

“It’s a life time experience for me”— Col. Khurram

Colonel Shafiullah Khurram of Afghan National Army (ANA) is a senior officer in the Legal Department of Afghan Defence Ministry. He is no stranger to foreign countries or their training programmes offered to the personnel of ANA from different countries. But the experience of the prestigious National Defence College (NDC) course left a different and lasting impression on Colonel Khurram, who represented Afghanistan in the NDC annual course of 2006.

Lt. General Sher Mohd. Karimi, chief of operations of Afghan National Army, attended the course in 1991. Brigadier General Amin Wardak, Commandant of Kabul Military Training Centre attended the course in 1992. Colonel Abdul Rahim Hamid of Afghan National Army is attending the NDC 2007 course.

The prestigious course at National Defence College (NDC), New Delhi, is conducted from January to December every year. A select community of senior defence and civilian officers from different countries



Colonel Khurram shaking hands with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in New Delhi. Khurram recently attended the prestigious course at National Defence College in New Delhi.

including from India take part in this course. The course curriculum at NDC focuses on issues relating to national security and strategic studies with multi dimensional approach towards domestic, regional and international developments. Studies of Socio-political

conditions, economy, science and technology, international security environment, global issues, India’s immediate neighborhood, strategies and structure for national security also form part of NDC course. As part of the exposure for the course participants, a foreign country tour and a visit to SAARC member country are also included in the curriculum.

For the 2006 NDC course, 20 senior army officers from countries such as U.S., U.K., Australia, neighboring and African countries attended. As part of the course, during the foreign country tour, Colonel Khurram visited U.A.E., U.K. and Turkey and visited Bangladesh during the SAARC tour.

Recollecting fondly his experience of the NDC course, Colonel Khurram cherished most the moment of his handshake with Prime Minister of India. With a beaming smile, Colonel Khurram says, “It (the NDC course) is a life time experience for me. India and Afghanistan always walk hand in hand to make a new Afghanistan — an Afghanistan of peace, prosperity and plurality.” ■

INDIA PARTICIPATES AT THE AFGHANISTAN DEVELOPMENT FORUM

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The other projects include the annual award of 500 long-term scholarships for undergraduate and postgraduate courses in universities throughout India, training of teachers in various provinces, gifting of 20,000 desk-cum-benches for schools in Nangarhar provinces (proposal for another 30,000 is being considered) and the proposed deputation of 15 English language teachers to Kabul to impart English language training to the candidates selected for the Indian scholarships. In the coming future, India will be taking up key projects of building of schools and basic health clinics in vulnerable border provinces under its Small Development Projects scheme, with focus on quick impact and delivery.

At the Afghanistan Development Forum, India made an announcement for the \$16 million funding for the construction of the power sub-stations at Doshi and Charikhar falling along the Pul-e-Khumri to Kabul transmission line being undertaken by India under the North East Power System project. The construction of the Chintala sub-station is already under the original plan and work is progressing satisfactory on this. The coverage of the additional two sub-stations

will ensure that the populace of these towns will also be provided electricity, which will contribute to their improved standard of living. Moreover, this will also ensure greater security along the transmission project route. With India’s announcement, an important lacuna in the overall power project has been plugged.

On the cross-cutting issues of aid effectiveness, capacity building and provincial development too, India participated actively in the discussions. Ambassador Sood stressed that the key to the developmental challenge would be capacity and human resource development not only at the national, but more so at the provincial and district levels — which would also be a key to the sustainability of all the projects being executed in Afghanistan. For this, a multi-pronged approach was warranted which ensured that skills were transferred to local Afghans with decision making power, that employment opportunities existed in areas where these skills were transferred, that the right people were employed in the right jobs, at the right levels, that there was some sort of balance between buying and building capacity. In pursuance of this conviction, India in co-ordination with the Afghan gov-

ernment and the other international donors, was making very concerted efforts in orienting the next phase of its developmental programs towards human resource development in all fields. In an important project with the United Nations Development Programme, India would also be bringing in 30 Indian Civil Servants to serve as coaches and advisors in various Afghan ministries for capacity development in public administration. India also totally supported the Afghan government’s focus on South-South Cooperation as an appropriate and affordable strategy towards enhanced national capacity.

The Afghanistan Development Forum helped to set the stage for meaningful collaboration across multiple sectors between the government of Afghanistan and the international community. India welcomed the platform of the Forum as playing an important catalytical role in initiating and sustaining appropriate aid for the betterment of Afghanistan. It remained committed towards working with the Afghan government and the international donor community towards bringing about tangible change in the lives of the Afghan citizens, measured through concrete development outcome indicators. ■