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Protestors torch Zardari's effigy, Pak flag

May 8, 2013



Hundreds of people continued protests across Afghanistan for the sixth straight day on Wednesday against Pakistani attacks on Afghan border posts.

In the heavily-fortified capital, Kabul University students took to the streets, chanting anti-Pakistan slogans and setting President Asif Ali Zardari's effigy on fire.

While appreciating the courage of Afghan security forces in beating back the aggressors, one protestor, Mohammad Younus, said: “We want to support the Afghan government’s stance on the Duran Line and we will protect our motherland until our last breath.”

Last week, after an Afghan border policeman was killed in a border skirmish in Nangarhar province, President Hamid Karzai announced Afghanistan would never recognise the British-mandated *Durand Line* as an international border.

They protestors issued a resolution, saying: “Duran Line has divided Afghans and hence its unacceptability to us...we seek back the part of Afghan soil forcibly separated from our land.”

The rally, which started at 9am, ended peacefully amid tight security measures put in place in Kabul. Deputy police chief, Brig. Gen. Mohammad Amin, said: “Despite lack heavy weapons, we will protect our motherland with our spirit of sacrifice and patriotism. Afghan police and soldiers are ready to lay down their lives for the sake of their country.”

At the same time, students of Dawat University, Khoshal Khan Mena and Rahman Baba High Schools also protested in Qambar and Kart-i-Chahar neighbourhoods of the capital. They denounced Pakistan’s policy toward Afghanistan.

In central Bamyan province, hundreds of people, including women, rallied in the provincial capital and set alight President Asif Ali Zardari’s effigy. Chanting “Death to Pakistan”, the protestors marched from a *mosque* to Bamyan City.

Former jihadi commander and member of *Mujahideen* Council, Abdullah Noori, said: “If the president issues a decree, we are willing to guard our borders and protect our motherland.”

Islamabad should know the Afghans, who defeated the much stronger Soviet occupation army, could also vanquish Pakistani troops, remarked a physically-challenged demonstrator, Mohammad Hashim.

In the east, Nangarhar University students kept the busy Kabul-Jalalabad highway closed for three hours in Daronta area, declaring what they called a new round of jihad against Pakistan.

Qari Motmain, one of the participants of the rally, accused the authorities of keeping silent on naked aggression by Pakistani border guards. If the government did not react to the cross-border assaults, they would kick up a storm of protests, he warned.

In neighbouring Laghman province, thousands of tribal elders, religious scholars, youth and civil society representatives lashed out at the neighbouring country. Sarhadi Zwak, the governor’s spokesman, said angry demonstrations were ongoing across the province.

One demonstrator Haji Timur said the nation stood firmly behind the border guards, warning Pakistan of dire consequence if it did stop interfering in Afghanistan.

Students in western Herat province also denounced Pakistani military incursions and checkpoints in Goshta town.

The situation was intolerable for the Afghans, who were ready to sacrifice their lives for their country's defence, observed Abdul Matin, a student of the Sharia Faculty at Herat University.

In southern Kandahar province, protestors voiced their concern at the international community's silence on the ongoing tension between the neighbours. University students torched Pakistan's flag and assured Afghan forces of solid support.

In case of need, students would quit their institutions and join their security forces in fighting against the aggressors, said their representative, Mohammad Zahir. The Afghans could no longer tolerate Pakistan's aggressive designs, he added.