



May 2011



Afghan News

Highlighted achievements

- **59% of Afghans think their country is moving in the right direction**
- **63% of Afghans believe they are better off today than five years ago**
- **More than 8 million children will attend school this year**

Latest News



H.E. President Karzai speaks to UN conference in Istanbul

H.E. President Hamid Karzai attended the fourth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries in Istanbul, Turkey. Representatives of 117 countries and 25 international organizations attended the three-day conference to assess problems in developing nations, such as poverty, hunger, disease, weak economic infrastructures, human capacity, and illiteracy. An action plan covering global cooperation for reduction of those problems was adopted at the end.

During his speech, H.E. President Karzai spoke about Afghanistan's specific challenges and the nation's policy of increased regional cooperation, including trade and energy projects, to work towards economic growth. H.E. said that he is hopeful that the action plan will open a new phase of world cooperation.

H.E. President Karzai encourages participants of National Conference of District Development Assemblies

The first National Conference of District Development Assemblies, a two-day session beginning April 30th, was held at the auditorium of the National Assembly.

First day participants included H.E. Second Vice President Mohammad Karim Khalili, H.E. Minister of Economy Abdul Hadi Arghandiwal, members of Parliament, 750 representatives of District Development Assemblies, and representatives of the United Nations, the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF), and various other groups. Development programs of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development and the newly-created District Development Assemblies were discussed.

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On the second day, issue discussed included rural development incorporating Islamic values.

Speaking with participants on May 2nd, following the successful conclusion of the conference, H.E. President Hamid Karzai noted the considerable progress in national infrastructure.

Ambassador Fatimie, Afghan delegation bring supplies to disaster evacuees



Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie along with a delegation of officials from the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and Afghan residents of Japan visited Tsukuba, Ibaraki Prefecture on May 20th in order to bring supplies to disaster evacuees from Fukushima prefecture.

The supplies, a set of furnishings for their new residences, were funded by 1,841,000 yen in donations from Afghan residents in Japan. The delegation met with the Mayor of Tsukuba, the Hon. Mr. Kenichi Ichihara, and with the Governor of Ibaraki, the Hon. Mr. Masaru Hashimoto. Both of the Hon. officials expressed their appreciation for the support. The delegation in turn expressed gratitude for Japan's enduring support of Afghanistan's development and reiterated the solidarity between the peoples of the two nations.

(For full story, please kindly see the Embassy's homepage: <http://www.afghanembassyjp.org/en/embassy/?pn=404>)

Conference Held on Children's Rights

The Ministry of Justice on May 4th hosted a one-day conference marking

the official launching of the follow-up on the implementation of recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Children. The event was co-sponsored by the Directorate of Human Rights and Women's International Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNICEF, and UNDP; it was supported by the embassies of Canada, Denmark, Germany, Norway, the UK, and the Swiss Development Cooperation.

Afghanistan ratified the Convention on the Rights (CRC) in 1994 and on February 4, 2011 the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Children adopted its concluding observations to Afghanistan.

The Human Rights Support Unit of the Ministry of Justice made a presentation on the immediate actions to be undertaken by the Government towards further moves to support children. The unit will later draft a Plan of Action to fulfill a number of initiatives.

International Midwife Day Celebrated In Kabul



On May 3rd, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), in association with the Midwives Association and USAID, held a ceremony in Kabul to mark International Midwife Day, celebrating the achievements and successes of maternal and midwifery services in Afghanistan.

The theme of this year's International Midwife Day is "the world needs midwives now more than ever."

The presence of a midwife at birth is said to be the single most impactful factor in reducing maternal mortality and is said to also greatly improve the baby's chance of survival. In line with Afghanistan's Millennium Development Goal to reduce maternal mortality by 50% by

2014, the MoPH is increasing the number of trained and skilled midwives at birth, particularly in remote and rural areas.

Agreement between MoIC, Inter News creates more support for journalists

An agreement was signed between the office of the Deputy Minister of Information and Culture for Youth Affairs, H.E. Mr. Temur Shah Ishaqzai, and Charmaine Anderson of the media support group "Inter-News" to establish press centers in seven provinces. The agreement also called for an increase in youth festivals in more provinces than the 16 that currently hold them. This would call for the organizing of other youth festivals at the national level for pictorial, print, and audio-visual media, as well as establishing professional training and conferences for young journalists.

Education Progress continues nationwide

Five educational centers were inaugurated in Panjshir on May 7th: an administrative and accounting center, the Ahmad Shah Masoud vocational and technical school, the Sarajudeen school, the Dara Doab school, and the Dara girl's school—constructed with the support of Germany.

A 12-classroom primary school was inaugurated in Helmand province on May 18th with the assistance of Denmark.

Eight schools in three districts of Zabul province reopened mid-May with the cooperation of elders in the Shah-i-Safa, Seyoroy, and Shahjoy districts.

Development continues nationwide

A new three-storey courthouse building for the Asadabad Court of Appeals was inaugurated in Kunar province, with the support of the United States, after 16 months of construction. The building has 30 administrative rooms,

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a conference hall, and 3 kitchens.

In Panjshir province, a new 16-room school building was inaugurated for a high school in the Faraj area of the Anaba district.

118 solar lights were installed at Sheikh Zahid University and along roadsides in Khost city with the assistance of the United States.

Construction work on two 40-meter bridges in Ghazni province was inaugurated by Hon. Governor Musa Khan Akbarzada and Ghazni city's mayor, Hon. Mr. Sayed Abdul Basir.

Reconstruction of Dali dam and electricity network in Kandahar province is set to begin and work on Kajaki dam is already in progress. Renovation of the electricity system including establishment of new power sub-stations and extension of power cables from Kabul to Kandahar will be the main focus. 12 dams, will be built on the Kabul River with the assistance of India.

Increased amount of nations partnering for direct flights

Due to continued development, increasing business opportunities, and ever-safer conditions, the number of nations engaging in direct flight agreements continues to rise.

This month, Deputy Transportation and Civil Aviation Minister Sayed Mehdi Sayedi and Bahrain's Civil Aviation Affairs Undersecretary Abdulrahman Mohammed Al-Qaoud signed an agreement to establish direct flights between Bahrain and Afghanistan. The agreement calls for eight passenger flights weekly, in addition to extra charter cargo flights.

Nations offering direct flights to and from Afghanistan now include Bahrain, Iran, India, Pakistan, UK, and UAE.

Parliament to Get new building

The national parliament will operate out of a new bronze-domed building as soon as the end of 2011. The project is supported by India.

Ambassador Fatimie welcomes the head of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research's (UNITAR's) Hiroshima office, Mr. Alex Mejia, and Youth Ambassadors to the Embassy



On May 18th, Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie welcomed the head of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research's (UNITAR's) Hiroshima office, Mr. Alex Mejia, and Youth Ambassadors, Ms. Yuri Kakeuchi and Mr. Taiju Sasaki, to the Embassy.

UNITAR's Youth Ambassador program seeks to help foster future leaders of diplomacy within Hiroshima's young. The two Youth Ambassadors were chosen from around 100 candidates through an essay contest on the importance of diplomacy for peace.

A full report of the meeting can be seen at: <http://www.afghanembassyjp.org/en/embassy/?pn=400>

Degrees Conferred 140 New Judges



Nearly 140 new judges, graduates of law, Islamic faculty of sciences, and Madrassas, graduated under the Afghanistan Judicial Training Programs, receiving their degrees on May 17th. Many female judges were amongst the graduates who will serve nationwide.

Beverage Production Plant Begins Operation

The Kheyam beverage production factory Pul-i-Khomri city of Baghlan province was inaugurated on May 18th. The factory is capable of producing 700 one and half liter bottles of Coca-Cola, Fanta, and Sprite a day.

This factory, built due to the very secure environment, will provide for the employment of many locals.

Afghans claim 15 medals at World Kickboxing Championships

At the World Kickboxing Championships in Ukraine between May 11th and 15th, Afghan competitors won six gold, three silver, and six bronze medals.

Interview with Evgeny Latypov Organizer of “Afghan Power” Bodybuilding Competition

Evgeny Latypov is a Former European bodybuilding champion. Now he is a representative for both Japan & Afghanistan for the World Fitness and Bodybuilding Federation.



How did you get interested in Afghanistan?

Studying history of my own country Russia, raised my interest in Afghanistan. During Cold war Afghanistan was central stage for power struggle between Soviet Union and United States. Afghanistan had to “pay” for political differences between two great powers- it was unexplained, covered with secrets time in the history of Afghanistan. By looking at that conflict I discovered many fascinating things about Afghanistan: culture, traditions, values etc. My interest has been rising all the time since.

What made you decide to do bodybuilding competitions there?

I went to Afghanistan in 2010 April. There I met many people who were doing bodybuilding. I saw that the sport quickly gaining popularity among Afghans. I met many bodybuilders and I was astonished what those people achieved with limited access to basic supplements and necessary equipment. I was shocked that no international organization has yet recognized fitness and bodybuilding in Afghanistan.

I am bodybuilder myself and big supporter of pure form of bodybuilding: development of mental health as well as physical at the same time that’s what is bodybuilding about. In modern world bodybuilding losing its original roots and mental health become less important. My goal is to bring to Afghanistan the pure form of bodybuilding, before they are influenced by the modified form - and to promote bodybuilding in Afghanistan internationally. Athletes from Afghanistan are completely ready for participation in World Championships. In order to promote pure form of bodybuilding and get recognition for bodybuilding in Afghanistan I decided to organize first international bodybuilding competitions in Afghanistan.

Tell us about the competitions and how it will benefit Afghans?

The name of the event is “Afghan Power.” It’s a two-day event with participation of local athletes as well as international athletes, who already have expressed interest in joining the event.

This event, in order to accommodate as many athletes as possible will be divided into 8 different categories, including “Fit Kids” and “Disabled Athletes”.

I am planning to make this a yearly event and in 2012 our priority will be include one more category: women.

These competitions offer children and young adult athletes a safe environment to engage in competitive sports, build self confidence and develop dreams for the future.

For the disabled it offers an opportunity to build self confidence and a return to normalcy for a country with a staggeringly large amount of disabled war victims, the majority of which would benefit from more recognition or assistance and face difficult obstacles on a daily basis.

Outside of competitions, the support and feeling of belonging to a group helps develop good mental health in both of these groups.

How can people support this?

Of course it is a difficult project, that’s why to make it as much beneficial as possible for Afghans we need support. We need all possible help: donations, volunteers to help us with preparation for the event; sponsors; promoters; hosts for a fund rising.

How does supporting you benefits sponsor?

As a sponsor, you have the opportunity to gain an immense publicity and recognition:

The Afghan Power competition heads towards becoming a global recognized, world-class, yearly based competition in Afghanistan, Kabul.

The Afghan Power competition is already supported by World Fitness and Bodybuilding Federation that include 100 member states with hundred thousands of the member athletes. This global connection is bringing together different cultures, values, ideas, and business connections.

The Afghan Power competition is supported by The Embassy of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Tokyo; Shiratory Harushiro; LTD Business Bank. The Afghan Power competition is a first, international fitness and bodybuilding competition in Kabul supported by World Federation. BBC, France News, Channel 1 (National Afghan TV) as well as number of local newspapers will be invited to cover the event.

Sponsors enjoy extraordinary visibility with the powerful audience during the competition, and through the media coverage.

Afghan Power sponsors gain access to World Fitness and Bodybuilding connections web whose members are executives, directors of some of the world’s leading organizations and companies, actors, politicians.

Sponsor name will be associated with education, development, peace, order More information about the event can be found on our webpage:

<http://afghanfitness.org>

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. This month we feature a food that is a traditional appetizer, Osh Pyozee (stuffed onions)



Ingredients (for appetizers for 6 people)

Onions

- 2 large (about 1/4 lb each) onions, peeled
- 4 cups of water
- 1 tablespoon of salt

Stuffing

- 1/2 lb ground beef
- 3 tablespoons of raw rice, rinsed, cooked until very soft, drained, & mashed
- 1 tablespoon of salt
- 1/4 tablespoon of pepper
- 1/4 tablespoon of ground cumin seed
- 10 medium pitted prunes, cut lengthwise into halves
- 2 tablespoons of corn oil

Preparation

Onions:

1. Make a 1/2-inch deep incision into side of each onion. Put the salt into the water and bring it to a boil over moderate heat. Add the onions. Cook for 2 minutes while turning them with slotted spoon. Remove onions & peel off the outer layers until you reach center. Set aside the onion layers and centers.

Stuffing:

2. Put the beef into a bowl with the rice, salt, pepper, and cumin seed and mix well.

3. Take 1 heaping teaspoon of the beef mixture and half of 1 prune and put it into 1 cooked onion layer - roll it up. Repeat this process until all onion layers are filled with stuffing.

4. Oil a skillet and lay the stuffed onions and centers in it, cover, and cook over very low heat for 2 hours — until quite dark but not burned.

Serve warm.

Embassy of Afghanistan in Tokyo

2-2-1 Azabudai,
Minato ward, Tokyo, 106-0041

Tel: 03-5574-7611
Fax: 03-5574-0195

Website

www.afghanembassyjp.org



Contact Us

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:

pratt@afghanembassyjp.org