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Kabul protestors demand land from municipality

By Weeda Baraki

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Nearly 200 people on Tuesday staged a protest in front of the municipality and accused the department of corruption and land grabbing.

The protesters accused municipal officials were involved in land corruption and asked for the distribution of plots in the Qala-i-Zaman Khan area of 16th police district of Kabul.

In 1992 the government distributed ownership documents of residential houses, but owners are yet to receive the land from the municipality, so they established an association to demand their rights, said Mahmud Khan, head of the group, of the Qala-i-Zaman khan area.

Municipality officials had pledged to award land in the Dasht-i-Padola of Chilsotun area of Kabul, but no one kept their promise, claimed the demonstrators.

“We gave money to the government and received legal documents, but our lands were given to powerful people. We expected plots in the town of Kabul, but officials cheated us,” he said.

A female protester, who wished anonymity, said municipality officials used offensive language at them when they demanded for their land.

“I paid 400,000 afs to the government for the documents. When the township project was inaugurated in March, the land was distributed to powerful people,” she said.

Protesters warned if their complaints were not heard, they would stage violent demonstration.

Deputy head of the property department, Hajji Mohammad Sabir Yousufi, said his director was on a trip to India and would address the issue soon.