialects are spoken by the Nuristani. Do not have overly positive relations with other Afghans or Pakistanis and a strong animosity toward Arabs. **Kata (Western) Nuristanis** There are some Kata Nuristani living the south-east portion of Hisa-I-Awali Panjshir district. Also reside in parts of Alingar, Mehterlam and Qarghayi districts. The Kata are a Nuristani tribe which speaks two dialects of Kamakata viri.

Pashai:

There are some Pashai in the south-east portion of Hisa-I-Duwumi Panjshir district. There is very little useful data on the Pashai, outside of some intense research on their language. They also inhabit Nuristan, parts of Laghman, and northern Nangarhar, seemingly between the Pashtun and Nuristanis. Many consider themselves Pashtun. They speak a Dardic language referred to as Pashai. Often they are associated with or referred to as Kohistani. The majority of Pashai in Panjshir rely on the livestock and timber business.²²

Security Landscape:

General Level of Security:

The threat level in Panjshir is low with no security incidents reported by the BBC Monitoring during the first six months of 2007. This is likely due to the fact that the Panjshir Valley was a major Northern Alliance stronghold and the population is generally pro-US. Hamid Karzai split Panjshir from Parwan in 2004, likely in an effort to appease the Panjshiri Tajiks.

Public attitudes toward security:

No survey data available.

Public attitudes toward FF:

No survey data available.



²² Regional Rural Regeneration Strategies, *Provincial Profile for Laghman*, 2006.