

# THE NEWSTAR

independent student newspaper

Special cultural issue 1

May 25, 2020



Amina Ahmad  
taken by Umka Bulatova

Photos by: Sarwari, Mohammad  
Homayoon

## MY AFGHANISTAN

Thirst for a  
visit...  
Jalalabad



page 2

Women's  
role in  
Hazaragi  
culture



page 4

Beri Beri

page 6





photos from: Pinterest

## Thirst for a visit... Jalalabad

As the new day started...  
My thoughts led me to Jalal-uddin in whose honour the city was named.  
My eyes directed me to the beauty of King Amanullah Khan's mausoleum  
Where hundreds of people came from across the country to feel the joy of independence  
Then my eyes led me to the great crowd in Habibullah-khan's Siraj-ul-Emarat in springtime.  
Here I am with one desire:  
To visit Jalalabad

As the spring arrived...  
My cheeks felt the warm air and my eyes saw the blooming flowers  
The fresh air and the blossoms reminded me of the Orange Blossom-Festival,  
The spring breeze bringing the fragrant smell of orange blossoms  
And my ears sensing the peaceful sounds of birdsong.  
People are celebrating the coming of spring through poetry and attan in Amir Shaheed Garden  
Hundreds of others visiting Darwanta Dam to enjoy freshly fried fish  
With the best seasoning, one would have ever tasted.  
Some are rushing towards Adam-khan's special Chapli Kebab,  
While others are buying the sweet jalebi of Do-Saraka  
And eating the special pakora and kulfi of Daramsaal  
Here I am, with one wish:  
To visit Jalalabad

As the springtime continues...  
My skin touches the softness of my loose-fitting Gande Afghani  
With its fabric of red, green, yellow, and white,  
And my forehead touches the stiffness of my chunky kuchi jewellery  
Without which my Gande Afghani is incomplete  
Here I am, with one hope:  
To visit Jalalabad,  
The city of Hamisha Bahaar  
(Always Spring).



photo from: Pinterest

Mursal Ayobi, PSY 117

## Cultural heritage of Paktia

The uniqueness, beauty, and color of Afghan culture shines from the north-east part of Afghanistan known as Paktia province. Paktia has 13 districts and the capital of Paktia is Gardiz. Paktia has historical importance, as it is considered the capital city of Aryas (the ancient people of Aryana) and Pashtuns.

In Paktia, it is a tradition to attempt to draw rational solutions to disputes through forming gatherings of elders known as (jirga). Pashtuns of Paktia are specially known for holding (jirga) and honoring the decisions of their elders in every aspect of life. The custom of dowry is well known among them; in order to unite two families in marriage. The groom's family has to pay some amount of cash to the bride's. Then the bride family purchases all the necessary household items for their newly married daughter. The rich traditions and hospitality of the Pashtuns of Paktia are experienced by everyone not only inside Afghanistan but also by tourists.

The traditional dance known as attan is performed by Pashtun men and women during wedding celebrations or before defeating the enemy in battle. The main purpose of the attan dance is to motivate everyone to passionately defeat the enemies of Afghanistan. In one part of the attan dance, everyone is supposed to touch the ground then turn around, symbolizing that the dancers can do anything to keep the honor of the soil as their ancestors did. In the past, attan was usually performed by the younger generation before going to war against the adversaries of Afghanistan in order to arouse the dancers' rebellious side. Gradually, it became a traditional dance across Afghanistan. Attan is performed in various forms by Pashtuns of Kandahar, Helmand, Nangarhar and elsewhere. Each Pashtun tribe has its own way of performing attan.

The traditional food in Paktia is known as (dandakai) which is made from rice and mung bean or green gram and in the middle of the dish, oil with yogurt is added. In the past, due to insecurity, there were few schools in Paktia and some families did not allow their children to study. However, currently, the people of Paktia are building schools and sending their sons and daughters abroad to complete their studies.

Nadeema Zalmay, Alumni 2019



## Recreational Places of Kabul

Afghanistan is a land of beauty and splendor. The capital city of Kabul, is famous for its culture, traditional architecture styles, and history of over 3,500 years. The population is more than 5 million people, which includes almost all major ethnic groups of Afghanistan. There are many beautiful natural and cultural sites in Kabul, such as the Qargha Reservoir, Paghman Palace and Gardens of Babur and Gardens of Chehelstone.

**Qargha Reservoir:** This reservoir is an amazing place that has attracted both locals and foreigner tourists for its beauty. This reservoir is surrounded by small hills and has a very calm and miraculous view. Many people visit here with their families for picnicking, and it provides space for surfing, boating, and horse riding. It has nice restaurants and hotels on its banks.

**Paghman Palace:** The town of Paghman lies 10km away from Qargha Lake and is well-known for its invigorating climate. Paghman Palace is a newly built castle that opened its doors to the public in 2014. This palace covers approximately 370 acres of land and is decorated with beautiful hand-made traditional carpets and rugs as well as carved wooden walls, which adds even more to its beauty. Outside of the castle there is a beautiful greenhouse with many different types of flowers, a mosque, a wonderful waterfall and a big playground for buzkashi (a traditional Afghan sport).

**The Gardens of Babur:** This garden is one of the historic parks in Kabul. It was built by Babur Shah the Mughal emperor in the 16th century. It is built on a hillside with many stepped terraces. Babur's grave is on the 14th terrace. His mausoleum was built from white marble; unfortunately, it was destroyed by the Taliban. In the middle of this garden there is a white marble mosque that was built by Shah Jahan. He is now best remembered for his architectural achievements: he was the one who constructed Taj Mahal in Agra, India.

**Chehelstone Palace:** This palace has more than 200 years of history. Only three columns have survived from the original structure due to the continuous wars. The base of the palace was built by Timor Shah Durrani in order to celebrate his 40th birthday. The name means "Forty Columns" in Persian. But as a result of wars, construction remained incomplete. Abdul Rahman Khan decided to reconstruct this palace and made significant changes. In 2015, with the financial assistance of the Aga Khan Foundation and the government of Germany, the palace was restored over a period of 3 years and six months. The reconstructed palace opened its doors to the public in 2019. The Chehelstone Palace is located on top of a mountain to the west of Afghanistan's parliament, Darulaman Palace, Tajbeg Palace, and Paghman Mountains, and the Gardens of Babur are to its north. This palace was painted red in the past and was known as the Red Palace.

Susan Azizi, NGA 2020



photo by: Naimat Rawan

photos from: Tripadvisor

## Afghanistan

I am from a place where everyone smells blood  
Everyone sees blood wherever they look

I am from a place where everyone awaits their death every second

I am from a place where death follows everyone, my mom, my dad, my little brother, and my people everywhere

I am from a place where at one moment people laugh, and at the next one they cry because of a sudden blast

I am from Afghanistan, where peace looks distant  
A place where body parts are visible in the streets after each brutal attack,  
Yet still everyone lives a normal life and stays hopeful.  
We are optimistic, we wait for peace

My country is a place where peace is only tangible in our dreams  
I am from a place where people are strong.

A mother loses her young son who was a soldier, her cute little daughter who was on her way to school, and her hard-working husband who was trying to bring home food for his children.

But the mother still struggles to survive in this unfair world and to remain strong regardless of her suffering

I am from a place where hope, love, and beauty shine in everyone's eyes.

I am proud to be from such a place, even though it is unbearable

My beautiful Afghanistan, my homeland  
We are all Afghans from different ethnicities  
We are optimistic about your future.  
We love you and we work hard for you

We will renovate you  
We, the strong people of Afghanistan, will show your enemies that we cannot be defeated  
We will bring peace from a distant dream to a feasible reality.  
We will change you into paradise

My dear homeland, Afghanistan

Taiba Atiffi , Eco 117

## Women's role in Hazaragi culture



Hazaras are a group of people living in several provinces of Afghanistan. They have their own lifestyle, cuisine, and culture; they have their own names, their own styles of dress, and their own ways of celebrating weddings and Eids. In Hazaragi culture, men and women each play their own roles. Women are very important in Hazaragi society and even play a strong role in Hazaragi literature. The Hazaragi woman Abe Mirza (Mother of Mirza) was famous for playing the Dambora (music instrument) and singing Hazaragi songs in the 1930s. She spent most of her life singing and playing the amobra; while it was something against the culture of those days, she put her life in danger to do what she loved. She is a symbol of strength and art in the life of young women who dream of becoming musicians or artists.

Hazara people traditionally look at girls as symbols of happiness, and when a girl is born, the family looks at her as a symbol of good luck and celebrates it. This idea was developed because it is believed that girls are sweet as children and supportive and kind as adults. Parents give their daughters names with a beautiful meaning, like "Gul," which means "flower" or "Hakima"

(my name), which means "the healer of pains" or "knowledgeable." Parents also taught their daughters social etiquette, cooking, and handicraft-making. Also, women are traditionally important in family decision making, and men would value women's ideas and decisions during discussions of important issues at dinner.

Hazara women are known for handicrafts and arts. In spring in most areas of Hazarajat (the places where Hazaras live), women busy themselves with livestock such as sheep, and in winter women make socks, jackets, shoes, hats, and rugs which are very similar to Kyrgyz traditional rugs. They are also renowned for designing clothes that are famous both in Afghanistan and elsewhere. Hazara women's dresses have subtle needlework and is usually composed of two colors, blue and green, symbolizing simplicity and peacefulness. Handicrafts are a very important part of women's life in Hazarajat, and even girls who move to other cities to study spend their vacations making handicrafts. Hazaras typically have smaller eyes, so they are called people with narrow eyes. I would love to put a picture of Abe Mirza as a heroic woman in my culture.

Hakima Askary, NGA 2020

## Hadda, a Historical Place in Nangarhar

Are you fascinated by the incredible beauty of Afghanistan? There are some beautiful places in Afghanistan that people might not be familiar with. One such place is Hadda, in my home province of Nangarhar.

Hadda is the collection of ancient and beautiful sculptures but the well-known of them is the sculpture of Buddha.

The follower of Buddha built a place by the name of Hadda where there they were practicing their religion and therefore they made the sculpture of Buddha for worship purposes. Which remained as huge history in Hadda of the Gandhara region one of the other interesting attractions is modernism or in other words, the place was built with recent beautiful design such as the design of the flowers and surrounding of the place. The ancient things found in Hadda is also known as the hidden treasure of Afghanistan because it also describes the way of living of people in

those centuries. Furthermore one of the other beautiful places is Takhte-bahi which was built for the reputation of Buddha. Now Takhte-bahi is the part of Pakistan's authority. Beside there were found some of the golden coins from previous centuries. I believe not only building, parks, but markets could also be considered the beauty of a place or country. History is in fact, the identity of a country or province which makes it more beautiful and interesting to visit and to know how the place has improved since past years. Beside remains of the ancient era make it more beautiful to see which skills people had in the past. As we know artist most of the time sculpt what they see which illustrate the culture, art style of living.

Nargis Kamran, NGA 2020

## Hazaragi Culture

Hazaras are the third largest ethnic group in Afghanistan, with a population less than that of Pashtuns and Tajiks. This ethnic group has its own beautiful cultural practices that differ depending on the location where they are residing in. For instance, the method of preparation of traditional Hazara foods in Daikondi is different from the method practiced by those who live in Jaghori, Ghazni. Moreover, there are different types of male and female costumes or traditional outfits with very unique and beautiful designs and patterns in different parts of Afghanistan. For instance, we have hundreds of gorgeous Afghan female traditional dresses that each have their own beauty, design, colors, and handmade decorations. For instance, Gande Afghani is a very popular costume or female traditional dress in Afghanistan that has many beautiful designs and colors. The usage of these dresses is a part Afghan culture, and they are worn at weddings, during Eid, at engagement parties, or for any other celebration or daily life by different ethnic groups, especially Pashtuns, Tajiks and some other ethnicities. Gande Afghani is even liked by those in other countries, and in recent years, Afghan designers have mixed traditional designs with modern ones and exported them abroad.

Hawa Taban, NGA 2020

## Ariana

Arians are a mystery  
 Carrying our 5000 years of history  
 There is a place up in the mountains  
 So rich with natural beauty and fountains  
 There live people so strong  
 From carrying richness for a thousand years long  
 We carry gold and kindness in our hearts,  
 The legacy of the Silk Road rests on our shoulders  
 This land and culture are my wealth  
 Our people are known as mighty warriors with respect  
 I miss the eagles in the peaks  
 The white-covered mountains and the busy streets  
 The dances and the Eids  
 The blue sky and generous treats  
 Colors around me reminds me of those clothes  
 Which the ladies used to wear on Nowroz

Among them there are many beauties  
 With every kind of charm like rubies  
 Their great bright eyes, long curling lashes  
 And eyebrows wide, rosy cheeks  
 My country is the land of emperors  
 The brave, the wise and heroes  
 Blood, we are immersed in love with you  
 And feel pain when we're away from you  
 I remember the mountain tops of my Afghan land  
 If I do not go there again, I will be damned  
 If I must choose between the world and you  
 I shall not hesitate to claim my love for you

Popal Mumtaz, NGA 2020

## Kabul

The plane landed at Hamid Karzai International Airport. It was a scorching summer day in July of 2014. The very first thing I saw after leaving the plane was my country's flag: green, red, and black dancing in the beautiful blue sky. I had a mixture of all kinds of feelings. I was happy and sad; insecure but safe. It was difficult for me to understand how I should have felt as an Afghan girl who had lived eighteen years as a refugee and was only now returning to my homeland, sweet Afghanistan. Indeed, I felt like a bird that had just gotten out of a cage and could finally fly freely, without any limitations the colorful dreams she had in her mind.

Days and nights passed, and the more I learned about Kabul, the more I fell in love with this magical but inauspicious city. It is like being outside on a freezing winter day with a shivering body, numb fingers, and a red nose, yet still feeling the taste and joy of a warm cup of hot chocolate inside you.

Kabul, the home of four million Afghans, is a city of contradictions: a city of wreckages and nice buildings, Dasht-e-Barchi in the west, Wazir Akbar Khan in the north. Take me back to walking around Karte-Char. Let me have a glass of green tea with wonderful cardamom flavor while sitting in a cozy café, hanging out with a bunch of friends and planning for a spring hike to Shahrak Omid-e-sabz. How can I not miss the sweet taste of sugar cane juice on summer days sitting in the backseat while stuck in heavy traffic at rush hour?

How about those judging gazes at me for the way I dress? Oh! I've gotten used to that. They just see and compare the beautiful creatures of God in two different looks: me, wearing jeans and a blouse with a yellow scarf not covering all my hair, and another woman with shiny eyes hidden behind a blue burqa, both of us in the same frame, doing same activity just crossing Mandawi Street.

How can we forget the sound of that terrible explosion in Dehmazang and then wear our new traditional colorful clothes for Eid al-Adha and listen to the melody of the dombyra broadcast by the channel Tolo? Kabul is alive, and people are living there. I too am there, my heart and thoughts are always there: I remember the sweet moments I had with my siblings enjoying chilled shornakhlood. I want to pay 100AFN for my favorite ice cream and shiryakh to enjoy a sunny afternoon in the month of Asad.

It is Friday night: I sit next to my father's grave, talking to him and telling him how much I missed him, and as always I blame Kabul for killing my dad. The sound of the azan can be heard around Sakhi Shrine. Oh! It's getting late; I stand up, wipe my tears off my cheeks, and say goodbye to him. I go home, open the door, and smile. Mom is waiting for me; I say hello to her and to my home.

Yes, it is the city of contradictions; it is Kabul.

Soheila Noori, ECO 117

## Beri Beri

While hearing the word "Beri Beri," I remember my childhood when I was living in a village with my family and friends. Beri Beri was the most memorable toy for me, and I cannot forget it. Beri Beri is a special amusement for girls in our village (Jaghoory). It is a traditional type of doll. Young girls usually play Beri Beri in winter (holiday time) with a group of friends of the same age. First, we would make the dolls, then we would make them clothes, and finally we would cover their wooden bodies. Usually the age for playing Beri Beri is 6 to 12. Girls playing Beri Beri would have a family of wooden dolls and any tools which were needed for a family: a house, dishes, carpets, cars, and the like.

In late fall, we would search for thin sticks for making the bodies of our dolls. After finding and cutting the stick into small pieces, we would try to find some beautiful photos for their faces. The most important doll was the bride. We focused on styling the bride in the best possible way.

In our Beri Beri family, the bride had a husband, a mother-in-law, sisters-in-law, and sometimes children. Most of our dolls were women. The wooden dolls were provided with clay dishes which we made by hand. Our shoes were our dolls' cars. Life was so simple and nice. Every day we were happy and had a party with our dolls. We used to put our small dolls in our shoes and took them to picnic. Young girls were learning about their future life with their wooden dolls, and playing Beri Beri was a young girl's preparation for her future life in a very practical way.



Shukria Shahryar, NGA 2020

## Kyrgyzstan, the Hidden Treasure

I came to Bishkek from Afghanistan three months ago in order to pursue my undergraduate degree at AUCA. Since childhood, I have been very interested in meeting new people and learning about their cultures. Before coming here, I did not have any information about Kyrgyzstan and its culture, but after my arrival I was surprised by its people and nature.

The language barrier was the first thing that I experienced in Kyrgyzstan. I used to speak Persian and Pashto in my home country, but here I have to speak English at university and Russian in the local environment. Keeping track of four languages at the same time is difficult. It took almost a month to learn how to pronounce “Здравствуйте”, meaning hello in Russian, correctly. Food was another new experience. During my first week of my stay in Bishkek, I wanted to try new food at a local Kyrgyz restaurant, but I had no idea what anything tasted like. I was unintentionally served horse soup which later made me feel sick. People do not serve horse meat as a meal in Afghanistan. As a horse lover, I felt very sad about my experience. This taught me that knowing about the ingredients of a meal is very important. Now, my favorite Kyrgyz dishes are beshpamak and kerchoo. I am very excited to teach these recipes to my family

when I return to Afghanistan. There are some Kyrgyz cultural values that have truly attracted my attention. One of these is the coexistence of various religions. Here in Kyrgyzstan, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, and Jewish live together peacefully. You can see a mosque on one side of the road and a church on the other side. Furthermore, elders are being highly respected and valued everywhere. I was also surprised to see that a special space was made for elders in public buses where nobody else would sit. Additionally, women’s rights have been significantly protected, and gender equality is considered an important cultural value. What really makes Kyrgyzstan special to me is the atmosphere of hospitality where people are friendly and respectful, and there are close family relationships within the community. Kyrgyz culture is very rich. As an Afghan woman, I believe that Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan have a lot of common values that could be used as tools to build a strong bond between these two nations. Let’s look for what we have in common rather than what keeps us apart.

Zainab Amirzai, NGA 2020



## How I See Kyrgyzstan as a Foreign Student

Leaving a place where you have grown up is a very brave step for someone to take. The love, respect, and freedom that you can find in your own country are difficult to find somewhere else. But if the place that you want to leave for is quite like your own country, then you may forget about homesickness. Bishkek is like Kabul in some ways. When I first saw the microrayons of Bishkek, for a moment I thought that I am in Kabul because we also had the same type of buildings by the name of “microrayons” in Kabul. Before coming to Bishkek, I was worried about how people here would treat us as Afghan immigrants. But the hospitality of Kyrgyzstan’s people, the love and respect that they showed us, and the freedom that we have here has assuaged my concerns. Kyrgyzstan also have beautiful green spaces and tasty food.

Arriving in Bishkek is certainly the best thing that has ever happened to me. Before leaving Afghanistan, I was worried that I might not be able to adjust to a new environment. However, as soon as I arrived, I started to appreciate the differences in our cultures and values. I met hospitable people both on and off campus. On my first day at AUCA,

I was warmly welcomed by AUCA’s staff. All of these experiences make me believe that I will be happy in Bishkek.

Kyrgyzstan has beautiful places such as Issyk-Kul, which I have heard about, but not visited. Hearing praise for Issyk-Kul makes me resolved to visit it once for sure. Kyrgyzstan has natural beauty rather than artificial beauty. Many places in Bishkek are green and relaxing. Kyrgyzstan has many popular foods such as lagman. Lagman is becoming one of my favorite foods, and I believe that after finishing my studies and leaving Kyrgyzstan, I will go back to Bishkek once a year for Lagman.

For me, coming to Bishkek was a dream come true. I always wanted to be a part of a society like that of Bishkek, where you can find love, respect, and freedom at the same time. Without a doubt, you will never feel like a stranger in a country like Kyrgyzstan. With its hospitable people, beautiful places, and tasty foods, Kyrgyzstan is going to stay in my heart forever.

Zuhal Qaderdan, NGA 2020

# Traditional Instruments & Dances in Afghanistan



Bekhanam Mesly Bolbol - I will sing like a nightingale, a folksy Afghan song that its music is rhythmized by traditional instruments like Tabla, Rubab and Ghichak. Afghanistan, a historical region previously known as Aryana and Greater Khurasan, is famous by its traditional and interesting music & dances in the world. Afghan traditional instruments indicates that from the early 7th Century, the Arian (ancient Afghans) used to be heart some and welcomed people for development of music in the world especially Central Asia, Iran and India subcontinent. Afghan people use their folkloric music and dances through concerts, ceremonies, parties, victories and other especial events even in sad times to express their emotions.

## Some music instruments:

**Rubab** known as “the Lion of Instruments” is the native instrument of Afghanistan. The body of Rubab is mostly made of mulberry tree or Rose wood. And the head is made of goat skin. Infront of it has 3 melody strings, 4 frets 3 drone strings and 14 to 15 sympathetic strings. Homayoun Sakhi is a popular Rubab instrumentalist, and if you go to his Instagram @homayounsakhi you can hear the amazing sound & melodies of Rubab.

**Dambura** is another Afghan classical instrument. The body of Dambura is made of hallow wood, the large form of it has 18 strings with 12 tuned pegs on the end of its body.

**Qaichak**, a different instrument with body made of mental tin or copper. It has a horsehair bow called Kaman.

**Nay Tulak** is a wooden flute, with 7 holes on the front of it that help for making different tunes.

**Harmonia**, another Afghan instrument is mostly used as “sur” for the voice. The special music categories it contains are Ghazal and Indian Ghwali.

## Dances:

**Shalangi** is also an Afghan traditional dance which is performed like a pair competition between 2 or 4 or up to 20 people. This dance has especial music which the melody is called Owshari. After the melody is played the first person turns to the second one and the third one turns to the fourth and so on. Then according to the melody, they both clap to the right, then above the head, then to the left, at first is 1 clap then 2 and finally 3 times. The dancers may add some other dance techniques like ghamza(flirtatious), eshwa(coquetry), naz(coyness) and movement of eyes. Here are some of words for Owshari and attan melody:

Jamshid shoro kard saza.

Memorom az gham-e to.

Translation:

Jamshid started the music.

I die from sorrow over you.

Should be mentioned that there are other traditional dances like Qarsak, Herati Slow Qamzai, Logary, Qataqani, Chob Bazi and especial Hazaragi.

Mina Tabibzada, NGA 2020

## Attan

Attan is one of the Afghan national dances, mostly performed by Pashtuns as well as other ethnic communities at engagements, weddings, New Year parties, or informal gatherings. attan became very famous thanks to the Afghan students who study abroad. When they want to introduce their culture, they often perform attan for foreigners. Thus, attan is being performed by Afghan students all over the world - in the USA, Canada, and even in Kyrgyzstan. At the American University of Central Asia, you can enjoy attan every year during the Diversity Week or the special celebrations of Afghan culture.

Attan is quite a spectacular dance since it is performed by a large group of dancers. There is almost no limit to the number of dancers, you could see 50 people dancing together. Usually it is a mix of boys and girls, and they typically wear Afghan traditional clothes and hold colorful scarves, waving them in the air while performing. As for the music, Attan is traditionally performed with the help of Afghan national musical instrument, called the dohol, but it can be accompanied by any other Afghani music or song.

The dance is popular not only abroad, but also inside the country. It has become so widespread that there are even different types of attan in Afghan culture, developed by different ethnic groups, such as Nuristani, Kabuli, and Kandahari attan styles. It is also a total must for engagements and weddings because it is symbol of happiness in the future.

Whether you are in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, or anywhere else, I hope you'll get your chance to enjoy attan or may be even dance it!





## A poem to the beauty of Afghanistan

by Ahmad shah Durani

### Afghanistan, Land of the Brave

If someone asks me to name a country considered to be graveyard of great empires, there is only one name which comes into my mind: Afghanistan. A land-lock country located in Central Asia and has more than 3,000 years of history. Thousands of years ago, tribes of people came to the area that is now Afghanistan and built a civilization. Many clans came and started battles against them, but the Aryans (Afghans' name in the past) have been rarely defeated by them because of their bravery and war strategies. I would love to share a poem written by Ahmad shah Durani translated in English book by Hamid Wahed Alikuzai, as it inspires me and many other Afghans.



ستا د عشق له وینو ډک سوه څپکرونه  
ستا په لاره کې بایلي زلمي سرونه  
تا ته راسمه زرگی زما فارغ سي  
بي له تا مي اندینني د زره مارونه  
که هر څو مي د دنیا ملکونه ډیر سي  
زما به هیر نسي دا ستا بنگلي باغونه  
د دهلي تخت هیرومه چې را یاد کړم  
زما د بنگلي پښتونخوا د غرو سرونه  
د رقیب د ژوند متاع به تار په تار کړم  
چې په تورو پښتانه کا گوزارونه  
د فرید او د حمید دور به بیا سي  
چې زه کاندې پر هر لوري تاخونه  
که تمامه دنیا یو خوا ته بل خدا یی  
زما خو خوښ دي ستا خالي تش ډکرونه  
احمد شاه به دغه ستا قدر هیر نه کا  
که ونیسي د تمام جهان ملکونه

By blood we are immersed in love of you.

The youth lose their heads for your sake.

I come to you and my heart find rest.

Away from you, grief clings to my heart like a snake.

I forget the throne of Delhi

when I remember the mountain tops of my afghan land

if I chose between the world and you,

I shall not hesitate to claim your barren deserts as my own.

Mansoor Moshtaq

Tentishev Satkynbai memorial

Asian Medical Institute

## A glance to Afghanistan

Afghanistan is a multi-cultural country and has experienced ancient historical moments. Afghanistan, is landlocked country which is home for different ethnicities, located in the heart of south-central Asia. Afghanistan plays a key role in connecting southern and eastern Asia to Europe and the Middle East. The mountains and landlocked geographic location of Afghanistan, and the fearless people of the country has long defeated the enemies of the nation.

### - Tribes in Afghanistan

There are different ethnicities and languages spoken all over Afghanistan which are: **Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Aymāq, Turkmen, Baloch, Pashai, Nuristani, Gujjar, Arab, Brahui, Pamiri** and a few others. Overall, according to the Afghanistan Constitution there are 14 ethnic groups which are mentioned in the Afghan National Anthem as well.

### - The culture of Afghanistan

Culture in Afghanistan has its history from 500 BCE. The term (Afghanistan) in Persian means "Land of Afghans" as (Afghan) refers to the nation and (stan) refers to the land. The nation's official languages are, Dari and Pashto. Islam has the most followers in Afghanistan while there are Sikh, and Christian followers living in Afghanistan as well.

### - Traditional Wedding in Afghanistan

The tradition of marriage is a man sends his family members as marriage proposal to a woman's house. The acceptance and rejection of the proposal depends on the girl's parents usually (if it is arranged marriage). Once the girl's parents accept the proposal, they give some kinds of sweet (desert) to the family of groom. After the acceptance, the in-laws of the bride throw an engagement party for their relatives and friends. The engagement party is followed by the (Henna) night. The bride wears traditional Afghan clothes, and the groom wears jami (traditional Afghan perahan, tunban) with a (traditional Afghan headwear). The bride and groom exchange engagement rings which puts an end to the engagement ceremony.

When the two families are ready, the wedding celebration takes place which usually consists of henna part then Nekah (an official way of marriage in Islamic religion) which puts an end to the wedding ceremony.

Masihullah Mushtaq

Tentishev Satkynbai memorial Asian Medical Institute

Parwan one of 34 provinces in Afghanistan is located in north Kabul. The city is known as a multi ethnic one as people from different ethnicities live there. There are many beautiful and amazing places to visit in this province. The center of this province is name Charikar. Golghondi is a hill full of purple bushes located in west Charikar and every year many people from different parts of Afghanistan visit this hill to have picnic there. If you get the chance to visit this city I highly recommend you to try Shiriyakh-e-Charikar (Iced milk or traditional icecream).

Niloufar Rafat, Alumni 2019



photos from: Pinterest

## My Bamiyan

When I first encountered a local guy in Bishkek, the moment he found out that I am from Afghanistan his first question was “is it still war in Afghanistan?” I do not blame media because it’s their job to inform people about the issues all-around the world. However, with use of media I want to show what you don’t know about Afghanistan particularly about my hometown Bamiyan.

### Band-e-Amir National park

As it is reported in Earth observary ,Band-e-Amir is a chain of six lakes in the mountainous desert of central Bamiyan, Afghanistan. The lakes formed from mineral-rich water that seeped out of faults and cracks in the rocky landscape. The lakes range in color from faint turquoise to deep blue. Over time, the water deposited layers of hardened mineral (travertine) that built up into walls that now contain the water. According to the Wildlife Conservation Society, who helped the Afghan government set up the park, Band-e-Amir is one of the few travertine systems in the world.

According to local legend, the lakes were formed as the result of a series of miracles performed by Ali, son-in-law of the Prophet Mohammed, which left the local king so amazed that he immediately decided to convert to Islam. A shrine to Ali to honor his miraculous works stands on the shore of one of the lakes.

photo from: Culturaltrip



### Buddha

They used to be the largest Buddha of the world. Buddhas are complex of hundreds of caves, monasteries and shrines, many of them colorfully decorated by the first oil painting. The larger Buddha (male) is 175 feet in height and the smaller (female) is 120 feet high.

In 2001, Mullah Omar ordered Taliban forces to demolish the Bamiyan Buddhas. The destruction took several weeks. Since, the two figures were remarkably solid. The engineers placed anti-tank mines between their feet, then bored holes into their heads and packed them with dynamite.

### Shahr e Gholghola or City of Screams

The city was built by Buddhist Ghorids during the Sassanian Period in the 6th century. Shahr-e Gholghola was reputedly the best defended of Bamiyan's royal citadels and was captured by conspiracy rather than force of arms. Bamiyan's ruler Jalaludin held strong under Genghis Khan's siege. the ruler's daughter betrayed her father and revealed the castle's secret entrance, expecting to be rewarded through her own betrothal to the Mongol ruler. In 1221 Mongols destroyed the city and killed everyone inside. The screams of the dying victims could be heard all throughout Bamiyan Valley earning Shahr e Gholghola the nickname “the City of Screams” (lonely planet).

Parwin Faizi, SOC 116



## Famous Afghan sports

Historically, Afghanistan has faced many wars and instabilities. Many countries tried to take over Afghanistan, mainly Great powers, but none of them were successful. Because of this, Afghans feel proud about their country’s independent heritage. Also, Afghan culture is rich in social customs. Afghans tend to be very social. For keeping their culture these people have very special customs like, visiting each other and drinking tea together. Besides, for the families that can afford it, they build “Ojras” for guests. This is a sperate guest home. Afghans believe in making their guests feel as comfortable as possible while visiting. Also, Afghans are deeply in love with sport activities. There are several famous games and sports among Afghan people. Buzkashi, Pahlwani,

Gursai, Fighter-kites.

Buzkashi means “grab the goat” it is an ancient game played in Afghanistan of which Uzbeks are considered the champions. It is played horseback by the team of 10 men and the point of the game is to pick- up, carry a dead calf carcass through the opposing team (armed with whips), and go a ½ mile to a “goal point” to score and back. The second most famous sport and game in Afghan culture is Pahlwani. This is a very popular sport similar to American wrestling match. Well, the famous Afghan holidays that people will be witness of playing these sports is Nawroz, the New Year celebration.

Tuba Farewar, NGA 2020

## Issue prepared by:

**Editor-in-Chief:**  
Niloufar Rafat

**Supervisor:**  
Bermet Ismailova

**Co-editor:**  
Erica Eisen

**Design&Layout**  
Aziza Kanimetova