

Corruption hampering Afghan policing

by UPI

GHAZNI, Afghanistan -- New U.S. strategy calls for 4,000 more troops to train Afghan police and army but observers say corruption may be a bigger policing problem.

Based on interviews with U.S. troops training police officers in Ghazni province, The New York Times says better policing may be impossible unless government officials stop undermining law enforcement efforts with openly illegal activities.

The lack of trust, along with the absence of security forces in most villages, strengthens the hand of the Taliban as the only real power in Ghazni, the report says.

U.S. and Afghan officers cite a long list of illegal schemes, including bribery, drug smuggling and theft.

"In every office there is corruption," Col. Mohammed Zaman, the provincial police chief, told the Times. "It's not only prosecutors and judges."

The result is an ineffective Afghan police force. Further, compared to the government's activity, the Taliban law is far more certain, though ruthless, the Times said.

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