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Afghan Newsletter



Introduction

I am delighted to issue the 10th edition of the Afghan community short newsletter at the beginning of the new year 2008.

It should mention that Eid ul Fetr (at the end of ramdan) and Eid ul Audha) are the most holy festivities in Islamic country. This year celebrating Eid ul Audha concided to the Christmas holy fetival.

I wish a happy Eid and new year for Moslim brothers,sisters and also to the people of all faithe and back ground.

Nasruddin Saljuqi



Eid-Al-Udha

The most celebrated holy days for Muslims are Eid-al-Fitr (At the end of Ramadan) and the upcoming Eid-al-Adha. Every year, these holy days occur eleven or twelve days earlier because of the Arabic lunar calendar which is eleven or twelve days shorter than the calendar here in Ireland. This year, Eid-al-Adha will be celebrated on 2 January. It is the time when Muslim pilgrims go to Mecca in Saudi Arabia and do the Hajj ceremony. Every able-bodied Muslim is obliged to make the pilgrimage to

Mecca at least once in their lifetime if they can afford to. Mecca is Islam's holiest site. For those who do not journey to Mecca, there are other traditions and festivities which take place at home.

Adha is an Arabic word meaning sacrifice, which in Persian (language Iran and Afghanistan) is called Qurbani. Eid-al-Adha commemorates the prophet Abraham's (peace on him) devotion to God. Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son Ishmael for God, but instead Allah (God) provided a lamb for sacrifice. Sacrifice or Qurbani is performed on the blessed day of Eid-al-Adha, which is a day of celebration and remembrance of Allah. Yet, not all of us have the means to enjoy this day and it is the duty of the more fortunate among us to help the less fortunate. Every Muslim who can afford to buy an animal such as a sheep, goat, cow and camel is required to make Qurbani





Kaba - Saudi Arabia

(sacrifice). Sometimes seven people share one cow or camel. Muslims sacrifice an animal which have been deemed Halal, or fit for sacrifice. They do not only eat the meat themselves but they distribute it among their neighbours, relatives and the poor. It is a rule that one third of the slaughtered animal is used for the family, another third by relatives and the rest is given to the poor or neighbours as a present. Children enjoy receiving presents or money from parents and relatives during Eid. In Ireland, gifts from the mosques are given to the children. I remember at Eid during my own childhood, parents paid cash as Eidi (gifts) to the Mullah (Islamic leader) and the Mullah gave the children a colourful page with the verses of holy Quran on it. We were very happy to get it.

On the first day of Eid people go to the mosque and pray in early morning. They wear their best clothes and perfume themselves. In my native country of Afghanistan, we call around to neighbours and go together in groups to the mosque. One the way, we give praise to Allah – for example, saying aloud ‘Allaho Akbar, Allaho Akbar, Allaho Akbar’ (God is great). One person says it loudly and the others follow him - this is a tradition for all Muslims. After prayers at the mosque everyone hugs and wishes one another a good Eid. It’s the day of peace. People who have been annoyed or displeased with each other make peace. After prayers, people sacrifice their animal. Muslim immigrants in Western

countries don’t have access to the slaughter house so they send money to their relatives or to poor people to sacrifice an animal on their behalf.

As a Muslim I wish the authorities in Ireland could look into the possibility of us fully expressing our traditions. Eid would also be a good opportunity for us to show our culture to the neighbourhood, as it is usual that people go to their relatives, neighbours and friends’ houses to visit each other. In Muslim countries we sit on the floor around a cloth with cake, cookies, dried fruit, tea and coffee on it for the guest and all are welcome. In some counties Eid is celebrated for one day but in my native country of Afghanistan it is celebrated for three days.

Afghan new year celebration in Dublin

The Afghan community of Ireland staged belated Nowroz (new year) celebration in Wynn~s Hotel in Dublin this year. Now roz is celebrated by people from Afghanistan at the beginning of spring and makes a new year in solar calendar.

The event was launched at 6pm by reading verses from Holy Quran by Mobasher Ahmad and started by Afghan Irish national anthem. As the programe was chaired by Jamilah Shafaq, she asked Saljuqi to say welcome to the guest. Saljuqi spoke about new year and integration. He compared integration between Afghanistan and Ireland. Dawi roshan Afghan Asylum seeker and writer also talked about history of new year.

The Irish guest Mr, Phlip watt director of the national committee on racism and interculturalism (NCCRI) who also attended in the event said that it was important for organising such as Afghan community of Ireland to play a role in the integration proceses. He refered to the positive contribution which Afghan have made in the business medical and hospitality field in Ireland adding that many of these people originally arrived as asylum seekers.

Watt said he hoped the government would initiate laws to make family reunification easier , and for professional qualification from Afghanistan to be recognised by employers. He also expressed a hope that Afghans and asylum proceses attain refugee status.

In a more light hearted commeat, to enthusiastic applause. Watt also said it would be fantastic if ryanair starts flight from Ireland to Kabul so that Afghans could visit their homeland.



Young afghans performing national afghan dance in wayne hotel

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It should be mentioned that Nasruddin Saljuqi interviewed with Metro Eireann About afghan culture and appreciation of culture in Ireland and Afghanistan. He said that Afghan living in Ireland who are permanent resident has no major problem

in Ireland but asylum seeker from Afghanistan should have access to work and education while their asylum applications are processed. Being with no dignity make them depressed.

Piper Emonn Walsh was presented to showcase of Irish traditional Irish music and then the program ended by Afghan national dance by Afghan youth and serving dinner.

New year Celebration in wayne's hotel

Imagine Cup

The world's premier student technology competition sponsored by Microsoft in which team and individual submit their projects online or person for a chance to compete at the global finals – like the Olympics of technology – held in a different country each year and this year held in Seoul South Korea.

The good news is that in the web development category after beating up about 400 teams, the Afghan fourth year students Mr. Marouf Azad who studies in Dublin Institute of Technology and his team came second in world and touched the silver trophy. It was such a good

experience and hard competition given, this was Ireland's first year in the competition. For more information please visit (www.imaginecup.com).

The Imagine Cup is one way Microsoft is encouraging young people to apply their immigration, their passion and their creativity to technology innovations that can make a difference in the world today. Now in its sixth year, the Imagine Cup has grown to be a truly global competition focus on finding solutions to real world issues.

Launch of Afghan film



Maouf azad and mohamad alhats. In Seoul - South Korea

The film scene of Afghan music in London, Kabul, Hamburg and Dublin. This film is one of several outputs from small research grant which was held in 2006 from the UK's Arts and Humanities programme, in which Professor John Baily looked for Afghan performance in London's musical connections with Kabul, Hamburg and Dublin.

The film is quite long (97 minutes) because it covers a lot of ground and moves back and forth between London and other places. The film has some footage from the concert which was run by the Afghan community in world's cultural

festival in Dublin last year. The concert was performed by the group of Afghan musicians in the name of Khoshal Music who came from Hamburg. There are two short interviews with Nasruddin Saljuqi who cooperated the programme and also spoke about integration and multicultural activities in Ireland.

The film is a research film not made for TV or the cinema it would be launched in first public screening on Tuesday 13th of November at Goldsmith University in London.

Gaelic game in Croke Park

The GAA is conscious of the fact that many people from minority ethnic backgrounds may have little or no knowledge of the GAA and of Gaelic games. The Association is very keen that people of all nationalities feel welcome to play and support their games. With this in mind, the GAA is in the process of developing an action plan to help encourage people of all nationalities to become part of the Association and to build on the good work that is already

taking place.

In view of this, GAA the president Nicky Brennan invited the representatives from most nationalities in Ireland on Saturday 27th October 2007 in Croke Park to participate in a forum which will discuss their views of the GAA and the games. The feedback would form as a key part of development of the action plan. In this event the participants' groups were given a tour of the Museum and Stadium and after discussions they were shown to their designated seating area.

Beauties of art

Calligraphy and painting is an ancient art in Afghanistan. In all historical places we can observe ancient old painting. In 15th century style of miniature painting and calligraphy flourished in Herat

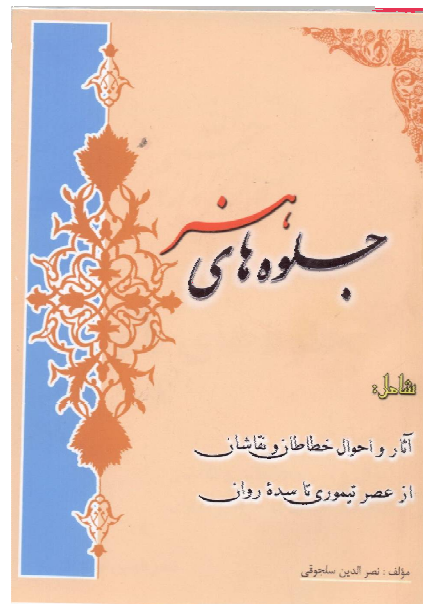
Afghanistan. Afghan contemporary artists such as painter, miniaturists, calligraphers follow the style of old style of the from Timurid period 14th century. There are many painters and calligraphers who established private courses and also there are faculty of beauty art and design in Afghan universities, hundreds students are graduated from different departments of art every year.

Miniature painting is also the most important art in Afghanistan. We can observe ancient old painting especially in historical places.

Beauties of Art is a book which is

compiled in Persian language by Nasruddin Saljuqi in (375) pages that is including contemporary calligraphers and painters from 14th century. The book is divided to nine chapters which is featuring the art of painting, calligraphy, engraving, decoration, stoncutting and biography of the artist with example of artistic work.

This book is published in August 2007 in Tawana Printing House in Herat Afghanistan in 1000 copies and can be found in Herat book store now. The compiler could present some exhibition of these arts in Ireland in past years. The aim of compiling this book is to encourage artists who suffered from two decades war in Afghanistan.



Beauties of art including biography of calligraphers and painters

Music initiative for central Asia

Music and musicians have long played a vital role in cultures of central Eurasia and the middle East. Music traditionally served not only as entertainment, but as a way to reinforce social and moral values, and musicians provided models of exemplary leadership. Whether bringing listeners to the God, sustaining cultural memory through epic tales, or strengthening the bonds of community through festive and celebratory music, musicians have been central to social life.

Aqa Khan established an initiative musical centre in Asia and middle East. The aim of this project is to contribute to the preservation, documentation and further development of central Asia's musical heritage and pursue its long-term goals both in its



region of activity and worldwide. The goals are as follows.

- Revitalize important musical repertoires by helping tradition-bearers pass on their knowledge and craft.
 - Build sustainable cultural institutions that can eventually be maintained by local organisations and communities.
 - Commission and support artists who are developing new approaches to the performance of central Asian music.
 - Increasing knowledge about central Asia's music and culture.
 - Cultivate collaborations among musicians from parts of central Eurasia and beyond.
- Part of this initiative project

musical traditional courses are established in Kabul and Herat Afghanistan in 2004-2006. In these courses hundreds of students are trained by master professional Afghan musicians. The students are learning classical and traditional music.

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