

COMMUNITY BULLETIN

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AFGHAN CYCLIST MEETS WITH UN REPS

On March 17, 2003, Dr Nadir Shah Nangarhari was finally able to fulfill his goal of delivering a letter of hope and peace to representatives of the

United Nations. Dr. Nangarhari was warmly welcomed by Gillian Sorenson, Assistant Secretary General of External Affairs, and Scott Smith, Political Affairs Officer for Afghanistan.

With AC's Rameen Moshref translating, Dr Nangarhari described the homeland

he left 11 months ago as a "country that was showered by bullets rather than rain." He spoke on the extraordinary poverty and its impact on the education and health status of Afghanistan's children, as well as the appreciation for the presence of the UN.

Dr. Nangarhari also expressed frustration that much of the money that should be going to the children is in fact being spent on offices and cars of



Dr. Nangarhari at his meeting with Asst Sec General Sorenson, holding the letter presented by Dr. Nangarhari, and UN Rep for Afghanistan, Mr. Scott Smith

the NGOs. Landmines endanger children going to school or people taking animals to pastures for feeding.

Dr. Nangarhari outlined other needs of the nation in reconstruction, namely a more formal Marshall-type plan for Afghanistan's infrastructure,

rather than piecemeal, independent projects by various NGOs. He requested the presence of more ISAF forces throughout the country, improvements in electricity and steps taken toward securing Afghanistan's participation in the world Olympics. He reiterated his fear and the fear of his fellow Afghans that if the country is forgotten, it will face even greater misery.

Ms. Sorenson thanked Dr. Nangarhari for the "tremendous effort and symbolism" of his ride for peace. She also reassured him that "even though the headlines are on Iraq, Afghanistan is not forgotten and we will continue to do what we can." Sorenson promised to convey Dr. Nangarhari's message to both the Secretary General Kofi Annan and Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan.

Scott Smith, Political Affairs Officer for Afghanistan, expressed regret that Dr. Nangarhari's accounts of the current situation in Afghanistan are

accurate and that 23 years of war can not be erased in a year or two.

Smith encouragingly described the efforts underway to help the Afghans develop a new constitution, hold elections next year, de-mine and disarm and demobilize militants. One UN goal is the ultimate creation of a multi-ethnic, professional army and police that would be responsible to the state. He described Dr. Nangarhari's ride for peace as a "spectacular way of getting feedback from Afghans."



Dr. Nangarhari presenting his letter of Hope to Ms. Sorenson while Rameen translated it.

ADVOCACY DAY WITH NYIC

On Wednesday March 5, 2003, Afghan Communicator participated in the New York Immigration Coalition rally in front of City Hall. This rally of over 400 immigrants and community leaders urged the Mayor and City Council to take steps to address urgent problems facing the City's immigrant population, including police /community relations, dropout and push-out rates for immigrant students, and language barriers in City agencies.

Frustrated by over a year of inaction on key issues, immigrants and community leaders came out in front of City Hall, symbolically setting off

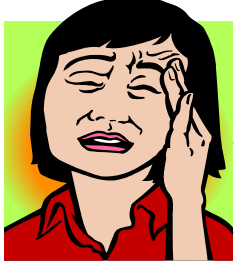
alarm clocks to send a "wake-up message" to the Mayor and City Council. Key concerns of participants included: deteriorating police/community relations due to NYPD enforcement activities targeting Muslim, Arab and South Asian communities and the Mayor's refusal thus far to implement the confidentiality policy approved by voters in the November 2001 vote on City Charter reforms; ballooning dropout and push-out rates of immigrant students who have not been given the instruction they need to meet new graduation and promotion standards; and persistent language barriers for those seeking to access

essential City services coupled with enormous shortages of English language classes. The rally followed a briefing for the day's participants that took place at the Church of St. Andrew and was followed by smaller group meetings with key City Council members and City agency administrators.

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TIPS FOR MIGRAINE SUFFERERS



Approximately 28 million Americans, 75 percent of whom are women, suffer from migraine headaches. Often beginning during teenage years to

early twenties, migraines become fewer as middle age is reached.

Migraines typically start as an intense throbbing pain on one side of the head and may then spread to the other side. However, a various combination of symptoms may occur such as, sensitivity to light and sound, nausea and vomiting. Migraines can be mild but are more often severe and can last from a few hours to three days. People may get migraines many times a week or as seldom as once every few years.

There are 2 common types of migraine: Classic and Common Migraine. Individuals who get classic migraines may feel warning signs called an "aura" (nausea, weakness or visual problems) shortly before pain strikes. Most migraines, though, are common migraine, with no

aura.

Though the causes are not precisely known, it is clear that migraine is a genetic disorder that can be triggered by external factors such as: lack of food or sleep, exposure to light, hormonal irregularities in women, anxiety, stress, and foods such as cheese, caffeine and alcohol.

For additional information contact the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke Brain Resources and Information Network (BRAIN) at:

BRAIN, P.O. Box 5801, Bethesda, MD 20824
(800) 352-9424, www.ninds.nih.gov



Dr. Nangarhari and the AC staff at Ground Zero

بایسکل ران افغان در ملل متحد

داکتر نادر شاه ننگرهارى یازده ماه قبل افغانستان

را بقصد ملل متحد در نیویورک ترک گفته با بایسکل،

و بتاريخ ۱۷ مارچ ۲۰۰۳ همراة خانم جیلیان سورونسون،

معاون امور خارجی منشی عمومی (کوفی انان) ملل

متحد ملاقات کردند. در ضمن این ملاقات، داکتر

ننگرهارى نامه پر دردى که از بیچاره گى های کشور

عزیز ما بیان داشت تقدیم خانم سورونسون کردند.

داکتر ننگرهارى از دشت ها و کوه های آسیاه و اورپا با

بایسکل گذشته و دچار درد و رنج های زیادى شدن،

تا بتوانند که صدای مردم افغانستان را بگوش مردم دنیا

برسانند. شهامت و وطندوستى داکتر ننگرهارى

قابل قدر است که بتنهای، در مقابل عناصر طبیعى

پنجه نرم کرده و از یک سر دنیا بطرف دیگر دنیا

بخاطر وطن و مردم سفر کرده اند با بایسکل!

موسسه جوانان افغان (Afghan Communicator)

این ابتکار داکتر ننگرهارى را قابل قدر میدانیم. کی

میگوید که در این عصر و زمان ما قهرمان نداریم!؟



On March 20-21, the first day of spring, the annual celebration of Now Roz (New Day) marks the Afghan and Iranian New Year. Now Roz is a cultural holiday that has been observed in Afghanistan, Iran, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and other Central Asian countries for over 3,000 years.

The actual birth and history of Now Roz is still under research, but most historians agree that this festive holiday originated in the Zoroastrian era and has been observed by the Sumerians, Babylonians, and other ancient Mesopotamian cultures. Even with roots in the Zoroastrian religion, Now Roz is celebrated by people of all faiths.

Now Roz is not only a celebration of the arrival of the New Year, the spring, but also represents a rebirth, a renewal and a chance to start a fresh outlook on life. Now Roz speaks on the past remembered, the future hoped for, and the present recognized as the foundation stone of hope.

NOW ROZ, A SPRING TRADITION

Now Roz is one of the most celebratory times of the year for Afghans and several rituals are practiced in preparation for and in celebration of this National Holiday. Weeks before Now Roz, houses are painstakingly cleaned, special dishes are prepared, new cloths are made for children, and some people travel to Mazar-e Sharif to take part in maila-e gul-e surkh (the red flower, or tulip, picnic). Mazar-e Sharif is one of the most festive sites in the country during Now Roz.

The Afghan celebration lasts one day, in contrast to the month long Iranian celebrations. The day starts with families gatherings. Traditional Now Roz foods include Sabzi-Chalaw (a spinach and rice dish), Haft-Mewa or Mewa-e Tar Karda, various nuts and dry fruits in a raisin broth and Samanak, a sweet dish made of nuts and wheat. Other Now Ruz rituals include planting of trees and raising a banner at the Shrine of Ali (AS) in Mazar-e Sharief and in Karta-e Sakhi district of Kabul.

Recently, Mayor Bloomberg, issued a formal proclamation recognizing the holiday of Now Roz

on March 20th-21st. This is perhaps the first time a government leader has formally acknowledged the diverse religious and cultural communities that celebrate the holiday.

نوروز در نیویورک و کالیفورنیا

جامعه افغانی در نیویورک، با همکاری آقای حیات مسعودی،

در روز شنبه ۲۲ مارچ در مکتب فلاشنگ های سکول نوروز

را جشن گرفتند. چندصد تن از هموطنان ما حاضر بودند.

مرکز افغانهای الامیدا در کالیفورنیا نوروز را در یک چمن

شخصی دایر کردند. اضافه از ده هزار افغان درین جشن

پرسر و صدا شرکت داشتند. بایسکلران افغانی داکتر نادر

شاه ننگرهارى همچنان چند کلمه بحضار اراه نمودند.

AFGHAN DENTIST COMPLETES RIDE FOR PEACE



After living through over two decades of war, Dr. Nadir Shah Nangarhari, an Afghan dentist, realized the moment had come for him to send a message of solidarity to the

Dr. Nangarhari shaking hands with Afghanistan President, Hamid Karzai (above). Dr. Nangarhari posing with the former King Mohammad Zahir (below).



world and to prove the people of Afghanistan want only to live in peace and without

fear. Nearly a year ago, Dr. Nangarhari, set out on a bicycle journey for peace that started in Kabul. He left behind six children, the youngest only 6 months old, and his wife to cross many borders, including those of Iran, Turkey, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, France and England, from where he took a flight to Washington DC to finally reach the US.

He had two missions when he decided to bike to Washington DC and then to New York City. One mission was to bring letters of peace from his war torn country; one letter was for President Bush and the other to the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, thanking them for their efforts to rid Afghanistan of the terror it experienced during the Taliban regime. The letters were also intended to be a

reminder not to forget the people and reconstruction efforts of Afghanistan at a time when they desperately need the resources and finances promised by the US and other countries. The second goal of his journey was to place an Afghan flag along side the US flag near Ground Zero to show that the Afghan people also mourned the victims of September 11th and to exhibit a show of solidarity between the two nations.



Dr. Nangarhari did not have an easy journey. Along the way he endured many hurdles. In Turkey, he was hit by a truck and in Europe, exhaustion drove him



Members of ASAP saying goodbye to Dr. Nangarhari on his way to NY, near the Washington Memorial in DC

Photo Courtesy of ASAP

near hallucination, but the will to go on came from the people he befriended along the way. In March 2003, he flew to Washington DC where the Afghan community there greeted him with open arms. During his week long stay in DC, he met with the Afghan Ambassador to the United States, Ishaq Shahryar, and handed him his first letter of peace to be delivered to President Bush. He then took off on bike, again, to finish the last leg of his long, tiring trek for peace and headed towards



People who accompanied Dr. Nangarhari from DC to NY, including Nasim, Karzai, Mukhtar, Yahya, Nadir, Ezmarai.

New York City with a detour in Philadelphia, PA to meet more Afghans. Some of the Afghans from Philadelphia decided to follow behind by car to ensure his safety and to show the pride they had in him and his mission.



Upon his arrival in New York City, many Afghans from the NY metro area greeted Dr Nangarhari near Ground Zero. As the doctor rode his bike onto the site, tears fell across the faces of some on-lookers as this was a joyous and proud moment for Dr Nangarhari's compatriots. With the help of the New York Parks Dept, NY Port Authority, and NYPD, Afghan Communicator was able to obtain permits to hold this memorable event near Ground Zero as well as for Dr. Nangarhari to place US and Afghan flags side by side at the September 11th Memorial Globe in Battery Park City.

One year of travel and three bikes later, Dr. Nangarhari has accomplished his many goals in the US and will now work to achieve his goal back home in Afghanistan. His trip has inspired many Afghans here in the US to the point that the Afghan communities of DC, Philadelphia, NYC, and San Francisco (where he flew to attend a Persian New Year event hosted by Society of Afghan Professionals), through fundraising events, have raised enough money for Dr. Nangarhari to open a clinic when he returns to his town of Jalaalabad, Afghanistan.

ASN CONFERENCE: ROUNDTABLE ON AFGHANISTAN

The Association for the Study of Nationalities (ASN) and Columbia University hosted their 7th Annual Conference on April 3-5, 2003 at Columbia University in New York City. Participating in this event, Afghan Communicator hosted its third official roundtable on Afghanistan. The participants included Batya Swift Yasgur, MA, MSW, the author of *Behind the Burqa*, Fahima Vorgetts, a women's activist from Maryland, and Rameen Javid Moshref, Executive Director of Afghan Communicator.

The roundtable was successful in identifying the various elements that impede peace and

solidarity in Afghanistan, as well as suggesting ways that some problems may be solved. Audience participation generated a healthy discussion.

In our ongoing efforts to serve the community and in accordance with our Declaration of Existence, Afghan Communicator creates forums of communication, where Afghanistan and the Afghan community are discussed by the educated tier.



Panelist from left to right: Rameen J. Moshref, Batya Swift Yasgur, Fahima Vorgetts



AFGHAN COMMUNICATOR
SERVING THE AFGHAN COMMUNITY

PO Box 1159
New York, NY 10011
Phone: 718-445-6438
Fax: 718-762-5575
www.afghancommunicator.com
Email: YoungAfghans@hotmail.com

AC STAFF

Executive Director Rameen J Moshref
Program Coordinator Setio Soemeri
Treasurer Khadija Hashimi
Secretary Wida Amir
Marketing Director Khatera Sayeed
Webmaster Ayman Shairzay
Public Relations Fahima Ahad

SAVE THE DATE!

AC IS PLANNING ITS ANNUAL
AFGHAN HERITAGE DAY ON
SUNDAY AUGUST 17TH. STAY
TUNED FOR MORE INFO BY JUNE!

Now Roz in NYC

Afghan Communicator took part in the Afghan New Year celebration held at Flushing High School, on Saturday March 22, 2003. The event was organized by many New York organizations and Mr. Hayat Mas-sudi. Hundreds of Afghan community members participated in this event. Vendors sold jewelry, food and other souvenirs. The program began with a few verses from the Holy Quran and included talks by elected officials, community organizers and activists, raffle prizes and various other programs.



Attendees performing the national dance of Attan.

موسسه جوانان افغان در مدافعه از حقوق افغانها
۱۱ سپتمبر ۲۰۰۱ توجع همه را بطرف مسلمانان و
افغانها جلب کرد، که اکثر این توجعها نادرست و
بضرر مردم ما واقع شد. موسسه هماهنگی جوانان
افغان همیشه در راس دفاع از هموطنان قرار داشته

و در مظاهرات صلحمندانه شرکت کرده و در هر موقع مردم
امریکا را به مردم و کلتور افغانی و اسلامی آشنا
میسازد.

Now Roz in California

The Afghan Community Center of Alameda in California held its annual Afghan New Year (Naw Ruz) celebration on Saturday March 29, 2003. AC accompanied Dr. Nadir Shah Nangarhari, the Afghan cyclist, on this trip to California to help him spread his message to the greater Afghan community and to draw support for his efforts in Afghanistan. Also accompanying AC and Dr. Nangarhari was Dr. Dawer Nadi, President of Afghanistan Peace Association.

Photo by K. Fakhri



Members of Society of Afghan Professionals (SAP) at their booth

It was a beautiful day in the Bay Area, and as many as 10,000 people showed up for the event. There were many jewelry, food, music and Afghan souvenir vendors as well as community based and student organizations. The program started with a recitation from the Holy Quran and included appearances by many artists, performers, elected officials and Dr. Nangarhari.

از جمله این فعالیت ها چندی را نام میبریم:
- روز چهارشنبه ۵ مارچ ۲۰۰۳ در شاروالی نیویورک
تمام موسسات جمع شدن تا از حقوق مهاجرین دفاع کنند
- روز شنبه ۵ اپریل ۲۰۰۳ موسسه جوان یک کنفرانس را
در پوهنتون کولمبیا دائر کردیم. درین کنفرانس خانم
باتیا سیوفت یاسگور، خانم فهیمه ورگاس، و رامین جاوید
مشرف اشتراک داشتند.

- پیش از جنگ با عراق، موسسه جوانان در یک مظاهره
برای صلح اشتراک کرده تا دولت امریکا را بوعده که به
مردم افغانستان داده اند بیاد دهیم. این مظاهره در روز
۱۵ فیرووری در منهاتن برگزار شد و اضافه از دوصد هزار
نفر شرکت داشتند.

RALLY FOR PEACE

On February 15, 2003, along with countless people across the world, Afghan Communicator participated in a peace rally in Manhattan. Rameen J Moshref, Executive Director of AC, braved the bitter cold wrapped in an AC banner to show support for peace and solidarity with fellow New Yorkers. Afghan Communicator wants to remind the Bush administration not to forget their promised support to Afghanistan, especially in the wake of the war

