



Directorate of Intelligence

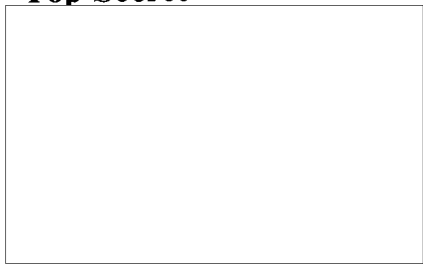
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Afghanistan Situation Report



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3 June 1986

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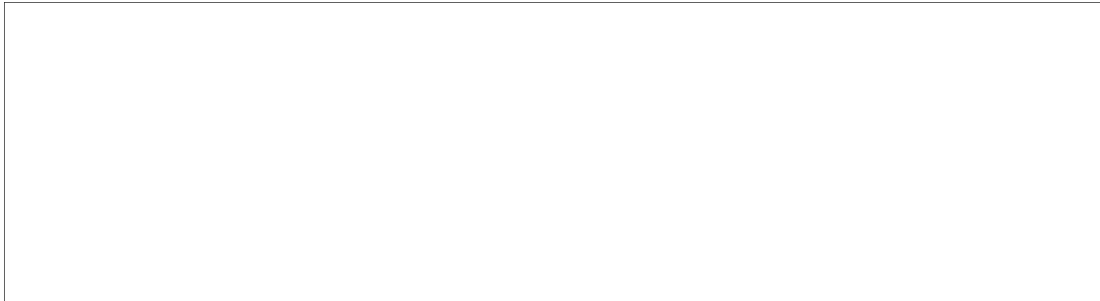
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AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT



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INCREASED WFP DONATIONS FOR AFGHAN REFUGEES

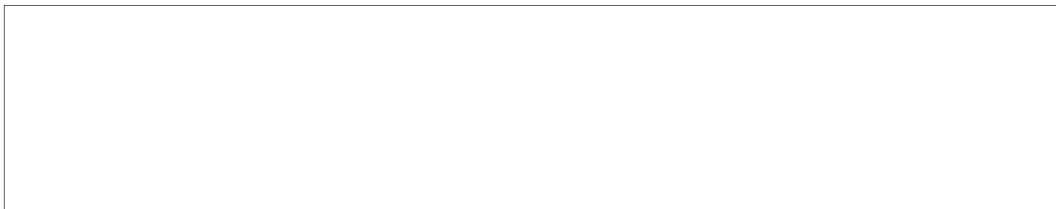


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Donations to the World Food Program's 1986 relief program for Afghan refugees have increased by 10 percent over last year's contributions but still fall short of the target levels set by Pakistan.



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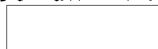
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VOICE OF AFGHANISTAN SPREADS THE WORD



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The voice of Afghanistan, the clandestine radio station which serves as an important propaganda tool for the resistance, has operated since 1978, despite Soviet and regime efforts to disrupt its broadcasts.



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IN BRIEF

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PERSPECTIVE

AFGHANISTAN: NAJIBULLAH SETTLES IN



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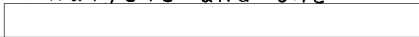
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New Afghan party leader Najibullah has moved quickly to consolidate power. Despite his efforts, the regime probably will not make much headway against the insurgency because of the government's longstanding problems.

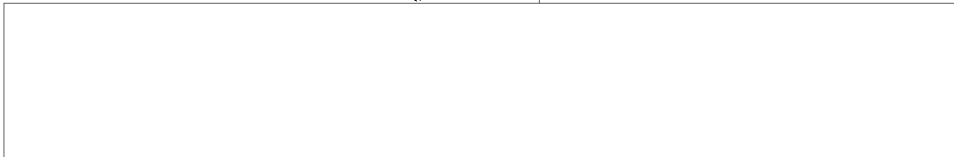


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INCREASED WFP DONATIONS FOR AFGHAN REFUGEES

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Donations to the World Food Program's (WFP) 1986 relief program for Afghan refugees in Pakistan have increased over 1985 levels, reversing a trend of declining international support. In 1985, total wheat pledges declined about 5 percent from the previous year, and Islamabad was forced to use wheat from its own stocks to meet refugee needs. Although pledges this year for 361,000 metric tons of wheat--up 10 percent over last year's--meet WFP goals, they still fall short of target levels set by Pakistan. Islamabad officially estimates that it will require 500,000 metric tons to support 2.6 million registered and over 300,000 unregistered Afghan refugees.

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COMMENT: These figures indicate that Islamabad probably will again be asked to draw on its own stocks




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to supplement WFP donations. Although the Pakistani Government probably will consent, it is sensitive to the political ramifications of the issue of the economic burden imposed on Pakistan by Afghan refugees. 

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VOICE OF AFGHANISTAN SPREADS THE WORD 

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A publication of the Hizbi Islami (Gulbuddin) insurgent group recently detailed the programming of the clandestine station, Voice of Afghanistan. In operation since 1978, the station broadcasts daily a mix of Quran verses, war bulletins, and world commentaries on the Afghan situation during four two-hour segments. Most of the broadcasts are in Pashto and Persian--Farsi and Dari--with some Uzbek-, English-, and Russian-language programs. The insurgents have occasionally had to relocate the transmitter and change frequencies because of Soviet jamming and bombing attacks on the broadcast site. 


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COMMENT: The broadcasts are an important propaganda tool for the Afghan insurgents, given the ready availability of radios and a 70-percent illiteracy rate of the Afghan population. Pashto programs probably are more popular than Farsi or Dari broadcasts, according to a USIA survey in 1984 of radio listeners in the Northwest Frontier Province refugee camps. 


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IN BRIEF

-- Pakistani Prime Minister Junejo is planning an Afghan policy review meeting, according to the US Embassy in Islamabad. The main item on the agenda apparently will be a review of the Geneva peace talks, although the Afghan media project and cross-border humanitarian assistance also may be discussed. 

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-- On 19 May, the Indonesian news agency Antara quoted several Indonesian leaders who condemned the Soviet Union for its policies in Afghanistan and urged an immediate troop withdrawal. Many of the leaders are affiliated with Muslim organizations; at least one member of a secular political party also voiced criticism. 

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-- Kabul television on 26 May showed Babrak Karmal, former head of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, attending a meeting of the Democratic Youth Organization of Afghanistan. This was Karmal's first public appearance since 8 May and




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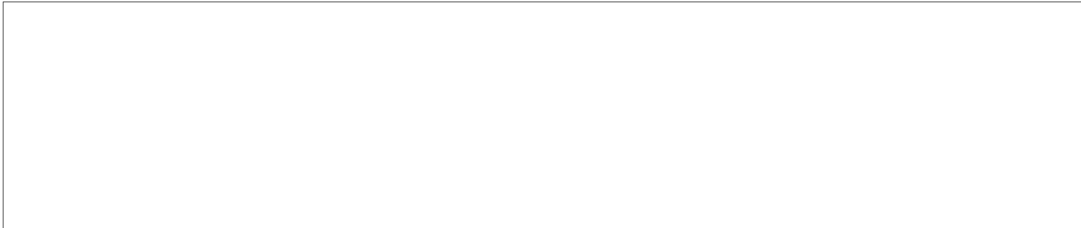
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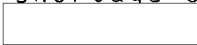
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probably was arranged to allay concern among his supporters about his absence from public view. According to the US Embassy in Kabul, Karmal seemed to be weary and "subdued." 

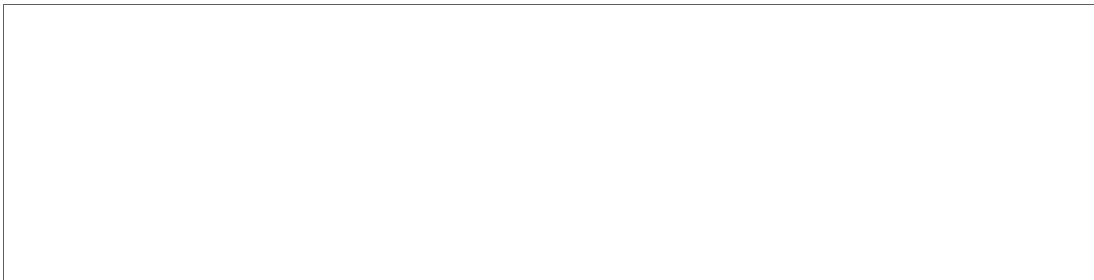
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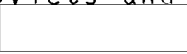


- The Afghan government recently announced an amnesty program for deserters and draft dodgers. Within the next six months, servicemen will be allowed to return voluntarily to their units or surrender to the regime to complete their remaining obligation. The lenient terms of the program probably were motivated primarily by the serious shortage of manpower in the Afghan military.




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- The pilot of a Pan American jet, told by Soviet air controllers on 30 May to delay entry into Soviet airspace on a flight from Karachi to Frankfurt, took the aircraft back to Karachi. The incident, which the pilot called "deliberate harassment," occurred on a route that has just become operational. The airline only recently obtained authorization from the Soviets and Afghans to overfly their airspace. 

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- Jamaica's leading independent newspaper--the Gleaner--carried an editorial on 17 May that stated the recent change in Afghan leadership did not indicate a fundamental change in Soviet objectives in Afghanistan. The anti-Soviet commentary generally reflects the Jamaican Government's stance on the Afghan Issue. 

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PERSPECTIVE

AFGHANISTAN: NAJIBULLAH SETTLES IN [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

New Afghan party chief Najibullah is moving quickly to consolidate power, although some opposition within the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) remains. He is focusing on strengthening the party and the army, using his good tribal ties to undermine the resistance, and launching a major effort to attract refugees back to Afghanistan. Despite his efforts, the regime probably will not make much headway against the insurgency because of the government's longstanding problems--party factionalism, a weak military, and the absence of popular support. [Redacted]

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Removing Babrak Karmal

Babrak Karmal's ouster came amidst signs of growing impatience in Moscow at his inability--after more than six years of war--to build an effective party apparatus, broaden popular support, or strengthen the armed forces. [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

At the 27th Soviet Communist Party Congress in February, Soviet leader Gorbachev announced that the Soviet Union and Afghanistan had worked out a timetable for Soviet troop withdrawal; Karmal made no reference to this announcement during his speech to the Congress and instead suggested that Afghanistan was not ready to stand on its own. Although we doubt that the Soviet Union is ready to leave Afghanistan any time soon, there probably is considerable tension between Kabul and Moscow over the peace negotiations in Geneva and the sensitive issue of a withdrawal timetable. Officially, [Redacted]

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[Redacted]

Najibullah was probably selected by Moscow in hopes that he could build a more effective regime. He is a proven administrator who, as head of the Afghan intelligence service (KHAD), increased its size and effectiveness dramatically, orchestrated two highly publicized tribal councils, and masterminded Kabul's destabilization program in Pakistan's border regions.

[Redacted]

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The Transition

Despite Moscow's apparent support for Najibullah, the appointment was contentious. The Central Committee plenum which elected Najib met amid tight security for three days--perhaps an indication that some high level party leaders were opposed to the move.

[Redacted]

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Strong party opposition to Najibullah's advancement may have prompted the Soviets to keep Babrak on the Politburo and the Revolutionary Council.

[Redacted]

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Regime media are portraying the transition as a move to a triumvirate, with Najibullah as party head, Babrak Karmal as President of the Revolutionary Council, and Prime Minister Soltan Ali Keshtmand as head of government.

[Redacted]

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Nevertheless, the transition proceeded fairly smoothly --there was no bloodshed--and security in the capital is now back to normal. According to the US Embassy in Kabul, most Politburo members--with the exception of Babrak and Anahita Ratebzad--were dispatched to the provinces in mid-May to promote the change in leadership among concerned party members. Najibullah's other major opponents--Interior Minister Gulabzoi and Defense Minister Nazar Mohammad--have either publicly endorsed Najibullah or appeared by his side at public ceremonies since his promotion, indicating at least a tacit acceptance of his new status.

[Redacted]

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We believe the troika style of leadership will gradually disappear, as Najibullah puts his own team in positions of power. Babrak and Keshtmand are now rarely seen in public.

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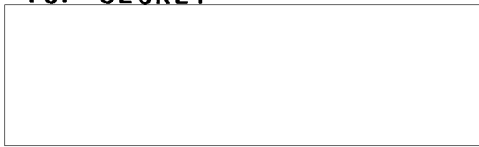
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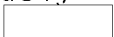


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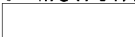
Najibullah's Agenda

Najibullah's most formidable challenge will be to build strong institutions of state control, especially the army. He will almost certainly try to meet Soviet demands that the Afghan armed forces assume more of the burden of fighting the war. Najibullah will also be under the gun to replicate the army's success in April in overrunning an insurgent base camp in eastern Afghanistan. 

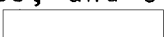
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Najibullah's ability to subvert border tribes in order to interfere with resistance resupply activities will be a major factor in determining the success of this strategy. Most observers believe that Najibullah's Pashtun heritage and proven ability as intelligence chief to work with border tribes suit him to the task, but tribal loyalties are notoriously fickle and he will likely make only limited gains. 

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Kabul and Moscow are sure to continue their campaign of military pressure and sabotage against Pakistan--which Moscow almost certainly views as the "weak link" of the insurgency. Violations of Pakistani air space have escalated markedly in recent months, and bombings in Peshawar frequently occur. 

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Najibullah also has a mandate to widen the public appeal of the regime, in part by improving party discipline and performance. Soviet media coverage of Najibullah's early public statements highlight his attacks on party laxity, corruption, and ineffectiveness at the local level. In particular, "faulty implementation" of policies aimed at tribal minorities, students and businessmen was cited. These statements suggest that Najibullah will intensify Babrak's effort to broaden the social base of the regime by appealing to tribal leaders, ethnic representatives, and clergymen--with whom he has already met. 

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Apparently as part of this effort, Najibullah said in a late May speech to religious leaders in Mazar-e Sharif that the government would establish a bicameral



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legislature, or shura, in the next few months. The legislature is to consist of a council of nationalities--with equal representation of all ethnic groups in Afghanistan--and an elected council of representatives of the people. Najibullah invited resistance participation in the elections, presumably in the hope of enticing resistance defections. [redacted]

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Kabul is also trying to lure refugees back to Afghanistan in order to gain political legitimacy. In late May Najibullah directly appealed to the refugee community, calling for reconciliation with "those of our countrymen who are wandering abroad in misery." His statements follow earlier reports indicating that Kabul has established a commission to oversee land distribution to returning refugees and has instructed its embassy in India to encourage refugee return. [redacted]

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Prospects

The longer it takes to unify the party around its leadership, the more difficult it will be for Najibullah to address the regime's serious weaknesses-- a demoralized army and ineffective local party control. Najibullah's appointment has brought to the surface serious divisions within even the dominant Parchami wing of the party, and his reputation for ruthlessness against the rival Khalqi faction suggests that opposition to his appointment in the military, where Khalqis dominate, is bound to arise. In this environment, he will be hard pressed to raise morale in the army and improve its effectiveness. [redacted]

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Barring a collapse of external support for the resistance, Najibullah probably will be unable to make serious inroads against the insurgency in the near term. His appeal for resistance participation in the upcoming elections will have little effect, in our view, because the insurgents consistently reject participation in a Communist-dominated government. Nevertheless, Najibullah will probably capitalize on the regime's recent marginal gains in some urban areas and in northern Afghanistan to redirect military forces to and increase pressure in the east, particularly against insurgent resupply operations. [redacted]

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