



July
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Newsletter

Latest News



Above : The world famous minaret of Jam, located in Western Afghanistan. Originally constructed in the 12th Century. As “an outstanding example of Islamic architecture and ornamentation,” and because of it’s “innovative architecture and decoration,” the Minaret of Jam has been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site.



H.E. President Karzai facilitates preparation for next culmination of Afghan democracy: 2014 presidential elections

H.E. President Hamid Karzai on July 20th approved a second election law of two. These two laws will make preparations possible for the April 2014 presidential election. The first law concerns election commissions and this latest one covers the details of how the election will be held. Parliament has already given their approval as well.

In this historic election, H.E. President Karzai will pass over the presidency to His elected successor.

The Independent Electoral Commission praised H.E. the President and the democratic process.

According to Tolo News, civil society organisations are stating that democratic awareness is truly spreading amongst the electorate and that “citizens are becoming aware day by day about the characteristics of a democratic society,” citing the high standards placed for a successor to the successful president, H.E. Mr. Karzai.

Inside this issue:

News	1-5
Ambassador’s message	2
Recipe	4

(Continued on page 2)

H.E. Minister Rassoul, H.E. Minister Zakhilwal co-chair Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework meeting



Following the ground-breaking Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan last July, this month senior officials from 40 involved countries and 8 organizations met again to build on the progress made last year. The Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF) convened on July 3rd at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The meeting was organized to review the progress made by Afghanistan and the international community in achieving joint objectives of the Tokyo Conference. Co-chairs of the meeting were H.E. Dr. Zalmay Rassoul, Minister of Foreign Affairs; H.E. Dr. Omar Zakhilwal, Minister of Finance; and the United Nations Secretary General’s Special Representative Jan Kubis. Dr. Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai, head of the commission overseeing the security transition, also took part.

The focus of the discussions was financial cooperation from the international community in the decade of 2014-2024. “The international community’s participation in today’s conference shows their common will for supporting Afghanistan and ensuring a bright future for the people of this country,” H.E. Minister Rassoul

stated.

The progress made in the wake of the Tokyo Conference has been lauded by the representatives of the involved nations. Representative Kubis remarked that “Afghanistan has had enormous achievements and we must not lose them. We have a lot of other common goals to achieve.”

The next ministerial meeting will be co-hosted by Afghanistan and the United Kingdom in 2014.

(Continued on page 3)

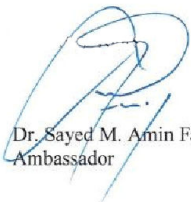
Message From the Ambassador
H.E. Dr. Sayed Mohammad Amin Fatimie

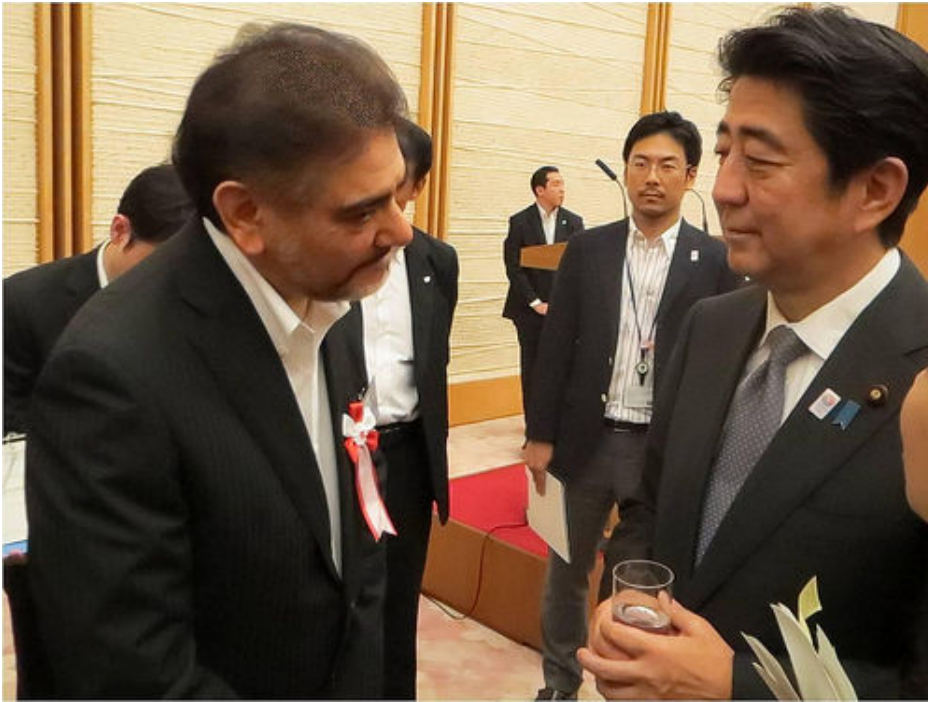


This month there have been numerous developments, both in Japan and in Afghanistan. As an Islamic Nation, this month, the people of Afghanistan, and Muslims around the world, marked the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan. Starting on July 9th, Ramadan is a time in which Muslims fast from before Fajr (the break of dawn) to Mughrab (sun-down), and take the time to reflect, to pray, and to remember our duty to be good to our fellow men and women. We certainly wish to extend at this special period blessings upon all our friends in Japan and beyond regardless of religion.

At the Embassy, we have paid close attention to the House of Councillors elections here in Japan. As a young democracy preparing for our next presidential election in April, Afghanistan congratulates the people of Japan on voicing their will through the ballots and we also offer encouragement to those officials elected with the mandate of representing their citizens.

During this most holy of months, I appreciate our continued friendship and cooperation, and, on behalf of the people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, I extend my best wishes to the people of Japan.


Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie
Ambassador



Ambassador Fatimie attends Iftar reception hosted by H.E. Prime Minister Abe

On July 31st, Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie had the distinct pleasure of attending an Iftar reception hosted by H.E. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at H.E. the latter's office in Tokyo. Iftar is the meal that comes with the breaking of the fast in the holy month of Ramadan, as recognized and held in reverence by Muslims. The auspicious event was attended by ranking representatives of the Japanese Government and Their Excellencies the Ambassadors of Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) member states.

H.E. Prime Minister Abe opened the event by addressing the attendees. Stressing His intention to further foster friendly relations with the Islamic world, H.E. the Prime Minister mentioned that He has already began making visits to nations represented that evening.

Following H.E. Prime Minister Abe, H.E. Ambassador H.E. Mr. Sid Ali Ketrاندji spoke in repre-

sentation of Their Excellencies the OIC representatives; other speakers were H.E. Former Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori; and Hon. Mr. Natsuo Yamaguchi, head of the New Komeito party.

Ambassador Dr. Fatimie was afforded the great honor of speaking with H.E. Prime Minister Abe, to whom the Ambassador firstly expressed heartfelt

appreciation, on behalf of the people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, for the generous and life-bettering cooperation that the Japanese Government and people have extended in towards socio-economic development and the further spread of peace. Ambassador Dr. Fatimie stated that this manifestation of the nations' friendship would never be forgotten in Afghanistan. H.E. the Prime Minister, who kindly recalled Ambassador Dr. Fatimie's service as Minister of Public Health, assured that such cooperation would only continue in order to realize H.E. the Prime Minister's vision of greater peace in Afghanistan. The Ambassador responded that through H.E. Prime Minister Abe's leadership and the Japanese initiatives to this end, this dream could be realized.

(photo above courtesy of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan)



Ambassador Dr. Fatimie was able to interact with a number of other esteemed attendees. Having the chance to speak with H.E. Mr. Fumio Kishida (pictured on the previous page), Ambassador Dr. Fatimie reiterated the enduring gratitude of the Afghan people and Government. H.E. the Foreign Minister kindly expressed the same sentiment as H.E. the Prime Minister that the Japanese Government is dedicated to continuing its cooperation with Afghanistan. Furthermore Ambassador Dr. Fatimie met with H.E. Parliamentary Vice-Minister of the Environment Ken Saito; H.E. Ambassador Shigeyuki Hiroki, Chief of Protocol at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; H.E. Senior Vice-Minister of the Cabinet Office Yasutoshi Nishimura, and Director-General Makio Miyagawa of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan's Middle Eastern and African Affairs Bureau. Ambassador Fatimie further had the opportunity to speak to Their Excellencies the Ambassadors of present that evening and to wish them the blessings of the holy month.

Ambassador Dr. Fatimie visits Tochigi Prefecture



H.E. Ambassador Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimie traveled to Tochigi prefecture as part of his initiative to further strengthen ties with the

local areas of Japan. The Ambassador was accompanied by Mr. Jason Pratt, Public Affairs Officer; and Mr. Kazuo Aoki of the NGO GHG Emissions Trading Agency.

Allowing for a visit with both elected representatives and members of the community, the Ambassador first had very productive meetings with Hon. Governor Tomikazu Fukuda and Hon. Mayor Eichi Sato of Utsunomiya. In each of these important meetings, Ambassador Dr. Fatimie was able to express deepest gratitude, on behalf of the people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, to his honored hosts for the gracious cooperation extended by all the people of Tochigi.

Ambassador Dr. Fatimie also had the pleasure of meeting with Mr. Yoshinori Kando, president of the respectable Shimotsuke Shimbun newspaper. To this gentleman, the Ambassador expressed his appreciation for the balanced coverage that Afghanistan receives in the paper, and complemented the Shimotsuke Shimbun on its role in promoting Afghan-Japanese relations.



Finally, the Ambassador paid a visit to Mutsumi Gakko, a school that has in the past held Afghan cultural events and made an effort to teach its students, and the community, about Afghanistan. After

being welcomed by students and administrators, the Ambassador offered words of encouragement to these future leaders of Japan and bridges between the peoples of the two nations.

Ambassador Dr. Fatimie's visit was covered by the Shimotsuke Shimbun and NHK.

2,000 policewomen serving the nation

Continuing in the gender equality initiative, the Ministry of Interior announced this month that already some 2,000 women serve in the Afghan National Police (ANP). Some of these brave sisters serve even as generals and deputy police chiefs. According to Colonel Hikmat Shahi, chief of gender department at the ministry, her goal is to increase this number further by the end of 2014 to anywhere from 2,500 to 5,000 total female officers.

The police recruit educated women from 18 years of age.

Hazar Shahr (Thousand Cities) Exhibition opened in Kabul

An exhibition on the ancient history and culture of Balkh city opened early this month at the National Museum of Afghanistan. In attendance at the opening ceremony were Their Majesties Prince Merwais and Princess Bulqis, H.E. Minister of Information and Culture Dr. Sayed Makhdoom Raheen, and parliamentarians. H.E. Dr. Raheen remarked on the special significance of Balkh, saying, "During the holy Islamic Period, Balkh had a key position and

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[it was called] Qubatul Islam (Dome of Islam) and Bright Balkh.”

Balkh is one of Afghanistan's most ancient, culturally rich cities. The exhibition at the National Museum will display numerous artifacts from the city, including tapestries, pottery, and poetry. The National Museum is located in the center of Kabul, and hosts over 30,000 pieces.

Three Hundred Fifty Students Graduate From Maiwand Higher Institution

Improvements are continuing in the education sector, with record numbers of students receiving post-secondary education and

training. This month, 350 students graduated from the Maiwand Higher Institution for Economy, Computer Science, and Information Technology alone.

In recognition of the students' achievements, and the importance of their efforts to the nation, H.E. President Hamid Karzai wrote a message commemorating the occasion, which was read at the graduation ceremony.

Ministry of Mines to Sign Mine Extraction Agreements in Two Months

The Ministry of Mines is set to sign new mining contracts with international investors. Representatives from Britain, Canada, In-

dia, Poland, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and the United States have expressed considerable interest in further developing Afghanistan's already burgeoning mining industry.

Afghanistan has an extremely lucrative territory, and it has been estimated that there are trillions of dollars worth of untapped natural resources. Of particular interest are Afghanistan's rare earths, energy minerals, gold, iron, and copper.

The Ministry of Mines has announced that legislation is being introduced that, if made into law, would make it easier and quicker for mining contracts with foreign companies to be drafted and signed.

Dining With the Diplomats

Afghan Recipe of the Month

This week's recipe is Sheerpira! In Afghanistan, Sheerpira is often eaten with guests or taken as a present when visiting others. Although they are made in many colours, pink and white seem to be the most popular!

Ingredients:

- Milk powder – 3 cups
- Whipped cream – 1.5 cups
- Granulated sugar – 3 cups
- Cardamom – 1.5 teaspoons
- Ground walnuts – 0.5 cups
- Ground pistachios – 0.5 cups
- Dried fruits – to taste

Preparation:

- Melt the whipped cream and granulated sugar together in a pan.
- Allow it to boil and mix for 4-5 minutes.
- Remove the pan from the heat once the mixture becomes a syrup.
- Add the milk powder, and then quickly mix in the dried fruits and cardamom.
- Pour onto a flat plate.
- Flatten the mixture, and add the pistachios, and more dried fruit if desired.
- Leave your Sheerpira to cool for around an hour, and then cut it up and enjoy!

