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## Urzagan police chief's arrest on rape, robbery charges ordered

November 14, 2012

Arrest warrants have been issued for an Uruzgan-based local police commander, blamed for killing scores of civilians and involvement in rape and robbery cases, the interior minister announced on Tuesday.

On Sunday, the Wolesi Jirga Complaints Commission warned that residents of the central province would take action against the commander if security forces failed to arrest him within 24 hours.

Abdul Hakim Shujaee, serving as Afghan Local Police (ALP) — a NATO-funded force — commander in the Khas Uruzgan district over the past three years, has been accused of committing heinous crimes.

Minister of Interior Mujtaba Patang and 50 relatives of the victims appeared before the parliamentary panel, whose head Obaidullah Barakzai said Shujaee — a resident of the Ajristan district of Ghazni — moved to Uruzgan in 2009.

Over the past three years, Barakzai said, the commander had killed 121 people. He dubbed the man as a hardened criminal, shielded by some officials. A year ago, Shujaee was detained, the MP said, adding he was freed within two hours.

Zainullah Khan, hailing from Uruzgan, informed the panel that Shujaee had killed two of his

sons, one in 2011 and the other during the holy month of Ramadan this year. He is said to have grabbed about 100 acres of land in the province.

If security forces did not arrest Shujae, the man warned, he would join insurgents' ranks. "I'm going to join the Taliban and strike government officials' houses with rockets."

A resident of Khas Uruzgan district, Haji Lal Mohammad, claimed the ALP officer had killed nine members of his family — a son and eight nephews. "One night, he shot them dead as they walked out of home..."

After listening to the complaints, the minister said: "I have ordered the arrest of Shujae, no matter who is shielding him. To me, law and justice is more important than anything else. No one will be able to free him once I get hold of him." Patang branded Shujae as an outlaw, not a ministry officer. Afghan forces were capable of catching killers, he said, lamenting why the criminal could not be detained so far. Army, police and intelligence officials will devise a joint strategy for bringing the commander and his men to justice.

Barakzai asked security forces to submit their report to the commission within a week. "If his arrest is delayed, I will quit and join my people in their efforts to capture Shujae ... let him kill me as well."