



AFGHANWIRE

Research, Monitoring and Media Support



Afghan Wire is a local organization that seeks to bridge the information gap between the Afghan and international community by making the local media accessible to foreigners who live and work here. It produces a daily digest of thirty of the most important stories in the Afghan press, translated and edited for international consumption.

In so doing, Afghan Wire provides a valuable service that can help those who design and implement international assistance projects to gain a deeper understanding of how they, and their projects, are perceived in the local community.

What is even more important, Afghan Wire can help the assistance community to identify trends, concerns, and problems in the local environment. This can go a long way towards penetrating the bubble of isolation in which far too many organizations find themselves. In turn, greater access to this type of information can make assistance projects more effective by making them more responsive to the needs of the local community.

It can also strengthen local capacity by providing the Afghan media with a wider and more sophisticated audience.

"As a journalist this is an exceptionally useful flow of raw information for two reasons. One is that small local journals often carry news that is breaking in far flung provinces that has simply not reached the ears of the international press.

"More important though is that the translations from the huge number of small Afghan publications that exist throw out many articles that offer insight into the currents of opinion that are flowing through Afghan society."

*Tom Coghlan
The Daily Telegraph, UK*



Objective

Building on its experience and expertise, AfghanWire hopes to become locally grounded and focus on its unique skills, bridging information gaps and strengthening Afghanistan's national media. This proposal outlines its achievements and goals, its strategy to build local capacity, to support the national media in its development, and to deepen its research

"AfghanWire provides me with the information I need to get a decent gauge of what actual Afghans think" Joshua Foust, Registeran.net

History

AfghanWire was founded in 2006 by Alex Strick van Linschoten and Felix Kuehn as a private limited company based in London. Following previous experience in media monitoring during a stay in Syria (working with MideastWire.com), we decided to combine our knowledge and love of Afghanistan with the experience of media monitoring, perceiving a gap between Afghanistan's national media and the international community. The idea was to give more access to the local media, and to deliver it through a tool that would allow researchers and other interested parties to find relevant news pieces quickly and easily. We also wanted to open the debate and discussion within Afghan media up to foreigners. AfghanWire has therefore specifically focused on opinion pieces, editorials and interviews, as well as smaller news reports that detail the minutiae of Afghan provincial activity – events entirely uncovered by English-language media outlets.

We started monitoring Afghanistan's national media in late summer 2006, training independent translators and setting up a web-based research tool. Our archive holds over 7000 articles from some 450-odd media outlets. Since summer 2007 we have extended our activities to monitor specific radio programmes and television news bulletins.

Throughout the start-up phase of AfghanWire Ltd, we became aware that our interests were more based in capacity-building and open access to information, leading to our current decision to become a national Afghan NGO.



AfghanWire's Research Tool

We have been constantly working on our website, creating a tool that allows the most comprehensive access to the local news.

The website consists of two basic elements: the news archive and the backgrounders. The backgrounders hold information about people, provinces, cities, ethnic groups, organizations and so forth – essentially an online encyclopaedia of Afghanistan, while the archive stores every article translated by our staff, fully sourced. Together the two parts allow the user to search the archive according to specific people, issues, regions or organizations.



"Afghan Wire is an invaluable service for those of us who live and work in Afghanistan. It can help Embassies, international organizations, and international media to penetrate into a layer of the society that was formerly closed to us."

Jean MacKenzie
Programme Director
Institute for War and Peace Reporting
Afghanistan



The Newsletter

The AfghanWire newsletter contains between 20 and 30 items each day, giving full translations of print media stories and summaries of radio and television programmes.

It is published 5 times per week, reaching the reader the morning after publication via email.



Daily Afghanwire Newsletter 23/07/07

Content

Gov't & Politics

Domestic Affairs: [News Bulletin](#)
Domestic Affairs: [The Public and their Problems](#)
Domestic Affairs: [News Bulletin](#)
Domestic Affairs: [News Bulletin](#)
Domestic Affairs: [Provincial council of Parwan province to resign](#)
Parliament: [List of Founding Members of the Afghan Republic Party](#)
Jirga: [Pakistan isn't interested in the regional peace jirga](#)
International Relations: [The decision of the leadership of the Islamic Emirate regarding the 23 South Koreans](#)
International Relations: [South Korea negotiates with the Taliban for the release of 23 citizens](#)
International Relations: [Afghan Islamic Emirate have extended the deadline for another 24 hours](#)

Instability

War: [Two districts of Nuristan captured by the Taliban](#)
Crime: [Two suicide bombers arrested](#)
Military Forces: [Taliban to hand over command of their troops in Afghanistan to foreigners](#)
Conflict: [22 foreigners captured in Qarbagh of Ghazni](#)
Conflict: [Five policemen killed and six others wounded](#)

Society

Gender: [Despite reserved seats for women, gender interests remain under-represented in Parliament](#)
Gender: [Afghan girl wins international drawing competition on gender equality](#)
Education: [Human rights will be taught in schools](#)
Culture: [Afghan youths and their social problems](#)

Travel: [Taliban](#)

Media: [TOLO TV](#)

Media: [UNESCO](#)

(ERTV)

Media: [Statement](#)

Pakistan: [What](#)

TALIBAN CLAIM TO HAVE INFLICTED CASUALTIES ON COALITION FORCES

Published In Afghanistan on Sunday the 05. of August 07

The Taliban claimed that three US tanks were destroyed in Nuristan province and that all the soldiers in the tanks were killed too. But security officials are saying that as a result of this incident only one police vehicle was affected.

NEWS BULLETIN

Published In Killid Ra

Zabihullah Mujahid, who introduces himself as the Taliban spokesman, yesterday night told Pajhwok Afghan news agency over the telephone from an undisclosed location that as a result of the Taliban attack three tanks of the coalition forces were destroyed.

Summary:

[From 1:00 to 1:

He claimed that all the soldiers in those tanks were killed too. Tamim Nuristani, governor of Nuristan province, told Pajhwok Afghan news agency that this incident happened in Sara Meera area of the province, as a result of which one Ranger police vehicle was affected by machine gun firing. There were no casualties to others, [he said].

[19 Taliban follow](#)

[military operation](#)

[Khost's province](#)

He stated that coalition forces were also accompanying this convoy with the national police; but that there were no casualties among them. Rahmanullah, spokesman for NATO's troops in the eastern zone, stated in this regard that their troops didn't face such an incident.

Backgrounder

[Nuristan | Mujahid and Tamim Nuristani | Zabihullah Mujahid | North Atlantic Treaty Organisation](#)

NEWS BULLETIN

Published In Aman FM on Monday the 06. of August 07

Summary:

[From 1:00 to 1:05PM]

13 Taliban killed: As a result of an armed conflict between the Taliban and government opponents and police in Shajoy district of Zabul province, at least 13 members of the opposition group, security officials claim, were killed. The spokesperson for the Zabul governor told a Killid correspondent over the telephone that the Taliban attacked a police checkpoint, opening fire on the police which resulted in the deaths of 13 opposition members, but no casualties were inflicted on the police. The Taliban's ammunition was left on the battlefield.

[Hamid Karzai lands in the USA](#): Hamid Karzai, the Afghan president, visited Camp David situated in the USA to meet the US president. The Afghan and the US presidents are supposed to be discussing the problems of narcotics and terrorism, civilian casualties during NATO-led military operations, economic and social development in Afghanistan. They will also hold a press conference on the official meeting in the USA.

[Aid workers send drugs to Korean citizens](#): Aid workers dropped off drugs for the Korean citizens and were able to take drugs to the location determined by the Taliban to be given to the Korean citizens. The head of this team said that one of the hostages was a doctor and knows how to use the drugs. One of the Korean hostages held by the Taliban in a phone call to Killid asked Ban Ki-moon to draw further attention to have them freed from Taliban captivity.

[NATO commander: foreign troops will stay in Afghanistan for the next 30 years](#): A NATO commander has recently said in Herat province that the foreign troops will stay in Afghanistan for the next 30 years, since the fight against the Taliban and government opponents on the one hand and on the other hand to deal with narcotics, will take the foreign troops a long time here in Afghanistan.

Backgrounder

[Herat | Zabul | Ban Ki-moon | Hamid Karzai | North Atlantic Treaty Organisation | 22 Koreans taken hostage by Taliban](#)

All articles within the newsletter and on the website are categorized with sub groupings.

Articles are sent out in full to subscribers; they are tagged to relevant backgrounders

Since the summer of 2007 AfghanWire monitors selected radio programmes



The AfghanWire Archive is categorised and tagged. It can be accessed through the website sidebar menu or through a search engine, by keyword or date.

Each individual article is tagged. Underneath each article the user can find relevant links to our backgrounders based on the article's content – people named, the location of the event or the origin of the news etc. Each article further shows its source. The reader/researcher can follow this up and read about the publication (location, print-run, political affiliation etc).

Newspaper and News Outlet profiles

Each media outlet that Afghanwire monitors has its own profile, informing you about print run size, or radio frequency, and history

The screenshot shows the AfghanWire website interface. At the top, the logo 'AFGHANWIRE' is displayed in large green letters. Below it, a navigation menu on the left lists categories like NEWS, BACKGROUNDER, and HISTORY. The main content area features a profile for 'Printmedia - Kabul Weekly'. The profile includes details such as 'TYPE: Newspaper', 'FORMAT: Tabloids - 18 to 28 pages - black and white', and 'ISSUE SIZE: Weekly'. It also lists the publisher as 'WELL-KNOWN ARTISTS: Mohammad Muhsen Nazari, Mirwais Hossain, Roshana Rustam, Sediq Zaki and others' and the editor as 'EDITOR: Mohammad Faten Dastgy'. The profile mentions that the newspaper was founded in 1984 and was revived in January 2002. It states that the newspaper has a print run of 10,000 copies and is distributed in 14 provinces. The profile also notes that the newspaper was forced to close in 2008 due to a lack of funding and is planned for a relaunch in late spring 2007.

The screenshot shows the AfghanWire website interface for the 'Amman-e Mill' newspaper profile. The profile includes details such as 'TYPE: Newspaper', 'FORMAT: Tabloids - 18 to 28 pages - black and white', and 'ISSUE SIZE: Weekly'. It also lists the publisher as 'WELL-KNOWN ARTISTS: Mohammad Muhsen Nazari, Mirwais Hossain, Roshana Rustam, Sediq Zaki and others' and the editor as 'EDITOR: Mohammad Faten Dastgy'. The profile mentions that the newspaper was founded in 1984 and was revived in January 2002. It states that the newspaper has a print run of 10,000 copies and is distributed in 14 provinces. The profile also notes that the newspaper was forced to close in 2008 due to a lack of funding and is planned for a relaunch in late spring 2007.

All articles from the given news source are listed in its profile, allowing direct access.



Province Profiles

AFGHANWIRE

Provinces - Badakhshan

Area: 100,000 km² / 11

Population: 1.1

Population Density: 11

Province Capital: 100000

Geographical Profile: North-eastern Afghanistan bordering Pakistan.

Climate: 100000 (Boasting China, Pakistan and Tajikistan)

Area (sq. km): 100000 (roughly half the size of South Carolina state in USA)

Geography: Murghab River

Geographical Profile: Mountains are the main feature of Badakhshan, with some peaks reaching 10000 ft. Badakhshan is located in the far north-east of Afghanistan, between the mountains of the Hindu Kush and the Amu Darya, also known as the Oxus. To the north, the province borders Tajikistan, and the Chinese province Xinjiang to the east (the border with China is approx. 75 km long), and to the southwest to Pakistan.

Population Profile: Tajiks are the dominant ethnic group. There are Uzbek communities in the West, Wakhs and Qizils in the Western Cordons.



Al Jazeera feature on education in Badakhshan (May 2007):



Backgrounder

Falajabad | Deraizi | Falajabad | Kunduz | Ahmed Shah Massoud | Burhanuddin Rabbani | Sir Morteza Dursani | Kirghiz | Pashtun | Tajik | Turcoman | Uzbek | Abdul Majid

Archive

Inauguration of school in Badakhshan province | Joint session of the lower house held | MRRD prepared for the winter | Some returnees will be transferred to Jalalabad | Afghanistan the Bloodiest Field for Slaughtering Human Rights | Rape of a woman stirs anger in Badakhshan | Women are the most vulnerable group in society | Badakhshan: brave territory with men of the Pamirs | Severe Attacks by Taliban | Quality Wheat Seed and Fertilizer Distribution - Drought Appeal 2006 | Bride burns herself | 1321 acres of poppy fields destroyed in Baghlan | Urgent aid to vulnerable Badakhshanis | Hamid Karzai meets a number of elders from Badakhshan province | Karzai's Screams | Rebirth Badakhshi book | Arts or Abuse ("mistake") | Attack on Mayor of Falajabad | Who is responsible for the Badakhshan massacres? | Badakhshan teachers: "we will close the schools" | UNAMA opens new office in Dai Kund | drive development | No-show for Attorney General for second time in Bazar Jirga | President Hamid Karzai Visits Badakhshan Province & Attends a Memorial Service for a Mass Grave | MRRD: 17 Development Projects for 7 Provinces | 25 children die in Badakhshan province from malnutrition | Afghan airports to be reconstructed | 10 women join the online

AfghanWire's back-grounders hold profiles of all 34 provinces, providing baseline data about the number of districts, size, governor, ethnic make-up, geographical profile, capital and major cities, history, economy and province-specific details

AfghanWire is in the process of updating all its provincial maps, gathering and combining existing information into updated maps unavailable elsewhere

Each profile is linked to our news archive, giving you direct access to stories relating to the province, as well as links to relevant other backgrounders, ranging from small biographical profiles of people, to summaries of the different ethnic groups, cities etc. Furthermore, AfghanWire aims to gather together relevant video and photographic material



The Backgrounders can also be accessed through the sidebar menu. Currently AfghanWire holds over 650 people profiles, profiles of all 34 provinces, major cities, ethnic groups, organizations, newspapers and magazines etc. Through the backgrounders, each subject or item has a profile; you learn about the person, you can read baseline data and information, followed by a list of all articles the person, for example, has appeared in or that hold information relevant to the person.

"The "Backgrounder" feature of its subscriber website acts as a ready reference encyclopaedia of the country, even as its daily and weekly newsletters provide a window into Afghans' thinking as expressed in their media."
Vanni Cappelli
 President
 Afghanistan Foreign Press Association

People Profiles

Our people profiles aim to provide quick baseline data on people's backgrounds, their profession, ethnicity, affiliations, status and occupation

Each people profile is directly linked to the news archive, listing all relevant news pieces



Glossary



SEARCH

NEWSLETTER

THE WEEKLY

ARCHIVE

BACKGROUND

GLOSSARY

ACCOUNT

HOME

ABOUT US

SERVICES

CONTACT

LINKS

Glossary

A
a'wan a'yan Abbasid Abdali Achaemenid [more...]

B
bab Babur Bactra Bactria Bagh [more...]

C
Cahous Baushee Caliph Camp Salerno CENTCOM Chador [more...]

D
da'i da'wah daghabaz dajjal dajjalun [more...]

E
ECC Eid eliman erez Israel EU [more...]

F
fadi Fakir fara'id faraghat fard [more...]



AFGHANWIRE

Welcome Felix Kuhn 1030 Oct - 1000000

SEARCH

NEWSLETTER

THE WEEKLY

ARCHIVE

BACKGROUND

GLOSSARY

ACCOUNT

HOME

ABOUT US

SERVICES

CONTACT

LINKS

Glossary letter A

Isack

a'wan
Arabic: armed helpers

a'yan
Arabic: provincial notables

Abbasid
English: Ruling dynasty holding the office of the Caliph of Baghdad (749-1258)

Abdali
One of the two major groups of the Afghans (sense 1), rivals of Ghilzai, also known as Duranis; divided into 9 sub-tribes. Rulers of Afghanistan, 1747-1973, were all Abdalis with the exception of Baccha-i Saqo (Habibullah Ghazi).

Achaemenid
English: Dynasty ruling Persian Empire (550-331 B.C.). Named after Hakhamanish, or Acaemenes (700-675 B.C.), reputed founder of the dynasty.

Achakzai (Achikzai)
Pashtu: a sub-tribe of the Pashtun Duranis

ACM (A.C.M.)
English: NATO-speak for 'anti-coalition militia'

adab
Arabic: propriety; good conduct

adalah
Arabic: justice

adat
Arabic: norms; habits

The glossary is a useful tool for understanding country and language-specific terms. AfghanWire's glossary holds over 650 terms



"Afghanistan cannot be understood by only listening to the foreigners writing on it—whether journalists or military, they have not lived there, and most simply do not have any historical context when discussing events. AfghanWire provides both: local opinion, written by Afghans and for Afghans, in English."

Joshua Foust,
Registan.net

The Search Engine

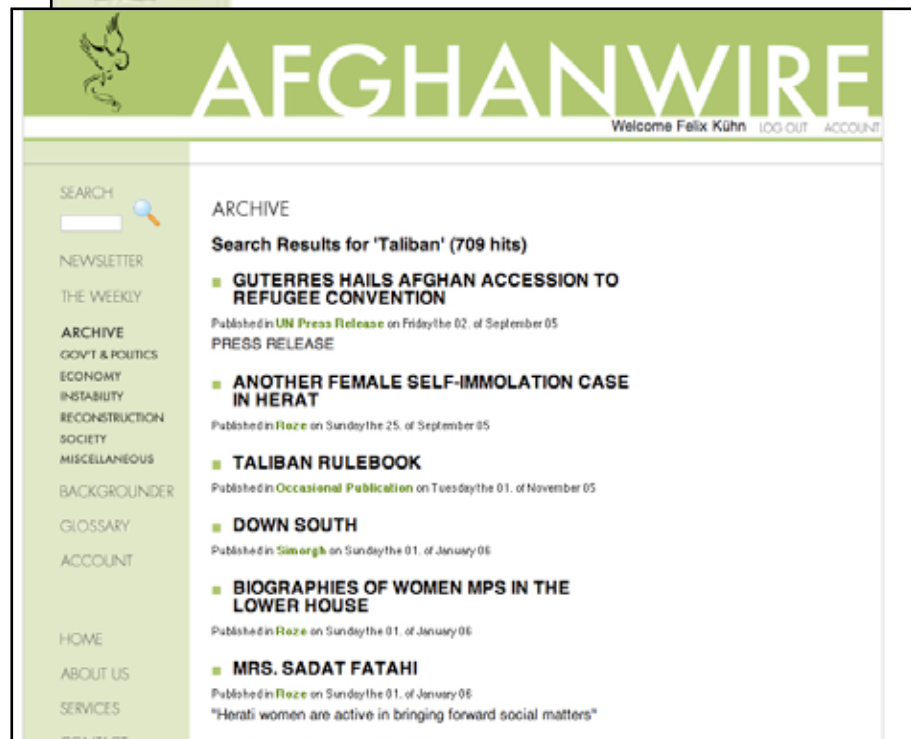
The search engine allows you to search AfghanWire's complete archive, including the Backgrounders and the glossary.

A keyword search will show you all relevant, or related articles, and backgrounders



The screenshot shows the AfghanWire website header with the logo and the text "AFGHANWIRE" in large white letters on a green background. Below the header, there is a navigation menu on the left with links for SEARCH, NEWSLETTER, THE WEEKLY, ARCHIVE, BACKGROUNDERS, GLOSSARY, ACCOUNT, HOME, ABOUT US, and SERVICES. The main content area displays "Search Results for 'Taliban'" and includes sections for "Glossary" (with a definition of Taliban), "Archive" (Found 709 results), and "Backgrounder" (Found 131 results). The user is identified as "Welcome Felix Kühn" with links for "LOG OUT" and "ACCOUNT".

The located articles are listed chronologically. AfghanWire aims to update its search function, allowing users to search between dates for specific keywords in the near future



The screenshot shows the AfghanWire website header with the logo and the text "AFGHANWIRE" in large white letters on a green background. Below the header, there is a navigation menu on the left with links for SEARCH, NEWSLETTER, THE WEEKLY, ARCHIVE, GOVT & POLITICS, ECONOMY, INSTABILITY, RECONSTRUCTION, SOCIETY, MISCELLANEOUS, BACKGROUNDER, GLOSSARY, ACCOUNT, HOME, ABOUT US, SERVICES, and CONTACT. The main content area displays "ARCHIVE" and "Search Results for 'Taliban' (709 hits)". A list of articles is shown, including "GUTERRES HAILS AFGHAN ACCESSION TO REFUGEE CONVENTION", "ANOTHER FEMALE SELF-IMMOLATION CASE IN HERAT", "TALIBAN RULEBOOK", "DOWN SOUTH", "BIOGRAPHIES OF WOMEN MPS IN THE LOWER HOUSE", and "MRS. SADAT FATAHI". The user is identified as "Welcome Felix Kühn" with links for "LOG OUT" and "ACCOUNT".



AfghanWire Archive and Context Database Stats

People profiles - total	654
Tagged profiles (no profile)	270
Province profiles	34
City profiles	23
Events	38
Ethnic profiles	31
Language profiles	50
Newspaper/Magazine profiles	475
Radio profiles	6
TV profiles	6
Organization profiles	160
Articles (edited)	2144
Articles (unedited)	5474
Articles (total)	7278



Planned Expansion and Activities

Research and Media Monitoring

Objective: Provide access to Afghanistan's national media and conduct ground research for the public

AfghanWire will allow national and international NGOs to access the local media through its daily newsletter. With the expansion of our regional monitoring, we aim to reach broad coverage, allowing the international community and the public to have access to regional media outlets. Our website, designed as an intricate research tool, will further assist policy-makers, think-tanks and researchers in integrating local and national views and opinions discussed in the national media in their work, bridging the current gap between local discussions and international research.

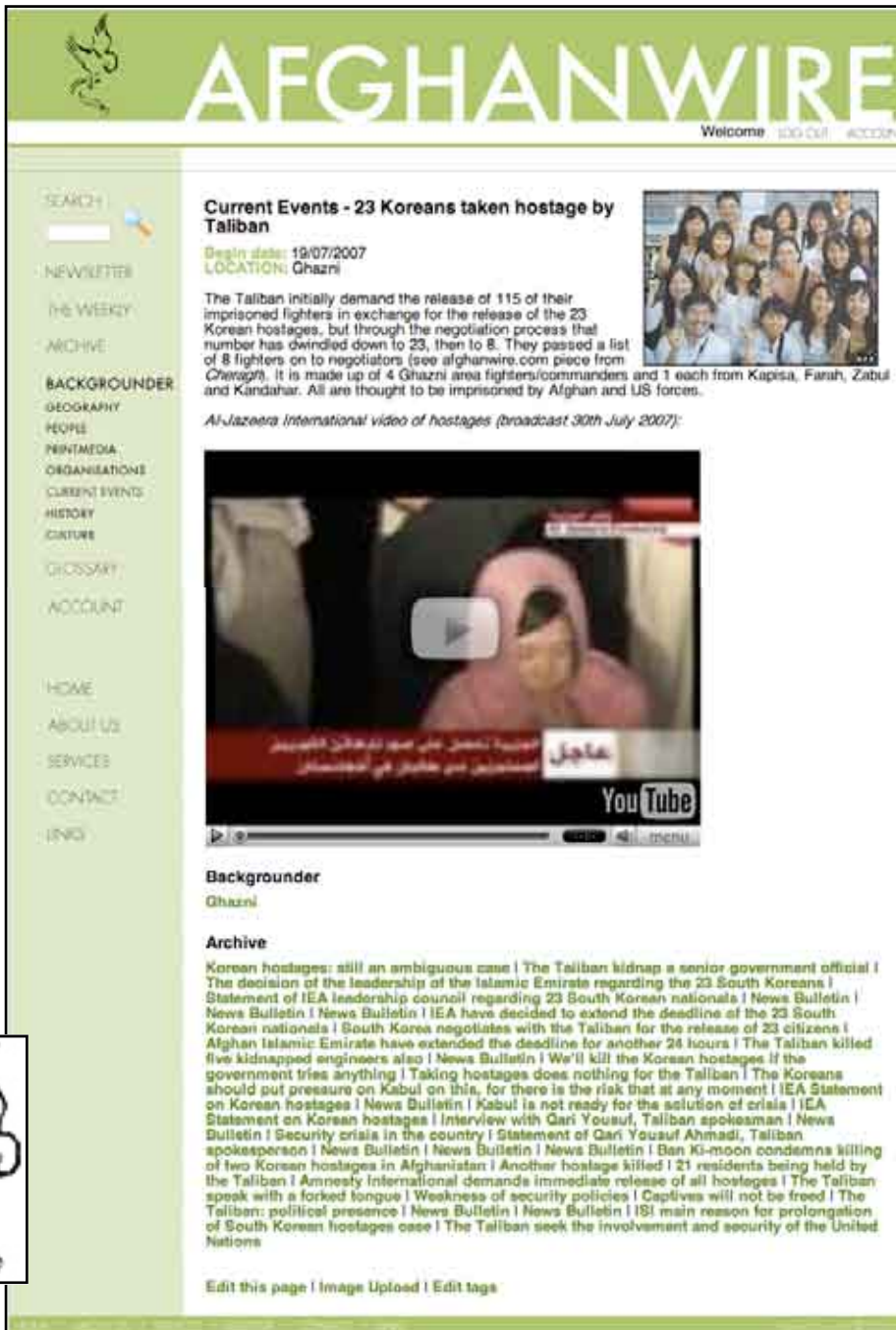
Our archives will enable users of our website to follow developments and arguments over time, as well as see them in the context of Afghanistan's regional, ethnic and organizational networks.

Understanding the local media, its background, and the different political parties and movements should be an integral part of assessing political and national progress.



Current Events

AfghanWire hopes to expand its event monitoring capacity to cover the minutiae and context surrounding each specific event.



The screenshot shows the AfghanWire website interface. At the top, there is a logo of a bird and the text "AFGHANWIRE" in large green letters. Below the logo, there are links for "Welcome", "LOG OUT", and "ACCOUNT". A navigation menu on the left includes "SEARCH", "NEWSLETTER", "THE WEEKLY", "ARCHIVE", "BACKGROUNDERS", "GEOGRAPHY", "PEOPLE", "PRINT/MEDIA", "ORGANISATIONS", "CURRENT EVENTS", "HISTORY", "CULTURE", "GLOSSARY", "ACCOUNT", "HOME", "ABOUT US", "SERVICES", "CONTACT", and "LINKS".

The main content area features a news article titled "Current Events - 23 Koreans taken hostage by Taliban". The article includes a "Begin date" of 19/07/2007 and a "LOCATION" of Ghazni. A photograph shows a group of people, likely the hostages. The article text states: "The Taliban initially demand the release of 115 of their imprisoned fighters in exchange for the release of the 23 Korean hostages, but through the negotiation process that number has dwindled down to 23, then to 8. They passed a list of 8 fighters on to negotiators (see afghanwire.com piece from *Chiragh*). It is made up of 4 Ghazni area fighters/commanders and 1 each from Kapisa, Farah, Zabul and Kandahar. All are thought to be imprisoned by Afghan and US forces."

Below the article is a video player with a YouTube logo and a play button. The video title is "Al-Jazeera International video of hostages (broadcast 30th July 2007)".

Under the video, there is a "Backgrounder" section titled "Ghazni" and an "Archive" section with a list of links related to the Korean hostages case, such as "Korean hostages: still an ambiguous case", "The Taliban kidnap a senior government official", "The decision of the leadership of the Islamic Emirate regarding the 23 South Koreans", "Statement of IEA leadership council regarding 23 South Korean nationals", "News Bulletin", "News Bulletin", "News Bulletin", "IEA has decided to extend the deadline of the 23 South Korean nationals", "South Korea negotiates with the Taliban for the release of 23 citizens", "Afghan Islamic Emirate have extended the deadline for another 24 hours", "The Taliban killed five kidnapped engineers also", "News Bulletin", "We'll kill the Korean hostages if the government tries anything", "Taking hostages does nothing for the Taliban", "The Koreans should put pressure on Kabul on this, for there is the risk that at any moment", "IEA Statement on Korean hostages", "News Bulletin", "Kabul is not ready for the solution of crisis", "IEA Statement on Korean hostages", "Interview with Qari Yousuf, Taliban spokesman", "News Bulletin", "Security crisis in the country", "Statement of Qari Yousuf Ahmadi, Taliban spokesperson", "News Bulletin", "News Bulletin", "News Bulletin", "Ban Ki-moon condemns killing of two Korean hostages in Afghanistan", "Another hostage killed", "21 residents being held by the Taliban", "Amnesty International demands immediate release of all hostages", "The Taliban speak with a forked tongue", "Weakness of security policies", "Captives will not be freed", "The Taliban: political presence", "News Bulletin", "News Bulletin", "ISI main reason for prolongation of South Korean hostages case", "The Taliban seek the involvement and security of the United Nations".

At the bottom of the article, there are links for "Edit this page", "Image Upload", and "Edit tags".



Media Support

Objective: To give media outlets an internet presence for free through an easy-to-use template; provide webspace, training and support to use and update the site

Based on discussion with various media outlets, AfghanWire sees a demand for the introduction of new technology. Various media outlets are seeking to publish their material on the internet. AfghanWire hopes to develop a template and provide the needed server space to allow small publications to have an internet presence, giving them the chance to reach Afghan audiences overseas, and to make their services available to students, scholars as well as diaspora Afghans all over the world.

Translator Capacity Training

Objective: Provide in-depth translation training for media translations (Dari and Pashtu into English) in a 10-month programme; support trainees in finding employment after the programme

Afghanistan lacks the capacity of skilled translators. AfghanWire aims to conduct in-house training of translators. AfghanWire has worked with a team of independent translators, gaining significant practical experience of the specific problems encountered. We have already trained up translators, increasing their skills in media translation and monitoring, summarizing and writing excerpts of relevant new pieces. They have learnt valuable lessons about common problems and recurring mistakes.

The program would aim to give recent graduates, or people who show a significant promise, the option of joining a 10-month trainee scheme. Trainees will be paid and will work on a daily basis in close proximity to the chief editors and experienced translators. AfghanWire believes that the best approach to building in-depth knowledge is through a communal office space that allows for constant input and feedback of the performance of each translator. Lessons and common mistakes are addressed in an open discussion, leading to a multiplying effect throughout the team. Repetition and an unrestricted open office environment, in which everyone can pose open questions, have proved to be key to developing translation skills.



Organizational structure

Kabul Head Office

The Head Office will fulfil a range of different functions and will be responsible for the majority of AfghanWire's activities.

The head office in Kabul will consist of a media monitoring and translation team, headed by the chief editor, that will be responsible for monitoring national television stations, selected radio stations and Kabul's print media. Together with the senior consultants, the team and the editor and chief will conduct the trainee programme parallel to its main focus of media monitoring, integrating trainees in the daily activities and conducting teaching sessions to develop the translation skills of the individual participants.

The senior consultants will be responsible for the overall operations in close cooperation with the NGO director. They will develop the media support project, design and develop the template websites for radio stations, newspapers and magazines around the country and hold instruction/induction sessions for participating media outlets.

The central office will, furthermore, hold the physical archive of the media material, with a recording suite for television and radio programmes. AfghanWire aims to digitalize its archives and bring it online for universities and research institutions.

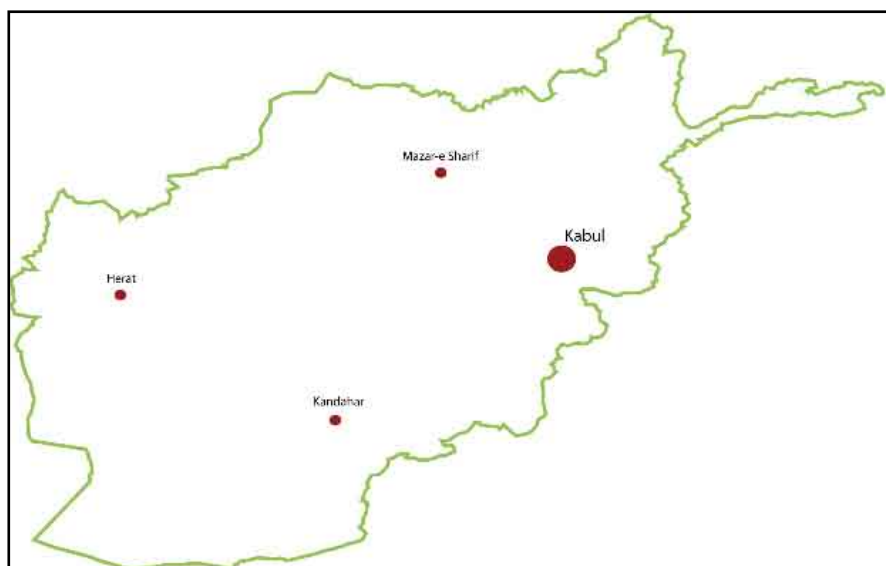


Regional Monitoring Personnel

The regional personnel will be trained in Kabul or in their local cities. The website allows individuals to access the system and submit material from any internet access-point, allowing the regional media monitors to submit their materials in a timely fashion, so that the editors can prepare the daily newsletter. The gathered news material (print and recordings etc.) will be transferred to Kabul once a month and archived.

Having been operational for the past 10 months, AfghanWire will be able to continue its work as an NGO without any delay. Building on our local expertise and bringing together international and national staff will merge local knowledge with international know-how.

While AfghanWire does irregularly receive publication from the different regions of Afghanistan, it plans a significant expansion, with local staff in Mazar-i Sharif, Herat and Kandahar, facilitating access to the different local radio stations and news outlets

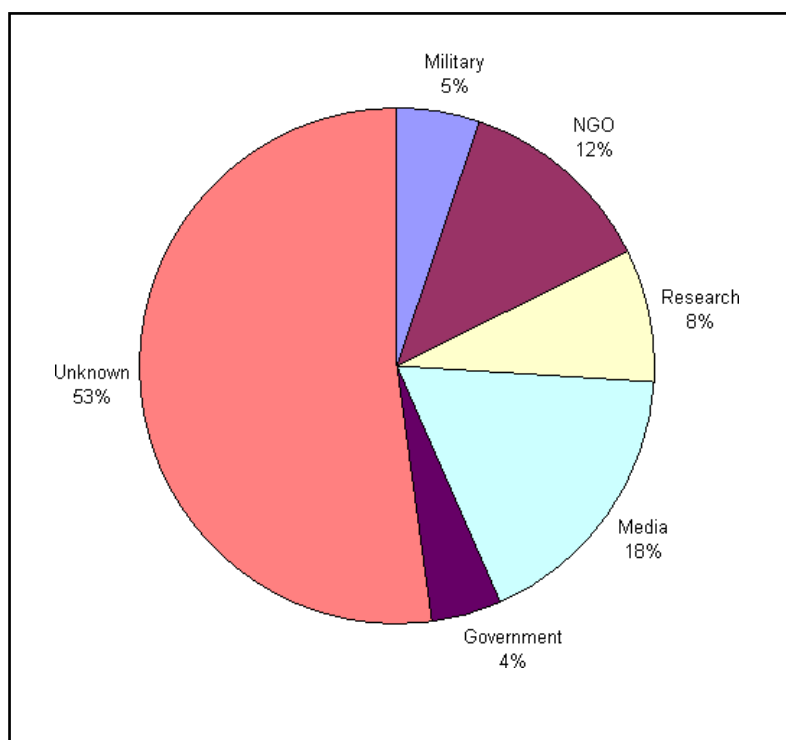


Responsibilities and Activities

Title/Team		Research and Monitoring	Media Support	Translator Capacity Training
Director	1	Will be responsible to oversee operations, as well as translate himself	Maintain contact with different media outlets, coordinate meetings	Provide training for the trainees, choose candidates, monitor progress
Consultants	2	Coordinate, prioritise and develop logistics, train and monitor, conduct research	Develop website template, train staff in using the website and maintaining it, design strategy to provide internet presence for local Afghan media outlets	Choose candidates, bi-weekly discussion with the trainees about progress, specific and common mistakes, check homework, design trainee programme schedule
Chief Editor	1	Responsible for selection of articles, final edits and publishing of the newsletter, as well as website maintenance	Participate in final system design for usability	Provide feedback, work together with senior consultants to readjust programme outline to the specific needs of trainees
Researcher	1	Coordinate and conduct research, updating profiles and setting current events into a historical context		
Monitoring and Translation Team	3	Chose specific news pieces, programmes and articles, translate, summarise and categorize.		Work together with the trainees on a daily basis, transfer knowledge, and provide advice
Regional Monitoring Personnel	3	Gathering local newspapers and magazines, translation and summarise programmes, articles and news pieces, coordinate transferral of material back to head offices in Kabul	Inform local media outlets about the possibility, establish contact with the different publications, be first port of call for help and questions	



AfghanWire User Distribution



Beneficiaries

AfghanWire's newsletter will benefit the international community and Afghanistan alike, by bridging the gap between the national discussions held in the Afghan national media. With its web-based research tool, developments within the ongoing discussion can be followed and used to gain a better understanding of Afghanistan's opinion leaders.

Providing a web presence for national news outlets, in particular in the provinces outside of Kabul, will help to support the development of a truly national media and give Afghans and scholars overseas the possibility of engaging with the local media.

While AfghanWire plans to only take a very limited number of trainees, we are confident that after the ten-month programme, working closely together with our senior translators and media monitors, the trainees will not just have better employment options, but will provide much needed human resources with advanced translation skills to the local job market.



AfghanWire Budget Proposal

Categories/Item	No.	Amount (USD)	Amount Cost/Unit per Month (\$)	No of Units (Months)	Total Cost
Human Resources					
NGO Director	1	1000	1000	12	12000
Consultants (expat)	2	4100	8200	12	98400
Editor (expat)	1	3330	3330	12	39960
Staff Driver	1	350	600	12	7200
Trainees	3	200	600	12	7200
Newspaper collection	1	200	200	12	2400
Senior Translators	3	600	1800	12	21600
Guard	2	200	400	12	4800
Local researcher	1	600	600	12	7200
Provincial Media Monitors	3	600	1800	12	21600
			Total amount of Human Resources (USD):		203160
Technical Resources					
Website server costs	1	100	100	12	1200
Website development costs	1	23000	23000	1	23000
Television + recorder	2	1000	2000	1	2000
Laptops	6	1000	6000	1	6000
Generator	1	1250	1250	1	1250
Digital radio/recorder	5	100	500	1	500
			Total Amount of Technical Resources (USD):		32200
Material Resources					
Transport costs misc	1	500	500	12	6000
Communication	1	200	200	12	2400
Office Supplies	1	100	100	12	1200
Fuel	1	500	500	12	6000
Housing	1	1400	1400	12	16800
Office	1	900	900	12	10800
			Total Amount of Material (USD):		43200
			Grand Total (USD):		278560



"The podcasts and photographs available to all on AfghanWire's public website have provided informed intellectual and visual commentary from some of the leading professionals engaged with the country and the region, among them Peter Bergen, Anatol Lieven, and Dominic Medley."

Vanni Cappelli
President

Afghanistan Foreign Press Association

AfghanWire Founders

Alex Strick van Linschoten

A graduate of the School of Oriental and African Studies (BA Arabic and Persian), Alex first came to Afghanistan four years ago as a tourist, traveling to 28 provinces to learn about the country and improve his Dari and Pashtu skills.

He has worked with Afghan refugees in London at the Afghan Association of London for a year prior to coming out to Afghanistan for the first time. In Damascus, he worked as a liaison between various Iraqi NGOs based in Syria and their international donors.

He is working on a book on how Sufi groups interact and work together with militant jihadi organisations in Iraq, Afghanistan and Chechnya, and how this plays out in terms of the spiritual lives of peoples at war in those countries.

He worked as an Arabic translator for Mideastwire.com, an Arabic-language media-monitor for the Arab world. He has worked as a freelance journalist from Afghanistan, Syria and Lebanon. He speaks Arabic, Farsi, and German well and can get by in French, Dutch and Pashtu.

Felix Kuehn

Felix holds a degree from the School of Oriental and African Studies in Arabic and Development Studies. He has travelled extensively throughout the Middle East, and has focused on tribal conflicts and conflict regions, gaining considerable insight in northern Yemen and the Occupied Territories.

He has worked with various NGOs, including the Jordanian Red Crescent during the beginning of the current Iraq war, involved in the organisation and administration of refugee camps.

He has been coming to Afghanistan for the past 4 years, traveling throughout the country, visiting 28 provinces. He founded AfghanWire with Alex Strick van Linschoten in 2006.

Felix is interested in the tribal dynamics of societies in conflict, and as such he has conducted research in Yemen and Afghanistan to that end. He speaks German, English, Arabic, and can get by in Dari, Spanish and French.



PAKISTAN



Reader Response

I'd like to recommend the Afghan Wire reports as I find them to be an essential window onto the current issues and opinions that are getting a hearing in Afghanistan's immature but very vibrant news media.

As a journalist this is an exceptionally useful flow of raw information for two reasons. One is that small local journals often carry news that is breaking in far flung provinces that has simply not reached the ears of the international press.

More important though is that the translations from the huge number of small Afghan publications that exist throw out many articles that offer insight into the currents of opinion that are flowing through Afghan society.

The articles are often of widely varied quality. Some are penetrating and coherent, others are contradictory, badly written, ill-informed or plain misleading. But I find that as a source of insight into Afghan thought all are extremely useful. This is particularly since so much of the information that reaches the media here is delivered after it has been spun and sanitized by the large number of press officers that work for both Western organisations and the Afghan government.

It is often hard to gauge how ordinary Afghans in far flung provinces are perceiving what is happening in the centre. I find that the Afghan Wire service offers an up to date window on to those currents of opinion and their likely future direction. Western organisations would be wise to study them more closely.

--

Tom Coghlan
The Daily Telegraph

AfghanWire

One of the biggest barriers to an effective Afghanistan policy in the West is the lack of good, on-the-ground information. While most American media outlets have bureaus in Baghdad, it is difficult to find any permanently stationed reporters in Afghanistan—aside from a rotating corps of newspapermen who are in Islamabad as often as they are in Kabul. Thus, without access to any regularly posted local information, policy makers are left in the dark, often at the whims of various neighboring governments for information. AfghanWire provides me with the information I need to get a decent gauge of what actual Afghans think, beyond the bounds of embedded reporters and NATO press gaggles. I consider it essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the situation in Afghanistan apart from the Western spin—whether you support or oppose the West's actions. Without its translations to provide much needed context for my analyses, I would be at the mercy of whichever news agency just happened to have someone stationed nearby, with little or no hope of hearing any dissenting views or local opinion. Afghanistan cannot be understood by only listening to the foreigners writing on it—whether journalists or military, they have not lived there, and most simply do not have any historical context when discussing events. AfghanWire provides both: local opinion, written by Afghans and for Afghans, in English.

--Joshua Foust, Registan.net



Tom Coghlan writes for the Telegraph newspaper (UK). He was previously the Afghan correspondent for The Independent (UK). He has been reporting in Afghanistan since 2003 and is a widely-respected journalist.



Joshua Foust holds a degree in International affairs with a focus on Security Studies and Political Science. He founded The Conjecturer, a weblog focusing on international relations, as well as registan.org, an online resource on Afghanistan's current issues. He is a keen observer of Afghanistan's development and was named Person of the Year by Time Magazine in 2006.





Vanni Cappelli is a freelance journalist from New York who has covered wars in the Horn of Africa, the Balkans, and Central Asia for over a dozen years. He is a co-founder and the current president of the Afghanistan Foreign Press Association.

As a freelance journalist who has spent a great amount of time in Afghanistan since the September 11th attacks and has had an extensive experience not only with the country and developments there but also with the way it is covered by international and native media outlets, I can state with confidence that AfghanWire is a media resource without parallel for all things Afghan. It holds this distinction because of the comprehensiveness, depth, and impartiality of the knowledge about the country it makes available to both subscribers and the general public.

The great challenge of covering or engaging with Afghanistan is the complexity of the country's historical, political, ethnic, and cultural realities, and how they have interacted in ever more complex ways with modern geopolitics, particularly in the realm of ideological conflict. So involved and convoluted are the strands of the country's encounter with the modern world that it is literally impossible to operate effectively and honestly there, as a media or other type of professional, without first gaining a working knowledge of these realities. The failure of most journalists to do so has resulted in much platitudinous and "inch deep" (to quote the distinguished American scholar Karl Meyer) coverage of Afghanistan and the challenge it poses for the world.

It may be objected that in a world in crisis with many regions crying for attention, not all media and other professionals can take the time to become authorities on every last country. Yet Afghanistan is a particularly important country, one whose situation and fate has been spectacularly and tragically shown to impact the security of the most advanced nations, starting with the United States. Understanding it is crucial, even if time and resources are limited. That is where AfghanWire comes in.

By making available, both on its subscribers-only and free websites, a plethora of schematized and detailed knowledge and opinion about Afghanistan, AfghanWire has in essence done the work of scholarship or just plain "boning up" for harried professionals, media and otherwise. The "Backgrounder" feature of its subscriber website acts as a ready reference encyclopaedia of the country, even as its daily and weekly newsletters provide a window into Afghans' thinking as expressed in their media which would not otherwise be available to those who do not speak the country's languages. The essays posted on this website provide a original syntheses of this raw data, and there are more to come. The podcasts and photographs available to all on AfghanWire's public website have provided informed intellectual and visual commentary from some of the leading professionals engaged with the country and the region, among them Peter Bergen, Anatol Lieven, and Dominic Medley.

Besides the plethora of information it offers, the final feature of AfghanWire that makes it an indispensable resource is its impartiality. The newsletters cull their articles from Afghanistan's competing and opposed media outlets, the podcasts offer the opinions and analyses of dissenting and debating experts, the factual sections and essays are the work of many hands. All to ensure a rounded and multidimensional view of this prism of modern history.

In short, AfghanWire stands alone as a portal to Afghanistan. I strongly feel that its advent has transformed our ability to understand the country and its crucial importance to the great crises of our age.

Vanni Cappelli
President
Afghanistan Foreign Press Association



Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR)
West of Cinema Baharistan Park
Next to Marie Stopes Clinic
Kart-e Parwan
Kabul, Afghanistan

Web: www.iwpr.net
E-mail: iwprkabul@yahoo.com



institute for war & peace reporting

August 1, 2007

In Support of Afghan Wire

As an avid reader of Afghan Wire, I can state with certainty that it has greatly improved my understanding of the situation in the country.

I head an NGO that deals with journalists and the media, and I need a deep understanding of the political, economic, and social processes in play. I also need to understand how these issues are reflected in the local media, the press that reaches Afghans themselves.

All too often the international community is caught up in its own vision of the country, and is convinced that its perceptions are based on reality. A thorough reading of Afghan Wire can burst many ideological balloons, and bring the international community closer to the Afghans we are here to serve.

Afghan Wire is an invaluable service for those of us who live and work in Afghanistan. It can help Embassies, international organizations, and international media to penetrate into a layer of the society that was formerly closed to us.

I am happy to support Afghan Wire, and I hope that others in the international community will be similarly inclined.

*Jean MacKenzie
Programme Director
Institute for War and Peace Reporting
Afghanistan*



Jean MacKenzie is the programme director of the Institute of War and Peace Reporting in Afghanistan. She has been working in Afghanistan for the past 3 years, and regularly travels to Helmand training journalists.





Dominic Medley has been working on media development and journalist training projects in Afghanistan since February 2002 when he established Internews in Kabul. In 2003 he was a journalist trainer at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and in 2004 he worked at Radio Arman, the country's first commercial radio station was he was responsible for transforming the station. In 2006 Dominic returned to Kabul firstly as Media Relations Officer at UNDP and then as the head of the civilian advisory group for ISAF Commander General David Richards. Dominic is co-author of Kabul: The Bradt Mini Guide (www.kabulguide.net) and he helped start Afghan Scene Magazine (www.afghanscene.com) and the Afghanistan Foreign Press Association (www.afghanistan-fpa.net). Dominic is a former BBC radio and TV journalist and has spent much of the last ten years overseas working on media development.

Afghanwire

Afghanwire is filling a gap in media monitoring and reporting in Afghanistan. By translating regional newspapers Afghanwire brings the feelings of the provinces to a wider English speaking audience; trends in opinion can be monitored and analysis offered on columns, articles and even poems. After months of careful planning and preparation Afghanwire is now at a stage where the staff is well trained and able to offer reporting and monitoring in a disciplined and house style format easy for the reader to appreciate. Afghanwire has now started to monitor TV and radio broadcasts. The broadcast media is often faster in Afghanistan but not as detailed or with the depth, background, context and analysis, or indeed comment, that the printed media offers. By keeping an eye and ear on all the media in Afghanistan Afghanwire offers its readers an in depth and informative service currently unavailable to individuals but also to those working at major organisations who have their own internal monitoring services.

Dominic Medley

