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US funds worth \$50 million stolen from Afghan bank: SIGAR

May 9, 2013

Top US Federal Watchdog, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) has announced that fifty million dollars located in an Afghan bank account last year have suddenly gone missing while under the Afghan government's watch, The Foreign Policy (FP) reported.

Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) John Sopko also accused the Afghan government of being a "criminal patronage network" from civil servant to the highest officials.

John Sopko on Wednesday also claimed that SIGAR office had served the Afghan government an order to freeze the account.

While delivering a speech at the New America Foundation, John Sopko said, Briefly put, we identified roughly \$50 million stolen from the U.S. government which was sitting in an Afghan bank account."

"We obtained a court order here in the United States and served it on the Afghan government to get them to seize the money. For months we pressed the Afghan attorney general's office to freeze the account and begin the legal process to allow us to seize the cash," John Sopko said.

He also added, "At first, we were told the bank account was frozen and the money protected. Unfortunately, as is too many times the case, a few weeks ago we learned that the money was mysteriously unfrozen by some powerful bureaucrat in Kabul. Now, most of it is gone."

In parts of his speech, John Sopko urged US to consider withholding vital aid to Afghanistan in a bid to put pressure on Kabul in order to adopt a stronger financial protections.