



July 2010



Afghan News

Latest News

THE KABUL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE



Highlighted Achievements

- University students increased from 4,000 in 2001 to 80,000 now.
- Universities increased from 3 in 2001 to 16 now.
- GDP increased from \$2 billion in 2001 to almost \$15 billion now.

Over 70 countries and international organizations attended Kabul's International Conference on the 20th and renewed their commitment to the government and people of Afghanistan. The conference was the biggest meeting of its type to be hosted in Kabul since the 1970's, and its landmark success set a hopeful tone for Afghanistan's continuing progress.

ment, highlighting the accomplishments that had been made so far, and outlining the direction for the country's future.

The three main points of His Excellency's speech and the following discussion in the forum centered on security, development, and peace building.

Concerning security issues, he emphasized the importance of the Afghan people and government's independence, and resolved that "Afghan National Security Forces...

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this issue:

Latest News	1-4
Upcoming Events & Important Dates	4
Omar's Kitchen	5
Language Lesson	6

JAPAN PLEDGES \$ 1.1 BILLION

Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada announced at the International Conference on Afghanistan that Japan plans to assist Afghanistan with a total of approximately US \$1.1 billion in aid by the end of 2010.

This sum is one of Japan's pledge of up to \$5 billion in reconstruction development assistance over the five years from 2009.

(Continued on page 2)



Photo: Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada with H.E. President Hamid Karzai



World Leaders convene for discussion on Afghanistan's continuing development..

Conference (continued)

... will be responsible for all military and law enforcement operations through our country by 2014.”

His Excellency Karzai reminded his audience of Afghanistan's vast mineral resources, and its potential for the creation of a vibrant trillion-dollar industry.

“Afghanistan is reemerging as the ‘Asian Roundabout,’ a central point of interconnection of goods, ideas, services and people in the fast expanding Asian economy. Our vision is to be the peaceful meeting-place of civilizations,” he said.

Third, issues of peace and reconciliation were discussed.

His Excellency mentioned the Peace Jirga as the foremost example of how the people of Afghanistan have expressed a national consensus for peace, and a willingness to reach out to armed opponents in order to restore the community.

To transform those visions into reality, His Excellency President Karzai promised that the government would show its political resolve in the areas of structural reform, law and order, peace and reconciliation, and constitutionalism.

Pictured right, a train crosses the Uzbekistan—Afghanistan border on one of Afghanistan's two active short line railroads. More rail lines are being planned for the future.

Japan's Pledge (continued)

Okada indicated that Japan's aid will be used for: (1) paying the wages of the Afghan police and providing training to them to improve the public security situation; (2) helping former Taliban soldiers find employment; (3) training of administration officials; and (4) social infrastructure, including further development to the Kabul area.

Japan will also contribute US \$50 million to the international fund created by Japan, the UK, and other countries for national reconciliation.

Okada stated at the conference: "We appreciate the Afghan government's efforts in improving public security, eradicating corruption, and other issues. It is important to make achievements (in improving governance) through Afghanistan's own efforts."

Transportation infrastructure Making Quick Progress

Transportation technology is developing at a fast pace, with work progressing on projects connecting the cities of Bamiyan-Kabul and Mazar-i-sharif to the Asian rail system, and with new strategies shaping the future of broader domestic and international connections. Economic benefits of the projects look to be highly substantial.

Construction work is progressing on two important routes. The first railway, connecting Mazar-i-sharif to the rest of the Asian rail system has over 25 miles laid already and should be completed by the end of 2010. Also, a road-sealing took place this month for a route connecting the cities of Bamiyan and Kabul.

Officials expect that the road will allow Bamiyan's farmers to take their produce to market much faster, reducing the risk of rotting. The new market access will have an economic impact for farmers and Bamiyan itself, an already rich agricultural area where potatoes, wheat, and various fruits are grown.



The government has also started the technical studies concerning the construction of a Kabul-Kandahar railroad, which the World Bank has pledged to fund.

In a joint press conference with the civil society, Minister of Mines H.E. Wahidullah Shahrani cited the construction of railways as the second-largest income generating project after mines for the government, adding that without the infrastructure of a railway, the economic potential of mines cannot be fully tapped. If an extensive railway network were to be established, he said, Afghanistan will profit enormously.

Railway Gazette reported that plans are firming up for a 1000 km standard gauge corridor running across the north of the country. This would give Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and potentially China access to world markets via the Iranian port of Bandar Abbas without requiring transit through other CIS countries.

Mental health training provided to nurses and doctors

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) with HealthNet TPO provided training to 32 staff from provincial hospitals in order to integrate mental health care into general hospital practice. They have now been enabled to address psychological disorders such as depression, anxiety, psychosis, as well as learning disabilities and substance abuse disorders.

MoPH plans to establish basic psychiatry units of 10 bed units at the provincial level, and 20 bed units at the regional level that provide mental health services.

The 32 doctors and nurses who received training will be assigned to provide psychiatric and other

mental health services at provincial hospitals of Nangarhar, laghman, Kunar, Daikundi, Logar, Paktia and Khost.

5 new schools constructed in Samangan

In the northern province of Samangan, 5 new schools have been constructed. Four of the schools are in the Firoz Nakhchir district and one in Dilkhaki. Financing for the projects were provided by an NGO based in Bangladesh (BRAC). Since 2004, BRAC has constructed 186 schools in the remote areas of the province.



Above, Governor Keramuddin Keram

Thousands of trees to be planted in Panjshir

Panjshir Governor Keramuddin Keram met earlier this month with a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) to discuss a large-scale reforestation project in the province of Panjshir that would result in the planting of as many as 35,000 new trees before the end of this year.

5,000 seedlings would be planted in five of Panjshir's six districts and one municipality with each district will have two belts of 2,500 trees.

New watering methods will also be introduced as part of the project, such as the use of Eco Bags which holds about a months worth of water.

Historic herbarium opens at Kabul University

A herbarium containing tens of thousands of plant specimens representing the botanical diversity of Afghanistan was officially re-opened and re-dedicated at Kabul University the morning of July 7.

The Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Dr. Mohammad Osman Babury, as well as other officials and University leaders were on hand for the event held at the university's Faculty of Science building. Event activities included a tour of the herbarium and demonstration of its importance to Afghanistan's education and research efforts.

Herbarium restoration was implemented through the Pastoral Engagement, Adaptation and Capacity Enhancement, or PEACE, project of USAID.

"When we PEACE project scientists examined the collection in March 2009, we were amazed... at the sheer number and diversity of plant specimens in the herbarium collection," said Dr. Catherine Schloeder, a research scientist with the Texas A&M System's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.



Below, a student cleans a page from the antique herbarium collection at Kabul University.

"The herbarium database is now available in the herbarium on a lab computer which can be used by students, faculty and researchers alike, along with photos of ever specimen," she said.

"This data also has been supplied to various government and non-government institutions to support their efforts in environmental management. We are now working to put it on the Internet so that it can be accessed by researchers and institutions worldwide."

The restored herbarium will be used to support the government's efforts to design, implement and manage development programs in cooperation with the university.

Restoration coordinators said the new herbarium database will make possible complete environmental impact assessments not previously possible.

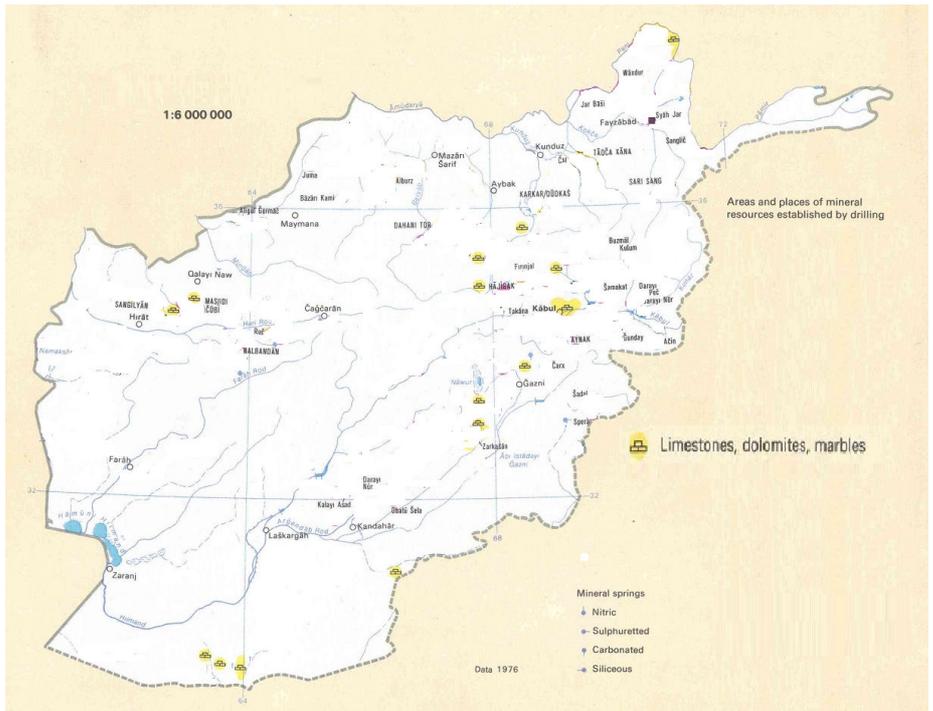
It also will make it possible to "customize" natural resources management and rehabilitation measures to specific geographic areas.

Afghanistan marble mining offers potential profits

Many international companies and groups are taking interest in acquiring contracts for the newly opened mineral and ore deposits.

Afghanistan is preparing to auction off a round of iron-ore, copper and natural-gas deposits over the next year. One deposit available is the Hajigak iron-ore resource, with an estimated 1.8 billion to 2 billion metric tons of the mineral used to make steel.

India's JSW Steel Ltd. expressed interest during the first Hajigak tender and said it is communicating with the Afghan government about



getting involved with the second one.

These are exciting developments in an area where the Chinese company, China Metallurgical Group, has already established a market presence.

Afghan entrepreneurs are also working with the USAID and Panjshir PRT to develop the highly valued marble industry in the Panjshir Province.

According to Curtis Rose, USAID field development officer with Panjshir PRT, marble is currently being mined in the Anaba, Rokha, Dara and Khenj districts of the province, but the profits are a small fraction of their potential.

bidding opportunities can be found often at http://www.mom.gov.af/index.php?page_id=7

or by contacting the ministry

No: +93 (0) 202100309
Email: mmiatfg@gmail.com

Upcoming Events & Important Dates

ピースおおさか *ピースおおさか 特別展*

写真に見る

戦争と平和

アフガニスタン

2010 (平成22) 年
7月27日(火) ~ 11月23日(火)

展示内容
■ 写真・絵・文字・パネル(約80点)
■ 特別展示室
■ 実物資料(約30点)
■ 民族衣装など

世界で今、最も注目される戦場の地、アフガニスタン。テレビに映るのは不気味なグリタや血まみれの兵士。しかし、アフガニスタンは本来、自然豊かな大地に多民族が生き生きと暮らす国だったのです。「戦争」と「平和」で、人々の表情がどう変遷してしまっているか、アフガニスタンが平和だった30年前のころと、現在の戦場のようすを写真で比較することにより、その差を感じることを考えます。

**7/27—11/23
War and Peace in Afghanistan
Photo Show**

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Omar's Kitchen

For each of our newsletters, Omar offers an authentic Afghan recipe from his kitchen to yours. This month's dish is...

Kofta (Meat balls)



- 500 g ground beef
- 100 g onion, finely minced
- 1 green pepper finely minced
- 6 g garlic finely minced
- 2.5ml ground coriander seed
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper

Preparations

1. Place the ground beef in a large bowl. Then pour in the onion, green pepper, garlic, salt and pepper. Gently knead together until vegetables, garlic, and meat appear well mixed.
2. Roll kneaded mixture into balls 3-4 cm in diameter. Rolling the meat between the palms of the hands makes for a more even shape. Carefully place each ball on a greased tray or plate.
3. Let stand for 30 minutes to allow the blending of flavors.



Kofta can be served in many ways. Try it as a complimentary entree. or as kebobs!

Kabob-Style Kofta

- 5 Green peppers (quartered)
- 1 package Halved Cherry tomatoes
- 1 package Kabob Skewers

1. String 4 kofta balls on skewers alternating with an onion quarter, green pepper quarter and a cherry tomato on each skewer.
2. Grill for about 5 minutes until browned, turn and grill other side for 3 minutes.

Omar recommends: Serve this dish with spiced brown rice and a large piece of flat Afghan bread!

Entrée-Style Kofta

1. Lightly oil a frying pan . Sautee mixed vegetables of your choice in medium-high heat.
2. Once the vegetables are halfway cooked, add the meatballs. Continue cooking until the meatballs are browned.

Language & Culture

Language Lesson! Making a Reservation

Of the many languages spoken in Afghanistan, Dari and Pashto are designated as Afghanistan's official languages. Let's learn to make room reservations in both!

English	Pashto	Dari
Hello? (on the phone)	Sallam alekum.	Sallam alekum.
Do you have any rooms available for Tuesday?	Aye tase kum otaq de se shenbe woraze ta po wake ke lary.	Ayabari see shenbe sho ma otaq ba dastrase daree.
Yes.	How laro.	Bale darem.
No.	Nalaro.	Na kher nest.
How much is a room?	Otaqe pa soo day.	Chand ast kariya otaq.
It costs Afghani.	...Afghani de.	... Afghani ast.
I'd like to reserve the room	Zey ghwaram che otaq wonesom.	Man me khwaham otaq begeram.
I'd like to cancel my reservations.	Zey na ghowaram che otaq wonesom.	Man namekhoway.
We'll be expecting you.	Tase ta po entezar you.	Ba enteza-e-shomu astem.

Cultural Note! Purchasing & Using Cell Phones



In Afghanistan, cell phones are commonplace and of very high quality. It's simple for visitors to acquire one upon arrival. Cell phone users pay for their network service with pre-paid phone cards easily purchased at hotels, shops, or even from vendors on the street.

Want to study Dari?

Weekly Dari Language Classes are open to the public at Takushoku University, every Tuesday from 18:50—20:30.

For more information or to enroll:
http://www.takushoku-u.ac.jp/extension/frgn_lang/index.html

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Thank you for reading the July edition of our newsletter. Visit our frequently-updated website for even more news:

www.afghanembassyjp.org

If you have any comments, questions or suggestions regarding this newsletter or the Embassy, please send an e-mail to the embassy's Public Affairs Officer, Jason Pratt:

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