



March 2011



Afghan News

Latest News

Afghan aid to Japan following the (Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami))

- US\$2 million in general support funds.
- Government officials, including the mayors of Kandahar City and Kabul City, have offered to provide relief money of approximately US\$250,000.
- Assistance has also been donated by the Diplomats of the Islamic Embassy of Afghanistan in Tokyo, as well as from non-government organizations and private citizens.



H.E. President Karzai expresses condolences over Tohoku quake, tsunami, provides US\$1 million in aid

H.E. President Hamid Karzai visited the Embassy of Japan in Kabul in order to express his and the nation's sorrow over the massive loss of life and property following March 11th's tragic earthquake and the tsunami that followed.

H.E.'s message read "The people of Afghanistan find themselves together in the pain and the difficulties of the people of Japan."

H.E. the President also wrote a letter of condolence to H.M. the Emperor of Japan and H.E. Prime Minister Naoto Kan. These messages can be viewed on the Embassy's web site

<http://www.afghanembassyjp.org/en/embassy/?pn=359>

H.E. Foreign Minister Dr. Zalmay Rassoul's

Message of Condolence can be viewed on the Foreign Ministry's web site <http://www.mfa.gov.af/detail.asp?Lang=e&Cat=1&ContID=1169>

H.E. Vice President Qasim Fahim also met separately with H.E. Ambassador Takahashi to express his condolences.

On March 29th at the Embassy of Japan in Kabul, H.E. Foreign Minister Rassoul and H.E. Finance Minister Muhammed Omar Zakhilwal presented H.E. Ambassador Reiichiro Takahashi with a check for US\$1 million in support of relief efforts in Japan.

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Mayor of Kandahar donates to disaster relief in Japan, others in Afghanistan also show support

In the wake of the March 11th magnitude 9.0 earthquake and subsequent tsunami that has brought massive loss of life and damage to Japan, Afghans both in Afghanistan and abroad have shown their sympathy towards those affected and are expressing their solidarity.

In Kandahar, Mayor Ghulam Hayder Hamidi has donated US\$50,000 – a reflection of how deeply he cares for the Japanese with, as well as a symbolic sign of gratitude for all that Japan has done for the city and province. Mayor Hamidi told Reuters, "I know \$50,000 is not a lot of money for a country like Japan, but it is a show of appreciation from the Kandahar people." Students of Kandahar University are also gathering further funds now. Other government officials, including the Mayor of Kabul, also gathered US\$200,000 in aid.

In Bamiyan, a group of 70 young people gathered to express their support, holding banners in Dari, as well as in English reading such slogans as "We are poor but rich in our willingness to offer assistance to the people of Japan in your time of need." The youth of Bamiyan extend our heartfelt sorrow to the citizens and victims of Japan."

In Dai Kundi, residents organized vigils for the victims.

President Fatima Gaillani of the Afghan Red Crescent Society has announced that her organization has begun raising funds in support. The money collected will be channeled through the Japanese Red Cross.

Conference Held On Support National Peace Program Held

A two-day conference was held in Kabul to support the national peace program and encourage the opposition to return peaceful life. About 300 participants were involved, representing tribal elders, scholars, clerics, writers, representatives of the youth, and government officials attended the conference.

Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani, Head of high peace council, stated that, "We all believe now that the war cannot put an end to the ongoing tragedy in Afghanistan and every Afghan is sure that negotiation with the opposition ensures stability in our homeland ... Unfortunately some individuals backed by the foreigners oppose peace and a number of the foreign countries push them ahead to reach their goals in Afghanistan." Regarding such issues as women's rights, Professor Rabbani made the following assurance: "the peace council will seriously stand on

the people's desires in the negotiation."

Presidential Advisor, Mohammed Massoom Stanekzai stated that, "Peace has regional and international dimensions and we should pay attention to these dimensions for the solution of the existing crisis ... In the meantime, we have to invest on the economic infrastructures to provide most of the governance system inside the country."

TB lab opened, clinics to be constructed, equipped

Herat's first tuberculosis (TB) laboratory was opened this month in Herat Zonal Hospital with the support of financial support of Italy. The foundation stone of the clinic had been laid three years ago by then Minister of Public Health, and now Afghan Ambassador to Japan, Dr, Sayed M. Amin Fatimie and Anna Cataldi, the Stop TB Ambassador of the World Health Organization (WHO). The laboratory, which benefited from the technical support of the WHO, has the capacity to diagnose patients from five different provinces – Herat, Nimroz, Badghis, Farah, and Ghor.

In 2010, over 50,000 people tested positive for TB in Afghanistan. This lab will help to reduce this number.

The foundation for a health clinic has been laid in Zaranj city, located in Nimroz province. The clinic will be constructed on an area of 200 square meters.

Additionally, through an agreement signed on March 11th by H.E. Foreign Minister Dr. Zalamai Rassoul and H.E. Ambassador Reiichiro Takahashi, the government of Japan will provide medical equipment for the Balkh governmental hospital, benefitting about six million people in Mazar-i-Sharif and surrounding areas.

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Schools opened nationwide

Amir Mohammad Khan High School in Ghazni has opened a new a laboratory room and a library with 750 educational books.

The Balkh Education Department has also received a donation of furniture, such as tables and chairs, that it has distributed to a high school and middle school in the Chintal district.

In Khost, a new building for Professor Abdul Hai Habibi School was inaugurated by the Hon. Governor Abdul Jabar Naimi. The building, which was made with the support of the World Development Program, will serve the school of 6200 students. The Hon. governor says that there are plans to have new buildings for all schools in the province within the next Afghan year.

Two two-storey, 16-classroom buildings have been completed in Herat province, one for Aboo Mansoor Ali school in the Shandand district and one for Qool school in the Zandajan district, with the support of the Italian Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT)

In Kunduz, a new building for Shir Khan Bander high school was inaugurated, having been constructed with the help of the German government. The school will accommodate the 896 students that study there.

Ambassador Fatimie sends letters of condolence regarding the tragic earthquake in eastern Japan to officials of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Japan International Cooperation Agency, shows support to the Japanese people

Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie has expressed deep regret regarding the tragic incidences resulting from March 11th's earthquake and subsequent typhoon in Japan. His letters of condolence to Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Takeaki Matsumoto, President Sadako Ogata of JICA, and other officials from their respective organizations. The letters can be viewed on the Embassy Web site [http://](http://www.afghanembassyjp.org/en/embassy/?pn=359)

www.afghanembassyjp.org/en/embassy/?pn=359

Additionally, Ambassador Fatimie and the Embassy's diplomats gathered 40,000 yen to donate to relief efforts. Ambassador Fatimie and the staff of the Embassy of Afghanistan have expressed their deepest condolences to the victims of this tragedy and have expressed that they will stand by the people of this great nation during this difficult period.

Ambassador Fatimie has also offered his services, as a physician experienced in assisting in a number of disasters since the early 1980s, to help in the areas affected worst.

Baghlan Workshop Focuses on Capacity of Religious Ulemas

A 21-day workshop on capacity building for religious Ulema was held in Baghlan province. The 75 religious Ulema from Baghlan's 15 districts were taught such subjects as issues regarding the sovereignty of Muslims, human rights, freedom of speech and faith, peace and security, and the prohibition of narcotics according to Islam. Graduates were awarded certificates.

Tanweer Company Awarded at International Exhibition

Afghanistan's International Tanweer Company was awarded first place and the Golden Eagle Medal in the International Handicrafts and Carpet Exhibition in Dubai from a field of 110 producers and 170 export companies. The International Tanweer Company has signed a contract with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to provide Afghan carpets for all the UAE's embassies.

Interview with Dr. Tetsu Nakamura of NGO Peshawar-kai

Dr. Tetsu Nakamura heads Peshawar-kai, an organization with its roots in helping Afghans in Pakistan which



expanded into Afghanistan and currently helps in irrigation, agriculture, and humanitarian issues.rnrnDr. Nakamura is a long time friend to Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie, having personally treated the Ambassador in the past.

How did you become involved with Afghans and Afghanistan?

This is a very interesting story. People tried to explain this as if I had a very noble idea in my mind, as if "for the poor Afghans he tried his best and was dedicated," or something like that. But actually, I used to be a mountain climber. In 1979 or 1978, I visited the Hindu Kush mountains. On the way back, I visited the Afghan side - that was the first time. Then after several days some organization - a Japanese NGO - requested me to work somewhere around there. I liked that area so I was happy to be assigned there. That was 1980-this was the beginning.

And after that, my task force -my initial task force - joined the leprosy control program in Pakistan. But in Peshawar, more than half the population is Afghan. And the patients, especially in remote areas where leprosy is common, the majority of the patients were Afghans. But according to the guideline the Pakistan government is just responsible for the Pakistani patients. I thought the Pakistani patients are also in difficulty, but they have some authority to be looked after, but the Afghans do not - this is the beginning. And after this after several years, I continued my task.

Then I realized, "only the leprosy control is realistic?" This plan is

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made by who? I thought, someday I have to go to the patient side. But the malaria patient came - he was just about to expire and I just had leprosy medicine. Is this really leprosy control? Where leprosy is common also infectious diseases are also common. So I realized, this plan is made on a desk, by those who don't know the real condition of Afghanistan. So then I changed my guideline. I put a general clinic inside Afghanistan where leprosy is common and at the same time there are other diseases that are very common. We started checking general patients - and leprosy is one of the diseases. I changed. Then we started opening the clinic in Nuristan.

Your activities have changed a lot. You've become a very grassroots organization helping a lot in irrigation and agriculture. How has that been going?

That's a very good question. I have been asked by many people, "you are doctor. Why are you digging wells and making canals?" The turning point was 2000, it was summer season and a serious drought hit Afghanistan. According to the WHO at that time, more than 12 million Afghans were being affected by the drought, and more than 4 million were starving, and one million would be expired soon. There was a clinic in the area. Of course I'm a doctor, I was checking the patients. But the villages were disappearing one by one. What's the sense in the presence of a medical clinic? Even if they bring the patients, the majority of patients were starved and malnourished and dehydrated. Then I realized, even if we brought many antibiotics, we couldn't help the patients - just food and water (could). Then we started the water program. So in my brain, these needs are on the same line as (the need for) doctors.

Can you tell me any positive news or positive progress in Afghanistan since your time there?

Mainly, the core activity is limited on the northern side of Nangahar. But one thing is going very well: after



starting completing canals, a lot of people have come back. For example, by taking the time of 8 years, we have completed 25-kilometers of irrigation canal. And this has been providing for more than 3,000 hectares. In the beginning, 8 years ago, it was almost desert - now they have come back from very miserable refugee camps in Pakistan. We have been repairing the intake area.

Because as you know, Global Warming is doing something horrible. Afghanistan is one of the victims. Up to 20, 30 years ago, people could take water by a simple method - by manual - but these days it's very difficult because of Global Warming. An Afghan proverb says "in Afghanistan we don't need money. We can survive without money. But without water, It's impossible to survive."

This is from the position of the farmers' view. Now after bringing this method - actually this is a Japanese traditional method from several hundreds of years ago - this is very suitable to Afghanistan. We have been repairing one intake to another intake - especially this year. One district has more than 300,000 in population, and at the worst time, more than half of them used to be in

Pakistan. Now because of water they've come back. At least the northern side of Jalalabad - almost the whole area is a huge oasis.

What misconceptions about Afghanistan would you like to change?


They should use their own eyes. Japanese tend to believe the Western media. This should be reconsidered. There is so many other media sources such as al-Jazeera now. They should consider realistically (and not influenced by Western sources), what is the role of a burqa, what are madrassas, and so many of these issues.



Abdul Rauf Lugali's Kitchen



The Embassy chef, who is nicknamed “Baba-jan” (or uncle) will offer an Afghan recipe from his kitchen to yours each month. We are sorry to say that the famous Fatimie Kebab recipe is a family secret, however. This month we offer a simple recipe: Haft Mewa, a dish eaten on Nauroz (Afghan New Years).

Ingredients (serves 4)



- 1/2 cup walnut halves
- 1/3 cup pistachios
- 1/3 cup yellow raisins
- 2/3 cup red raisins
- 2/3 cup dried prunes
- 2/3 cup dried apricot
- 1/3 cup blanched slivered almond
- 1/3 teaspoon rose water
- 3 1/3 cups cold water

Preparation

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1. Blanch the walnuts and pistachios.
 2. Bring 3 cups of water to a boil, remove from the heat, add the walnuts and pistachios, cover and let it sit for 20 minutes.
 3. In a large bowl add all the raisins, prunes, and apricots. Rinse three times in cold water to remove any residue.
 4. Pour the hot water out of the pot with the boiled nuts and add cold water to cool. Peel the skin off the nuts.
 5. Add the dried fruit and the nuts to a container along with the rosewater and 5 cups of cold water. Stir well. The water should be at least 1 inch above the ingredients. Refrigerate for 2-4 days. The longer you leave it the sweeter it gets. It will keep in the fridge for up to 7 days.
 6. Serve.
 7. Enjoy.

Happy Nauroz!

**Embassy of Afghanistan in
Tokyo**

2-2-1 Azabudai,
Minato ward, Tokyo
106-0041
Tel: 03-5574-7611
Fax: 03-5574-0195



www.afghanembassyjp.org

pratt@afghanembassyjp.org