Chairman’s Message
Ali Reza Yasa (Changez)

“We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt

As the chairman and founder of Star Educational Society, I have spent more than half of my life placing every brick to build this institution’s recognition, productivity and glory. I am committed to make this institute a successful and enjoyable experience for the faculty, students, support staff and every person who passes through our doors. Our mission cannot be fulfilled alone. We depend on every single student, teacher and support staff member who has the potential to make Star shine in the sky of educational competition. When Star is succeeding in this mission, it extends itself to the society and, likewise, to the country. You don’t have to be great to start a positive change but you have to start to be a great positive changemaker.

Above all, I express my gratitude to every honorable and sincere person whose heart has beat with the responsibility of fulfilling a task to make Star’s mission a true success. I also thank all Star teachers whose invaluable assistance and dedication has borne fruit for the institution. They learned and conveyed their knowledge to serve their people even better. Star Educational Society is committed to bringing about an educational change and creating an ideal educational environment. We have advanced from producing a labor force to the greater and more challenging task of creating future leaders. Our students are rocking and reflect the depth of the faith we have instilled in them. Their success is our success. They are the agents of change and are crafted to help build a better future for our war-torn country, Afghanistan.

Our staff members are selfless, dedicated and provide individualized care and attention to our customers. We have the pride of graduating over 7,000 students and operating in five branches. Our high school has a great future. Our libraries are great resources for intellectual meetings. Our futsal team is bringing us better and better results every year. Our alumni are industrious contributors to research centers, prominent writers in publications, frequently appear in media and are active civil society activists.

In the past decade many NGOs, government offices and contractors have benefited from our talented students and the quality education and language expertise they acquired at Star. Now our aim is even greater. We are meeting the needs of international NGOs and leading universities of the world by providing the best and the brightest students from Afghanistan. We have built a wall of human chain with the motto, “Join us for a difference.” Join us to strengthen this wall against discrimination, injustice and atrocities and build the kind of country we deserve.

Star Educational Society proudly introduces “Interstellar Bulletin,” an informative and educational weekly which is going to be available from August 1, 2015. Besides containing diverse academic news, literary pieces, interesting excerpts from students’ diaries, essays and interviews, this weekly will focus on success stories of Star alumni and other inspirational articles. By sending your stories, you can help improve the content of Star’s weekly newspaper, the “Interstellar Bulletin.”

Ali Reza Yasa
President Ghani Appoints Eighteen Advisors

T.B Behrouz: Etilaatruz: Yesterday, President Ashraf Ghani appointed eighteen people as his advisors according to Presidential Decree 7/4 on 21st Saratan (July).

According to this presidential decree, Abdul Hai Nemati was appointed as president’s advisor for Anti-Narcotics Affairs, Saleh Mohammad Safari as president’s advisor for Tribal Affairs, Nabi Mesdaq as Media Affairs Advisor, Agha Lalai Dastgiri as Dispute Resolution Affairs Advisor, Ahmadullah Alizai as Local Governance Affairs Advisor, Kheyal Mohammad Houssaini as Social Affairs Advisor and Haji Najibullah Naser as Border Affairs Advisor. They have been chosen for their experience and knowledge by President Ashraf Ghani. And also according to this decree, Homayon Jarir has been appointed as Social Affairs Advisor, Fazel Karim Emaq as Tribal Affairs Advisor, Haji Ali Akbar Zhoandai as Private Sector Affairs Advisor, Said Mohammad Ali Jawid as Religious Affairs advisor, Shamim Katawazi as Youth Affairs Advisor, Ewaz Ali Sadaat as Scientific Affairs Advisor, Assadullah Fallah as Dispute Resolution Affairs Advisor, Haji Alam Kochi as Nomad Affairs Advisor, Haji Fazel Karim Fazel as Press Affairs Advisor and Dr. Eid Mohammad Ahmadi as Social Affairs Advisor. These 18 people were appointed while Ashraf Ghani ousted 22 advisors who Hamid Karzai, the former president of Afghanistan, had appointed. These 18 people have been given the authority of using the transportation, office staff and a governmental salary. A considerable amount of governmental budget has been spent to hire these advisors. However, there are barrage of objections about the futility of appointing them.

Two Bomb Blasts Injure One Man in Kabul

Etilaatruz: The two separate bomb blast incidents injured one man in Kabul city. The first blast injured one man but the second blast did not have any casualties. However, Mr. Wahid Bikan BBC correspondent, posted on his Facebook page that two men were slightly injured in this blast. Mr. Abdul Rahman Rahmani, Kabul City Chief of Police, confirmed this incident. Meanwhile, Mr. Mohd Humayoon, Head Police of 119 Ministry of Interior, spoke to Pajwak News that this blast occurred in Road # 1, Kolola Poshta in front of Central Hotel and Ansari Square, District # 10, Kabul. The victims of this incident were taken to the hospital and their health condition is said to be satisfactory. The photos of the incident show that the shops were damaged in this area. A few days ago, the insurgents attacked Parliament House and seven insurgents were killed while more than twenty men were injured.

Star Educational Society

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Start dating

OS (Operating System)
Office Programs
Graphics
Programming
Web Development
Database
Networking

Starting Date:
Saturday, August 01st, 2015
Against Hatred

Kazim Ehan

Yesterday was the 20th anniversary of the Srebrenica Massacre or Srebrenica Genocide which is recorded as one of the most painful tragedies of the twentieth century. The occurrence of the tragedy in late 20th century reminds us that despite progresses in human rights and protecting human dignity, the world has not succeeded to prevent such tragedies and so there is always a potential of its repetition. If reviewing these tragedies is a moral obligation for others to know about, for Afghans, considering the bloody history of Afghanistan, growth of hatred and propensity to violence due to long term war and violence, it is a necessity to study different aspects of tragedies like Srebrenica Genocide so that we may manage to prevent it in the future.

There may be many reasons for what happened in Srebrenica, but ultimately increasing social hatred was the main cause of ruthless massacre. Growing hatred is the main driving factor pushing people to kill their fellow human beings. This hatred can be derived from religious beliefs or ethnic strife like what happened in Rwanda, or it may be from believing in racial pain in their hearts. It is not possible to explain all that happened in Srebrenica, but all we know is that their women were raped and used as war tools, their people were tortured to death, hundreds of people were disabled, thousands of them fled their towns, their homes were destroyed, their loved ones were killed, their livelihoods were lost, their economy was perished and lots of victims still suffer from neurosis caused by that tragedy. Therefore, war trauma is not going to leave Bosnians’ broken souls very soon since victims are badly affected by desperation and social disillusionment.

Rereading the Srebrenica’s story reminds us that hatred only fructifies destruction and unlimited suffering. In absence of love and tolerance where supremacy, like the rise of Nazism in Germany that led to World War 2 and Holocaust Genocide, results. In any case, hatred is main factor. When there is no hatred, no individual and no group of human will be the target of a systematic killing by their fellow humans. The growing ethnic conflicts and existence of some religious beliefs that legitimize hatred and violence in Afghanistan imbued illiterate masses with hatred which ultimately lead them to violence and killing. Therefore, if rereading the human tragedies and like that of Srebrenica does not attract our attention on growing hatred in Afghan society, perhaps it may help us to know more about its disastrous consequences.

In Srebrenica, 8000 people were killed in less than one week, but it was not the end of the tragedy. The cost that victims paid in Bosnian War is much larger than what has been recorded. Still no complete report or investigation has recorded all of what happened to people and there will never be so. Yesterday, Bosnian Muslims commemorated the 20th anniversary of this bloody tragedy with tears in their eyes and hatred rules over the society, there will be no prosperity and happiness. Instead of spreading hatred, let’s teach our next generation to live with love, tolerance, patience and mutual respect, because hatred leads us to nowhere except destruction and misery. Let’s not tie our human values and dignity to ethnicity, race, gender and beliefs because it only generates hatred and enmity. Srebrenica massacre was not an exceptional tragedy far-different from Afghan social and historical condition, somehow we are living in a similar environment. Let’s learn from Srebrenica by respecting others’ rights, values and dignity. We should never foster hatred and enmity or we have to wait for another Srebrenica massacre to take place in Afghanistan.

Disaster to Happen
Written by: Mokhtar Wafae
Translated by: Homayoon Asadullahi

The security situation in the northern region is deteriorating day by day. A large number of terrorist groups from Central Asia and high-ranking officers of Pakistan Intelligence Services (ISI) assist Taliban in fighting against government of Afghanistan. While Taliban increased their offensive operations against Afghan National Security Forces in northern region, Doctor Abdullah Abdullah, the chief executive of the national unity government, visited some provinces of the northern region and checked the front lines of fighting and posts of ANSF. Abdullah visited the northern region to give moral to ANSF Forces and indicated that if the National Unity Government collapses, the Taliban and ISIS will take control of Afghanistan.

He conveyed the abovementioned message after visiting the northern region and he believes that the northern region is about to collapse at the hand of insurgents. In case of negligence, the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (ISIS) and Afghan ISIS will seize the northern region and establish their own parallel governments. Hundreds of well-equipped Taliban fighters and ISIS related groups started their new phase of operations in Qaisar, Almar, Shirin Tagab, Dawlat Abad districts of Faryab province.

As indications of the strong determination of insurgents to overthrow the northern region of Afghanistan and the recent development of fighting and insecurities in that area are the following activities: the commencement of the new phase of Taliban’s operation by the name of Aynak in Sar Pol Province; the formation of Taliban’s supply structure in Balkh province; the creation of one thousands fighters under the name of rapid reaction force in Faryab and Sar Pol Provinces; expansion of propagandaized activities; and recruitment of fighters in the northern provinces with the mission of sending equipment and fighters to battle in other provinces.

During this period of security challenges, the Afghan National Security Forces, however, has become tired and disappointed and are fighting in their defensive positions and battlefields against terrorist groups.

Mes Aynak Antiquities to be Exhibited in Czech Republic
Translated by: Ali Sadiqi

The Ministry of Information and Culture and the Embassy of the Czech Republic have reached an agreement in Kabul to exhibit this collection of antiquities in the Czech Republic. Digging started in 2009 in the coalmine of Mes Aynak in Logar and, to date, 149 wooden antiquities have been discovered and kept in the National Museum, which dates back over 5000 years. According to this agreement, by the end of the year, these antiquities will be transferred to the Czech Republic, and after the investigation and refinement, on February 2nd to 9th they will be exhibited in the city of Prague. Based on the notice from Ministry of Information and Culture, the Czech Republic has agreed to return these antiquities to Kabul with half the income generated from the exhibition; besides, the total advertising expense is undertaken by the Czech Republic. The ministry has also declared that talks are now going on with other countries, as well, to exhibit the antiquities in those countries and to return them to Afghanistan half the income.
The First Step is the Most Important One

By: Faiza Nasery

“The harder you work, the luckier you get” - Gary Player

Have you ever been advised to live a simple life and not to ask for trouble? I am used to it, hearing from my grandmother, “Undoubtedly one day you will die, why do you try to kill yourself?” Hence I start to explain my goals and she changes the subject because she finds my words so boring and my goals unreachable. Why? Is that because I am a girl? Or because I am an Afghan? Why should I not pursue my goals? What is the difference between Afghan students and those studying in Harvard? Is it only a matter of luck? Fortunately, my mother taught me not to give up on my dreams and encouraged me to pay the price to reach my worthy goal, and that price is hard work.

Three times I applied for master’s degree scholarships through the Ministry of Higher Education. After losing three years of my life, due to non-transparent procedures, I could not succeed. I was a little disappointed at the time but I did not have to settle. Yes, I made a brand new start. After a search for the best scholarships, I found out about Fulbright. That was great. It was a full scholarship, administered by the U.S. Embassy-Kabul, and scholars from the entire range of professions were eligible. Nonetheless, the requirements made my heart a little heavy! To make a long story short, I worked hard and after many ups and downs, I am a finalist of the Afghan Fulbright Program and I will study in the field of Education-al Psychology, my favorite major.

To be honest, more than the scholarship the application process was a life-changing experience for me. First of all, I met great people and learned a lot from them. They generously offered their knowledge and experience. It resulted in my humbleness and knowing how empty I was. As a result, I decided to offer my knowledge and experience to those who need help. Through trial and error, I understood even the most difficult jobs are not impossible. The thought-provoking experience made me serious and critical about values and better recognition of myself. As a matter of fact, it was the first and the most important step I took towards my better self. Though the path is full of twists, still the first step is the most important one. I recommend my friends to work as hard as possible, come what may.

I still remember the snowy winter of 2012 when I was studying advance level in Star Educational Society - "B" Branch, located in Saripul, Dushki Barchi, Kabul. It was about 3 kilometers from my home. I used to commute to center on foot every day except holidays. However, I never suffered this long-distance walking since my three classmate and I walked most of the distance together discussing our class or sharing jokes.

Our teacher was Ali Reza Yasa, also known as "Changezi." In our first session, he demonstrated his seriousness and his expectation that we would work extremely hard during the course. He warned us, “If you have simple grammar and punctuation mistakes, you will be required to study lower levels again.” I promised myself to work hard and achieve an A+ graded diploma which required a score between 90% and 100%.

During the initial sessions, we learned the overall procedure of the class, how to read critically, and understanding the major assignments.

Moreover, partners were chosen to peer-review each other’s assignments. Shokrullah, a thirteen-year-old boy, was chosen as my partner to whom I am very thankful today. I was fifteen years old at that time.

When it came to the first major assignment, Writing an Academic Essay, I faced problems that were almost unendurable. Mainly, I did not have a computer nor did I know how to use one; I didn’t even own a mobile phone at the time. The text had to be typed with specific format and font. In addition, we had to write the essay within a specific number of words. It’s really difficult for a person to do it by hand, isn’t it?

My main concern was how to type it rather than the task of creating it. I selected the title “Environment Problem.” I brainstormed, mapped, outlined, analyzed my paragraph structure, and began writing the first draft. As I wrote, I started to count the number of words used in my essay by hand. When my draft was completed, I used 682 words and was pleased that it was within the required word count. After my partner peer-reviewed the essay, I found a photocopy shop that also provided typing services. The typist typed my essay and charged me 200 Afghanis for his service. Returning home, I read the typed essay and discovered that the typist made many capitalization and punctuation mistakes. Furthermore, he ignored some sentences. I returned to the photocopy shop to edit the text but the typist rejected my request and threatened to beat me up! I edited the text in another photocopy shop but the typist there didn’t know how to format the essay as desired. When I showed the essay to the instructor, he rejected the essay by putting a big cross mark on the second page which contained a wrong-formatted table of contents.

I had to revise the essay and face the difficult task of having it typed again! The problem of having my assignments typed continued to haunt me in the following assignments of writing an argument essay, writing a process essay, summarizing and analyzing texts and so on. One particularly memorable challenge was the two sleepless nights I spent summarizing and analyzing “The Lonely, Good Company of Books.” Another one of my assignments in that course was my argument essay, “Human Beings Are Better Than Other Animal.” I remember it was 746 words long. It may seem strange that I remember the exact number of words in essays that I wrote over three years ago, but counting the words by hand, over and over again, had a way of implanting those numbers in my brain.

The outcome of all this hard work and the many obstacles I faced was a good one. I was aiming for an A+ graded diploma in the course. Although I did not succeed and earn in earning an “A”, I was the first position holder by having the highest grade in the class – an 89! I was extremely happy and proud and enjoyed the result of my hardships.

By: Waheed Hadeed
I came to Kabul from Daikundi Province when I was sixteen years old and started studying English at Star Educational Society from beginner classes through the advanced ones. I learnt many things from Star, its teachers and the environment. Mr. Yasa was a huge source of inspiration and motivation for me. My experience at Star helped me to find the correct path and follow the way to success. After graduating from Shahid Saeed Ismayeil Balkhi High School I was accepted to the Faculty of Science at Kabul University. I graduated with a degree in Physics in 2012. I felt indebted to Star for the opportunities I have enjoyed and was inspired to share my success with other aspiring students. Therefore, during my undergraduate studies, I became a mathematics teacher for Star instructors and senior students who intended to compete for international scholarships (Fulbright, PEACE/JICA* Scholarship Program, Chevening, etc.). I loved working with the talented and highly motivated students and teachers at Star.

Since graduating from Kabul University, I have been working as Job Classification and Analysis Manager at Ministry of Urban Development Affairs (MUDA). In addition, I teach Mathematics at Gharjistan University in Kabul. However, I am most excited to be at the threshold of a new chapter in my life. I was recently selected as a scholarship recipient for the PEACE/JICA Master’s Program. The Japanese Government will support me in attaining my Master’s Degree in Public Administration and Public Policy at the International University of Japan. I will write my thesis on “Human Resources Development in Government” and return to work in Afghanistan’s government with my newfound skills and knowledge. High English language proficiency is the first on the PEACE/JICA’s list of eligibility requirements and I feel indebted to Star Educational Society, Mr. Yasa and my other great teachers for my success. I treasure my continued contact with everyone at Star. Next stop – Japan!

* PEACE is the acronym for “Promotion and Enhancement of Afghanistan Capacities for Effective Development” and JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) is the independent government agency that administers the development assistan funds that support the scholarship.
There was a wish, a dream, and a goal, and like my very ambition, the goal was to make a difference... to impact the lives of my fellow country men and women in one of the farthest, oldest and poorest provinces of my country, Bamyan. My dream came true in 2010 when I opened a branch of Star Educational Society in Bamyan. I worked in Bamyan for almost three years. During this time, I learned to care for people whose honesty, courage and selflessness were beyond the approach of my imagination. It was probably the most interesting chapter of my life.

My stay in Bamyan was very productive. I related so emotionally and historically to the giant Buddha statues, the rocky Baba mountains and felt like I was living near the roof of the world. My desire to open a branch of Star Educational Society in Bamyan was inspired by my life-changing experience at Star’s branch in Kabul. Star was where I learned the holy mission of “gain & convey.” This philosophy was engrafted in my soul and compelled me to extend myself by helping others to learn English. Therefore, I offered special English classes teaching lower and upper intermediate classes. Students were motivated and intelligent. Our classroom discussions were a great opportunity to practice speaking English and also allowed us to improve our cultural and educational awareness. Many of my students were able to secure positions as interpreters and government officials after taking my classes. Ali Reza Haidary, Azizullah and Ain Ali were three of my students. They were English majors at Bamyan University and became great teachers across Bamyan Province.

Star Educational Society has been teaching English in Kabul, Afghanistan since 2003. In this past decade, they have gained tremendous recognition and many success stories. It is where I developed my skills as an English speaker, linguist (translator/interpreter) and an English instructor. Those newfound skills opened the doors of opportunity for me and inspired me to help students in Bamyan to have the same experience. Students who attended the classes were aware of Star and some of them had studied English at Star just like me. Sometimes, I listened to them talking about it. They talked about their family members who studied English at Star and had obtained scholarships to many countries like America, UK, Germany, India, Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Canada, Mongolia, and other countries.

I regret that I could not stay in Bamyan for a longer time. However, I now work at Star’s Main Branch in Kabul and am honored to continue my relationship with this stellar institution. Star is now offering Russian language classes in its first phase of becoming an international language institute with future plans to offer Turkish, Chinese and other languages. Many students from Star have received prestigious scholarships, study abroad opportunities, excellent employment, and have created their own businesses and English language centers using the language skills they developed at Star. I am proud of my longstanding association with Star and the contribution I am able to make to advance the people in Afghanistan.
The Builders

All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time;
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rhyme.

Nothing useless is, or low;
Each thing in its place is best;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest.

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

Truly shape and fashion these;
Leave no yawning gaps between;
Think not, because no man sees,
Such things will remain unseen.

In the elder days of Art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part;
For the Gods see everywhere.

Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen;
Make the house, where Gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean.

Else our lives are incomplete,
Standing in these walls of Time,
Broken stairways, where the feet
Stumble as they seek to climb.

Build to-day, then, strong and sure,
With a firm and ample base;
And ascending and secure
Shall to-morrow find its place.

Thus alone can we attain
To those turrets, where the eye
Sees the world as one vast plain,
And one boundless reach of sky.

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Biography

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) was an influential American poet, translator and professor at Harvard University. Longfellow’s most significant work is, perhaps, Evangeline: A Tale of Acadie. During his lifetime, Longfellow was considered the best of all American poets, and his work was widely translated and published in other European languages: Italian, German and French to note a few. Some view Longfellow’s literary reputation as nearly sacrosanct, yet Edgar Allan Poe and Walt Whitman negatively critiqued his work. Walt Whitman would go so far as to accuse Longfellow as merely being an imitator of European forms. Whitman would praise Longfellow almost exclusively on his ability to keep his audience’s favor. He is the only American to be honored with a bust placed in the Poet’s Corner of Westminster Abbey.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. declared that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was the best of American poets and praised the cheer he was able to display in his writing.
With a Fulbrighter-Maker, a Humble Starian Who Makes his Way from Barchi to Columbia University

An Interview with Hussain Yousofi, the General Director and Co-founder of Star Educational Society

How do you describe yourself? Who are you?

Well, this is always difficult to capture one’s entirety in a few sentences but I will try. I’d say that maybe the word “student” captures most of what describes my personality and activities. I am a student in that I love learning about new sciences, new cultures and new people. I also love to convey what I learn to people. Through learning and teaching, I am seeking to be a useful member of society.

Who or what has been influential in choosing the path you are following now?

Many things and people have been influential in my life. But most importantly, immigration to Pakistan played a crucial role in shaping my life. I was enrolled at a public school in Pakistan where students were treated with violence and corporal punishment, and lack of love and encouragement. Students were treated that way as school faculty and staff were way kinder and caring to students. I became more dedicated and hardworking at private school where I received love and encouragement from my teachers. I realized that students can exhibit strong desire to raise their children about education in Afghanistan, they will get the answer from those who claim so.

How did you get accepted to Fulbright? Please explain the process you had to go through?

Wanting to get my Master degree, I applied to Fulbright for 2014-2015 academic year, but I didn’t get accepted. As I thought about my mistakes and reasons that made me miss that chance, I reapplied to Fulbright and used my past career experience to decide about my field of study, and this made me a stronger applicant for 2015-2016. My research, work experience and spending sufficient time on my application helped me secure this scholarship.

You not only got into Fulbright yourself, but you even helped six of your students to get into Fulbright. What were the secrets of this achievement?

One of the secrets to the success of my students was that I played a role in the selection of my students. I always want to try new thing, make progress, and achieve more. I want to surpass myself.

Have you ever fallen in love?

Yes!!! But please don’t ask the details yet.

Why do people like you so much?

I’d say they are kind, but you should apply and learn how to be stronger candidate.

What is your most important message you have learned in your life?

Dream and go for it. Never give up. And be grateful for what you have.

A few personal questions now! You are known for your integrity and peace! Are you really in peace deep in heart?

I think so. But I am also restless in that I want to try new thing, make progress, and achieve more. I want to surpass myself.

Do you consider yourself a happy person?

Yes, I am a very happy person, and I am grateful for everything that I have in my life. I am thankful for having my family and friends and wonderful people around me.

What is your ultimate goal in life?

Through learning, teaching, and writing, I wish to contribute to making the world a better place to inhabit, a world without violence, hatred and prejudice, & a world where everyone can follow their dreams and live a happy life.