



AFGHANISTAN



آغاز نو - نوی پیل
Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme



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KABUL—PANSHIR VALLEY HEAVY WEAPONS COLLECTION CONTINUES

Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme has moved ahead with heavy weapons collection in the Panshir Valley following assurances from the people of the region that they support the efforts of ANBP. The Panshir is the last remaining area of Afghanistan with significant numbers of serviceable heavy weapons.

Last week, three small explosive devices were found on vehicles being used by ANBP to collect tanks, armoured personnel carriers and other heavy weapons in the valley. A day later, two of the heavy lifting cranes were set on fire.

The events resulted in a series of meeting between the Public Information Department of *Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme* and the people of the region. After discussions with community and religious leaders, as well as the Governor and other officials representing the government, promises were made to respect the work of the heavy weapons team and protect them from any criminal attacks.

The Public Information Team was supported by members of the Heavy Weapons Collection Team and a representative of the ANBP Regional Office.

During the meetings, representatives of all the villages and towns in the Panshir, as well as the government representatives, also promised ANBP that they will support the reintegration of former AMF soldiers in the valley because it meant that the soldiers could return to a normal life and support their families.

There are about three thousand members of the AMF in the Panshir scheduled for disarmament and then reintegration training before the end of June.

ANBP has collected 62, or about half, of the known to be working or repairable heavy weapons in the Panshir Valley. However, from past experience ANBP expects to discover previously unknown weapons as it continues its work and the total number to be collected will increase.

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*The ANBP is a programme of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
It works with the Afghan Transitional Authority to disarm and demobilize former members of the AMF forces
then reintegrate them*