



August 2009



Afghan News

Latest News

National Day Message from Ambassador Hakimi (Published on August 19, 2009)

As August 19th marks Afghanistan's National Day, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity, on behalf of President Hamid Karzai and the Government of Afghanistan, to convey my deepest respects to Their Imperial Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan and to H.E. Prime Minister Aso.

The first Afghan to visit Japan was General Ayub Khan in the 1907. As Admiral Heihachiro Togo's guest of honor, the two celebrated Asian victories over colonial powers. In a gesture of empathy and respect, General Khan granted support to Tokyo Haihei In, a home for soldiers

While this specific day is celebrated in honor of our nation's independence and restoration of sovereignty, our national legacy and our special relationship with Japan extends back farther than the 100 years represented by this date.



Afghanistan's National Day reception held at the Embassy of Afghanistan on August 20th.

Initial contact with Japan owes its existence to the old Silk Road and its transport of ideas and goods, such as the lapis lazuli decorated belts and mirrors found in Shosoin in Nara. Both Zoroastrianism and Buddhism's presence in Japan can trace their origins to Afghanistan. While the practice of Zoroastrianism has since passed, its influence is evident in such examples as the March 12th Shunie Otaimatsu Festival that involves religious tree-burning. This tradition shares its roots with the present-day Afghan custom on March 21st of purifying the household with smoke.

disabled in the Russo-Japanese War. The friendly terms between the countries were later reaffirmed when King Habibullah Khan provided assistance to the victims of three destructive earthquakes in 1914. Japan was also very well received in Afghanistan with products, such as cloth, chemical products, and machinery, in high demand. The first

(Continued on page 2)

Highlighted Achievements

- There were 6,969 polling stations
- The polls opened at 0700 (0230 GMT) and closed at 1700 (a one hour extension)
- 250,000 journalists and observers witnessed the election
- 323 women ran for provincial council seats of the 3,300 candidates in total
- Up-to-date election results: www.iec.org.af/results/Index.html

Inside this issue:

Latest News	1-5
Upcoming Events & Important Dates	5
NGO Spotlight	5
Omar's Kitchen	6
Language Lesson	7

(Continued from page 1)

Japanese to visit Afghanistan was Hisao Tani, a military officer, followed by Yasunosuke Tanabe in 1925, who after returning to Japan went on to establish the Japan-Afghanistan club in 1935.

Formal relations were established on November 19, 1930 in London with the signing of the Afghan-Japanese Treaty of Friendship by Marshal Shah Wali Khan and Tsuneo Matsudaira, the Japanese ambassador to the United Kingdom.

Now, nearly 8 years after the overthrow of the oppressive Taliban regime, Japan continues to be a valuable and dedicated partner through its support of our reconstruction and rehabilitation. As part of the international coalition in the war on terror, Japan first dispatched Maritime Self-Defense vessels to the Indian Ocean to engage in refueling missions.

On January 21st and 22nd, 2002, Japan convened the "International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan," the first of its kind, in which Japan's pledge of US\$550 million made it the first nation to offer assistance to our rebuilding. In total, from 2001 to present, Japan has pledged over US\$2 billion in aid for use in various sectors including: refugee reintegration, IDPS, income generation, medical care, sanitation, capacity building for education, de-mining, farming, small business, the Afghanistan New Beginnings Program, the DDR program, irrigation, and road construction. JICA has also taken on a major role in the reconstruction of new Kabul International Airport terminal and is currently involved in the designing of the New Kabul City.

With the help of Japan, our other international partners, and the drive of our people, we have begun to reclaim our previously hampered



Ambassador Hakimi's Credential Ceremony

Ambassador Hakimi was escorted by imperial carriage to Kokyo, the Imperial Palace, on June 19th to present his letter of credence to His Majesty the Emperor.

During their time together, His Majesty the Emperor fondly reflected upon his own experience of visiting Afghanistan and reaffirmed Japanese support both in reconstruction and the upcoming Presidential election.

(Photo courtesy of Mr. David MacDonald)

prosperity. Our accomplishments in the last few years alone are promising: over 90% of children under-five years old have been vaccinated against polio; 6.2 million children are now attending schools (40% girls); and around 4,000 school buildings have been constructed or rehabilitated with 4,400 more planned in the next four years. The DDR program has collected 57,629 weapons and 12,248 heavy weapons, demobilized 62,376 combatants and reintegrated 53,145. Over the last year, 49 square kilometers of minefield has been cleared and over 81,000 anti-personnel mines, 100 anti-tank mines, and 2.5 million explosive remnants have been destroyed. Our nation is set to be mine-free by 2013 and we aim towards self-sufficiency in security as our national army has already grown to a force of over 90,000 active servicemen.

It is indeed our desire to stand up on

our own feet. Our constitution was drafted as the region's most progressive and now the latest stage in the development of our young democratic system will be realized in tomorrow's election. The people stand at this crucial juncture using their voices, protected by the freedoms that they so justly earned, to shape the direction that our nation takes.

On this day when international attention has once again been focused on Afghanistan, it is indeed with heartfelt gratitude that we extend our thanks to the Japanese people for their enduring friendship and support. As Afghanistan regains its rightful place as a partner, our nations will extend our Silk Road bourn legacy into a future of mutual support, friendship, and benevolence.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

World leaders praise election

World leaders praised their forces for helping to secure the August 20th election, while hailing the bravery of our people. The vote was historic as the first self-run democratic election in more than three decades. National security forces took the lead in protecting voters and providing security for 6,969 polling stations. There were more than 30 presidential candidates and 3,300 provincial council candidates on the ballot, including a record 323 women.

Japan expressed its respect towards the passion and bravery of citizens who went to the polls as well as towards the government and staff of the United Nations and other organizations who supported the holding of the elections.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown praised the accomplishment of our people for organizing the elections amid a looming Taliban threat while thanking his troops for "everything that they have done to make sure that these elections can take place."

Bernard Kouchner, the French foreign minister, lent his voice, praising "the dignity, courage and determination shown by the Afghan citizens who went to the polls."

U.S. President Barack Obama, for his part, pledged to continue the U.S. role after the election, promising to "ramp up the pressure in Afghanistan" to eliminate the threat from al-Qaida and the Taliban insurgency. In addition, he also took the opportunity to wish people a blessed month of Ramadan. In a separate statement, the president said he wanted to reiterate his commitment "to a new beginning between America and Muslims around the world."



Work begins at the Aynak copper mine

H.E. President Hamid Karzai welcomed the official commencement of work at the Aynak copper deposit in Logar province. On July 4th, at a meeting with President Shen Heting of the Chinese state-owned firm Metallurgical Group Corporation (MGC), the Chinese company in charge of the project, President Karzai stated that broader ties with China and more Chinese investment are sought. President Karzai also assured Mr. Shen of the Afghan government's cooperation and added, "The government of Afghanistan will do every possible effort to facilitate Chinese investment in Afghanistan; and Chinese companies can count on our cooperation."

The Anyak mine was contracted to

MGC who paid an advance of US\$80 million to secure the rights. The government will receive US\$808 million per year from the mine, nearly half of that in tax levied on the copper extracted. 1500 troops have been pledged to protect the site. President Shen expressed his satisfaction over the security and cooperation provided.

One of the largest copper deposits in the world, the Aynak mine contains 11.3 million tons of copper, and MGC expects to extract about 200,000 tons per year. MGC will invest roughly \$2.8 billion and create 10,000 Afghan jobs; another 20,000 will benefit from indirect employment.

The project was officially inaugurated on July 9, 2009.

(Continued on page 4)

For more information on investing in Afghanistan:

- Afghanistan Investment Support Agency <http://www.aisa.org.af/>
- International Trade Administration <http://trade.gov/afghanistan/>
- Doing Business in Afghanistan Guide http://www.buyusainfo.net/docs/x_6210018.pdf
- Afghanistan Export Agency <http://www.epaa.org.af/>
- Da Afghan Bank <http://www.centralbank.gov.af/>
- Ministry of Communications <http://www.mcit.gov.af/>
- Ministry of Transportation <http://www.motca.gov.af/>
- Ministry of Commerce and Industry <http://www.commerce.gov.af/>
- Export Promotion Agency of Afghanistan <http://www.epaa.org.af/>
- Ministry of Finance <http://www.mof.gov.af/>

(Continued from page 3)

The project has strengthened ties between our nation and China in ways that are more than just economical. The city of Herat formed a sister-ship with Shanghai in July and the Ambassador to China, Sultan A. Baheen, said he would like to see more students studying abroad in China.

In addition to mines such as Aynak, there are many other opportunities for investment. A feasibility study has been done for a dam on the Kokacha River in the north and solar energy projects are being considered due to the country's many clear, sunny days.

Bidding information for other projects is available at http://www.mom.gov.af/index.php?page_id=7

Ambassador Yoshikawa visits, meets with President Karzai

On July 20, 2009, during his business trip to Kabul, Mr. Motohide Yoshikawa, Director-General of Middle Eastern and African Affairs met with President Karzai. Mr. Yoshikawa stated that transparency in the upcoming Afghan elections would have a positive impact on people's trust in the government and the image of the nation abroad; he also reiterated Japan's dedication to supporting the process by sending a monitoring group in addition to the 300 million US dollars already contributed to the election. President Karzai agreed, saying that Afghanistan endeavors to show that the money contributed by Japanese taxpayers is being used correctly and effectively; he also pledged strict security measures for the monitors.

Additionally, President Karzai and Director-General Yoshikawa spoke on Japan's future role in the development of the agricultural sector.

200 health facilities to be constructed by Japan within 2 years

Dr. SM Amin Fatimie, Minister of Public Health, announced that Japan has pledged to construct 200 health centers in nine remote and under-served provinces: Ghor, Daikundi, Farah, Nimroz, Paktika, Nooristan, Badakhshan, Fariab (Kohistanant) and Saripul (Kohistanant). Since Ghor is on top of the priority list, many new health centers will be constructed there. The Japanese Government and JICA have been very generous and supportive in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the health system within the country. At the gathering Mr. Peter Graaff, WHO representative to Afghanistan, assured officials and citizens of WHO's support for the enhancement of the province's health care system.

5 years ago there were only 9 clinics and one small hospital in Ghor. This number has increased to 52 centers in 2009. Support of donors like USAID, the World Bank, the European Commission, and the Japanese Government has been very crucial in the enhancement of health service delivery.

Foreign Minister Spanta Concludes Official Visit to India

Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta paid an official visit to New Delhi, India from July 26th-28th. During his visit, Dr. Spanta met with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, Foreign Minister S.M. Krishna and National Security Adviser Narayanan, discussing a range of issues.

In his meeting with Prime Minister Singh, Dr. Spanta expressed gratitude for India's constructive role in the reconstruction and stabilization process. Prime Minister Singh reaffirmed his government's commitment and support.

In his meeting with Foreign Minister Krishna, Dr. Spanta highlighted the importance of Indian assistance as vital to stability and development. The Foreign Minister's committed to the establishment of an Afghanistan-India Partnership Council for increased cooperation in various areas, including political consultation, trade and industry, agriculture, energy, health, education and capacity-development.

Agreement to extend telecom services to rural areas

An agreement was signed on Wednesday July 30, 2009 by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) to provide remote and rural areas with telecom and ICT services.

This is the first phase of the Telecom Development Fund (TDF) that will build twenty towers in twenty remote districts within the provinces of Nooristan, Daikundi, Paktika, Zabul and Badakhshan. Up until now, these areas have not been completely covered by telecom services.

The towers will be built by AWCC, who was declared the winning bid-

(Continued on page 5)



Photo of Cricket team.

Story appears on the next page.

(Continued from page 4)

der by the Afghanistan Telecom Regulatory Authority (ATRA). The project will have a total cost of 2.5 million USD which will be paid as a subsidy through the Telecom Development Fund provided by the MCIT.

According to officials at ATRA, the twenty towers will be built within six months and will provide 400,000 people with telecom and ICT services.

Cricket team impresses with their success

The national team's remarkable success in the ICC World Cup Qualifiers, where they qualified for the Super Eights, will provide plenty of confidence as they take on Zimbabwe in their first Intercontinental Cup fixture in Mutare.

However, they are in for a tough challenge as Zimbabwe is led by the hugely impressive Tatenda Taibu, who formerly captained the senior team. As a result of their impressive performance in the World Cup Qualifiers, the national team has earned ODI status for four years, qualified for this tournament, and has been promoted to Division One of the World Cricket League and won funding grants from the ICC. Their success has undoubtedly given them great recognition - they were in fact the most closely followed team in the Qualifiers - but the team now wants to take a step forward and make its mark in the long term. The team will rely heavily on the leadership of captain Nowroz Mangal along with Hamid Hassan, Karim Khan and batsman Mohammad Nabi, who has played for the MCC and is among the few players in the squad with first-class experience.

Upcoming Events & Important Dates

November 22:

Lecture, discussion and photograph exhibit about Afghanistan and the silk road. Tenri University in Nara. For more information, call **0743-63-9077** or email: **icers@sta.tenri-u.ac.jp**

NGO Spotlight JOICFP & UMCA/RPA

The United Medical Center for Afghans/Rehabilitation Program for Afghanistan (UMCA/RPA) is a non-political, non-profit, non-governmental humanitarian organization established in 1987, with RPA added in 1992. The UMCA/RPA works with the Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning (JOICFP) on joint programs in the fields of health, education and agriculture. The group has projects within five districts of Nangarhar Province: Kama, Shivah, Behsood, Jalalabad and Hashamana.

In Kareez-e-Kabeer village in the district of Behsood, a comprehensive health center was opened in 2002 as a joint venture between UMCA/RPA and JOICFP. The clinic provides neonatal care, health education, vaccinations for women & children, lab services, treatment of common diseases, parasite control, family planning and malnutri-

tion. Fifty-thousand patients received help at the clinic last year.

UMCA/RPA started several projects last year in the Kama district. The organization donated backpacks, pencils, stationary, candles and clothes to over sixty-thousand students and also distributed 272 bicycles. UMCA/RPA also implemented a parasite control program to improve the health of local residents. Almost four thousand students and teachers received treatment for intestinal worms and were taught methods on how to prevent future infection.

For more information, please visit JOICFP's website at:

<http://www.joicfp.or.jp/eng/index.shtml>





Omar's Kitchen

Each month, the Embassy's Chef, Omar, will offer a recipe for authentic Afghan food.

Birinj-ay-reshtah (rice & noodles)

Ingredients:

- 6 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, chopped coarsely
- 4 whole cinnamon sticks broken in half
- 6 whole cloves
- 2 whole black cardamom seeds bruised
- 115g black raisins
- 115g angel hair pasta
- 455g long grain brown rice
- 480ml water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 0.5 teaspoon salt

To cook:

Soak rice in 590ml of water overnight. Drain and bring to a boil with the same amount of water and 1 teaspoon of salt. Boil until water evaporates. In a pot, sauté onion, cinnamon, cloves, cardamom, raisins and angel hair pasta until pasta browns. Drain, wash and add rice. Turn heat up to quickly coat the rice with the mixture. Add 480ml of water and 0.5 teaspoon of salt. As soon as the pot begins to boil, wrap a dish towel around the lid, put it on the pot and lower heat to simmer. Let it simmer for 30-45 minutes. If rice is tender, it is done. Mix thoroughly and serve with a side dish of meat, fish or poultry.

Nan (bread)

Ingredients:

- 1 package of dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon dark brown sugar
- 60ml lukewarm water
- 240ml whole wheat flour
- 1-1/2 teaspoon salt
- 120ml cold water

To cook:

In a large bowl, add the yeast, dark brown sugar and lukewarm water and stir to dissolve. In another bowl, sift the flour and add the salt. Add this to the yeast mixture. Knead the bread by hand while adding the cold water. Knead until the dough is smooth and firm. Cover and put in a warm place for one hour. Preheat a lightly oiled cookie sheet in a 260°C oven. Divide the dough into two balls and shape into two oblong pieces 30cm long and 1.3cm thick. Dip three fingers in cold water and make three lengthwise grooves in the center of the breads. Put the nan on the cookie sheet and bake five or six minutes, until just beginning to brown.

Language Lesson

There are many languages spoken in Afghanistan, but two are designated as the nation's official languages: Dari and Pashto. For audio samples of the vocabulary and phrases, please go to:
<http://www.afghanembassyjp.org/en/life/?pn=192>

English	Pashto	Dari
Excuse me	Oobakhe	Bubakhshed
Yes?	Oo?	Bale?
Where are the ...?	... dey qainchi?	... kujya hast?
Here	Delta	Injya
There	Halta	Onjya
Scissors	Cherta	Kaichia
Pen	Kalam	Pen
Pencil	Pencil	Pencil
Stapler	Staplar	Stapler
Thank you	Manana	Tashakur

Conversation		
Excuse me	Oobakhe	Bubakhshed
Yes?	Oo?	Bale?
Where are the scissors?	Cherta dey qainchi?	Kaichia kujya hast?
Here	Delta	Injya
Thank you	Manana	Tashakur

Embassy of Afghanistan in Tokyo

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

Domestic

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

Overseas

Tel: +81-3-5574-7611
 Fax: +81-3-5574-0195

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