

AFGHAN READING PROJECT (ARP)

NEWSLETTER *Summer-Autumn 2008*



In this newsletter we are delighted to bring the voices of Roshna Wardak and Hafizullah Turab, Afghan writers whose books have been funded by the Afghan Reading Project, to support literacy and a love of reading in Afghanistan. ARP remains committed to funding books and educational resources that are relevant to the culture, heritage and experience of the Afghan people and printed in local languages.

.....news.....newsnews.....

Khaled Hosseini author of the international bestseller *The Kite Runner* kindly agreed to include ARP as one of the charities listed on his website. In 2006 Khaled Hosseini was named a goodwill envoy to the United Nations Refugee Agency.

.....news.....news.....news.....

A total of 47000 books printed, thanks to your generosity.

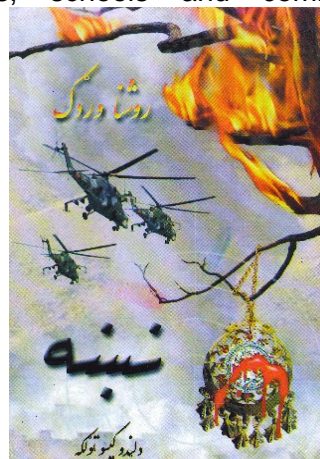
Projects funded Spring 2007- 2008

- 2000 Posters of Solar System, in Pashto and Dari
- School Library for Lacha Galee School, Dandwono Valley
- "The Target" short stories for women by Roshna Wardak – 1000 copies
- "The Speckled Hen" by Shirshah Sartoor 2000 reprints
- "Lives of Famous Afghans" by Asok Jyasina, stories of famous men and women in Afghanistan's history -2000 copies
- "The Opium Route" by Abdul Ghafoor Brishana, a classic adventure based on a true story – 2000 copies reprint
- "Literary Letters" by Qateel Khogyanaei - 1000 copies

For the first time posters are being printed by the KOR publications team in Kabul, funded by ARP. The KOR team chose to print "The Solar System", which will be particularly welcome in classrooms for children aged 10 years and up.

Donations to ARP fund *The Target* by Roshna Wardak, short stories from a woman's point of view

Roshna Wardak lives in Afghanistan. Roshna says *The Target* is the first collection of my short stories, which I wrote in my muddy village in very difficult and troubled times. Like other Afghans I have been disheartened with the long wars and injustices in our homeland, so I wanted to clothe this tragedy in short stories. Putting these stories into a collection will be a step forward in encouraging my sisters who have endured such hardship. Even though many girls and women may have no opportunity to be educated, they have great talents. This book might give them encouragement to show their art and talent." *The Target* has been printed in Kabul and will be distributed to adult literacy centres, schools and community libraries.



'Naxha' *The Target* by Roshna Wardak

Parent Power is deployed to protect schools. Hundreds of thousands of children, men and women are reaching out for education in Afghanistan. Sadly schools are still part of the battleground. In some areas teachers have been attacked and killed and school buildings burnt. "Insurgents attack schools because they represent the government in rural areas," said the Ministry of Education's chief protection officer. Despite the grave risks teachers continue teaching and parents continue to seek an education for their children. A new scheme to protect schools is operating in some rural areas.

Jerome Starkey writes in The Independent, Sat 12 April 2008, "Under a protection programme, sometimes called School Councils or Shuras, villagers agree to provide a small quota of night watchmen to take turns on guard. (-) In Logar province last month a primary school was saved by a gang of furious fathers who chased would-be arsonists into the night. The head of the local PTA, Basir, said armed men approached a co-educational primary school for more than 600 students after midnight. "They had guns and petrol to burn. But the guards saw them and started shouting", he said, "Everyone came out of their houses and when the terrorists realised, they ran away".

More than 5.8 million children, 2 million of them girls, now attend school, compared with fewer than 1 million under the Taliban. The Ministry of Education said 9,600 schools were being protected by parent-teacher groups." (For the full article please see *The Independent* 12 April 2008)

ARP aims to bring books to children and adults, and at the same time promote Afghan writing. Your donations have funded books which put Afghan classics back in the hands of readers and funded new writing.



Author Hafizullah Turab

Hafizullah Turab was born in the village of Pashad in Kunar Province 45 years ago. From a young age he had a love of books and during the Soviet occupation read any book he could find, which helped develop his own writing and his first poems. When the Soviet occupation ended Hafizullah enrolled in the Literary Faculty of Ningarhar University where he carried on writing. After graduation his short stories became popular among readers. ARP chose to fund two of his books "Salgai in the West" and "The Answer of an Angel, for school children and community libraries. Hafizullah Turab has gone on to write dramas for the new Afghan television. When asked about his hopes for the future, Hafizullah replied "**I hope that in future Afghans will achieve work according to their merit. I want Afghan original writing to reach the people again, in print, on television and in media**". Hafizullah has gone on to win a "Hero of Peace" award from a German Literary Association for his writing, specifically Afghan folk dramas.

Fundraising

ARP is a grass roots charity, managed on a voluntary basis and through the generosity of individuals and local fund raising. The Trustees wish to thank you for your generosity this year:

- Heather Holden-Brown of hhb Agency Ltd
- The Elizabeth Lunn Rockliffe Trust
- Barbara Large and donors at the 2007 Winchester Writers Conference
- Dr Abi Berger; Michael Price; Alex Davis; Kathy Morris; the members of the Thursday Readers Book Club; Mr and Mrs Doheny; Mr and Mrs Elliott; Gabrielle Balducci; Ian and Sevinç Harrison; Alastair and Chris Duncan; for your continuing donations and support.
- Neil Taylor for the website.
- Dr Farid Bazger and the KOR publications team, Kabul.

For more information or to make a donation:

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