



February 2010



# Afghan News

## Latest News

### Parliament begins fifth legislative year: H.E. President Karzai opens the inaugural ceremony.



H.E. President Karzai speaking to Parliament during the first meeting of Parliament's fifth legislative year.

H.E. President Karzai opened the inaugural ceremony of Parliament's fifth legislative year on February 20th. In his speech he defined and addressed five points that the government should strive for in the upcoming year: peace and national reconciliation, maintaining security, eradicating administrative corruption and improving the rule of law, social and economic development, and regional cooperation.

### President Karzai Awarded with King Abdul Aziz Medal of Excellence

H.E. President Karzai was received on February 3<sup>rd</sup> on arrival at Riyadh Airport personally by His Majesty King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. H.E. President Karzai later held a meeting with His Majesty in Janadriyah after an Umrah Haj performance in Mecca and prayers at the Prophet Mohammad's Mosque in Madina. A reception hosted by King Abdullah was attended by many officials and princes.

Following the reception, a formal ceremony took place in which the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques awarded H.E. President Karzai the King Abdul Aziz Medal of Excellence, the most prestigious medal in Saudi Arabia. H.E. thanked King Abdullah for the Medal,

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Foreign Minister Rassoul speaking at Session II (Regional Framework) of the London Conference

### Highlighted Achievements

#### Sports Achievements

- In total, Afghan teams brought home 32 medals in the South Asian Games (7 Gold, 9 Silver 16 Bronze)
- Afghanistan won its first ever Olympic medal in 2008, a bronze medal in Taekwondo.
- The National Cricket Team won the 2010 ICC World Twenty20 Qualifier cup & qualified to play in World

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H.E. President Karzai being presented with the medal of excellence personally by His Majesty King Abdul Aziz.

and declared it a “great pride to himself and the people of Afghanistan.” H.E. also expressed gratitude for all the arrangements made for him and his visiting delegation during the Umrah Haj Performance and rituals. In addition to attending the ceremony and reception, H.E. President Karzai briefed His Majesty King Abdullah on Afghanistan’s plan for Peace, Reconciliation and Reintegration efforts, for which he requested Saudi Arabia’s help and His Majesty’s personal guidance. In turn, His Majesty King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz commended H.E.’s endeavors for peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region and assured the President of his support for the peace process in Afghanistan.

### President Karzai Attends Munich Security Conference

H.E. President Hamid Karzai spoke to assembled high-level officials on the third day of the 46th Munich Security Conference in Munich, Germany. The conference, which opened on February 5<sup>th</sup>, covered such themes as the Middle East’s stability, global energy security, arms control, world power shifting, and NATO’s new strategy. The third day was dedicated to talks on Afghanistan. About 300 officials, including heads of states, politicians, business people, academics, and senior political experts were in at-

tendance.

### Progress towards Fair Health Services

Dr. Suraya Dalil, Policy & Planning Deputy and Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) Acting Minister inaugurated the 30-bed Haji Janat Gul Khan Kuchi hospital in Puli-Charkhi, Kabul on February 1st. The new facility will provide care for more than 120 thousand Kuchis. A large number of people including representatives and leaders of Kuchi tribes, parliament members, and MoPH staff were also present. Dr. Suraya Dalil congratulated the residents, the Kuchi tribes, in particular, on this prosperous achievement.

The Ministry of Public Health has planned to further support Kuchi tribes via the training of health workers, especially nurses and midwives, in addition to establishing and upgrading health clinics and designing a specific program of health and nutrition services for Kuchi tribes.

“It is a great pleasure that because of the practical consideration of The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the intensified non-stop attempts made by the Ministry of Public Health, Kuchi tribes who had not been able to take advantage of health services throughout the history are now very lucky to be supported by establishment of this 30-bed well equipped hospital,” said Mullah Tarakhil, the parliament representative for the Kuchi population.

### 625 women receive vocational training

As many as 625 women graduated from different training courses aimed at creating job opportunities for females in Samangan province on February 7th.

280 women completed agriculture

and carpet-weaving courses, 160 were taught fruit-processing skills and another 135 were trained in livestock, embroidery and tailoring. All the participants of the courses, funded by the World Bank, were



Local women receiving loom training

given certificates and a \$75 kit relevant to their courses. In addition, every participant of the agriculture and livestock training was given 12 chickens and a goat.

"I earned 12,000 Afghani in just three months while acting as a beautician in my house," explained Sitara, 19. She said with the working kit provided to her, she could open a shop inside her house. 50 girls who were unable to pass university entrance test were also given six-months of lessons in English, computer literacy, and management.

### 68 schemes executed in Khost

Sixty-eight uplift schemes were executed under the National Solidarity Program (NSP) of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) in Khost province on February 9<sup>th</sup>.

Rural Rehabilitation and Development Director, Mr. Omar Aryan stated that an estimated population of 11,988 families living in Zazi Maidan, Tani, Musakhel, and Gurbaz districts, as well as Matun and Lakano areas would benefit from the projects. The projects included construction of small bridges, com-

*(Continued on page 3)*



munity centers, and flour mills; the gravelling of roads; the institution of water supply schemes; the digging of wells; the cleaning of canals; and the conducting of tailoring courses for women. According to Mr. Aryan, since the establishment of NSP in the province, 1052 reconstruction schemes had so far been inaugurated at the cost of 129 million Afghanis, and work on 169 other schemes is underway.

**Gardeners to receive 50,000 apple tree seedlings**

Orchard owners in Ghazni province will be provided more than 50,000 apple tree seedlings, free of cost, with support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The Agriculture Director, Mr. Sultan Hussain Abasyar, stated that the seedlings worth a total of 2.5 million Afghanis would be distributed to orchard owners in Khwaja Omari district. "We are planning to extend the programme to some other districts of the province in order to promote gardening," he said.

The district chief, Qasam Disiwal, said there were hundreds of orchards in the district and the distribution of the seedlings would encourage the orchard owners to develop their gardens and result in increased production of fruits.

**Ambassador Hakimi takes part in Tokyo University of Foreign Languages workshop**

Ambassador Hakimi spoke to assembled representatives from the Japanese government, media, and academia at Tokyo University of Foreign Languages' (TUFL) workshop entitled, "War on Terror and Peace Building in Afghanistan - Lessons learnt from Cambodia, Indonesia and

Sri Lanka." The Ambassador's speech touched on the accomplishments and challenges of the past 9



Ambassador Hakimi speaks on Afghanistan's achievements and challenges at TUFL's workshop

years. Other participants included Professor Isezaki of TUFL and representatives from academic institutions in Kabul, Cambodia, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka.

**Japan Inaugurates New Building of Primary School in Samangan**

A new primary school building in the Roye Doiab district of Samangan province was inaugurated on February 6<sup>th</sup>. The building has 8 classrooms and other educational facilities and was established with the help of the Japanese government.

**Afghanistan takes gold in Basketball Final**



The national team celebrating their win.

Afghanistan beat India 65-64 in a thrilling men's basketball final

match during the 11th South Asian Games in the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka on Friday, February 5<sup>th</sup>. Trailing 35-44 at half-time, the Indians made a remarkable revival in the next two quarters to tie the score at 58-all. The Indians, 49th in the FIBA ranking, kept up the pressure but Afghanistan, down 64-63 with only seconds remaining, scored a game-winning final basket.

Mr. Muhammad Arif Paiman, an official of the National Olympic Committee, credited the victory to a heroic performance by team captain Nafi Mashriqi.

This was the first time Afghanistan took part in the games. An official from the Afghan Sports Federation (ASF) commented: "This is a great achievement for Afghan sports and we truly proud of our athletes and organizers who made this possible."

**Afghanistan wins the 2010 ICC World Twenty Qualifier Cup**



The national cricket team poses for photos

The 2010 ICC World Twenty Qualifier was played from February 9-13th in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). With a win over the UAE, Afghanistan qualified to play in World T20 Cricket Championship scheduled to be played in April and May in the West Indies. The momentum that has made Afghanistan the world's fastest-rising team carried the squad through the World Twenty20. Afghanistan finished the qualifying tournament

## Interview with Ms. Chihiro Imai, First Secretary of the Embassy of Ja- pan in Kabul

*Our staff recently had the opportunity to speak with Ms. Chihiro Imai on the presence of Japan in Afghanistan and Afghanistan in Japan.*

### **Have you seen people in Afghanistan using any Japanese products?**

Yes, electric items such as PCs, digital cameras, mobile phones, and walkmans. I normally stay in Afghanistan for 8 weeks in general and most of the time I spend in remote areas but if I go shopping in a town, then I can find mobile phones and other electric items made in Japan.

### **Is there anything in Afghanistan that you think Japan could benefit from importing?**

Yes, for example, fruits, walnuts, raisins, and pomegranates, and also processed fruit like dried apricots. Afghanistan could also export handicrafts, small tapestries, cushion covers, carpets and antique items.

### **Is there anything in Japan that you think Afghanistan could benefit from importing?**

Yes, I don't know exactly how to describe this but, for example, food processing techniques and how to preserve fruit. Also, transportation techniques and packaging of fruits and other goods could benefit Afghanistan.

### **Is there anything in particular you think Japanese companies could sell to or in Afghanistan?**

Yes, but it depends on market surveys in Afghanistan - if it is in urban

areas or rural parts. One sector that is very good is selling second-hand cars. It is very easy to sell second-hand cars and second-hand electronics from Japan in Afghanistan. Do you know Akihabara? 7 or 8 years ago there was such an area in the middle of Kabul. I was very surprised.

### **Is there anything in particular you think Afghan companies could sell to or in Japan?**

Raw materials such as marble, Lapis Lazuli, carpets, handicrafts, pure wool and different types of fruits could be sold in Japan among other things.

### **What sectors in the Afghan society do you think are most important for Japanese companies to invest in?**

More than 70 or 80% of Afghans are working within the agricultural sector and therefore investment in this sector would help. I think one of the sections within the agricultural sector that needs investment is making the economic sector work more efficiently.

### **In what ways do you think Afghanistan can make itself more attractive to investment, especially from Japanese companies?**

I don't know. In general, for example, technique transfers and encouraging more discussions about the economic activities between the two countries

### **In what ways do you think increased investment in Afghanistan could help stabilize the country?**

Creation of jobs for Afghan people. For example, when given permits for road constructions, the company should keep the road construction permit and give the jobs to local Afghan people.

## Upcoming Events & Important Dates

### **March 16: Refugees International Japan's "Art of Dining" fundraiser.**

RIJ is hosting their 20th "Art of Dining" event, which is a one-day exhibition of beautiful and imaginative table settings. Celebrities, Representatives of the diplomatic community and other talented and generous people donate their time and energy to design unique table settings which reflect their individual styles, nationalities, and personalities. This event has raised about ¥150 million since its establishment and attracts some 1,500 people each year.

The event is to be held at the Westin Tokyo hotel in Ebisu Garden Place and is from noon to 6:30pm.

For more information call RIJ at 03-5500-3093 or send a message to [enquiries@refugeesinternationaljapan.org](mailto:enquiries@refugeesinternationaljapan.org).

Advance tickets can be purchased through this embassy by contacting Jason Pratt. (contact information is available at the end of this newsletter.)



## Omar's Kitchen

Each month, Omar will offer a recipe for authentic Afghan food.

### Naurinj Palau (Orange Rice)

#### Ingredients:

- 1 ½ kg of chicken - cut into pieces
- 60ml of vegetable oil
- 1 large onion - chopped
- 1 orange rind finely julienned
- 4oz of blanched almond
- 24oz of long grain brown rice
- 5g of salt
- water
- 200g of sugar
- Saffron

#### To cook:

Divide a medium-sized orange into four pieces. Remove all pulp including the white skin with a sharp knife so all that is left is the orange rind. Julienne each piece into toothpick size shreds and soak them in a bowl of water for three hours. Drain, add fresh water and boil them for 15 minutes. Drain again and cover evenly with 40 grams of sugar and allow to dry on a plate overnight. This will remove the bitter taste from the orange peel.



Pour the vegetable oil into a Dutch oven (or a pressure cooker) and brown the chicken. Add the onion, salt and enough water to cover the chicken. Bring to a boil and simmer for 30 minutes, until chicken is very tender.

Put 1.66 liters of water and 5g of salt into a large pot with a lid bring to a rolling boil. Wash and add the rice, cover the pot and bring to a boil again. Cook rice of a moderately high heat until all the water is absorbed and rice is tender, but not completely cooked.

In another pot, bring 240ml of water to a boil. Add the saffron and dissolve the sugar. Simmer for 15 minutes then add the orange peels.

Remove the broth from the Dutch oven and bury the chicken and almonds under the rice, then pour the orange-saffron liquid over the rice. With a dish towel tightly covering the oven, steam on a low heat for 30 minutes until the rice is cooked and all liquid is absorbed.

## Language Lesson

There are many languages spoken in Afghanistan, but two are designated as the nation's official languages: Pashto and Dari. For audio samples of the vocabulary and phrases, please go to: <http://www.afghanembassyjp.org/en/life/?pn=221>

English	Pashto	Dari
Weather	Hawaa	Hawaa
Rainy	Baraany	Baraany
Snowy	Waura	Barfy
Sunny	Lemar	Aftaby
Cloudy	Vres	Abbrey
Cold (weather)	Salah hawaa	Hawaa Sard
Season	Mosoum	Fasil

### Conversation

What is the weather like today?	Nen hawaa senge da?	Embros hawaa chetor hast?
It's cloudy.	Vres da.	Abbrey ast.
It's been cold this year.	Da salah mosoum wa.	Fasil sard bood.
Yes, it has.	Ho latfan.	Balle latfan.

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#### Contact Us

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