How my life changed with Star

Message from Mustafa Hussain, the Executive Director of Star Educational Society

Slowly the race, nation, religion, skin color preferences, gender prejudice and passion abate. A galaxy of light has been formed to appeal human beings to brighter lives. I was one of them. Yes, Star is the place where social mobility is formed, where motivation has strong roots to self-development, where students find new horizons of hope for their future.

An begins learning since they are born and it continues till the end of their lives. Some parts of learning happen incidentally, unknowingly, and through engagement in social interactions with people in a society, some however, happen through intended, integrated, systematic, planned and organized strategies. The important part of learning starts by planning. It starts from schools, colleges, institutes, universities and educational centers. Ten years ago I joined to STAR EDUCATION-AL SOCIETY as an ordinary employee, an employee who, upon finishing his heavy labor of cleaning the rooms and offices, was torn out, tired and unhappy.

My being employee at Star did not please me at all. Because I never thought about improvement, my improvement, and more importantly the importance of education, seemed almost covered in the shades of a smoke screen. It was and is a common perception in society to believe that the condition in our lives is demand of God. I believed the same. Like many ordinary Afghan workers, the discontentment lingered for long and ended in a fight with God, a meditation and some prayers after that would reconnect me with God, the result always was in favor of God who I felt would forgive me after long repentance and apologies in my prayers.

Some months passed I did not have any idea or plan for my future. It was one Friday morning when Mr. Yasa (Ustad Changiz) asked me why I was not studying English. I did not have any answer. I just replied, “I have become old, this is not the time of studying for me!” It was not enough for him. I further argued, “I have four children, if I only find myself good enough to support my children’s education that would satisfy me.” Finally he convinced me to sit in a prep class. I started it and after nearly two decades I found myself a student. The idea pleased me. I studied hard. I slowly became an instructor. I became more and more passionate and found the joy of learning. I felt improved and found out that many people had made their lives by studying. And I found families become educated, societies improve, and countries develop. Any kind of activity that has target turns out to become deep and leaves life changing impressions on individuals, learning is a part of it. These are all to make our lives better. Human beings are trained to gain more skills. Skills of speaking, listening, writing and reading and above all of them comes the skill of living. Without the skill of planning your skill of living your life successfully lacks an indispensable thing. These skills can help human beings to communicate better, cross the borders, develop their social relationship, understand variety of cultural values and get familiar to them.

Slowly the race, nation, religion, skin color preferences, gender prejudice and passion abate. A galaxy of light has been formed to appeal human beings to brighter lives. I was one of them. Yes, Star is the place where social mobility is formed, where motivation has strong roots to self-development, where students find new horizons of hope for their future.

Fulbright Advising Workshop

For the past many years, Star Educational Society has been working with the great number students to get their way to purse their education in one of the top universities of the world. Therefore, Fulbright advising workshops were held at Star Educational Society... Page 6

Kabul Hosts G7+ Group Meeting

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The tragedy of Dog

After a noisy day of rocket launching and the rain of gun firing and several airstrikes, which I still hear in my ears as they were suffering the cracking of gun firing, and after being witness of death bodies of our relatives, neighbors and finally the heart-breaking tears of mothers, fathers and all family members, the leaders, quite unexpectedly once again announced cease-fire... Page 2

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Quote of the Week

“I have the choice of being constantly active and happy or passive and sad. Or I can go mad by ricocheting in between.” — Sylvia Plath
Taj-e-Begum

About the Author: Hakimia is a brilliant Level 5 student of Star Educational Society’s C-Branch. Recently she was selected as the best student of C-Branch. She likes writing stories and plans to study her higher education abroad.

Once upon a time in Afghanistan, in the Ghazni Province, lived a family who was very ignorant and that family had only one daughter. Her name was Taj-e-Begum. She was a very beautiful and kindhearted girl but the problem was that her parents always beat her and did everything to her. Taj-e-Begum had to wash the dishes any time they ate, wash everything to her. Taj-e-Begum had to that her parents always beat her and did anything to her. Taj-e-Begum was woken by the harsh sound of her father shouting at her, she opened her eyes and found out that the sun was up and everyone had woken up. Taj-e-Begum woke up and started working. After breakfast she took the cups by the river to wash them, she felt dizzy and fell asleep, again she was woken by the harsh sound of her father telling her how stupid she was.

So on like that, she worked until night and didn’t even bother to stop going to the roof at night and look at the stars. That night after midnight Taj-e-Begum fell asleep and she saw a dream. She dreamt that an angel came to her and the angel said, “Taj-e-Begum, you have pleased us and you are to work hard, because you will become a doctor and the lives of many Afghans are in your hands so try hard no matter what kind of situation your parents leave you in.”

Taj-e-Begum woke up and thought about her dream then she started working. After one month, she was in Band-e-Qachar and I want to go there and study because I want to become a successful doctor in future and the lives of many Afghans are in my hands.” Her father said harshly, “You are a girl remember, you should work at home and help your mother. By the way, when you get married the education you are planning to try will not help you, and Band-e-Qachar is one hour away, you will not be able to reach it.”

Taj-e-Begum didn’t lose her hope because she knew that the stars would help her. That night Taj-e-Begum looked at the sky but the stars didn’t say anything, she thought for a minute then she remembered that the angel had told her that she had to work hard no matter what would happen.

The next day she woke up early as usual and finished all the work and went to school without letting her parents know about it. She swept in the hot weather while the other students had fans and different kinds of cold foods.

Taj-e-Begum was very tired but she kept working hard because she knew that she would succeed one day.

Taj-e-Begum grew up and became a successful doctor and saved the lives of many poor people. She went to her parents and said, “The education helped me a lot, didn’t it?” Her parents pledged not to say those things again to anyone, and that was the story of Taj-e-Begum!

The tragedy of Dog

About the Author: Ahmad Murtaza Ahmadi graduated from Kabul University with a degree in Political Science in 2011. He studied English at Star from 2006 to 2008 and began teaching for Star in 2009. Currently working at the Ministry of Higher Education, this is the second in a series of stories that he will be contributing to the Interstellar Bulletin.

After a noisy day of rocket launching and the rain of gun firing and several airstrikes, which I still hear in my ears as the others prayed in the temple, but Taj-e-Begum would go to the roof at night where the air was fresh and the only place where she could feel comfortable to express her thoughts and feelings to God and with the comforting air she would express her thoughts and she reviewed all her wishes.

One night Taj-e-Begum prayed and watched the stars until midnight, when she fell asleep. Taj-e-Begum was woken by the harsh sound of her father shouting at her, she opened her eyes and found out that the sun was up and every one had woken up. Taj-e-Begum woke up and started working. After breakfast she took the cups by the river to wash them, she felt dizzy and fell asleep, again she was woken by the harsh sound of her father telling her how stupid she was.

Finally we met each other and started playing over the Wahdat Bridge; we knotted a plastic pocket with the warp and left it to the ripple part of the river as the river was swelling in it and moving swiftly and farther and farther, and we sought pleasure cheerling and chanting with loud shouts enjoying each moment, and I was looking at smiley face of my friends, who desperately wished to live in a peaceful and friendly atmosphere for ever, then we all saw some armed young boys who were targeting the small things in the river, like the bottles or any other thing which moved by the river waves. Just by the bridge, a dog had given birth to four whelps which were just moving and calling their mother, but the mother was looking at them with the tearful eyes and the blood-soaked chest, she was moving its legs, breathing its last breath, and moaning in pain, but the puppies were so scared like a jet, echoed in the air and hit the poor mother. In a moment, the dog fell down! The bullet soared like a jet, echoed in the air and hit the poor mother. By the way, when you get married the education you are planning to try will not help you, and Band-e-Qachar is one hour away, you will not be able to reach it.”

Taj-e-Begum didn’t lose her hope because she knew that the stars would help her. That night Taj-e-Begum looked at the sky but the stars didn’t say anything, she thought for a minute then she remembered that the angel had told her that she had to work hard no matter what would happen.

The next day she woke up early as usual and finished all the work and went to school without letting her parents know about it. She swept in the hot weather while the other students had fans and different kinds of cold foods.

Finally the People were scattered in different directions, and the puppies were a lone barking at people who were leaving the crowd, as if they had messag-es in their barks or they may call us not to abandon them, but unexpectedly and gradually all left, I with my friends were watching it with deep sadness and grief, we all were fighting with the soldiers in our imaginary world. Previously, my mother had called to me, to join them for the lunch, and after long silence, I intentionally distracted myself from the scene and came home, while we were having lunch I started telling the tragedy of the dog, I don’t know if I made a mistake but it seemed like anger struck everybody hard, everyone was shocked by the story, felt deeply dejected. The silence told me “nothing is unexpected here.” Then, nobody seemed to enjoy lunch. The silence broke with my sister’s tears and one by one everyone started to cry. I can’t reckon how the surfa was picked, but the every male left home to come to see the dog, we saw that the puppies were not there any-more but the carcass of the mother was still lying in a pool of blood lifeless, with no spirit.

Stop! The three turned their faces to us, stared or perhaps glared, didn’t say anything, they even looked surprised! They stood up and did nothing, but one of them sit back and targeted again, and shot at the dog with anger! The bullet soared like a jet, echoed in the air and hit the poor mother. In a moment, the dog fell down! The bullet soared like a jet, echoed in the air and hit the poor mother. In a moment, the dog fell down! The bullet soared like a jet, echoed in the air and hit the poor mother.
My family was living one hour drive from our district, Jaghori, in Ghazni province. My family was living among 60 other families, which were politically divided into two parties: Sazman-e-Nasr and Nahzat Islami Afghanistan in 1980. Poverty had dominated the whole district except for a few families, who had members working outside of the country: Iran, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia. Some people had local small businesses and some others were working on their lands as farmers. Since, back then, a small number of schools were opened, our parents encouraged us to go to Madrasa (religious school) and learn Holy Quran. I still remember my first day of going to school when my mother accompanied me to the Madrasa, since my father was in Iran and there was nobody else to drop me off. When I got to Madrasa, I was really surprised because for the first time in my life I witnessed a number of kids all gathered in one place reciting Holy Quran. Therefore, I was hardly able to listen to the Mullah (clergy or madrasa instructor) when he was talking to me. I somewhat remember him encouraging me to study, promising my mom to take care of me, and supporting me in my studies.

I was shot at again when, one of the Wahdat party’s commanders, ordered me to take some food to the mountain. Once I arrived there, suddenly one of the Nahzat’s commanders saw me and started shooting. I quickly hid myself in the back side of a big stone. I am pretty sure he shot around twenty bullets. After he was gone, I ran and used another stone to cover and protect myself. I waited there for about half an hour till it got dark. Finally, I delivered the food to Wahdat’s commander.

There was nobody to deny the requests of these parties. That is why not only food but also other war equipment were forcibly prepared and delivered by innocent people. Years have been passed, and now those memories are giving me more power and inspiration, in order to become a peace activist and fight against injustice and inequality.

Written by: M. Zaman Khoshnam

I was born in a village, which was one hour drive from our district, Jaghori, in Ghazni province. My family was living among 60 other families, which were politically divided into two parties: Sazman-e-Nasr and Nahzat Islami Afghanistan.

In this book, the 21 strategies will guide you to how to get more tasks done in less time. This book has discussed how to get the very big and tedious works done gradually in a determined time. The author believes that every human has the ability to do any kind of tasks which looks big and difficult. He also talks about why most people take the lazy road when it comes about doing a task which is very important and looks big.

The big cake is an understandable example which will guide you to be brave and take the risk of doing the job, no matter how big and tedious the task is. The fact is that no one can gulp an entire cake at once but if they cut it into pieces, they can eat one piece at a time. Later on you will see the whole cake is eaten. The author also believes that the laziness is a habit, and because it is a habit it can be developed or destroyed, so you have the option to destroy it.

The different rules which are discussed in this book are: the 80/20 rule (It means the very important tasks have to be considered and less important should be considered lesser and ignored at all), consequences for the tasks according to the orders, preparing in advance before beginning, focusing on key results, setting a timetable, doing the most difficult tasks first, and many more.

This book is a guide for the people who are procrastinating in their daily activities and not doing what they should do. You can find it on internet the PDF format and also the translated version is available in the market. The good point is that this book is written in very easy literature and there is no need to for a dictionary or a long time to read. It is very simple with only 120 pages.

Written By: Hadi Shaikhzada

Brian Tracy is a consultant in business and self-management. He is the author of many books in literature and there is no need to mention his books. This book is written in very easy literature and there is no need to for a dictionary or a long time to read. It is very simple with only 120 pages.
President Ashraf Ghani stated in a statement that reaching to peace and stability needs strategic endurance. President Ashraf Ghani during a meeting with NATO secretary on Tuesday said in news conference that if there were civil war, the framework would be different, but the international and regional dimensions have complicated the peace talk process. "We need to contemplate cautiously", he added.

"Bringing peace and stability is a global aim and it is what our people want, and reaching to an agreement in this talk needs strategic endurance", president Ashraf Ghani said in a statement.

The president also stressed that the countrymen would be prepared for the worst situation, and for making plans for the best. He also said that we could not anticipate the result of peace talks before it's happening.

Athletes of the country have received 222 medals this year. Department of Sports and Physical Education have announced accomplishing 222 medals from different tournaments, this year. Fourteen of these medals are accomplished by female athletes.

In the newsletter which the Press Office of this department have shared with Pazhwak News Agency, from the total achieved there are 71 gold, 63 silver and 77 bronze medals. The medals that the female athletes have accomplished were in Taekwondo, Wushu, Karate, Kabul, Taekwondo and many other sports fields.

The source added that these medals have been accomplished from regional, international and Asian tournaments, including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan, China, Qatar, Iran, Uzbekistan, Mongolia, Jordan, USA, UAE, Hungary, Tajikistan, Egypt, Russia, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Japan, Indonesia, and Lebanon. The newsletter indicates that in the current year 50 internal sports tournaments, including 30 tournaments for the selection of the national team members, and 20 best teams of Kabul city, have been held.

These tournaments were in the following fields: Body Building, Wrestling, Box ing, gymnastics, New full-contact, Ishihar Karate, Karate, Volleyball, Snooker, Maui Thai, Para Olympics, Kung Fu, ITF Taekwondo and many other sports fields.

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These tournaments were in the following fields: Body Building, Wrestling, Biking, Karate, ITF Taekwondo, WTF Taekwondo, Low Athletics, Ishihar Karate, Wushu, Boxing, Kung Fu, Kabaddi, Volleyball, Basketball, Futsal, Judo, Gulf, Maui Thai, gymnastics, Powerlifting, Badminton, Jujitsu, Handball, Chess, and many other sports.

Based on information received from the newsletter, many sports tournaments were held for the ladies too, such as Volleyball, Handball, Jujitsu, Taekwondo, Karate, Paralympics, Maui Thai, Fencing, Gulf, Badminton, Gymnastics and Futsal.

The Department of Sports and Physical Educations said. “This year, besides inaugurating Athletic Complex Department of Balkh province, the Athletic Complex Departments of Jawzjan, Nimroz and Ghazni province have been inaugurated along with the Athletic Stadium of Panjshir Province. Furthermore, such projects are under process in provinces such as Laghman, Logar, Ghazni, Takhar, Kabul, Balkh and Nangarhar.

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Lesson 8: Writing Poetry
Lesson 9: Writing Articles and Journalistic Pieces
Lesson 10: Writing Dramas, Scripts, and Screenplays
Lesson 11: The Importance of Editing
Lesson 12: Overcoming Writer’s Block
Lesson 13: Unlocking Your Creativity
Lesson 14: Resources for Writers
Lesson 15: Publishing Your Writing
NB. The eligibility will be determined in an entry exam....
Kabul Hosts G7+ Group Meeting

Translated by Walid Bahmany
Source: BBC Persian

Kabul hosted the 4th meeting of G7+ on 23rd and 24th of March 2016. The members of this group discussed about the challenges of fighting against poverty and crises of their countries. In the opening ceremony of this meeting, the president of Afghanistan Mohammad Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai emphasized on bringing reform and fighting against corruption, and said the G7+ is a good way to share their experiences.

Based on experiences, the key to global peace and stability is strengthening and stabilizing weak and underdeveloped governments. Supporting underdeveloped countries is very important in order to have a global peace," Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai.

Afghanistan is one of the countries that face many challenges such as insecurity, poverty and political challenges that are the causes of Afghanistan joining this group. During the meeting, Salahu-din Ilahtai said that in 15 recent years, Afghanistan have had a lot of improvements, but have not yet achieved her main objectives.

Political and economic cooperation, struggling against poverty and illiteracy and working together on strategies in terms of education, hygiene, agricultural development, fighting against corruption and provision of basic services can protect the residents of these countries from war, political and economic crises, and bring permanent peace and stability in these countries. Seven back-warded countries established this group in 2010 in Eastern Timor and now its members have increased to twenty countries.

The group was established with the motto, “Farewell crisis and welcome development” and it is a partner to many international organizations including the international bank, United Nations agencies and research institutions. The group aims to establish coordination in sensitive political issues; such as security, social, economic and political crises between the members of the group. And their main purpose is to establish a better relationship with their sponsors and beneficiaries. This is the fourth meeting of this group. The previous meetings were held in Eastern Timor, Southern Sudan, Haiti and Togo.

The prestige that can be disgraced just by a photograph

Translation: Farid Shejofayi
Source: Daily Open Society

Firstly I pray to God, not to create anybody a girl, at least not in Afghanistan. Otherwise, the girl might disgrace the whole family’s and her prestige just by putting a photograph or writing status on Facebook.

On New Year, a group of my friends and I decided to go hiking and have fun. Luckily, we met a photographer friend of us, and enthusiastically planned to record the happy moments of our amuse ment. Though the smart-phones have facilitated photography and we do not need a professional photographer or any extra preparation, we cannot relinquish a high quality camera and the photographer. We enjoyed, hiked, and took so many photographs. When coming back, I decided to share some of the photos with friends in virtual world. I chose two of the best photos and uploaded on Facebook. After a few minutes, I received a message with the following contents from a relative: “What sort of photos are these that you are posting on Facebook? How many times should we warn you not to stroll around too much? Especially with men! Think of your dignity and your family! You are not well-grown yet, you haven’t seen the world, cannot distinguish friends from enemies, there are bad people everywhere around you.”

This was not a different photo from what I used to post in the past. A photo in crowded entertaining place of Kabul, but in this photo I was the only girl and five other boys. In my trips to Ramayn or any cultural or entertaining programs that I had previously, I had such photos and received such warnings as well, but not so distinct. This was not a different photo, I only wanted to become an obedient girl and finally the relatives lost their temper. What am I supposed to do if my own daughters are not posting their photos on Facebook? Or what can I do if their thoughts are different from mine?

Sometimes I have to work for long hours with men, greet them, and adapt myself to the environment. Should I quit my job, where there is no one to fill my position? Sup­pose, I share a photo of my working place on Facebook, what reactions it may face then?

I closed the message without reply.

Women’s Political Association; first step for women right determination

Translated by: Hadi Shakhizadah
Source: Hasht-e-Subh

Hashire Subh, Kabul: the president in a cel­ebration ceremony of Nawroz which was held on 23rd of March 2016, announced the establishment of the first women’s political association in Afghanistan. The President in his speech emphasized the importance of women’s political power for Afghanistan. He also stressed that in this ceremony, in which lots of active, elite and cultural women partici­pated, that 1395 will be the year of change for lots of active, elite and cultural women partici­pated, that 1395 will be the year of change for Afghanistan will be the year of change for Afghanistan.

He also hoped in that ceremony, in which lots of active, elite and cultural women partici­pated, that 1395 will be the year of change for all the citizens of Afghanistan.

Pointing out to the Women Political Associa­tion in the National Unity Government, he said that four minister, six deputies and four women ambassadors had been appointed and the num­ber is increasing.

He also complained the female parliament sit­members for not cooperating in his endeavor for introducing a woman in Supreme Court. Pointing to the positive change in women rights, he declared that a special bureau had been established in Supreme Court for women and children’s affairs investigation, and in pre­scription issues on different regards, women’s prisoner indulgence and decrease in assignation of imprisonment on them are considered.

He included that those kinds of endeavors regarding to decrease assignation in imprison­ment and punishments of prisoners including women not only prevent the office corruption and secure the transparency but are also the fun­damental steps for provision of poor women’s right.

The president says that the women have also had a good role in security forces and 13 of them could earn the “second grade Bredmal” with sword and higher grade.

Pointing to the educational differences, situ­ation between men and women, he declared that he was trying to build dormitory for women in each University and in Provinces in which women have problems even schools should have dorms for them.
For the past many years, Star Educational Society has been working with the great number of students to get their way to pursue their education in one of the top universities of the world. Therefore, Fulbright advising workshops were held at Star Educational Society on March 3rd and 4th, 2016. These workshops were led by Kara Lozier, colleague and educational and cultural advisor of Star Educational Society, for those who want to achieve American scholarships. In these two day workshops, many teachers and students of Star and outsiders had participated. Kara Lozier spoke on filling the Fulbright Form, writing a CV, writing a recommendation letter, field of study, statement of purpose, personal statement and how to be a qualified candidate for the next year's Fulbright program. In addition, Nasir Ahmad Kayhan, Mohammad Yousuf Warasta and Latif Wahidy who are the Fulbright Program 2015 finalists shared their personal experiences with the audience.
Zara’s life was a tragedy. She began life with all the joys in the world, but lived it in agony, and died in misery and solitude. Zara was your father’s paternal aunt. She was married off to Hotqol. Her husband had two adolescent children from a previous marriage – a boy and a girl. They had lived with their grandfather in another village after the passing of their mother. They returned home after Zara had her children. 

When we visited her a few summers after her marriage, she seemed happy. She had two beautiful daughters. They were healthy and good looking. I also met her youthful step-children. The girl was lovely and beautiful. The boy was strong, and already helping out his father. They were nice, and welcoming. Zara had a beautiful and happy family.

And then it all changed. A year or two later it all vanished, like the night devours all sunlight. Zara’s happy days were devoured by a nightfall of misery. First her step-children fell ill, and died, one after the other. A few weeks later, or perhaps months later, her own daughters fell ill and died. She gave birth to a son. The new-born too, died. In a short time, their five children died, in front of their eyes.

Zara’s step children had contracted Tuberculosis while living with their grandfather. When they returned to their father, they fell ill, suffered and both died. The Tuberculosis then killed Zara’s two daughters and her new-born son. Zara and her husband were left all alone. It pains me to even think about what she went through, and how she endured all of that. She became a recluse, and a social outcast. She was unrecognizable.

She came to visit us once. She had aged so much in such few years. She looked old, and was ill, and bloated. There were no doctors or hospitals back then. There was no treatment. People tried herbs, and prayers and talismans. None of it worked for her. The condition destroyed her organs. She could not have children anymore.

Years went by. Zara and her husband were old, weak, ill and all alone. She asked my husband, her brother, to send one of our kids over every now and then. I sent over Rubaba. She stayed with them one winter and then returned. Next I sent Hafeeza. She was clever and stubborn. She stayed for a night, and returned the next day. My other children were too young to send over.

Then, one day, Zara’s husband fell ill, and died in Hotqol. A day later Zara fell ill, and had to be taken to Kabul to see a doctor. She died a week later. She was buried in Kabul, a long distance away from her husband in Hotqol. They died a week apart.

Hadi jan, a home is good with people, with children. Otherwise, it’s just an empty life-less building.
Mr. Ahmad Haji Komail was born in 1350’s in Kabul and studied at Habibia High School. In 1370’s, he immigrated to Iran with his family. He received his Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Political Science from Azad University, Iran. He worked as a diplomat in Afghanistan’s Embassy for five years. He is an entrepreneur. He has also had different responsibilities in economic positions. He was a member of Ezterari LOOYE JERGA as the representative of Afghan Business Association in Iran. Mr. Komail is the founder and CEO of Afghanistan Radio and Television Union.

Why did you decide to establish the Afghanistan Radio and Television Union? Two years ago, I realized that there should be an organization to make all media united. This organization follows different goals such as capacity building, and increasing the numbers of different projects. It also tries to make Afghanistan’s media standard and lead them to modern technology. Afghanistan Radio and Television Union started its activity from May 2015. At the beginning, it had only twelve members from Kabul Province, but now, it has more than 130 members from different provinces throughout Afghanistan. I can consider it as one of my greatest achievements in this one year.

What are the most challenging problems for media in Afghanistan? The most challenging problem is the economic downturn. Unfortunately, political, social, cultural and economic changes in the recent years have engendered many financial problems and it certainly had a direct effect on media. The marketplace became smaller and smaller, advertising reduced and finally the income of media is decreased. Even though it is costly to pay for the electricity, media is forced to pay it themselves. In addition, they have to pay the salary of their employees.

Could you please tell me about the serious security problems that media encounters? The enemies of the government and Taliban can anticipate the government’s plans in security issues. Therefore, they cause security hurdles for the Afghans, especially for the media. They have threatened the media staff so rampantly that many of the media employees have left their jobs.

What are the positive and negative points of freedom of speech? Freedom of speech is one of the most important achievements for both government and media in the last fifteen years. Freedom of speech which has been instilled in the society by media is really important for people. Fortunately, Afghanistan is the only country in its neighborhood which has freedom of speech. It is one of the most important factors in media and no one is allowed to take this right from people and media, neither government nor enemies. However, media should not misuse this privilege. We try to make some restraints and red lines for the freedom of speech.

Please tell me a nice memory you have had since you started working for media? Media has made my life more enjoyable. I have many nice and unforgettable memories. The worst memory is the dark Wednesday, Chaharshanbe Siyah. On that day, a suicide bomber detonated his explosives near a van carrying Tolo TV employees which resulted in the death of some of the employees. I can never forget that tragedy and I wish no such event befalls Afghanistan again.

What is the role of government in improving and supporting media in Afghanistan? One of the activities that government did for media was paving the way for freedom of speech. It has not done anything more and we do not expect it to do more for us. Unfortunately, the government was not able to make a good and close relationship with media. However, the government tries to make the gap broader. As a result, the government’s take advantage of this and attack us.

What is your idea about Oqab? There is no doubt that digitalizing Afghanistan’s media is necessary. But, unfortunately, the government made a quick decision to change the system of media from analog to digital without considering its consequences. This project has been monopo- lized by only one company. Digitalization takes a long time and it should proceed step-by-step. Doing this project needs much financial support. One of the biggest problems is people’s accessibility to digital media in rural areas. Digital system needs a high quality. In addition, Afghanistan is a mountainous country and no one guarantees that people in different areas can use digital media. And also changing analog to digital reduces the numbers of users and it decreases media’s income. In Afghanistan, each TV channel has their own radio station. If we digitalize our two channels, the radio stations will require an analog system, which will increase the cost for them.

Why do you want to abdicate your position? The only reason is security threats. I am forced to abdicate to protect myself. I have asked the government for protection many times. However, the government officials have always ignored me and just suggested me to change my office location. I have done so three times, which has been futile.

And what is your message to the readers? I had many ups and downs in my different work positions. Everyone has many challenges. We should trust God, believe in our skills and abilities and have self-confidence. By doing so, we can overcome any difficulty one-by-one, which will take us closer to our goals.