



November, 2012



Afghan News

Latest News

Select Development Indicators

The International Monetary Fund forecasts the Afghan national economy to grow by 11% this year.

The IMF also says inflation is 5% year-on-year: lower than previously forecast.

There are now over 30 domestic universities, from four or five ten years ago.

The size of the national army is now over 190,000.

Inside this issue:

Latest News Pg.1-5



H.E. President Karzai takes part in 5th Bali Democracy Forum

H.E. President Hamid Karzai attended the 5th Bali Democracy Forum in Bali, Indonesia, which was held on September 8th and 9th. The forum focused on democracy, global governance, security, peace, human rights, and economic development. It is said that representatives from roughly 70 nations participated.

Addressing the attendees, H.E. President Karzai spoke on the democratic gains that Afghanistan made since becoming an Islamic Republic in 2001, as well as the measures to ensure the enduring strength of the democracy: H.E. the President stressed the importance of combining democracy's core concepts with a given society's unique culture and traditions: "For nations such as Afghanistan, the real test of the desirability of a democratic system is not only in bestowing individual freedoms or promoting public participation in elections, but actually in the degree to which it promotes inclusiveness, stability, progress and a future of hope for our people. Besides, for a democratic system of government to promote justice and progress, it must be anchored in good governance and the rule of law, which we find in Afghanistan to be of paramount importance in order for democracy

to take roots and get promoted ... Afghanistan's intermittent experience of democratization from the beginning of the 21 century to the more in-depth attempt that we had ten years ago suggests that democracy will succeed as it did this time in Afghanistan ... because we also relied heavily on values and democratic practices that the Afghan traditions allow."

H.E. Foreign Minister Rassoul serves as Vice-Chair of OIC Foreign Ministers' Session

H.E. Dr. Zalmay Rassoul, Minister of Foreign Affairs, served as a Vice-Chair at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's 39th Council of Foreign Ministers Session in the Republic of Djibouti on November 15th to 17th. The session was chaired by H.E. Mr. Mahmoud Ali Yussouf, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Djibouti.

Entitled "Solidarity for Sustainable Development," the session addressed a number of topics pertaining to this important theme within the Islamic world and touched on

(Continued on page 2)



other topics, such as maintaining regional peace and security, providing humanitarian relief, and advocating mutual understanding and tolerance across the world. As a result of the fruitful dialogue, resolutions were passed on various issues, “including the Cause of Palestine and the Middle East; Political Affairs; a Ten-Year Programme of Action; Statutory, Organic and General Matters; Legal Affairs; Conditions of Muslim Minorities and Communities in non-OIC Member States; Information Affairs; Administrative and Financial Affairs; Humanitarian Affairs; Economic Issues, Science and Technology, and Cultural, Social, and Family Affairs.” Furthermore, “the Council unanimously adopted the “Djibouti Declaration” which addressed major issues affecting the Muslim world.”

H.E. Deputy Minister Ludin attends Shanghai Cooperation meeting

H.E. Mr. Jawed Ludin, Deputy Foreign Minister represented the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan at the November 14th Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) meeting on regional security in the Moscow. The meeting focused on Afghanistan. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Igor Margulov, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, and attended by Jan Kubis, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Afghanistan, and representatives of nine regional nations, as well as other key SCO officials. Afghanistan recently gained the observer status in the organization.

H.E. Deputy Minister Ludin addressed participants of the progress and plans of the Afghanization of security, political

and economic processes, and the progress indicators from the past decade and remaining challenges in Afghanistan and the region. Expressing the importance of regional cooperation towards shared security and development, H.E. emphasized the unique role of the SCO. Building upon this topic, H.E. the Deputy Minister further mentioned the great need for regional nations to support the Confidence Building Measures within the Afghan-led Istanbul Process. Participants expressed their support for the Afghan government’s efforts on the improved security situation, socio-economic development, the peace process, and further strengthening of democratic institutions.

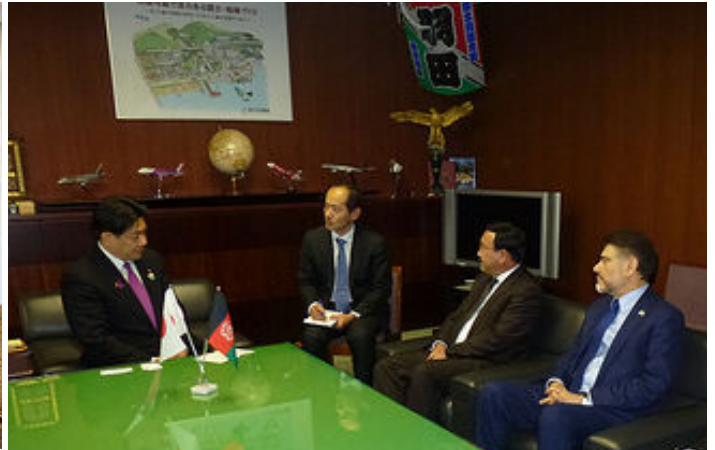
Other important issues discussed included enhanced cooperation between the SCO and the UN, the role of the regional organizations and the need for joint efforts to address the challenges of counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics and the fight against organized crimes.

On the sidelines of the meeting, H.E. Deputy Minister Ludin met with Igor Morgulov Russian Deputy Foreign Minister and the Mongolian Deputy Foreign Minister, respectively.

Ambassador Fatimie meets with Hon. Vice-President Komura of the Liberal Democratic Party

On November 16th, Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie met with Hon. Vice-President Masahiko Komura of the Liberal Democratic Party at the latter’s office.





Ambassador Fatimie expressed appreciation for meeting in this most busy of periods. The Ambassador then offered deepest gratitude, on behalf of the people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, for the generous and selfless cooperation extended by Japan. Ambassador Fatimie pointed to real betterment of lives that has resulted therein. Commending the LDP for the party's role within, Ambassador Fatimie praised Hon. Vice-President Komura and through His Honor the leadership of His party. In turn, Hon. Vice-President Komura pledged Japan would continue its support to Afghanistan as per the mandate of the Japanese people.

Contract signed at Embassy between H.E. Min. Najafi, Dai Nippon, Gyros for Kabul International Airport

On November 16th, Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie and the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Tokyo hosted a contract signing ceremony between the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation, as represented by H.E. Minister Dr. Daoud Ali Najafi; Dai Nippon Construction, as represented by President Hiroki Sato; and Gyros Corporation, as represented by President Takao Yamaguchi. The contract enables the rehabilitation and expansion of aircraft parking aprons at Kabul International Airport.

Ambassador Fatimie opened the event with a welcome speech in which he first of all greeted participants, praising them on their dedication towards the strengthening of Afghanistan. The Ambassador further expressed the great honor of being a facilitator of the beginning of a project that will enhance Afghanistan's connectivity to the world. Ambassador

Fatimie's speech was followed by the signing of the contracts. Afterwards, H.E. Minister Najafi shared of the progress that has been made in Afghanistan's civil aviation and the significance for the nation. Speeches were also given by Presidents Sato and Yamaguchi.

H.E. Minister Najafi meets with H.E. Transport Min. Hata, H.E. Parliamentary Vice-Min. for Foreign Affairs Kazama, JICA's Vice Pres. Kuroyanagi, accompanied by Ambassador Fatimie, Mr. Amiri

November 15, 2012: Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie and Mr. Sayed Ali Asghar Amiri, Third Secretary, accompanied H.E. Dr. Daoud Ali Najafi, Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation, on a number of key meetings during his visit to Tokyo.

A meeting was held with H.E. Mr. Yui-chiro Hata (pictured above), Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, and H.E.'s office. H.E. Minister Najafi offered deepest gratitude, on behalf of the people and Government of Afghanistan, for Japan's invaluable role in transport sector development, expressing appreciation directly to H.E. Minister Hata.

H.E. Minister Najafi also met with H.E. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Naoki Kazama. In this meeting, as He would be have the opportunity to do in His following meetings, H.E. the Minister again shared of the heart-felt appreciation felt by all Afghans to Japan and its noble people for the life-bettering support provided. H.E. the Minister lauded the strong partnership that has existed between Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Afghan Government over these years of redevelopment.

At the offices of the Japan International Cooperation Agency, H.E. Minister Najafi spoke with Vice President Toshiyuki Kuroyanagi. The redevelopment of areas of Kabul International Airport and other issues were discussed.

Ambassador Fatimie visits Kyoto and Osaka, meets with Hon. Mayor Kadokawa, Hon. Vice-Governor Ohta, Hon. Governor Matsui

Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie made an official visit to Osaka and Kyoto Prefectures on November 7th and 8th. He received very warm welcomes.

Arriving in Kyoto on November 7th, Ambassador Fatimie was extended great hospitality by Hon. Mayor Daisaku Kadokawa (pictured above) upon arriving at His Honor's office. Similarly, the Ambassador was treated to a very warm reception by Hon. Vice-Governor Noboru Ohta at the latter's office later that same day. Ambassador Fatimie in his respective meetings expressed deepest gratitude for the collective efforts of the Government and people of Japan, on behalf of the people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, for the selfless and life-bettering cooperation extended in development and peace-supporting initiatives. Kyoto has been a special partner within this, having in recent years hosted a number of Afghan-related events, including a speech by H.E. President Hamid Karzai at Doshisha University in 2010. The Ambassador made special reference to this, and highlighted the area's ability to inspire in areas including the harmony of tradition and modernity. In



response, both officials, as later would the Hon. Governor of Osaka, expressed determination to continue supporting Afghanistan, linking peace and security there to global peace and security.

On the following day, Ambassador Fatimie was extended the courtesy of a warm welcome by Hon. Governor Ichiro Matsui of Osaka. During this meeting, Ambassador Fatimie once again took the opportunity to laud Japanese assistance in development and peace in Afghanistan, offering sincerest gratitude and referring to said assistance as a key reason why Afghan men, women, and children live better and freer lives. In addition, Ambassador Fatimie praised Osaka many issues, including its ability to serve as another cultural and economic center, distinct from but in close cooperating with Tokyo.

Ambassador Fatimie, Diplomats accompany H.E. Mayor Nawandish on activities, host reception in His honor

Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie and the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Tokyo welcomed to Japan H.E. Mayor Yunus Nawandish of Kabul. H.E. arrived in Japan on November 4th to engage in a number of important activities and to meet with key Japanese officials.

On November 5th, Mr. Bahadir Kargar, Second Secretary, accompanied H.E. Mayor Nawandish on a number of meetings. Firstly, H.E. the Mayor was warmly received by Dr. Akihiko Tanaka, President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency. H.E. Mayor Nawandish expressed deepest gratitude for the generous, effect-driving assistance selflessly extended to all of Af-

ghanistan, particularly mentioning the assistance in Kabul. A project that H.E. the Mayor would hail throughout His meetings with Japanese officials was the erection of a bridge in the area, as well as the assistance to Kabul International Airport through the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation. Following this meeting, H.E. the Mayor met with JICA's Vice President Toshiyuki Kuroyanagi and Director-General Miura. In this second meeting, H.E. reiterated the sincerest appreciation of the people and the entire Government. Sharing of developments and key issues in both Kabul and in the New Kabul Metropolitan Area project, he again hailed the aforementioned projects and spoke on the excellent initiative that Japan and JICA will undertake: the paving of 55 kilometers of roads in Kabul. Furthermore, the issue of potential help with Kabul's garbage disposal and the potential for its use in creating fuel was discussed. Vice President Kuroyanagi promised to look into the issue.

H.E. the Mayor then visited with Hon. Acting Governor Naoki Inose of Tokyo. Expressing the importance of relations between these two important capitals and centers of culture, H.E. the Mayor and the Hon. Governor spoke on a number of issues, including possible energy collaboration.

H.E. Governor Nawandish was able to further pay a visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan where He was well received by Director-General Kunio Umeda of the International Cooperation Bureau. In this important meeting, H.E. the Mayor was able to further express sincerest appreciation for the cooperation extended by Japan and the Ministry. Sharing of these priorities, including infrastructure and waste disposal, the

two gentlemen engaged in very fruitful dialogue.

On the evening of the 5th, Ambassador Fatimie hosted at the Embassy a reception to welcome the distinguished delegation of H.E. Mayor Nawandish. The event was attended by JICA and Japanese Ministry officials as well as Afghan students and other prominent Afghan residents of Japan. Ambassador Fatimie in his opening speech welcomed the attendees, praising the work of H.E. the Mayor, offering words of encouragement. H.E. Mayor Nawandish also kind shared some words with the attendees, praising Japan's cooperation and sharing of his successes and future vision of the metropolis. Following this, H.E. the Mayor presented Ambassador Fatimie with a pin of distinction. A film on the capital's progress was also shown.

The reception was also attended by special guest Dr. Amanulla Hussaini (pictured below), Environmental Health Director at the Ministry of Public Health of Afghanistan. Dr. Hussaini has been in Japan for a series of important engagements on an official visit supported by the WHO. Ambassador Fatimie, who previously filled the role of Minister of Public Health, expressed highest regard for Dr. Hussaini's efforts to continue to facilitate ever-healthier lives for all Afghans.



Infrastructure development further improves lives

In Jowzjan province, a 13 km road has been completed, connecting 8 villages of the Khwajadokoh district to its center. It has now been opened for use.

New centers of education being built

The foundation stone for a teacher training center in Kabul was laid on November 6th in a ceremony attended by H.E. Minister of Education Dr. Farooq Wardak and representatives of Germany, New Zealand, Holland, and the World Bank. Germany is assisting in the construction of the facility.

H.E. Minister Wardak also laid the foundation stone for veterinary and agriculture institute in Kabul on the same day. The institute is expected to be completed within 18 months.

Silk industry in Herat continues to produce world-class products

Craftspeople in Herat, a traditional hub for the Afghan silk craft, are working to revitalize the world-renowned industry.

Silk in the region has long been a high-class symbol of beauty and affluence. According to a Herati man involved in the industry, Ghulam Sakhi, "thirty years ago there were 1,000 silk weaving looms in Herat city." The main products then as now were shawls, scarves, turbans, and handkerchiefs.

Despite the high quality, the silk is inexpensive. One kilogram of pure silk costs around 3,000 Afghanis (less than 4500 yen) and a pure silk scarf could be priced from around 400 Afghanis (less than 600 yen).

International companies bidding for oil, gas rights

United States-based Exxon Mobil Dubai's Dragon Oil, Kuwait Energy, and the Turkish Petroleum Corporation are among eight companies that have been shortlisted for possible oil and gas exploration rights in the Tajik Basin between Mazar-i-Sharif and Kunduz. Some 20 international companies had shown interest in the six blocks up for tender. The areas are estimated to in total hold more than 1 billion barrels of oil. A contract, or multiple contracts for divided portions of the blocks, will be signed in March.

Afghanistan's natural reserves, such as copper, iron, oil, and rare earth elements, continue to gain interest internationally.

Women participate in taekwondo competition

Monisa Rustam Zada won the "Ambassador of Peace Rohullah Nikpai" martial arts tournament in Kabul on Friday. Nikpai is Afghanistan's two-time Olympic champion; the event was named in his honor. Up to 37 women competed.

Afghan takes second in South Asian Bodybuilding Championship

Afghanistan's national bodybuilding team finished second in the 9th South Asian Bodybuilding Championship held in India. Ramin Hassan Zada of Afghanistan won a gold medal in the 70 kg division. Afghan athletes captured a five silver and two bronze medals.

Five countries were represented in the tournament: Afghanistan, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, and Nepal.



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