

# CLAWS Newsletter



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Afghanistan Khabar Pana | Volume II

by Anusua Ganguly

## **Domestic Development**

### **OIC Urged to Collaborate with Afghanistan in Health Sector**

[The Kabul Times](#), 23 February 2025

On 22 February, in a meeting with Tariq Ali Bakheet, Deputy and Special Envoy of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Mawlavi Noor Jalal Jalali, Acting Minister of Public Health of the Islamic Emirate, called for greater cooperation from OIC member states in Afghanistan's healthcare sector. The discussion focused on improving healthcare facilities, strengthening Afghan medical staff, and enhancing treatment for drug addicts and cancer patients. Jalali also highlighted the vital role of OIC support in expanding Afghanistan's healthcare system, while Bakheet reaffirmed the OIC's commitment to assist in this area.

### **Radio Begum Staff Remain Detained as Broadcasts Resume, Says AJSO**

[Khaama Press](#), 25 February 2025

On Monday evening, February 24, the Afghanistan Journalists Support Organization (AJSO) announced that while Radio Begum has resumed its broadcasts, the station's detained employees remain in custody. The AJSO clarified that previous reports claiming the release of the journalists were incorrect. The ongoing detention highlights the continued suppression of media and the severe restrictions placed on journalists in Afghanistan.

The organization emphasized that media workers in Afghanistan face immense pressure, with constant risks of detention and suppression, severely limiting press freedom. AJSO called for the immediate release of the detained employees and the protection of media rights in the country, stressing the need for journalists to work without fear of retaliation. The report also pointed out the growing difficulty in accessing information from within Afghanistan, as well as the repression of media outlets, hindering accurate reporting. The continued targeting of journalists signifies a troubling trend of censorship and suppression of free expression in the country.

### **Flash floods claim 21 lives, injure scores in Farah**

[The Kabul Times](#), 26 February 2025

On 25 February, the provincial Disaster Management Authority reported that at least 21 people were killed and dozens were injured, due to devastating floods in Farah's western province. Mawlavi Mohammad Israil Sayar, head of the provincial disaster management, confirmed that heavy rains and flash floods had caused large scale destruction in the Qala-e-Kah district. Additionally, many houses were destroyed, and large areas of land were damaged. Afghanistan, one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, faces these severe consequences annually.

### **Amu River Bank Reinforcement Starts in Takhar with a 65M Afghani Budget**

[TOLO News](#), 26 February 2025

The Amu River bank reinforcement project has officially commenced in the Darqad district of Takhar province, with a designated budget of 65 million Afghanis. According to Sayed Ghulam Mashani, the head of the Amu River Bank Reinforcement Department, the project is expected to be completed within ten months, with the primary objective of mitigating flood-related damage. Local residents who have long experienced significant loss of agricultural land and property due to flooding, have expressed optimism about the initiative, which also provides employment opportunities for the community.

### **Explosion in Farah Province Kills Two and Injures One**

[Khaama Press](#), 26 February 2025

On 25 February, an explosion in the Gholestan district of Farah province killed two people and injured one. The blast occurred in the village of "Dehk," located within a former foreign military base. Details about the explosion and the identities of the victims have not yet been disclosed. The area is known for being one of Afghanistan's most contaminated regions with unexploded ordnance and landmines from past conflicts. Afghanistan continues to be one of the most mine-affected countries in the world, with many casualties, including children, resulting from unexploded devices.

### **Ministry of Education Signs Literacy Agreement with 25 Government Institutions**

[TOLO News](#), 27 February 2025

The Ministry of Education has signed a cooperation agreement with 25 ministries and government agencies to promote literacy, expand education, and enhance the skills of employees. Sakhaullah Saeed, Deputy Minister for Education and Training, highlighted that educational services are being extended to remote areas across the country. He also noted ongoing efforts to identify and eliminate "ghost schools." He also emphasised on significant progress in addressing the issues of ghost schools. Meanwhile, the National Mobilization Director of the Literacy Department announced the launch of over 14,000 literacy courses nationwide. Zahidullah Salimi, the National Mobilization Director of the Literacy Department, stated, "A total of 14,090 literacy courses have been established across the country, offering educational opportunities to 290,427 individuals."

### **Taliban Introduces New Uniform Policy for Afghan Students**

[Khaama Press](#), 27 February 2025

According to a notice issued by a school on February 27, students in the 1404 solar year, beginning 22 March, will be required to adhere to the new uniform policy set by the Taliban. The announcement specifies that students in grades 1 to 9 must wear a blue shirt and pants, along with a white hat, while those in grades 10 to 12 will be required to wear a white shirt and pants, paired with either a headscarf or turban. This uniform directive follows a nine-point decree signed by Hibatullah Akhundzada, the Taliban's leader, which mandates that uniforms for all public and private school students consist of a shirt, pants, turban, and white hat. The decree, however, does not address uniforms for female students or teachers. The uniform colour for female students is black.

Since regaining control of Afghanistan, the Taliban has imposed a ban on education for girls beyond grade six, and universities and medical education centers remain closed to them.

### **Afghanistan and the World**

#### **Rubio: Taliban Cooperation with US on ISIS Effective, but Concerns Persist**

[TOLO News](#), 21 February 2025

In a recent interview, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio highlighted that the Islamic Emirate has, at times, cooperated with the United States in efforts to eliminate ISIS and Al-Qaeda. He explained that the lack of full control over these extremist groups in Afghanistan has allowed them to expand their activities. Rubio emphasised that the lack of governance in the area has created an opportunity for these groups to thrive. He also pointed out that America's security concerns extend beyond Afghanistan, citing Syria as another major threat.

However, Moeen Gul Samkanai, a political analyst said, "In my opinion, this is a baseless claim because, over the past three and a half years, the current government has proven its authority in Afghanistan and has not lost control over even a small portion of its territory. They should clarify which part of the country is outside the government's control."

### **Afghanistan and Uzbekistan discuss expanding Trade and Transit Relations**

[The Kabul Times](#), 23 February 2025

During his visit to Uzbekistan, Mullah Abdul Ghani Beradar Akhund, Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs of the Islamic Emirate, met with Jamshid Khodjaev, Uzbekistan's Deputy Prime Minister, to discuss expanding bilateral trade and transit relations. The two sides focused on strengthening political, economic, and trade ties, and attracting Uzbek investment to Afghanistan. Khodjaev proposed establishing a joint commercial zone at the border, including facilities for processing pine nuts, cotton, packaging, logistics, and food production. Uzbek investors also expressed interest in collaborating on Afghanistan's oil, gas, and industrial projects, such as a cement factory in Samangan. Both parties committed to full cooperation.

### **Red Cross stresses Humanitarian Aid for Afghanistan**

[Khaama Press](#), 25 February 2025

On 24 February, Pierre Krähenbühl, the Director General of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), emphasised the need for sustained international support for Afghanistan. During his seven-day visit to the country, Krähenbühl reviewed the ongoing humanitarian crisis and stressed the importance of neutral and independent humanitarian efforts to address the challenges. He described the human rights situation in Afghanistan as "very severe," noting that nearly four decades of conflict have impacted almost every family in the country. Krähenbühl reiterated the ICRC's commitment to supporting Afghanistan, especially as the

nation faces continued political and humanitarian challenges, including the suspension of aid by the United States.

### **US Continues Weekly Payments to Afghanistan, Says Sopko**

[Khaama Press](#), 25 February 2025

On 25 February, at the Herat Security Conference in Madrid, John Sopko, former Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), revealed that the United States has spent over \$21 billion on Afghanistan since the Taliban's return to power. Despite a reduction in foreign aid, Sopko emphasised that the U.S. continues to provide weekly payments. A significant portion of this funding has been allocated to humanitarian aid, refugee relocation, and repaying Afghanistan's foreign assets. Sopko further criticised the impact of humanitarian aid, stating it has not changed the Taliban's stance on women and human rights. SIGAR's report detailed that \$2.97 billion of the \$20.7 billion allocated between August 2021 and June 2024 has been spent on humanitarian and development assistance.

### **Islamic Emirate's Trade Attaché to Begin Work in UAE Soon**

[TOLO News](#), 26 February 2025

Abdul Rahman Feda, the Islamic Emirate's consul general in the UAE, has announced that Afghanistan's trade attaché will soon begin operations in the UAE. This initiative aims to enhance trade relations with both Afghan and foreign businessmen in the country. Feda confirmed that the appointment of the trade attaché has been approved by the prime minister of the Islamic Emirate. He also noted that while a position for the trade attaché has existed at the Dubai consulate, no diplomat had been assigned to the role until now. Additionally, Feda mentioned that high-level discussions between the Islamic Emirate and the UAE will lead to improved travel facilitation for Afghan citizens visiting Dubai.

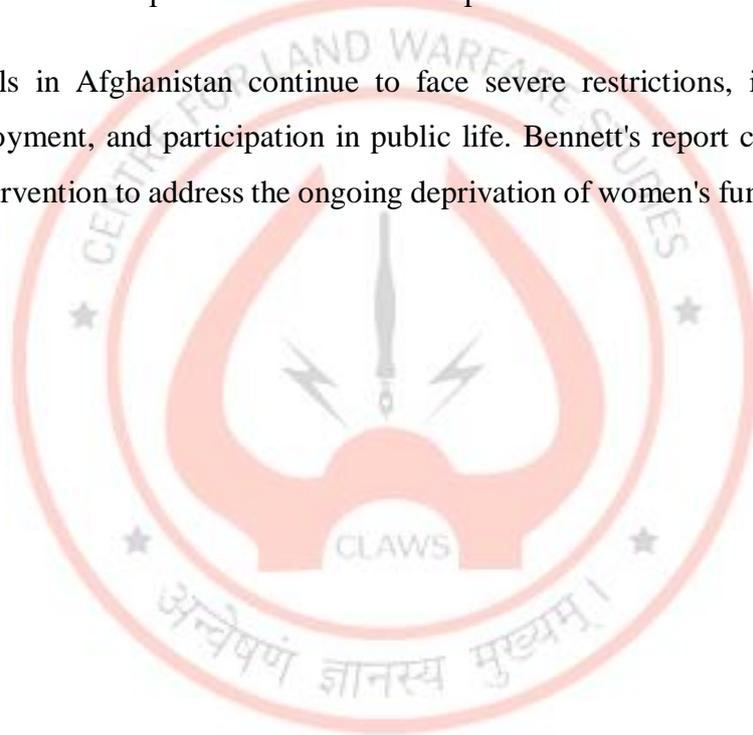
### **Bennett Report Calls for Recognition of Gender Apartheid in Afghanistan as a Crime Against Humanity**

[Khaama Press](#), 28 February 2025

Richard Bennett, the UN Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan, has urged the international community to recognise gender apartheid in Afghanistan as a crime against humanity. His comments were made during the 58th session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, where he presented a detailed 20-page report on the country.

Bennett stressed the worsening situation for women in Afghanistan since the Taliban's return to power, emphasising the urgent need to address the systemic oppression of women within the framework of international law. The report outlines a sharp increase in human rights violations, particularly the escalating suppression of women. Bennett warned that the Taliban's discriminatory policies against women are becoming deeply entrenched, bolstered by restrictive laws such as the "promotion of virtue and prevention of vice."

Women and girls in Afghanistan continue to face severe restrictions, including bans on education, employment, and participation in public life. Bennett's report calls for immediate international intervention to address the ongoing deprivation of women's fundamental rights in Afghanistan.



## About the Author

Anusua Ganguly is a Research Assistant at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies, where her study focuses on Russia and Central Asia. With a Master's degree in Conflict Analysis and Peace Building, Anusua also has a keen interest in non-traditional security threats, the role of media in conflict and the role of gender in conflict and peacebuilding efforts. Their research explores the complexities of global security dynamics and emphasises the importance of inclusive approaches in fostering lasting peace.



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