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Women's rights act face intense opposition in Afghan parliament

May 18, 2013



The elimination of violence against women act was severely opposed by a number of Afghan lawmakers, despite the act was considered to be one of the major achievements of the Afghan government to prevent violence against women.

The act was one of the main agendas of the Afghan parliament on Saturday and the Afghan lawmakers were due to pass the act, however a commission was formed to discuss the main and controversial articles of the act after a number of lawmakers showed their opposition.

Afghan lawmakers Mawlavi Tara Khel, Mawlavi Abdul Rahman, Qazir Nazir Ahmad Hanafi, Abdul Satar Khawasi and Sadeqi Zada Neli opposed the elimination of violence against women act.

The lawmakers opposed with the elimination of violence against women act due to specification of age for the marriage, polygamy, provision of shelter for the women, determination of penalty for convicts committing violence against women and authorization of women to decide regarding the marriage.

This comes as comes concerns have grown regarding the fate of the women in the country as NATO troops are preparing to withdraw from the country by the end of 2014, and women's' rights activists are fearing the achievements by the Afghan government, civil society organizations and by other activists will be comprised.

The argument by a number of conservative lawmakers led to the formation of a commission to decide regarding the controversial articles of the act despite a large number of the lawmakers support the elimination of violence against women act.

The act was approved by Afghan president Hamid Karzai in a legislative decree and is currently practiced in all Afghan courts, however, a number of the lawmakers argue that the act is against the principles of Islam.