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Call to purge govt offices of corrupt officials

By Zarghona Salehion

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A Wifaqi Millie Party gathering in Kabul on Sunday called on people to rise up against missile attacks from Pakistan into Afghan villages and the massive corruption in government departments.

Led by Bismillah Sher, the Wifaqi Millie party was established a year ago in Kabul. Dozens of its members and residents on Sunday gathered under a tent in Shahr-i-Naw park, asking the government to purge its departments from corrupt officials and prevent Pakistan from firing artillery shells into border Afghan districts in the east.

Sher asked President Hamid Karzai to take up the issue of cross border attacks with the authorities in Pakistan.

"We want an end to missile attacks from Pakistan and our national integrity ensured. And Karzai is responsible to defend the dignity of people and the country," the politician said, calling on the international community to seriously consider the issue of militant sanctuaries located in Pakistan as part of the war against terrorism.

"We will soon be launching a new protest movement from the Shahr-i-Naw Park, if the government fails to initiate a stern action against corruption and defend the country's territorial integrity."

Despite \$60 billion in assistance given to Afghanistan over the past decade, he lamented, many people still lived in abject poverty. "For how long we would remain silent. Let's raise our voice for our rights and against corruption before it could eliminate us and start struggle for having a strong government," Sher said.

Coming hard on President Karzai, he said corruption had reached its climax in government departments because the president had consistently opted for expediency over principle when it comes to accountability.

He warned of continued protest gatherings until practical steps against corruption were taken and graft-tainted high officials prosecuted.