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Angry protestors close voter registration center

7/28/2013

Hundreds of enraged protestors on Sunday forcibly closed a voter registration centre in the Gizab district of central Uruzgan province.

Up to 600 demonstrators took to the streets in the district at 9am, chanting full-throated slogans against the Independent Election Commission's (IEC) ill-planning.

One protestor Malik Rahmatullah told Pajhwok Afghan News voters from the district, which government forces retook from the Taliban after a decade, had been registered in Daikundi province.

Another demonstrator called the IEC action a conspiracy against the district residents, asking why voters from Gizab had been included in another province.

Haji Lal Mohammad warned the regional registration centre would not be reopened as long as it was not linked to Uruzgan province. Hinting at shutting schools, he said they would not receive voter cards if their demand was not met.

Juma Khan, in charge of the IEC in Daikundi, alleged hundreds of protestors ransacked their office, smashing furniture and other tools. He said the office had been closed and people's complaints conveyed to the head office in Kabul.

On Saturday, the IEC announced the launch of the second phase of the voter registration campaign at district and village levels ahead of the April 2014 presidential and provincial council election.

IEC chief Fazal Ahmad Manawi told reporters in Kabul the campaign would continue as scheduled, with 375 centres established in districts and police districts in big cities as part of the second round. The process will end two weeks ahead of the elections.