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The New York Times

Afghanistan: Claims Against Official Set Off Vote Fraud Investigation

11/11/2010

The Afghan election commission said Thursday that it had opened an investigation into allegations that a top government official pressured an election worker to rig the results of the parliamentary ballot in western Afghanistan. The commission said it had received an audio recording of a telephone call said to be between an election worker in Kabul and Ismail Khan, the Afghan minister of energy and a former governor of Herat Province.



Afghanistan's Energy Minister Ismail Khan.

A losing candidate, Ghulam Qadir Akbar, said the election worker had taped the conversation to prove that Mr. Khan was interfering with the vote counts. The voice said to be Mr. Khan's is heard on the tape, which was played on Afghan television, listing about a dozen names that the worker is instructed to include or exclude from the list of winning candidates. A spokesman for the commission, however, said the voices on the tape had not yet been identified. A spokesman for Mr. Khan said he had no comment on the accusation.