



March, 2013



Afghan News

Latest News

Select Education Indicators

In honor of the start of the new school year

10.5 million

Projected number of students to be enrolled at schools nationwide. This is 1.5 million more than the previous year.

40

The amount of Turkish students set to study at Kabul University. A testament to the increase of education standards and spread of peace.

40%

Amount of school children who are girls, overcoming the past difficulties faced by females seeking education.



H.E. President Karzai delivers message of hope on Nowroz (Afghan New Year)

On March 20th, as part of his bi-weekly radio address, H.E. President Hamid Karzai congratulated all Afghan citizens on the occasion Nowroz, Afghan New Year, which marks the beginning of the year of 1392. In H.E.'s greeting, he spoke of a new year filled with peace, security, and progress for the nation as a whole and prosperity for all the people of Afghanistan.

As the educational year coincides with the New Year, H.E. the President encouraged students in the start of their studies to make capital use of every single moment for education, to respect and obey their

parents, and to observe good manners. H.E. President Karzai underscored that Afghanistan could achieve its long-standing desire of being a leading state on the world's pathway towards progress only through the power of its youth's education.

In addition, H.E. President Karzai spoke on the ever-increasing reach of peace, encouraging all to join in the process.

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H.E. Foreign Minister Rassoul welcomes further Japanese partnership

H.E. Foreign Minister Zalmai Rassoul welcomed the latest cooperation initiatives of Japan, a nation he has frequently called a close friend and an enabler of development, better lives, and increased peace.

A number of projects will be completed with the assistance of Japan. Projects signed onto by H.E. Ambassador Hiroshi Takahashi include the construction of 13 schools and 6 health clinics, road maintenance, building multiple water supply networks including one for the New Kabul project, the development of Kabul International Airport, and fuel acquisition.

In H.E. Foreign Minister Rassoul's statement on the occasion, he praising Japan as an indispensable ally. Thousands will benefit from the projects.

Ambassador Fatimie attends memorial ceremony on 2nd anniversary of Great East Japan Earthquake



On March 11th, Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie attended a memorial ceremony hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan at the National Theatre in Tokyo to mark 2nd anniversary of Great East Japan Earthquake.

Participants observed a minute of silence to honor the victims of the tragedy. This was followed by comments by H.M. the Emperor, who offered



enlightened words on the lessons learned from the disasters, including offering disaster-related education at the school and community levels.


H.E. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe also spoke, stating that he is determined to do his best to help those areas that continue to feel the after-effects of the disasters and to make Japan more prepared and resilient. In representation of the victims, Ms. Rin Yamane spoke of her personal account.

H.M. the Empress was also in attendance, as were a number of Japanese government officials and foreign dignitaries. In total, some 1,200 people were in attendance.


In related news, the Ambassador's

message to the Japanese people on this occasion was published by the Daily Yomiuri newspaper. The text of the message is as follows:

Two years have passed since tragic disasters afflicted your noble nation. While our Embassy felt the effects, we were struck by the suffering elsewhere, particularly in the Tohoku region. Each life lost and every destructive aspect further saddened our people and Government. Despite limitations, we offered what we could. Government and Embassy funds were given, and I was honored to personally help deliver supplies to evacuees. For what we contributed, we received more. We were inspired by your strength. Afghans know firsthand that rebuilding takes time, but Japanese people are capable. We stand together with you now and forever.



**Embassy of
the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan**



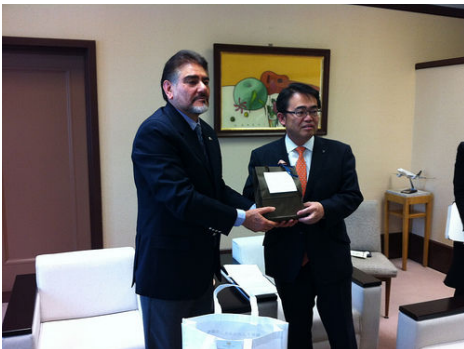
H. E. Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary

Two years have passed since tragic disasters afflicted your noble nation. While our Embassy in Tokyo felt the effects, we were struck by the suffering elsewhere, particularly in the Tohoku region. Each life lost and every scene of destruction further saddened our people and Government. Despite limitations, we offered what we could. Government and Embassy funds were given, and I was honored to personally help deliver supplies to evacuees. For what we contributed, we received more. We were inspired by your strength. Afghans know firsthand that rebuilding takes time, but Japanese people are capable. We stand together with you now and forever.



Above photo: Ambassador Dr. Fatimie meets at a recent reception in Tokyo with close friends Hon. Counselor Dr. Kazuyuki Hamada, Madame Sadako Ogata, special advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and JICA, and Director General Masahara Nakahara of JICA's South East Asia Department.

Ambassador Fatimie makes official visit to Aichi prefecture, Nagoya city, meets with Hon. Gov. Ohmura, Hon. Mayor Kawamura

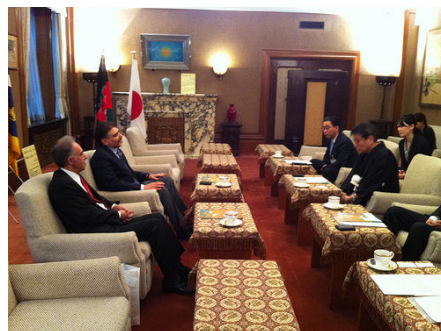


On March 15th, Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie made the first official visit to Aichi prefecture by an Afghan Ambassador to Japan. An important partner in Afghanistan's development both on a people to people level and a Government to Government level, as well as its special role as the prefecture possessing Japan's 3rd larg-



est GDP, this visit was highly significant.

Ambassador Dr. Fatimie firstly was extended an extremely warm welcome from Hon. Mayor Takashi Kawamura of Nagoya (pictured above and below) at His office. Ambassador Fatimie firstly expressed deepest gratitude, on behalf of the people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, for the enlightened and impact-generating support that Japan, and within this Nagoya, has provided to a fully-inclusive assortment of socio-economic areas and to the peace process. Ambassador Dr. Fatimie expressed that these contributions by Japan have led to true positive results in terms of life expectancy, quality of life, and freedoms. Hon. Mayor Kawamura kindly replied that he was indeed happy to have received the Ambassador and extended cordialities. The two then spoke about a number of issues of mutual interest, including the vast resource reserves in Afghanistan and its openness to investment. Also in attendance at the meeting were Director-General Kenji Kuzusako and Deputy Director-General Yoshihiko Niwa of the Office of the Mayor, and Director Toshimitsu Miyajima and Chief Liasons Officer Toshiko Funhashi of the International Relations Division.



Ambassador Dr. Fatimie was then received very cordially by Hon. Governor Hideaki Ohmura (pictured top and bottom) at the Aichi prefectural offices. Ambassador Fatimie had the pleasure of also being able to express

to His Honor sincerest appreciation, on behalf of the people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, for the selfless and life-bettering partnership extended by Japan and Aichi prefecture in specific. Speaking on the areas of health, agriculture, education, peace, and other socio-economic areas, the Ambassador mentioned that all have benefitted from Japanese efforts and that the scope of progress is only possible through this partnership. The Hon. Governor in turn expressed pleasure over the visit, stating that He fondly recalls H.M. Prince Mostapha Zaher's visit to Aichi as well in 2010. The two then continued friendly discussions on a number of issues, including Afghanistan's wealth of natural resources and possibilities for international development. The meeting was also attended by Executive Director for International Relations Toyosaburo Koyama, Director Tominori Kato and Assistant Director Tsutomu Asada of the International Affairs Division, and Director-General Masato Kondo of the Department of Regional Development and International Affairs.



International Women's Day Celebrated

A number of events were held around Afghanistan to mark March 8th's International Women's Day. In Kabul, among other events, a gather of the "Civil Society Youth of Afghanistan" was held, which was joined by Hon. Governor Abdul

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Jabbar Taqwa of Kabul who spoke on women's key role in national development.

In Mazar-e Sharif, Balkh Province, the Balkh Department of Women's Affairs organized an event with participation from local government officials and dignitaries. This event also symbolized the importance of international connectivity for women with the support of the Federal Republic of Germany.



In Zabul Province, the media was a central figure in celebrations with Radio Rana, for instance, having specials all day regarding women's issues.

Other key celebrations were held in Jalalabad in Nangarhar province, in Bamiyan, and in Paktia province.

Andra Gandhi Child Hospital to receive equipment upgrade

Andra Gandhi Child Hospital in Kabul is set to increase its capacity to provide quality medical care for children through the acquisition of medical diagnostic equipment from Japan and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). The two parties have also been very supportive regarding the capacity development of the staff. These efforts should help contribute to even further decreases in the child mortality rate.

Afghan sports heroes excel



The Afghan national team qualified for the 2014 AFC Challenge Cup due to its performance in qualifying matches. Overall, the Afghan team's record was 2-1-0, having won 1-0 each in matches versus the national teams

of Sri Lanka and Mongolia and tying 1-1 versus the host nation, Laos. This success builds off of the debut of the Afghan premier soccer league last year.



Afghan fighter Siyar Bahadurzada participated in an Ultimate Fighting Championship contest in Japan. Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie and the diplomatic staff of the Embassy had the opportunity to speak with this world-class athlete in the lead-up to the event. While Bahadurzada was not victorious, he competed with honor and integrity and is sure to make another strong showing in the future.