

Afghans vote to choose new leaders

Afghanistan's presidential run-off election marks the first democratic transfer of power since the fall of the Taliban in 2001



■ **Dr. Abdullah**, 53, and running mate **Mohammad Khan** (*inset*) both took part in resistance to Soviet invasion in 1980s. Former Afghan foreign minister has strong following among ethnic Tajiks while Khan is Pashtun – most populous group, with ethnic solidarity to Taliban

■ **Insurgency:** Backs indirect talks with Taliban. His Northern Alliance, anti-Taliban record could make start of peace talks difficult

■ **Corruption:** Pledges zero tolerance to nation's endemic corruption from first day in office. Cash bribes are estimated to 20% of nation's \$19.6-billion GDP in 2012

■ **Future U.S. role:** Both candidates have pledged to sign security pact with Washington to keep U.S. troops in Afghanistan, but new president will not take office until August, just ahead of September deadline



■ **Dr. Ashraf Ghani**, 65, comes from influential Pashtun family. He spent two decades in America as former World Bank executive and professor at Johns Hopkins University. Running mate **Abdul Rashid Dostum** (*inset*) is ethnic Uzbek and former warlord in Northern Alliance

■ **Insurgency:** Supports negotiations and peace deal with Taliban. Supports release of insurgent suspects held in American-controlled prisons in Afghanistan

■ **Economy:** Says he has experience to ensure flow of foreign aid, which contributes more than 90% of government's budget

■ **Power sharing:** Has pledged to accommodate Taliban members in his government. Will create third vice-presidential position to include all main ethnic groups: Pashtuns, Hazaras, Tajiks and Uzbeks