

## **Afghanistan: Aug/Sep '10**

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Afghan media chiefs say IWPR feature helped them better understand lawless reality in province.

A senior figure in the independent Afghan media has described as “really powerful” an exclusive IWPR story on growing Taliban power in Wardak province, a region just 35 kilometres from the capital Kabul.

The article, widely cited by local radio and print media, described how the insurgents were quietly gaining control over most areas beyond the district centre, with some locals warning that they had set a parallel administration in the region.

Radio Spogmai, Azadi Radio, Radio Kalid and Radio Sadi-e-Azadi, the station of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force, ISAF, were among the broadcasters to feature the story; while print outlets that republished the piece included the Sarnawesht, Wisa, Erada and Agah newspapers.

Both radio and newspapers chiefs said the August 26 report enabled their readers to better understand the challenges faced by both the international and the Afghan forces as they struggled to enforce order in Wardak.

“I published the report on Taliban control on Wardak for two consecutive days, and it was really a powerful report,” said Hamid Naseri, the head of Radio Spogmai, an independent radio station, broadcasting from Kabul and Kandahar. “Every morning, the first thing I do is to check the IWPR website, because this site publishes the best reports.”

Mohammad Amin Modaqiq, a representative of Azadi Radio, said that IWPR reports in general were well-suited for use in their radio packages due to their balance and accuracy. “We always check IWPR and use their reports,” he said.

Zia Bomia, a former chief of Bakhter news agency who now heads the Journalists’ Defence Committee, said that IWPR output provides a valuable resource for both the Afghan and the international media.

“When I want to get information on any subject, I refer to IWPR, because these reports are full of information and facts and are free of any kind of prejudice,” he said.

Ordinary Afghans welcomed the Wardak report, saying that other local media had not properly investigated the situation in the region.

“When I heard the report I was surprised [and wanted to know] which organisation is this, which has dared to publish a realistic report on this province,” said Mohammad Rahim, an engineer and a member of Wardak Province Tribal High Council, who heard the report on Azadi Radio.

“Afghan media are involved in ethnic and language disputes and therefore one cannot trust most of them. But the IWPR report was on a reality that no one else has yet dared to publish. I appreciate the IWPR reporters.”

Kabul resident Gul Mohammad said, “When I heard the IWPR report on the radio I was shocked and I woke up from the sleep of negligence, and thought that if the Taliban controls Wardak, they will soon reach Kabul and we should be careful about our future.”

**Location:** [Afghanistan](#)

**Topic:** [Elections](#)

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