

## DIAG has changed the life of people in Mohmand Dara

When you are traveling from Jalal Abad to Torkham, on the way you can see the district headquarter of Mohmand Dara in the distance of 35km from Jalal Abad city, Mohmand Dara is a district of Nangarhar Province in the eastern region, few years ago this district was known for the cultivation of poppy and illegal Armed Groups (DIAG), but today it is known for peace and security, because all the IAGs handed over their weapons to DIAG, and returned to a new life without poppy and guns,

In the distance of about 20 meters of the district compound you can see a small signboard of Emal BaBa higher secondary school, where 2000 students are being taught by 20 teachers in this school, they have 10 classrooms and two other small rooms for teachers and administration, most of the students are taking classes on the ground under burning sun without chairs and desks,

Farooq a tenth class student says, "we are in very terrible conditions, but we are hopeful that it



will change", in the northern side of the old building, construction of a new building is ongoing for their school, which is funded by UNDP/ANBP/DIAG, he added" *the students are very happy that all the former jihadi commanders who took part in a successful jihad against the enemies of the country realized the importance of education for their children , and now they believe education is a milestone for the development"* Farooq says he is very pleased of their jihadi commanders to handed over their weapons to DIAG program, and proposed for a school building, "we are very thankful of DIAG program for funding of this project and now they are the witnesses of construction of a beautiful school building in which they can learn in a sound and suitable conditions", Farooq said,.



Farooq says, "Two years ago many students were not able to attend the classes, and nobody was ready to send his children to

school, but today you can be seen thousands of male and female students attending their classes in the different schools of Mohmand Dara, without of any fear of armed people.



Muhammad Yaseen a shopkeeper in in Muhamand Dara says, during the existence of illegal armed groups they would stay in their shops day and night, because they afraid of looting their shops by armed people, also he mentioned the gunmen of illegal armed people would come to the shops and will take every thing by force without paying money, but after the disbandment of these groups their shops and lives are

safe, during the night they can stay at their homes without any fear about their shops, they can provide economic support to their families by shop keeping.

Mr, Yaseen said,"most of the people of this district were busy in poppy cultivation, but when the former Jehadi commanders disbanded their groups and handed over their weapons to DIAG they observed a lot of changes in the life of the people, *the parents were also afraid to allow their children to school for learning, they could see Armed people every where, "but the situation has been changed in Mohmand Dara, today children of Mohmand Dara are able to come out for learning without fear of armed people, says Mr, Yaseen"*



further he added "By the collection of weapons from IAGs (Illegal Armed Groups) today there is no poppy in our district and people returned to cultivate cereals and vegetable on their lands",



A former Jehadi commander narrated his story in these words "I started my jihad against the Russian troops when I was 25 years, I was very happy for fighting and was proudly keeping the weapons for the defense of our country, I was the commander of (10) mujahideen," a long beard and broad shouldered former Jehadi commander.

Malik Ameer Khan was a former Jehadi commander and fought for two decades against the Russian forces in Afghanistan, he has handed over his weapons to DIAG, now he is working as a farmer.

"In those days fighting for the freedom of the country was the holy Jihad, now struggling for bringing a peaceful environment is also a jihad, Malik Ameer says"

"I am very proud of my participation in this jihad", and for the success of this jihad I handed over all the weapons and disbanded my group for bringing peace and stability to the district, Commander Malik Ameer said,"

He added "he wants to change the life of his people, and for this purpose he calls on the people to work for peace and stability, he says, all the people should send their children to school, because only education can bring changes and improvements in our life, fighting against the illiteracy is the most important jihad in current situation. Malik Ameer has three children, two sons and one daughter, they are going to school "he says, I am satisfied from my life",

Malik Ameer has 8jereeb land and he is working in his land, he is able to provide financial support for his family and children's school from his land. "Peace is the only way for education and development", says Malik Ameer.

Salma a woman in Mohmand Dara district is also very happy about the implementation of DIAG in this district. Salma a thirty years old woman who has returned from Pakistan four years ago, she doesn't like her picture to be taken. She has married and the mother of two daughters and one son, she says at the beginning of their returning from Pakistan she was very upset about the education of her daughters, because there was no opportunity for the girls education in Mohmand Dara, and she was afraid of the illegal armed people.

"I was working in the poppy fields with my husband, and would always thinking about my husband and daughter's future, I would like to educate my daughters, I would afraid to see the young boys and girls were working in the poppy fields, Salma says",

She added "she was very happy to hear about the decree of the president to "stop the poppy cultivation" but she was happier when she heard about the implementation of a school project by DIAG, now she sends her daughters to school, but she appointed the government should hire the female teachers in the school to teach the girls.

The district chief of police who is working for security and rule of law in the district said,



“Security is the key of development, DIAG IS the key for security” so we can say DIAG is the most important program for both government and people. The chief of Police of Mohmand Dara district is working for - ---- year he says,” the people of this district have passed very difficult life at the existence of illegal armed groups, they used to observe a lot of criminal cases, but after the implementation of DIAG the rate of such cases have been decreased. Another point that the chief of police mentioned was the poppy cultivation which decreased to zero (0) level. The chief of police further mentioned “the people of Mohmand Dara are very

happy about the implementation of development projects of government and NGOs in their district. Many people of Mohmand Dara are working in these development projects, and they can provide financial facilities for their families.

The end

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