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Afghan News

Latest News

Facts on Afghan-Singaporean Relations in honor of Ambassador Fatimie's reception in the Republic of Singapore



Diplomatic relations between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Republic of Singapore were formalized in 2006.

The Republic of Singapore has been a major cooperative partner in a number of activities related to Afghanistan's peace and development, particularly in capacity development of officials.



H.E. President Karzai swears into office Defense, Interior, and Head of NDS

In a ceremony was held in the Presidential Palace on September 16, 2012 administered by H.E. President Hamid Karzai, H.E. General Bismillah Mohammadi, H.E. General Gholam Mujtaba Patang, and H.E. Mr. Asadullah Khalid were sworn in as the new Minister of Defense, Minister of Interior, and Head of the National Directorate of Security, respectively. Each of the individuals, in pledging their allegiance to God, people, Government, and office, recited the oath of office as read out by H.E. the President. H.E. President Karzai wished success for the gentlemen in serving their nation and country.

The appointments had been approved by the Lower House one day earlier.

(also pictured above, H.E. First Vice-president Marshal Mohammad Qaseem Fahim with Their Excellencies Minister Mohammadi and Minister Patang)

H.E. Foreign Minister Rassoul visits Lithuania, inaugurates international conference on regional cooperation

H.E. Foreign Minister Dr. Zalmai Rassoul visited Lithuania September 18-19

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Ambassador Fatimie had the distinct honor of meeting with H.E. the President. First and foremost, Ambassador Fatimie offered sincerest appreciation for the arrangements made and the precious time provided H.E. President Yam. The Ambassador also expressed, on behalf of the people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, deepest gratitude for the Republic's support in Afghanistan's peace and development, in particular referencing Singapore's efforts in capacity building.

in order to meet with key officials, prominently including H.E. Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius, and to attend an international conference entitled "Afghanistan and the Region: Practical Approaches for Sustainable Development" on the 19th. More than 20 countries and regional and international organizations participated.

Speaking on Afghanistan's interconnectedness with the region and the mutual benefit that this can bring, H.E. Minister Rassoul stated, "since late last year, the series of conferences beginning with Istanbul in November, followed by Bonn in December, Dushanbe in March, Chicago in May, and the Heart of Asia Ministerial meeting in Kabul this June, have demonstrated an emerging consensus in the region, supported by the international community, for a secure, stable, prosperous Afghanistan that is a reliable hub for regional trade and transit at a key interchange in Asia, the world's most dynamic region. Besides facilitating the movement of goods and services, the private sector gathering in New Delhi this past June, in the lead-up to Tokyo, demonstrated Afghanistan's growing contributions to global markets in the trade of, for example, precious minerals, agricultural products, carpets, cashmere, and marble."

The conference and H.E. Minister Rassoul's participation have been hailed as highly successful.

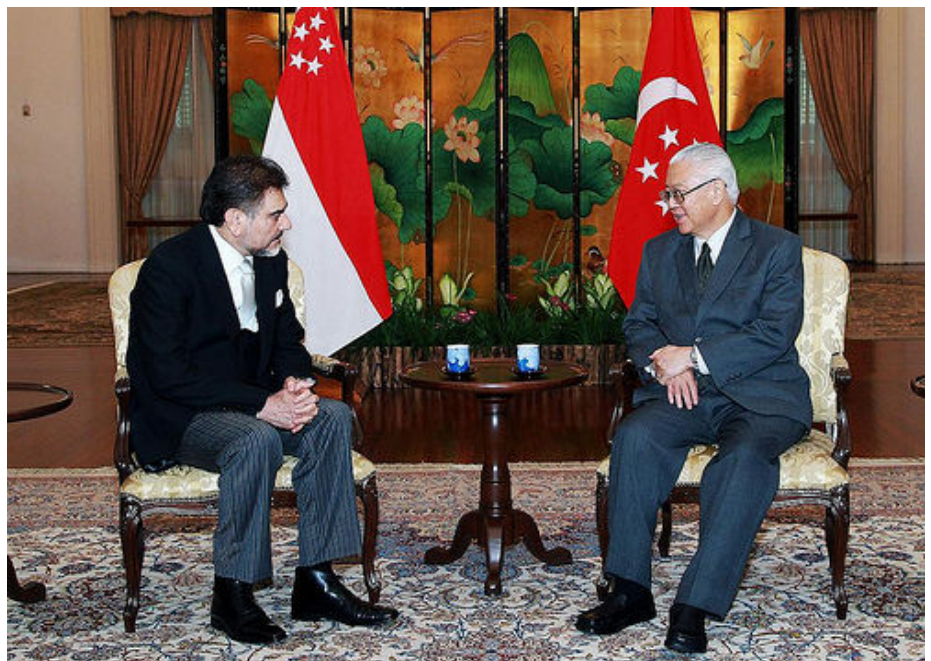
Ambassador Fatimie visits Republic of Singapore, presents credentials, meets with H.E. President Yam and key officials

Between August 28th and September 5th, Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie visited the Republic of Singapore in order to present his credentials as non-resident Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore to H.E. President Tony Tan Keng Yam and to meet with senior government officials. This was Ambassador Fatimie's first visit to the City State, a very cherished experience and investment in further strengthening relations between the two nations.

On August 30th, H.E. President Yam graciously met with Ambassador Fatimie in a most special ceremony. Following the credential ceremony,

Representative of His and His nation's kindness and generosity, H.E. the President expressed that the Republic of Singapore considers its efforts in Afghanistan as its duty to the Afghan people and pledged to continue. Furthermore, He mentioned that the peace and stability of Afghanistan is central to the peace and stability of the world.

Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie had the honor of meeting with H.E. Ms. Grace Fu, Second Minister for Foreign Affairs and Second Minister for the Environment and Water Resources on August 31st. During his valuable audience with H.E. Second Minister Fu, Ambassador Fatimie firstly ex-





pressed, on behalf of the people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Singapore, deepest gratitude for the Republic's unwavering and generous support towards Afghanistan's peace and development. The Ambassador spoke of the impact that this support has had, in making possible great progress across multiple sectors. Touching on the successes of the Tokyo Conference, Ambassador Fatimie mentioned that this would set up the transition to fully Afghan security as well as to a decrease on donor dependence; Ambassador Fatimie welcomed potential Singaporean private sector investment in Afghanistan, in particularly in natural resources, towards this end.

H.E. the Second Minister showed great interest in the topics of discussion, and directed her office to follow-up on these matters with an eye on potential partnership. As far as the

existing Singaporean cooperation, H.E. Second Minister Fu graciously echoed the words of H.E. President Yam, saying that the Republic of Singapore is committed to continuing to work with the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

During this visit, Ambassador Fatimie also had the privilege of meeting with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Director General for Middle East and North Central Asia, H.E. Mr. Samuel Tan; and its Acting Chief of Protocol, Mr. Michael Tan. With H.E. Director General Tan, Ambassador Fatimie was able to express deepest gratitude directly to a highly influential figure directly responsible for Singapore's effect-generating assistance. The two spoke on a range of topics of mutual interest including the achievements of Afghanistan since the formation of the current Government, the Tokyo Conference and its significance, and the security transition. H.E. Director General Tan conferred upon Ambassador Fatimie an invitation to in the future speak at the esteemed Singapore Strategic Institution.

Having the opportunity to visit Singapore's Civil Service Institute, Ambassador Fatimie praised the Institute and its staff for the crucial

role it has played in allowing Afghanistan's officials to develop quickly and professionally. The Institute's representatives kindly stated that while already possessing deep ties with Afghanistan's Civil Service Institute, they hope to further strengthen this relationship and would like to increase the support it provides.

Another of the highlights of Ambassador Fatimie's Singapore trip was the visit to Sentosa island, which is an internationally renowned tourist destination, contributing largely to the Republic's finances. This trip helped to resonate the point that was made to Ambassador Fatimie that despite the small land mass of the nation and the lack of natural resources, through its strong exports and tourism, the Republic has become a world economic power; this served as further inspiration to the potential of Afghanistan to capitalize upon its own unique traits towards increased success.

Work towards sustained and equitable access to education further strengthened

Since March 2011, Afghanistan has been taking another action in its course to provide sustained and equitable access to education within the nation through its membership in the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) initiative. Earlier this month, the nation's involvement in this initiative was further underscored in the granting of further resources over three years to 55 priority districts in 13 provinces (Badghis, Ghor, Daikundi, Urozgan, Farah, Nimruz, Helmand, Kandahar, Zabul, Paktika, Paktia, Khost, and Nuristan). The move is supported by partners UNICEF and the Kingdom of Denmark. The program has four pillars, described by the Ministry of Finance as:



“strengthening community and social mobilization and governance system at the local level,
“Expanding and reinforcing multiple pathways to education,
“Increasing the number of qualified female teachers in areas with high gender disparities,
“Streamlining policy and administrative systems in the Ministry of Education.”

Telecommunication towers to bring access to rural areas

220 telecommunication towers will be built in rural areas currently without coverage by private companies through the arrangement of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. 440,000 people will benefit from the project. The companies participating in the project are Afghan Telecom, which will build 195 towers; Afghan Wireless, to build 9; and MTN, which will build 16. All towers are to be completed within 18 months.

Second Afghan National Conference on Science and Engineering held in Kabul

The Second Afghan National Conference on Science and Engineering (ANCSE) was held for two days earlier this month in Kabul. The conference, which was organized by



the Afghan Society for Science and Engineering Education and the Afghanistan Telecommunication Regulatory Authority the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology and technical assistance, was attended by professors from Kabul, Nangarhar, and Balkh Universities, experts in various departments of science and engineering community, Afghan researchers and scientists abroad, students of universities and a large audience. Various parties presented their scientific and research articles in the field of Communication and Information Technology, Management, Community, Environment, Agriculture, Health, Education, and Construction.

Iron processing factory opens in Herat

A large iron processing and melting factory was officially opened this month in Herat province’s industrial

park in a ceremony attended by H.E. Commerce and Industries Minister Anwarul Haq Ahadi, H.E. Economic Minister Abdul Hadi Arghandiwal, and Hon. Governor Daud Shah Saba. The factory now produces about 80 tonnes of iron on a daily, but plans call for increasing the capability to 400 tonnes per day.



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