

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	1485
Land:	Afghanistan
Kilde:	RFE/RL – Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
Titel:	Taliban Bans Political Parties In Afghanistan After Declaring Them Un-Islamic
Udgivet:	17. august 2023
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	21. december 2023



Document #2095973

RFE/RL – Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (Author)

Taliban Bans Political Parties In Afghanistan After Declaring Them Un-Islamic

- By [RFE/RL's Radio Azadi](#)

Afghanistan's hard-line Islamist Taliban rulers have [banned all political parties](#), saying there is "no justification" for them under Shari'a law.

"Political parties are banned completely, we will not permit any political party to operate in the country," Abdul Hakim Sharaee, the Taliban's de facto justice minister, said during a news conference on August 16, one day after the Taliban marked two years of rule since international troops withdrew from the country.

"Political parties have no justification in Islamic Shari'a law and they are not in the best interest of our nation," he added, claiming political parties have been the main factor causing turmoil in Afghanistan for decades.

The ban is the latest Taliban restriction on political activities after dozens of political parties were registered after the militants were ousted in 2001 from their previous stint as rulers.

Since returning to power in 2021, the ultraconservative militants have monopolized power by giving all major government leadership posts to Taliban leaders while muzzling the press and abolishing democratic institutions.

No country has officially recognized the Taliban administration and its strict rule, which has also severely cut basic freedoms in most facets of daily life, from banning women and girls from schools to outlawing music.

The fear of Taliban persecution, assassination, and arrests has driven Afghanistan's once-vibrant civil society and political class out of the country. Political leaders living inside the country live under strict Taliban supervision and are mostly not allowed to travel abroad.

The political party ban is expected to complicate reconciliation efforts among Afghans seeking to initiate a dialogue between various political factions. The international community has supported such a dialogue with the aim of eventually forming a broad-based government in the war-torn nation.

The Taliban government operates without a constitution even after some Taliban members, such as Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef, a former Taliban diplomat, called on the group to adopt a document.

"Forming a constitution is important to preserve Afghanistan's sovereignty," [he said in a recent interview](#). "It will determine the destiny of our people, outline the power of the people [in the government] and how to interact with the world."

Political parties made a limited comeback in Afghanistan after the demise of the first Taliban government in 2001.

Anemic political organization continued to be dominated by former anti-Soviet guerrilla commanders from the 1980s and the communists who fought them.

Most Taliban leaders were educated in religious madrasahs in neighboring Pakistan. Most of the religious schools are run by clerics associated with Jamiat Ulema-e Islam (JUI), a major Islamist political party. JUI participates in elections and often joins alliances with secular political parties.

In the mid-1990s, the Taliban emerged as a ragtag student militia opposed to Islamist and former communist factions engaged in a civil war. These groups evolved from within the leftist and right-wing Islamist political factions that emerged in the 1960s when Afghanistan first attempted to develop its democracy.

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ecoi.net description:

Taliban rulers banned all political parties, arguing that they had "no justification" under Shari'a law

Country:
Afghanistan

Source:
[RFE/RL – Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty](#) (Author)

Original link:
<https://www.rferl.org/a/afghanistan-taliban-bans-political-parties/32552632.html>

Document type:
Media Report

Language:
English

Published:
17 August 2023

Available on ecoi.net since:
18 August 2023

Document ID:
2095973

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Documentation	info@ecoi.net	
(ACCORD)		

ecoi.net is run by the Austrian Red Cross (department ACCORD) in cooperation with Informationsverbund Asyl & Migration. ecoi.net is funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and Caritas Austria. ecoi.net is supported by ECRE & UNHCR.

