



September 2009



# Afghan News

## Highlighted Achievements

- 52,200 students are enrolled in higher education institutions
- 2.5 million citizens have received social support
- 38.2% of women are economically active
- GDP per capita has increased by 100% since 2001
- More than 50 radio stations and 20 TV stations are active

## Inside this issue:

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

## Latest News

### H.E. President Hamid Karzai's message on the International Day of Peace

(Published on 12 September, 2009)

My fellow citizens,  
Brothers and Sisters!

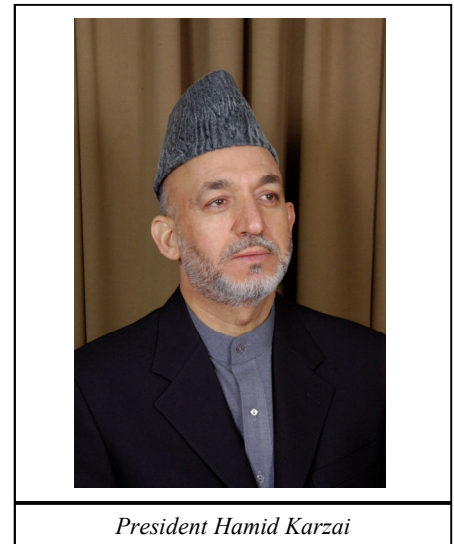
September 21 has been declared as the International Day of Peace by the United Nations. People around the world commemorate this day to strengthen the ideals of global peace. We Afghans, more than any other nation in the world, realize the value of peace. In a world where conflict and unrest claims thousands of lives each day, our nation bears the heaviest burden.

A one day ceasefire may be a symbolic gesture, but it is one that fittingly places peace as the greatest ever aspiration of mankind. I have ordered every member of the Afghan Armed Forces to avoid employing force on this day, except when attacked. I also call upon the international forces stationed in Afghanistan to enact the same policy. Taking this opportunity I would also call on those who are fighting against our country, for whatever reason, to still their weapons to honor of this day.

I hope that this day represents the beginning of an enduring peace in our country and the world.

### President Hamid Karzai Signs Law Preventing Violence Against Women

Based on Articles 3, 24 and 54 of the Constitution, a new law has been brought into force to further discourage violence



President Hamid Karzai

against women . Ministry of Women's Affairs spokesman Wadan Farahi stated that the law has four chapters and 44 articles dealing with violence against women and victims' rights. Moreover, the roles of authorized officials and supportive measures have also been clarified in the new law, making it easier to help women in need.

### Construction Begins on First Nursing School

Construction on the nation's first nursing school has begun in Faizabad, Badakhshan, with U.S. Ambassador Karl Ekinberry laying the foundation stone of the project. Abdul Maroof Rasikh, spokesman of provincial administration, de-

*(Continued on page 2)*

clared, "This essential project bears 1 million U.S. dollars provided by the United States."

### 35 New Health Projects Next Year

The Minister of Public Health has stated that 35 projects will be implemented in 2010 at the cost of US\$203 million. Work on some of the projects will begin by the end of the current year and the rest will be implemented in 2010, including 419 health centers, clinics and hospitals according to Dr. SM Amin Fatimie. Training workshops will be launched on child and mother care next year; ministry staff capacity-building is also included in the plans.

### Almost 1.2m Afghan children immunized against polio

Almost 1.2 million children have benefited from a polio immunization drive conducted for the International Day of Peace in eight provinces, including some of the country's hardest to reach areas such as Kandahar, Uruzgan, and Helmand. At the end of the three-day long drive, about 97.5 per cent of the targeted children were immunized, with health workers unable to reach only 13 of the intended 593 locations.

This is better than any immunization round in the past 18 months, said Peter Graaff, Country Representative for the World Health Organization (WHO). We are quite excited as such high coverage gives us a better chance than ever to get rid of polio, he added.

The polio drive was a joint effort by the Afghan health authorities, WHO and the UN Childrens Fund (UNICEF). It was also supported by actors including the International Committee of the Red Cross as well as health NGOs.

According to the Public Health Minister Dr Sayed Amin Fatimi, this immunization round, involving 14,000 health workers and volun-

teers, was a great success. Since 2007 Afghanistans Peace Day campaigns have resulted in polio immunization for 4.5 million children .

### New Media Center Opened in Helmand

A newly-built media center was inaugurated in southern Helmand. The opening ceremony was attended by Governor Gulab Mangal, officials of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), local officials, and media people associated with various media outlets. The well-equipped center will operate around the clock and foreign and national journalists will benefit from it as well. Funded by the province-based PRT, the center has five computers, menu desks, internet facility and rooms for video conferencing services. Nimatullah Zaheer, a correspondent from Aryana Television said: "The center would help address many problems facing the journalists particularly the net facility will help us correspond with our organizations."

### 209 schools to have laboratories, libraries and 3 new Primary schools to be built In Ghazni

The World Bank has provided \$1.1 million to the education department of the southern Ghazni province in grant for establishing laboratories and libraries at 209 schools. Only a few schools previously had laboratories and libraries in the province, said the Education Director Hassan Mubarak Azizi, who added that all the schools would have the facilities in near future. "We are making efforts to develop and modernize the education system so that the students have access to practical work besides theory."

Students and teachers have hailed the program, saying such initiatives would help boost their morale. The students are sure to be encouraged by

the establishment of the proposed laboratories and libraries. Khalid, a student of Shamir High School in Ghazni city said the laboratory can help in learning theoretical lessons that would increase the education quality.

Additionally, three primary schools are to be established for Kuchi children in Ghazni province, according to Education Director Hassan Mubarak Azizi. Two of the three primary schools will be constructed in the provincial capital of Ghazni City, while the third will be built for Sulemanzai Kuchis in Deh Yak district.

### Peace Day Campaign Launched

United Nations agencies, Afghan celebrities, civil society organizations, media and government bodies vowed to carry out a string of activities to promote peace. In the Kunar province, Marawara has already been declared a peace district and the Nangarhar government is preparing to declare Kama, Durbaba and Dibala as peace districts on September 21. Running till International Peace Day, the campaign aims to be the most ambitious and determined peace effort that the country has yet seen. This year's campaign will feature numerous initiatives in support of peace by individuals and groups plus a polio immunization drive. The peace campaigns have become annual events since their launch in 2007. The campaign is entirely apolitical and open to involvement by any

*(Continued on page 3)*



individual or organization. They serve to promote openings for reconciliation and humanitarian causes. On the Peace Day last year, 1.6 million children were vaccinated against polio.

**Ambassador Hakimi offers his congratulations on Eid.**

“The Embassy of Afghanistan in Tokyo would like to congratulate the Afghan community in Japan, as well as all Afghans and Muslims around the world this Eid.

We ask that the blessings of Allah bring you peace and happiness.

We also wish that you would all join us in working together towards the continued development of Afghanistan.“

The original document written in Dari can be viewed at <http://www.afghanembassyjp.org/pdf/notice.pdf>

**Celebration of Eid al-Fitr in Afghanistan**

Eid al-Fitr festival was celebrated in Afghanistan and Kabul was crowded and festive, markets were full and many of the streets were jammed with cars filled with people on their way to and from holiday meals. Children dressed up in their finest clothes for the celebrations, and families posed for formal photos against the backdrop of the surrounding mountains. After Eid payers, President Hamid Karzai offered his best wishes to the Muslims of the world. He prayed for peace and stability in Afghanistan and the whole Muslim world in general.

**Opium Cultivation Down Sharply** Cultivation of opium, a major funding source for insurgency, has fallen sharply this year, according to a U.N. report. Opium policy has changed amongst coalition partners moving away from eradication efforts. Instead, funding is being directed toward programs to persuade farmers to grow other crops. The area under



opium poppy cultivation fell this year by 22 percent to 123,000 hectares, or about 304,000 acres, the second consecutive year of decline, according to the United Nations' 2009 Afghanistan Opium Survey. Twenty of 34 provinces are considered poppy-free, two more than last year. Much of the decline was in Helmand which still accounts for nearly 60 percent of all opium grown nationally.

The U.N. report praised Afghan and NATO troops for destroying tons of chemicals, seeds, drugs, and 27 labs this year. Programs are quickly being developed before the planting season begins in October to encourage farmers to grow crops such as wheat and fruit instead. The programs offer vouchers to buy cheap seeds and provide farm workers with infrastructure jobs.

**The Rebirth of Arts, Crafts and Music in Afghanistan**

Afghanistan is embracing art and music with the help, of among other people, Rahraw Omarzad, a teacher in Kabul University's Faculty of Fine Arts. He has been setting up The Centre for Contemporary Arts Afghanistan, to teach young male and female artists interested in exploring contemporary and abstract art. The first-ever exhibition of contemporary women artists, held early last year, bore testimony to this new artistic rebirth . The female artists who displayed their works followed no set pattern of painting, and many of them produced works that varied greatly in technique, style and subject. Many of the artists have been nurturing

their talent for years. 21-year-old Ommolbanin Shamsia has been painting for as long as she can remember, as a child and refugee in Iran and, later, after her family returned home to Afghanistan.

Another organization trying to promote the revival of traditional arts and crafts is The Turquoise Mountain. In 2008, the organization held a first-of-its-kind three-nation contemporary-art exhibition, bringing together artists from Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan. The three countries share a strong bond, particularly in art and in the way Islamic calligraphy and painting evolved. 7,000 Afghans visited the exhibition, a third of them schoolchildren who were encouraged and challenged to ask questions and express themselves.

The Aga Khan Music Initiative for Central Asia in Afghanistan is another organization trying to teach classical music to the young. Classes are free in order to encourage families to send their children, and students get a small stipend as travel expenses. However, music culture and the knowledge of the traditional instruments, the dilruba, rubab, tabla and sarinda, are in decline as Indian, Pakistani, Iranian, Tajik and European pop and rap music is replacing the traditional music very fast. It is not just through students that the Aga Khan program seeks to rebuild the musical tradition; it is also trying to create an audience for such music through public concerts, radio, and television broadcasts.

*(Continued on page 4)*



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Links to organizations listed:

The Centre for Contemporary Arts Afghanistan

<http://www.ccaa.org.af/>

The Turquoise Mountain

<http://www.turquoisemountain.org/>

The Aga Khan Music Initiative for Central Asia in Afghanistan

<http://www.akdn.org/music>

### **Afghan 'Indiana Jones' Hunts Lost Bamiyan Statue**

Dr. Zemaryalai Tarzi has a big dream. To be exact, this archaeologist dreams of a giant - a 1,000ft (300 meter) sleeping Buddha. But it is more than a dream. Dr. Tarzi is trying to make it a reality. Dr. Tarzi, who has been mapping the landscape of Bamiyan for 40 years, is renowned world-wide for his knowledge of the Buddhist civilization that flourished centuries ago in the central highlands.

Bamiyan was a storied destination for travelers journeying on the Silk Road between East and West and in the 7th Century, a Chinese pilgrim, marveled at a colossal reclining statue: "To the east of the city there is a monastery in which there is a figure of Buddha lying in a sleeping position, as when he attained nirvana. This detailed journal made Dr. Tarzi curious as the pilgrim also wrote with passion, and precision, of two magnificent stone Buddhas which stood guard over the valley. Those statues, the world's largest standing Buddhas, were destroyed in 2001 and this further fueled Dr. Tarzi to find the third Buddha.

Afghan archaeologists trained by Dr. Tarzi and French colleagues from Strasbourg University gently tap picks and trowels in the dust and dirt, backed up by a small legion of laborers. The team's hard-working search for hidden treasures has yielded a stunning array of stone remnants from the remains of Buddhist monasteries - small feet from

statues, chiseled folds of monastic robes, sacred stupas etc. Then finally their persistent digging had uncovered fragments of a reclining figure, a sleeping Buddha, one hand protruded visibly, without a thumb and the head destroyed. But the find was only estimated to be 62 feet, (19 meters) long; hence, it was not the giant Buddha they were searching for but Dr. Tarzi will not give up and there are other areas where the giant Buddha might still lie sleeping.

When Dr. Tarzi is not occupied searching for the Buddha, he teaches a master class for young training to be tour guides at an eco-tourism center set up with the help of the Aga Khan Foundation. Through Dr. Tarzi's help, the legend of a giant still lives in Bamiyan. It has slept through much and if it ever wakes, it would be a dream-come-true for Dr. Tarzi, and countless others.



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## **Interview with Nazaar Mohammad**

**Program Manager of ASCHIANA**  
(Afghanistan's Children - A New Approach)

### **Please tell us about ASCHIANA.**

ASCHIANA is an Afghan non governmental, non political, humanitarian organization registered with the

Ministry of Economy. ASCHIANA also has very close working relations with other ministries in Afghanistan.

ASCHIANA's main goal is to assist vulnerable and poor street-working Afghan children and their families.

We have centers in 6 provinces in Afghanistan (Mazar-e-sharif, Parwan, Gardez, Kabul, Herat, and Badakhshan)

In each province, we have sub-offices as we are working both in day care centers and in IDP's with refugees.

Overall ASCHIANA is working with more than 8,500 children and their families.

### **Could you tell us about what your program does?**

We are providing various programs to the street-working and poor children, such as vocational training in carpentry, wood carving, hair dressing, and flower arrangement, among other skills. Additionally, we offer recreational activities in the form of sports and art, literacy programs, basic education and advanced educational programs, school sponsorship, money savings programs, as well as awareness programs for children and their families in children's rights, child protection, health and hygiene, mine awareness, and drug awareness - to name some of our many activities.

### **What makes ASCHIANA unique?**

Our dedication to working with war-affected, street-working poor orphans sets us apart. ASCHIANA is the first NGO started with street working children since 1995.



*ASCHIANA Children visiting Tokyo in August, 2007*

**Please tell us about your experience during your previous visit to Japan.**

Visiting Japan was a very good experience as I learned that the people are hardworking, disciplined, and kind.

The experience served as an example of their positive work to bring people from different nations together; the time that the ASCHIANA children were in Japan, they put aside their sadness and were very happy. We appreciate the hospitality of the people of Japan (ASHINAGA).

**Many people say Japan and Afghanistan have a special connection, both cultural and historical. Did you feel that during your visit?**

Yes. I noticed that Japanese have the same traits as Afghans; they are kind, obedient, hospitable, hard-working people

**What can Japanese people do to support ASCHIANA?**

As you know today Japan's hard-work and strong educational system has allowed the country to progress to the level it is at. We need to bring international attention to the fact that Afghanistan needs to address educational needs now too. We need more efforts, like those of ASCHIANA, in working with poor street-working children whose youth should be spent in school. We need to establish good education facilities for these children that provide peaceful education along with recreational and vocational facilities.

**Do you have any message for the Japanese people?**

I'd like to express my thanks to Japanese people for their kind hospitality. My message for the people of Japan is that, just as Japan has kindly said that they will take part in the redevelopment of Afghanistan, other than reconstruction and development programs, I think we

would greatly benefit from education sector support. Japan relates well to Afghanistan's suffering under 30 years of war through its own sad war experiences, as we all still remember Hiroshima. But education can help with the bringing of peace and we appreciate Japan's support in this regard.

**Upcoming Events & Important Dates**

**October 3-4: Global Festa**

The Embassy of Afghanistan will operate a booth again this year at the Global Festa in Hibiya Park. Open from 10 AM to 5 PM, the booth will sell Afghan jewelry and engage in cultural activities.

**October 6-12: Global Festa**

An exhibition of photographs of children by Hiromi Nagakura, a master photographer who has captured moving photos of Afghan people and life.  
 Date: October 6th—12th  
 Time: 10:00 am—6:30 pm  
 Venue: Nihonbashi ... Shinkan 7F gallery  
 Advanced tickets available for 700 yen (students 500 yen) by contacting Mr. Jason Pratt  
 03-5574-7611  
 pratt@afghanembassyjp.org

**October 27: Ladies' Friendship Association for Africa & the Middle East 15th Charity Bazaar**

The Embassy of Afghanistan will take part in a charity bazaar "for the welfare of children & women in the Middle East and Africa  
 Date: Tuesday, October 27th, 2009  
 Time: 11:00 am—3:00 pm  
 Venue: The Royal Park Hotel, 3F Royal Hall  
 Advanced tickets available for 2,000 yen by contacting Ms. Namie Imanishi  
 03-5574-7611  
 imanishi@afghanembassyjp.org



## Omar's Kitchen

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

### **Boolanee Kachaloo** ( Potato Turnovers )

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#### **Ingredients :**

- 2 Medium boiling potatoes
- 4 Tbsp. Vegetable oil
- 1 Cup (230 ml) Finely chopped onion
- 225g Ground beef
- 3 Garlic cloves chopped
- 1/2 Cup (120 ml) Finely chopped green pepper
- Egg roll skins
- Salt and cayenne pepper to taste
- Additional vegetable oil for frying
- 2 c Chakah (drained yogurt)
- 2 garlic cloves (or more)
- Salt to taste

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#### **To cook:**

Slice the potatoes and steam them until tender. In a pan, sauté half of the onion in the 4 Tbsp. of vegetable oil. Add the beef, salt, pepper and garlic. Cook until most of the liquid evaporates. Drain and set aside. In a bowl, mash the potatoes and blend in the meat mixture. Place the egg roll skins on a dry surface and outline each one with your finger that has been dipped in water. Put 2 Tbsp. of the meat mixture in the center of an egg roll skin and fold in half to make a triangle. Roll over the edges and press hard to seal completely. In a skillet, heat the oil for frying (about 5cm deep) and fry the boolanee kachaloo on both sides until golden brown. Drain and serve with 470ml of yoghurt to which 3 cloves of minced garlic, salt and pepper have been added.





## 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=194>

English	Pashto	Dari
My name is _____.	Zama noom ... dai.	Nam-e man ... ast.
What's your name?	Sta noom chaishai dai?	Nam-e shuma chist?
What do you do?	Chakar kawai?	Chi kar mikuni?
I'm an office worker.	Za dai dafter kay kar kaum.	Man kar mand daft er hustam.
I'm a nurse.	Za nurs yem.	Man nis hustam.
I'm a journalist.	Za journalist yem.	Man journalist hustam.
I'm a police officer.	Za polic yem.	Man police hustam.
I am a teacher.	Za malim yem.	Man malim hustam.
I am a homemaker.	Za kor jolawonky yem.	Man kor de khanaram mekunam.
I am a student.	Za shagird yem.	Man shagird hustam.

Conversation		
What's your name?	Sta noom chishai dai?	Nam shuma chist?
My name is Jason.	Zim noom Jason dai.	Nam-e man Jason ast.
What do you do?	Chakar kawai?	Chi kar mikuni?
I'm a office worker.	Za dai dafter kay kar yem.	Man kar mand daft er hustam.
Nice to meet you.	Stapu mulagat khosh shoom.	Khoshal az molaghat ba shoma.

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### 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:

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