

“Your activities in developing the authority of the Helmand Province, in the fight against corruption and in ensuring security in the parliamentary elections held in September increases the trust of the residents of the Helmand Province in the possibility of fair governance and serves as an example to many local leaders,” said President Toomas Hendrik Ilves in a meeting with Gulab Mangal, the Governor of the Helmand Province.

The Estonian head of state who arrived in Afghanistan for a working visit said that one of the prerequisites of building up the country is that more people start supporting the country and believing in it.

Gulab Mangal, one of the most powerful governors in Afghanistan, assured President Ilves that although the attacks of rebels in his home province remain frequent, he sees solid signs of improvement of the situation.

Estonia, for whom Afghanistan is one of the most important states in terms of development aid, coordinates the establishment of the local health care system in the team building up the Lashkar Gah Province. Also, Estonia has organised first aid courses, in-service training for physicians and the construction of an adult training centre in the Helmand Province. Estonia also supports the establishment of a police training centre in cooperation with Great Britain and Denmark and is a cooperation partner to a project funded by the Japanese Government, in the framework of which wells are dug for providing five thousand people with drinking water in the proximity of Lashkar Gah.

Estonian health expert Priit Paju who coordinates the build-up of the medical system of the Helmand Province introduced major local cooperation partners to President Ilves.

“There is no success without any civil contribution and the war against the Taliban cannot be won merely by the force of arms,” said President Ilves. “The Afghan people need our help and support in organising medical assistance, making education more available and creating a better future overall, and if we can and are able to, we will obviously help them.”

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