

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



**Australian Federation of Islamic Council**

**Presents**

**Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan  
&  
Diaspora Muslims**

**A talk delivered by**

**The National Grand Mufti of Australia**

**His Eminence Sheikh Abdul Quddoos Al Azhari**

**16 October 2021**

**Webinar Program**



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على أشرف الأنبياء والمرسلين

I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today. I would also like to pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

MC Mr Keysar Trad, president of AFIC Dr Ratib Jneid, Hon Minister Mr Sheikh Shohail Shaheen, Hon Minister Sheikh Sayed Abdul Basir Sabiri, Prof Mohammed Naqib Jan, President of Islamic Council of Western Australia Brother Zubair Sayed, honourable listeners and respected audience.

Assalamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuhu

I congratulate AFIC for organising this online forum and this important Webinar on the future of Afghanistan and our role in the recent developments. I am also grateful for being invited to be part of this historic event.

I would like to divide today's talk into two parts. In the first part, I will discuss the impact and contribution of Afghan cameleers in Australian history. In the second part, I will present our request and our opinion on the current status of the Islamic Emirates of Afghanistan and also for the request for the Muslim nations.

More than 140 years ago, thousands of cameleers from Afghanistan, modern India and Pakistan, wearing turbans and carrying Quran, were brought by British India to Australia. These men were known as Afghan Camel Drivers.

Afghan cameleers were the second group of Muslims who came to Australia who played a major role in the exploration of the Australian interior. These men and their camels were able to make roads into the very heart of Australia. Most of these cameleers lived in outback shanty towns called Ghan towns.

From 1840 to 1935 they provided vital support to the exploration, communication and settlement in the arid interior of the country where the climate was too harsh for horses. They also played a major role in establishing Islam in Australia, building a number of mosques from 1861 onwards.

Before the building of railways and the adoption of motor vehicles, camels were the primary means of transporting goods into the outback for approximately 90 years. Afghans played an important part in opening central Australia, and acted as guides for major exploration. Afghans supplied almost every inland mining and station with goods and services, helping to build Australia's overland telegraphic lines between Adelaide and Darwin, thus linking Australia and London via India.

In recognition of their tremendous contribution in the establishment of railways between Adelaide and Darwin via Alice Spring, the train linking these two cities is still called the Ghan's train. Generally, the Afghans lived away from white population in Ghan towns. Leading to the nick names Little Asia, or Little Afghanistan.



They found more acceptance by the local aboriginal people. Generally, Afghan men married local aboriginal women and started families in Australia.

Outback settlers and farmers who had dealings with the Afghans often vouched for them, finding that they held many values in common.

Prejudice arose, and discriminatory legislation was introduced by the colonial state and federal governments including refusal of return entry to Australia if they travel abroad and refusal of mining rights in the outback and so on.

After camels was superseded by motor transport, some of the Cameleers had to return to Afghanistan, while others settled in Australia and joined with other trades and work.

A fourth generation Afghan who settled in Geraldton in WA who is proud of her heritage on both sides says, "I am proud of my heritage and both of my sides, Afghan and Aborigine".

She also says that it was difficult for her ancestors to acquire permanent residence and permission to marry, "but the Afghans were honourable men who preferred to marry rather than rape local women".

Marrying Indigenous was considered as an illegal act. The children of mixed heritage were taken into missions and never allowed to see their families again. (The Stolen Generation) John Edwards, the regional governor wrote to the Attorney General in 1902, "It is no exaggeration to say that had it not been for the Afghans and their camels, many settlements such as Wilcannia, White Cliffs, Tibooburra, Milperaka, and many townships would have practically ceased to exist".

In my next part of the talk, I would like to mention three important points that we would like to kindly request the honourable government of Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and other Islamic nations. The first request is

## **EDUCATION FOR ALL**

Right from the beginning, our beloved Nabi Mohammed (peace and blessings upon him) never missed any opportunity to educate the Muslims. As the famous hadeeth says: 'Seeking knowledge is Fard, it is compulsory on every Muslim male and female'.

There is no discrimination in Islam. Education is Fard (obligatory) in all branches of knowledge. All education must be Ilm and Nafih (Beneficial knowledge must be pursued). Scientific research and new inventions all must be encouraged and promoted.

At the early days of Islam, Muslims were the masters, teachers and inventors in the world. It is very unfortunate our situation is quite reversed today. I request the Honourable government of the Emirate of Afghanistan and the rulers of the Muslim world to pay attention toward educating their own people without any discrimination on the basis of gender. This is the demand of our time.



## EQUAL TREATMENT

Equal treatment to all human beings is reflected in all aspects of Islamic ideology. No discrimination on the basis of gender, male or female, on the basis of tribe, clan, or on the basis of nationalism or citizenship.

The famous hadeeth we all know: 'You all came from Adam and Adam was from clay. There is no superiority of Arabs over non-Arabs, nor white over black except in Taqwa (piety).

From here it should be clear that Islam does not tolerate discrimination, all citizens should be treated equally.

Without any discrimination, in all walks of life, I request the Honourable government of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and all other Muslim nations to treat their people equally, honourably, kindly and respectfully.

## JUSTICE, KINDNESS TO ALL THE POPULATION

Islam promotes justice as Allah Ta'ala says in the Holy Quran: "Indeed Allah commands عدل (Justice) and إيتاء ذي (good kinship)." (excellent and beautiful behaviour)

People must have equal rights; the people have the right to choose their leaders. As Allah Ta'ala tells us in the Holy Quran that the affairs of the believers must be governed through Shurah, (consultative assembly). There is no room in Islam for dictatorship, there is no room in Islam for military coups, there is no room in Islam to inherit the power from father to son to grandson.

The life of the Prophet (peace and blessings upon him) clearly illustrates how democratic he was, he used to consult his Sahaba on every small and big issue before taking a decision. I request the most Honourable government of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and all other Muslim nations to heed this important point, be kind to the people and your own subjects and do not deprive them of their own rights. Allah has given them rights and reassured by the Prophet (SAW) and Quran. And do not deprive them of these values and their rights which has been preserved for the Ummah.

Honourable, respected speakers, ministers, audience and listeners. It has been a great honour and privilege for me to be a part of this webinar. May Allah accept all our efforts and direct us to that which pleases Him.

Jazakum Allah Khairan.

Walaikum