



AFGHAN COMMUNICATOR  
SERVING THE AFGHAN COMMUNITY

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**BOOK REVIEW: SILENCING POLITICAL DISSENT**

Nancy Chang's *Silencing Political Dissent* is an unsettling exploration of the PATRIOT Act, a legislation passed in the wake of 9/11 to expand the government's authority in the war on terrorism.

Chang, a lawyer working for the Center for Constitutional Rights, begins with a concise review of the battle between the judicial and executive branches over how much latitude federal agents should have in protecting the United States from political dissidents and "terrorists."

The background cases are disturbing in their own right but the dissection of the PATRIOT Act and an analysis of the implications it has already had on individuals of Middle Eastern descent are

especially troubling.

Chang discusses the vague wording in this act that allows for wide interpretation by the authorities and the increasing reluctance of the government to disclose its actions or investigations.

As another example of the disregard for checks and balances, Chang points out that the PATRIOT Act expands the authority of government agencies to supersede decisions of immigration judges as well as permitting "sneak and peak" searches that circumvent the traditional need for a warrant.

Although at times weighted in "legalese", this book provides a brief and concise review for anyone interested in the much talked about PA-

TRIO Act. Civic responsibility is critical given our current political climate and this

book helps to shed some light on the status of our democratic freedoms.

**AFGHAN HERITAGE DAY**



**Circle Your Calendar!**

AHD is coming to New York Saturday August 14

<http://ahd.afghancommunicator.com>

**COMMUNITY BULLETIN**

**VOLUME 3, ISSUE 4**

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**PICS**



RVCC Project Coordinator for the Afghan School Project, Deborah Corbett discusses the endeavor.

**IMMIGRATION NEWS**

Despite strong objections from immigrant-serving organizations and community groups, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) increased immigration application fees across the board on April 30th. The filing fee for N-400 naturalization applications, for example, rose from \$260 to \$320.

The fee schedule can be found at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

Information provided by the New York Immigration Coalition.

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**CELEBRATION RAISES FUNDS FOR AFGHAN SCHOOL**

A world class celebration on April 30th of global cultures raised much needed funds to help the Amir Shir Ali Khan School in Kabul.

At International Night, an annual celebration of world cultures by the Raritan Valley Community College in NJ, colorful clothing and dances were on display as people from such far flung places as India and Turkey exhibited their cultures and helped raise funds for Amir Khan School.

The evening began with an introduction by the RVCC International Club President who kept the audience laughing for most of the evening.

*Afghan Communicator* par-

ticipated in the event by performing the national Afghan dance, attan, as well as displaying various kinds of Afghan clothing during a fashion show.

The evening was well attended by students, faculty, and local residents of the North Branch community helping to make the fundraiser a success.

Along with the money raised

during International Night, the RVCC International and Rotaract clubs have been raising funds for Amir Khan School since last year. To date, the effort has managed to raise over \$5000. These funds will help buy basic supplies such as blackboards, desks, chairs and other necessary items for the school.

RVCC chose this specific school in Afghanistan with the help of AC.

Persons interested in contributing should contact AC or send us a donation along with the donation slip on the inside of this Bulletin. Please note "Amir Khan School" on the slip.

**AFGHAN NIGHT AT ALWAN PROMOTES AFGHAN CULTURE**

*Afghan Communicator*, with support from Alwan for the Arts, hosted its first of what will hopefully be a series of Afghan Nights on Saturday June 19, 2004.

The evening began with a film screening of *A Vacation For Safawi*, a moving documentary about Andreas Stefansson, a committed NGO worker from Sweden and his managing director, Engineer Safawi who became one of millions of Afghan refugees after the Taliban destroyed his home. Shot in 2001, the English, Swedish, Dari (with Eng-

lish subtitles) film, directed by Carl Larsson is one of the only films made during the fall of the Taliban.

Following the screening, there was a discussion with Afghan filmmaker Walied Osman (*Afghan Stories*) and *Afghan Communicator's* Executive Director, Rameen Moshref Javid.

The night's program continued with a social and music. Attendees came from as far away as Connecticut.

Alwan, where the event was held, was decorated much like

an Afghan house with Afghan carpets, mattresses, pillows and knickknacks commonly found in an Afghan household. The attendees were treated with Afghan hospitality: tea, sweets and nuts.

In an effort to promote Afghan art and culture not only within our young community but also among non-Afghans, we will be hosting this series at least 3 or 4 times a year. We thank Alwan (<http://alwan.org>) for giving us their space in downtown Manhattan for the evening.

## ASIAN FESTIVAL BRINGS CROWDS

*Afghan Communicator* participated in folk, classical and rock music. the annual Asian Pacific American Heritage Festival held in Union Square Park on Sunday, May 2, 2004.



From left: AC intern, Shoaib Harris, AC Board Director, Nadia Hashimi, and AC Treasurer, Khadija Hashimi enjoy a sunlit day at the Festival.

It was on this beautiful Sunday morning that the festival was launched with vivacious live music, Asian dances, martial arts demonstrations, and other traditional Asian stage performances.

These stage performances included traditional Korean, Chinese, Indian, and Filipino dancing, taiko (Japanese drumming), Vietnamese and Polynesian music and dance, modern dance, and jazz,

The Festival was adorned with countless arts & crafts tables and booths presenting Asian foods, exhibits and information, including one from Afghan Communicator featuring Afghan cultural items and other information on Afghanistan.

The Heritage Festival is considered to be the largest pan Asian outdoor event on the East Coast. It is held every year on the first Sunday of May to kick off Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.



AC staff member, Khadija Hashimi staffs the AC table during a large turnout at the Festival.

## RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD: A REVIEW

*A History of the Religions of the World*, though long in title, is a rapid-fire exploration of faith and practice starting with the first upward-gazes of early humanity.

Author Harold E. Lurier describes in a clear, unbiased voice the complexity and diversity of religious belief, as well as the brutal intolerance that often accompanies it.

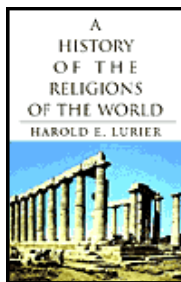
By detailing political, cultural, and philosophical issues surrounding a time period, Lurier adeptly chronicles the unseen forces that drove developing religions. Lurier skillfully explains the seeming randomness of certain religious practices with objective interpretations of underlying historical facts.

The first half of *A History* is a chrono-

logical recap of religion's history from primitive man to today's Islam. The second half of the book describes the histories of the religions of India, China, and Japan, and also features a summary of Lurier's 1972 UN speech on "Obstacles in Achieving World Religious Tolerance" – an interesting topic especially relevant to today's global conflicts.

Lurier's analyses are cogent and his observations precise. His historical explanations place religious practices and religious beliefs in the context of their complicated political and cultural origins.

*A History of the Religions of the World* is a meticulously researched work. The book will make an interesting read for anyone curious about the historical progress and evolution of religion.



Author Harold E. Lurier pursues a careful analysis of world religions.

## FREE ASSISTANCE FOR SMALL BUSINESS

The Small Business Initiative's Neighborhood Entrepreneur Law Project provides free legal assistance to low-income micro-entrepreneurs interested in starting or formalizing a small business. Individuals who demonstrate both a strong commitment to a business idea and financial need will be eligible to receive one-on-one free legal counsel from volunteer attorney.

The Project works closely with a number of community based organizations in the New York City area in order to facilitate access to services and remain sensitive to the needs of diverse populations.

What type of legal assistance is provided to Micro-Entrepreneurs?

- Services related to business structure, such as forming a corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, LLP or LLC
- Reviewing and negotiating commercial leases
- Protecting trademarks and copyrights
- Preparing sales and service contracts
- Dealing with employment law matters, including drafting and reviewing employment agreements
- reviewing loan documents
- obtaining necessary city, state, and federal licenses and registrations

In the event that a client exceeds the income guidelines of this project or demonstrates the need for further assistance, referral for technical and financial assistance will be provided.

If you are interested in learning more about the Entrepreneur Law Project or would like to refer someone for assistance, please call Akira Arroyo, Esq. or Laura Campbell, Program Coordinator at 212.382.6633.

The Neighborhood Entrepreneur Law Project is part of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York Fund.

## PICS FROM INTERNATIONAL NIGHT

During RVCC's International Night, AC displayed Afghanistan's rich heritage during a fashion show.



AC Executive Director, Rameen Javid celebrates his Afghan Heritage during the fashion show at RVCC's International Night.



AC volunteer models colorful Afghan clothing on the catwalk.

## مساعادت مجاني برای بزنس های کوچک

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| - کمک در قسمت قرداد های تجارتي است تا برای کسانی که علاقمند به شروع بزنس کوچک است خدمات قانونی مجاني عرضه نماید. که علاقمند به آغاز بزنس شخصی کسانی هستند ميتوانند از مشوره مجاني قانونی پروژه متذکره مستفيد گردند. | - پروژہ ابتکار بزنس های کوچک در صدد شروع بزنس کوچک است خدمات قانونی مجاني عرضه نماید. که علاقمند به آغاز بزنس شخصی کسانی هستند ميتوانند از مشوره مجاني قانونی پروژه متذکره مستفيد گردند. |
| - کمک در قسمت حفظ حق چاپ یا ترید مارک   | - در تهيہ قرداد های خرید و فروش مشوره قانونی روی مسایل استخدام کارمندان  |
| - در تهيہ قرداد های خرید و فروش مشوره قانونی روی مسایل استخدام کارمندان   | - در تهيہ اسناد قرضيه - در حصول جواز و لایسنهای سنتت، شهر ی و یا قدرالی  |
| - اگر علاقمند دریافت معلومات مزید هستيد لطفا با Akira Arroya Esq و یا Laura Campbell در شماره ذیل تماس گیريد. 212.382.6633  | - مشوره در مورد شروع بزنس از قبیل تشکیل کمپنی، شرکت و یا دکان تجارتي   |

## برگذاري همایش برای کمک به مکتب افغانی

به منظور کمک برای مکتب ابتدا انیبه امیر شیر علی خان به روز ۳۰ اپریل طی یک نمایش همه جانبه یک مقدار کمک نقدیه جمع اوری گردید. نمایش متذکره یکی از جشن های سالانه بود که به افتخار تجلیل از فرهنگ جهانی از جانب کالج راریتان در نیو جرزی میزبانی نام گردید. مذکور با سخنرانی جالب از طرف رییس کلوپ بین المللی کالج راریتان آغاز گردیده و سپس چندی از داوطلبان افغان کمیونیکیتور با اجرای اتن ملی و نمایش لباس های افغانی طی یک فیشن شو مجلل مهمانان مجلس را سرگرم نگهداشتند. محصلین و استادان کالج راریتان و یک عده باشندگان نارت برانچ کمیونیتی از جمله شرکت کنندگان فعال این همایش بودند. با همکاری

## جشنواره فرهنگی آسیایی

روز یک شنبه ۲ می: دفتر افغان کمیونیکیتور در جشنواره سالانه که برای تجلیل فرهنگ کشور های آسیایی برگزار میگردد شرکت نمود. جشنواره موصوف با موسیقی زنده آسیایی، رقص های سنتی از خاور دور، و غیره نمایش های روی سٹیژ آغاز گردید. پارچه های نمایشی که روی سٹیژ برگزار گردید شامل رقص سنتی کوریایی، چینایی، هندی، فیلیپینی، تیله تایکوی جاپانی، و غیره نمایش های فرهنگی آسیایی بود. میز معلوماتی افغان کمیونیتور با بعضی لوازم و معلومات در مورد افغانستان در میان سایر

## DONATE AND HELP AFGHANS REBUILD

**Afghan Communicator** is a community based, grass-roots organization that was founded in 1997. Much of our work is concentrated in the Afghan community in New York. We organize a number of cultural, educational and humanitarian projects and events throughout the year. We also work towards the reconstruction of Afghanistan, and AC is proud to announce the opening of its new office in Kabul.

### PLEASE PRINT:

Yes, I would like to help Afghans rebuild their community here and abroad.

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I can donate:  Patron: \$100  Friend: \$50  Benefactor: \$25  
 Supporter: \$10  Helper: \$5  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable to **Afghan Communicator**.

\* AC is a 501(c)3 not-for profit organization. All contributions of cash or in kind are tax deductible.

To learn more about our work, please visit us at [www.afghancommunicator.com](http://www.afghancommunicator.com).