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Afghan News

Latest News

Select approval figures

There are currently more than 140,000 serving in the Afghan national police; this will increase to 155,000 by 2014. In honor of the recent visit by police officials, highlighted below are results from a 2011 survey commissioned by the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan.

- 81% of people respect the police
- More than 80% of people believe that the establishment of local police has had positive impacts on the security
- 74% believe in the capabilities of the police



H.E. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ludin, Director Omar, and Mr. Amiri visit Japan, meet with key officials

H.E. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Jawed Ludin, along with H.E.'s delegation of Mr. Azizullah Omar, Director of Multilateral Relations in the Ministry's Economic Division, and Mr. S. Asghar Amiri of the Japan-Korea Desk in the Ministry's First Political Division, visited Japan from Wednesday, February 8th, to the 14th and 13th, respectively.

The important visit served as a chance to further deepen relations and friendship with Japan and to prepare for this coming summer's Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan.

During his stay, H.E. the Deputy Minister and his delegation, accompanied by Ambassador

Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie and Dr. Bashir Mohabbat, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Tokyo, met with a number of key Japanese figures, including H.E. Foreign Minister Koichiro Gemba; H.E. Mr. Tadamichi Yamamoto, Ambassador in charge of Afghanistan and Pakistan Assistance Coordination; Director-General Shigeo Matsutomi of the Middle Eastern and African Affairs Bureau; and Madam Sadako Ogata of the Japan International Cooperation Agency. In the meetings, H.E. Deputy Minister Ludin delivered on behalf of H.E. President Hamid Karzai expressions of

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this issue:

Latest News Pg.1-3

deepest gratitude for Japan's efforts as a stalwart partner in Afghanistan's development and peace process, and in particular called attention to Japan's noble gesture in approving the latest support budget. Regarding future relations, H.E. the Deputy Minister expressed, among other things, a desire to have Japanese governmental help in gaining Japanese private sector investment in Afghan development.

Embassy hosts reception for participants of JICA's "Strengthening of Afghan National Police" program, JICA officials, and Ministry of Public Health delegation, as well as for participants of JICA's Medical Education Training program

Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie and the staff of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Tokyo on February 1st hosted a reception for participants of the Japan International Cooperation Agency's (JICA's) "Strengthening of Afghan National Police" program, JICA officials, and a visiting delegation from the Ministry of Public Health.

Japan has been an active supporter of the Afghan National Police, having supported training as well as providing financial backing. In this latest initiative organized through JICA, 16 police chiefs and generals from the Ministry of Interior in Kabul as well as provincial branches were invited to Japan to further enhance this Afghan-Japanese cooperation. The group was accompanied to the Embassy by Mr. Nobuhiko Hanazato, Mr. Farouq Asefi, Mr. Jafar Ahmadyar, and other JICA officials.

In his welcome speech, Ambassador Fatimie referred to the visiting officers

as heroes of the people and protectors of freedom. The Ambassador cited a recent independent survey that showed that nearly 85% of the Afghan people have a positive image of the police forces as proof of the trust that has been built by this noble force.

A reception was also held at the Embassy on February 14th in honor of participants of the Japan International Cooperation Agency's (JICA's) Medical Education Training program.

From his previous experience as Minister of Public Health, and through his observations as Ambassador, Dr. Fatimie personally attests to the great, uncompromising support that the Japanese Government and people provide to Afghanistan's health sector. In reference to this, and to the countless benefits that have resulted, the Ambassador expressed, on behalf of the people and Government of Afghanistan, sincerest gratitude.

Speaking to the participants, Ambassador Fatimie offered encouragement to use what they had learned to help aspiring doctors continue to build upon the successes that have already been made.

Representing JICA, Mr. Onishi generously stated that his organization is ready to conduct future collaborations in the field of health.

Latest health sector developments instill hope in more

An agreement between the Ministry of Public Health and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has been reached, creating the basis for 2012's Annual Work plan. Through the plan, the organizations will cooperate to help develop the capacity of the Reproductive

Health Directorate and Department of Nursing and Midwifery of MOPH and provincial health directorates, improving their ability to perform their stewardship function, support and regulate midwifery education and services, support professional associations such as the Afghanistan Midwifery Association and Afghanistan Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and provide reproductive health services to remote communities living in underserved areas, among other goals.

New initiative for reconstruction of historic palaces

The mayor of Kabul, Muhammad Yunus Nawandish, is aiming to rebuild Darul Aman, Chehl Seton, and Taj Baig palaces in the city, as part of his local-led reconstruction initiative. Darul Aman palace and Taj Baig palace were constructed during the time of King Amanullah Khan (1919 to 1929). Darul Aman palace was particularly damaged heavily between the late 70s to the 1990s. Chehl Seton palace was constructed during the period of King Zaman Sadozai (~1810).

Wind power to be developed

To further increase self-reliance in power generation, a program supported by USAID has begun to tap into wind power. Six sites nationally have been chosen for the initial test stages: Balkh, Heart's Injil and Zanda Jan districts, Kabul, and Parwan provinces. The test stage will last one year, and based upon this, sites for full-scale wind power generation will be determined.

The program is being administered by the Afghan Clean Energy Programme



(ACEP) in coordination with the Ministry of Water and Energy.

National Olympic team prepares for London

The national Olympic team is preparing for this summer's London Olympics. Afghanistan won its first Olympic medal in the Beijing Olympics and the first female Afghan athletes qualified for competition in 2004 in Athens. Athletes to watch in London include the following: 17-year-old student Sadaf Rahimi – a female boxer, Rahimi will be competing in the 54-kilogram (118.8 pounds) weight class in the sport's Olympic debut. Rahimi started boxing four years ago and won a silver medal during a boxing competition in Tajikistan.

Rohullah Nikpai - Afghanistan's first Olympic medal winner. Nikpai said, "In the 2008 Olympics, I won a bronze medal and I am hopeful to win a gold medal in the 2012 Olympics in London." Nasar Ahmad Bahawi also joined Nikpai in the 2008 Olympics. Massoud Azizi - a 25-year-old, 100-meter sprinter who competed in 2008 in Beijing. He also participated in the 2009 International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) World Championship in Berlin.

Habiba Bayat, a former silver medalist, is the only female member of the Afghan National Judo team in a six month training session in Japan in preparation for the 2012 London Olympics. Afghanistan won a couple of awards in the 2001 World Judo Championships.



NBA basketball event held

On the campus of Ghazi Olympic Stadium in Kabul earlier this month, about 170 children from 10 different provinces participated in a four-day basketball event with eight senior American sporting officials, including the Na-

tional Basketball Association's Cares program, to mentor and train both Afghan athletes and coaches. At the end of the training camp, each athlete earned both an AAU coaching certificate, and an NBA Cares certificate of completion.

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