

## FACT SHEET – AFGHANISTAN

### Geography

**Location:** Southern Asia, north and west of Pakistan, east of Iran

**Geographic coordinates:** 33 00 N, 65 00 E

**Land boundaries:** total: 5,529 km

**Border countries:** China 76 km, Iran 936 km, Pakistan 2,430 km, Tajikistan 1,206 km, Turkmenistan 744 km, Uzbekistan 137 km

**Elevation extremes:** lowest point: Amu Darya 258 m; highest point: Nowshak 7,485 m

**Natural resources:** natural gas, petroleum, coal, copper, chromite, talc, barites, sulfur, lead, zinc, iron ore, salt, precious and semiprecious stones

**Land use:** arable land: 12.13%; permanent crops: 0.22%; other: 87.65% (2001)

**Environment - current issues:** limited natural fresh water resources; inadequate supplies of potable water; soil degradation; overgrazing; deforestation (much of the remaining forests are being cut down for fuel and building materials); desertification; air and water pollution

**Geography - note:** landlocked; the Hindu Kush mountains that run northeast to southwest divide the northern provinces from the rest of the country; the highest peaks are in the northern Wakhan (Wakhan Corridor)

### People of Afghanistan

**Population:** 29,928,987 (July 2005 est.)

**Age structure:** (2005 est.)

0-14 years: 44.7% (male 6,842,857/female 6,524,485)

15-64 years: 52.9% (male 8,124,077/female 7,713,603)

65 years and over: 2.4% (male 353,193/female 370,772)

**Infant mortality rate:** total: 163.07 deaths/1,000 live births male: 167.79 deaths/1,000 live births

female: 158.12 deaths/1,000 live births (2005 est.)

**Life expectancy at birth:** total population: 42.9 years

male: 42.71 years

female: 43.1 years (2005 est.)

**Nationality:** noun: Afghan(s), (not Afghani)

adjective: Afghan (s/he is an Afghan or Afghan carpet)

**Ethnic groups:** Pashtun 42%, Tajik 27%, Hazara 9%, Uzbek 9%, Aimak 4%, Turkmen 3%, Baloch 2%, other 4%

**Religions:** Sunni Muslim 80%, Shi'a Muslim 19%, other 1%

**Languages:** Afghan Persian or Dari (official) 50%, Pashtu (official) 35%, Turkic languages (primarily Uzbek and Turkmen) 11%, 30 minor languages (primarily Balochi and Pashai) 4%, much bilingualism

**Literacy:** definition: age 15 and over can read and write: total population: 36%; male: 51%;

female: 21% (1999 est.)

### Government of Afghanistan

**Country name:** conventional long form: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

conventional short form: Afghanistan

local long form: Jomhuri-ye Eslami-ye Afghanistan

local short form: Afghanistan

former: Republic of Afghanistan

**Capital:** Kabul

**Administrative divisions:** 34 provinces (welaayat, singular - welaayaat);

**Independence:** 19 August 1919 (from UK control over Afghan foreign affairs) (never been colonized)

**National holiday:** Independence Day, 19 Aug 1919

**Constitution:** new constitution drafted 14 December 2003 - 4 January 2004; signed 16 January 2004

### Economy of Afghanistan

**GDP (purchasing power parity):** \$21.5 billion (2003 est.)

**GDP - per capita:** purchasing power parity - \$800 (2003 est.)

**GDP - composition by sector:** agriculture: 60%

industry: 20%; services: 20% (1990 est.)

**Labor force:** 11.8 million (2001 est.)

**Population below poverty line:** 53% (2003)

**Budget:** revenues: \$300 million

expenditures: \$609 million, including capital expenditures of NA (FY04-05 budget)

**Agriculture - products:** opium, wheat, fruits, nuts, wool, mutton, sheepskins, lambskins

**Industries:** small-scale production of textiles, soap, furniture, shoes, fertilizer, cement; handwoven carpets; natural gas, coal, copper **Exports:** \$446 million (not including illicit exports or re-exports) (FY03-04)

**Exports - partners:** Pakistan 24%, India 21.3%, US 12.4%, Germany 5.5% (2004)

**Imports:** \$3.759 billion (FY03-04)

**Imports - partners:** Pakistan 25.5%, US 8.7%, India 8.5%, Germany 6.5%, Turkmenistan 5.3%, Kenya 4.7%, South Korea 4.2%, Russia 4.2% (2004)

**Currency (code):** afghani (AFA)

**Exchange rates:** afghanis per US dollar 50 afghanis to the dollar.

### Source:

<http://geography.about.com/library/cia/blcafghanistan.htm>



# Chronological History of Afghanistan

## Part I (50,000 BCE - 652)

Archaeologists have identified evidence of stone age technology in **Aq Kupruk**, and **Hazar Sum**. Plant remains at the foothill of the Hindu Kush mountains indicate, that North Afghanistan was one of the earliest places to domestic plants and animals.

**Aryan** tribes in Aryana (Ancient Afghanistan). The City of Kabul is thought to have been established during this time. Rig Veda may have been created in Afghanistan around this time. 600 BCE

**Zoroaster** introduces his religion in Balkh- 522 BCE--486 BCE

After conquering Persia, Afghanistan is invaded by Alexander the Great. Alexander conquers Afghanistan, but fails to really subdue its people.

Greeks rule **Bactria** (Northern Afghanistan) 170 BCE-160 BCE

**Kushan** rule, under King Kanishka. Graeco-Buddhist Gandharan culture reach its height. 220 AD

## Part II (652 - 1747)

Arabs introduce Islam. 962-1030

Islamic era established with the **Ghaznavid Dynasty** (962-1140) Afghanistan becomes the center of Islamic power and civilization.

Invasion of Afghanistan by **Genghis Khan**. 1273

**Marco Polo** crossed Afghan Turkistan. 1332-1370

The rule of **Timour-i-Lang** (Tamerlane) and **Timurid Dynasty** 1451

**Babur**, founder of the **Moghul Dynasty** takes Kabul 1520-1579

## Part III (1747 - 1978)

Rule of **Ahmad Shah Abdali** (Durrani). Ahmad Shah consolidates and enlarges Afghanistan. The Afghan Empire becomes the greatest Muslim empire in the second half of the 18th century. 1747--1773

Rule of **Timur Shah**, son of Ahmad Shah. 1773-1793. Capital of Afghanistan transferred from Kandahar to Kabul because of tribal opposition. Constant internal revolts 1793-1801

### **First Anglo-Afghan War**

After some resistance, **Amir Dost Mohammad Khan** surrenders to the British and is deported to India. **Shah Shuja** is installed as a "puppet king" by the British. (1839-1842) Shah Shuja killed by Afghans. **Akbar Khan**-Afghan hero-victorious against the British. In January 1842, out of 16,500 soldiers (and 12,000 dependents) only one survivor, of mixed British-Indian garrison, reaches the fort in Jalalabad, on a stumbling pony. 1843

### **Second Anglo-Afghan War**

The British invade and the Afghans quickly put up a strong resistance. 1879

### **Battle of Maiwand**

July 1880, Afghan woman named **Malalai** carries the Afghan flag forward after the soldiers carrying the flag were killed by the British. She becomes a heroine for her show of courage & valour.

Abdur Rahman takes throne of Afghanistan as Amir. 1885

**Abdur Rahman** dies, his son **Habibullah** succeeds him. Slows steps toward modernization 1907

Habibullah is assassinated, and succeeded by his son **Amanullah** (The reform King)

### **Third Anglo-Afghan war**

Once again, the British are defeated, and Afghanistan gains full control of her foreign affairs. **Amanullah Khan** initiates a series of ambitious efforts at social and political modernization. 1923

Amanullah Khan is overthrown by **Habibullah Kalakani**. After the fall of Amanullah Khan seeks asylum in Turkey. The Rise and Fall of Habibullah Kalakani, popularly known as "Bache Saqao" or son of the water carrier.

**Nadir Khan** takes the throne. 1930 Nadir Khan assassinated and his son, **Zahir**, inherits the throne. He rules until 1973.

The U.S. rejects Afghanistan's request to buy military equipment to modernize the army. 1955. Daoud turns to the Soviet Union (Russia) for military aid. The Afghan Communist Party was secretly formed in January. **Babrak Karmal** is one of the founders. Second nation-wide elections. **Babrak** and **Hafizullah Amin** are elected. 1972

July 17, 1973: Zahir Shah overthrown in a military coup headed by Daoud Khan and PDPA (Afghan Communist Party). Daoud Khan abolishes the monarchy, declares himself President-Republic of Afghanistan is established. 1973

## Part IV (1978 - Present)

1978 - Bloody Communist coup: Daoud is killed, **Taraki** is named President. **Guerrilla (Mujahideen)** movement is born. 1979. Taraki is killed and **Hafizullah Amin** takes the Presidency. Amin is executed, and he is replaced with **Babrak Karmal**. Soviet Union (Russia) invade in December. 1980. Babrak Karmal is replaced by **Dr. Najibullah**. 1987

Peace accords signed in Geneva. Soviet Union defeated by Afghanistan, Soviets withdraw on Feb. 15, 1989.

April 15, 1992 -The Mujahideen take Kabul and liberate Afghanistan but fight over control and civil war starts

1994. The **Taliban** militia are born, and advance rapidly against the **Rabbani** government.

September 9, 2001 - **Ahmad Shah Masood** is killed by assassins posing as journalists. Two days later (September 11th), suicide attacks on the U.S. November 7 – US and allies attack Afghanistan and War on Terror begins.

December 5 - **Bonn Agreement**. Afghan political groups together in Germany to form interim government. **Hamid Karzai** chosen as Chairman of the transitional government.

January 2004 - Afghanistan adopts a new constitution. The country is now a republic with 3 branches of government (Executive, Legislative, and Judiciary).

October/November - Presidential elections are finally held after being delayed twice. Hamid Karzai is declared the winner, with 55.4% of the votes. He is sworn in December

**Yunis Qanuni** announces new political alliance (March 31st). April - Karzai welcomes the formation of Qanuni's political alliance.

### **Source:**

[www.afghan-web.com/history](http://www.afghan-web.com/history)