



# The Kaghan Flame

A quarterly Newsletter of The Kaghan Memorial Trust

Summer, 2008

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### Highlights:

- **The Kaghan Memorial School is starting its first classes in September**
- **Forty children selected for the first two classes**
- **Teachers recruited for the school**
- **KMT looking for sponsors for its first batch of students**
- **Chukkurs for Charity Polo Match Raises US\$ 65,000 in aid of KMT**

## The Kaghan Memorial School To Start Classes in September 2008

As a result of more than two and a half years of hard work by everybody involved with The Kaghan Memorial Trust, the Kaghan Memorial School (KMS) is scheduled to open the doors of its main campus for its first primary level students on September 15, 2008.

Forty children have been selected for admission from a pool of roughly one hundred applicants during interviews conducted by a team of KMT Trustees and Teachers in April and May this year. Another twenty children will be picked in a second round of interviews before the end of August. The focus of the selection teams during interviews is on: a) picking children from the right age groups i.e. 4 to 5 year olds for kindergarten and 5 to 6 year olds for grade one; b) selecting an equal number of boys and girls; and c) giving representation to the broadest possible number of families and villages. With respect to this last priority, the selectors have tried to give as equitable a representation as possible to the three major villages within a five kilometer radius of the school. These villages are

Kawai, Ghanool and Paras. Furthermore, to accommodate as many families as possible, no more than one girl and one boy per household is being admitted into the first two classes.

The school will therefore start with sixty children, divided into two classes of thirty, and with each class comprising of

the three month winter break that will start in Mid December. This foundation semester will focus on orientation of the children to make them comfortable with the environment in their new school, and on teaching them the English language. These same children will return to the school and to a more conventional academic model at the start of the new school year in March 2009. This model has been custom-developed for KMS over the past nine months, by a team of teachers that the Trust recruited specifically for this purpose. The proposed curriculum places a strong emphasis on learning



Temporary classrooms nearing completion

through exploratory and sensory play based activities. Both the teaching model and the curriculum will be improved by the KMS teaching staff as they experience and understand the nuances and considerations involved in teaching children in this remote area.

These children will go through a foundation semester prior to



Work in progress on the first academic block

through exploratory and sensory play based activities. Both the teaching model and the curriculum will be improved by the KMS teaching staff as they experience and understand the nuances and considerations involved in teaching children in this remote area.

Temporary classrooms have been constructed to accommodate the foundation classes. These temporary facilities will be used till the first of academic block is ready for use in 2009.



**Nothing left standing  
in the valley**

**“..we formally committed that we would build the Kaghan Memorial School in memory of all the children who had lost their lives to the earthquake, to provide quality education to the ones who had survived.”**



**The Main Kaghan Road  
Shredded - 11 Oct 2006**

## **A Message from The Managing Trustee**

Dear Reader,

Thank you for taking out the time to go through this newsletter. This indicates that you have an interest in our school and in what the Kaghan Memorial Trust is doing, and for this we, the Trustees of KMT, are grateful. This is the first edition of our quarterly newsletter, and through this publication we will try to keep all of you, our donors, partners organizations, volunteers and friends, informed about the Trust's activities in general and about the progress of our Kaghan Memorial School Project in particular.

This is also the first opportunity that we have had to communicate with many of you directly, and therefore, on behalf of all of the Trustees, I am going to write in a bit of detail for which I hope you will excuse me. I expect future newsletters to be focused more on news and less on my personal comments, but in this first instance I believe there is a genuine need for me to explain the spirit and the motivation behind all that we are doing.

For those of you who don't know our history, this all started on October 11, 2005 when three friends and I were hiking through the debris and devastation of the Kaghan Valley in Northern Pakistan in search of another friend, Junaid Qasim. That was three days after the massive earthquake that literally shattered Northern Pakistan and killed in excess of 73,000 people; Kaghan was one of the worst hit areas. We had received news the previous morning that Junaid had been killed in his village during the calamity, and we were on a mission to find him. During that hike, from the first light of dawn well into the late evening, walking, stumbling and climbing through mind numbing scenes of misery and tragedy, shell shocked, believing our friend to be one of the victims, unable to do anything except to keep on moving, the unspoken promise to return and to build a school for the surviving children of Kaghan was made.

At Junaid's village, Kawai, we discovered to our relief that he had been spared, though twenty seven of his family members hadn't been that lucky. Bittersweet news if ever there was any. Three weeks on, Junaid, a companion from the hike, Kashif, and I met in Abbottabad, where we formally committed that we would build a charitable school Kaghan in memory of all the children who had lost their lives to the earthquake, to provide quality education to the ones who had survived. The Kaghan Memorial Trust was registered for this purpose soon thereafter.

The two and a half years since that decision was taken have been eventful and challenging to say the least. The plans for the Kaghan Memorial School have expanded over time to accommodate as many children as possible and to give them the best possible facilities. Consequently, the school, when completed, will now comprise of two campuses instead of the originally envisaged single site. Further objectives have also been added to the school's mission, most notable of which is the decision to provide all students with meals on school days to counter the serious problem of malnutrition prevalent amongst the children of Kaghan. These and other enhancements in the scope of the project, coupled with the steep rise in costs of materials and transportation over the past year, have led to an increase in the projected cost of the Kaghan Memorial School from an initial estimate of roughly US\$1 million to over US\$4 million. Thankfully, however, these funds are needed over a six to seven year time period, and not immediately.

In conjunction with the escalating costs of the project, the KMT Trustees also realized over time that fundraising was probably not going to be as easy as we had initially expected. In so many cases, we were met with disinterest, cynicism, or in some instances, even with mistrust. There are so many worthwhile projects around the world vying for limited development funds or donor assistance, and there are also so many others who have unfortunately used charity for less than charitable purposes, that it is always going to be a challenge for any new trust such as ours

## A Message From The Managing Trustee

Continued from Page 2

to convince people that they should give their support to our particular cause rather than to all the others out there, and that if they do, that their money will be spent on what it is intended for. Gaining the trust and assistance of donors requires patience, integrity, resilience, dedication, and faith; traits that we are lucky to have amongst the Trustees of KMT. We are all thankfully quite thickheaded when it comes to challenges, and the prospect of failing is simply not an option.

Many people also don't understand why we are spending so much money on one school when we could have made fifty smaller schools in the same budget. Such individuals often have little interest in our arguments for providing these children with a solid and meaningful education that will allow them to have the opportunities in life that so many of us take for granted. To them, the idea of offering this kind of education to poor children is wasteful, unnecessary and unrealistic. We respectfully disagree! Quality is something that we refuse to compromise on, and we continue to look for supporters who understand what we are trying to do. We accept that other organizations and individuals are serving a valuable role in trying to spread basic education to as large a number of children as possible in the developing world, and we respect and admire many such initiatives. Our aim is, however, different as we want to give the children that go through our school a real chance at becoming whatever they want to be in life, and to not let their poverty become a hurdle in the way of their aspirations. Later on we also plan to give them scholarships to go to college. The two models i.e. mass education of a basic level for many vs. a good education for a select number of underprivileged children, are completely different from each other and they focus on different objective sets. Neither can be compared to the other and both are important. At the core of the matter is our desire to give the same quality of education to the children of Kaghan as we would want for our own children, and as far as we are concerned, this subjective standard defines the bottom line for any school that we set up and operate.

Having said all of this, we have also received encouraging support from many quarters in the past two and a half years. Several dedicated individuals have joined our board as Trustees and are volunteering their time and efforts to our cause. Many more friends have used up their annual leaves or taken time off from their studies to help the Trustees organize various fundraising events for the school. We have also received financial support from many donors and sponsors who have all contributed generously to the school. It is these volunteers and these donors who have brought us this far, where we have raised approximately US\$600,000 in cash and kind and where we are now ready to start classes in a few months. This type of outstanding support reaffirms the belief of the Trustees of KMT that we will be able to realize our goals for the school, and that this institution will be able to provide the education and the hope for a better future that we want the children of Kaghan to have.

In conclusion, I would like to thank, again on behalf of all the Trustees of KMT, everyone who has contributed to KMT over the past years in any capacity. I also request all such supporters to continue doing what you can to help. Please think of this school as your own school, and visit whenever you can to see what has been achieved with your assistance. For those of you who are reading about us for the first time and contemplating on whether to support us or not, I cannot ask you to select our project at the expense of another good cause, but I can solemnly pledge that if you do assist us, you can rest assured that your money and/or your time will be well spent and will directly benefit some children who need all the help that they can get.

With warm regards,

*Khurram Khan*

*June 15, 2008*



**“At the core of the matter is our desire to give the same quality of education to the children of Kaghan as we would want for our own children..”**





**One of the temporary classrooms recently completed**

**“international teachers have been recruited on a volunteer basis”**



## A good three months for KMT

Fundraising for the Kaghan Memorial School is an emotional rollercoaster. Months can pass without any significant donation and with letters of regret coming in one after another. In such times, the prospect of raising four million US dollars seems daunting, and even foolhardy. The last resort is always the trustees, who contribute from their own resources to keep work on the school going through these lean periods.

Then there are days when news comes in of a donor sponsoring a room or a building, or of an industrialist ex-

tending support in kind in the form of materials or of equipment. One such breakthrough does wonders for the team's morale and suddenly anything seems possible again.

The three months since mid March have been especially encouraging for the Trust. First of all there was the Chukurs for Charity Polo Match that KMT organized in Lahore (Story on page 7), in which KMT raised almost sixty five thousand dollars. Shortly after that our request for a grant from the Government of the North West Frontier Province was approved to the tune of

three million Pakistani rupees, which translates to approximately forty five thousand dollars. And then finally, in the beginning of June, KMT received two grants in kind, totaling another thirty five thousand dollars.

These donations mean that we have the funding and the resources that we require for our September launch. This allowed us the luxury to relax for a rare and welcome couple of days before resuming our focus on the remaining millions. And now, once again, we look towards future challenges with optimism.

## Teachers Being Recruited for the Kaghan Memorial School

KMT has recruited one international teacher and two local teaching assistants for the Kaghan Memorial School's launch in September 2008. An additional Pakistani teacher is being selected from a pool of applicants as this newsletter is being published. This team of four teaching staff will manage two foundation classes for the period from September to December 2008.

Two additional international teachers will be inducted into the team in February next year. One of these teachers has already been selected and has signed on for the assignment, whereas the second is expected to be hired shortly. The school will therefore have four teachers and two teaching assistants for its first full

year of operations from March to December 2009. This teaching team will also be tasked with developing the curriculum for Kindergarten, first grade and second grade during the course of the year.

The teachers, Pakistani and International, are being re-



**A teacher residence under construction. Teachers will be accommodated on campus**

cruited on a volunteer basis, with the Trust providing them with accommodation, board, health cover and a small monthly stipend for daily incidental costs.

The teaching assistants have been hired on standard teaching pay scales prevalent in the area. They are conversant in English, Urdu, and Hindko, and they will serve primarily to facilitate communication between the international teachers and the children during the first year, until the latter get to a level where they are able to comfortably understand and communicate in English. The teaching assistants will also help the teachers in developing and conducting play based activities for each school day.

## Volunteer Teacher Profiles



### Ruth Beaumont

Ruth has also taught English to new immigrants, and has worked with children at camps in Canada, helping them learn more about nature and environmental issues. Ruth says: "I was motivated to come and work in Pakistan after traveling in Northern Pakistan in summer 2005. I was deeply impressed with the friendliness and sincerity of the people. After the earthquake, I was worried about all the wonderful people I had met and wanted to do something to help".

Ruth will be joining the KMT team as a volunteer teacher in August 2008. A Canadian, Ruth has been living in Central China for the past 2 years teaching English as a second language with her husband.

Ruth hopes to be able to follow her other interests of hiking, camping, bike touring and cooking whilst in Pakistan and also hopes that by sharing her experiences with people back home in Canada, she can become an ambassador for Pakistan, helping to establish friendships between the two countries. Ruth says: "apart from teaching, I am looking forward to wearing a shalwar kameez and eating chapatti. For the rest, I will just have to wait and see".



### Jennifer Ankrom

position within the China University of Geosciences, Wuhan as a CELTA trained English Teacher. Her students ranged from primary school students through doctoral university level. Prior to this, as a Play-scheme Supervisor and Senior Playleader of a local government child care provision, Jenny gained extensive experience planning and implementing activities for over sixty children at a time. She also attained a Play work qualification during this period.

A British Citizen, Jennifer (Jenny) is a psychology undergraduate aiming to complete her Masters in International Relations from Durham University this summer. She has extensive experience living and working overseas, and in addition to her mother tongue, can speak Mandarin, Uyghurs, German and French. She is now learning Urdu to prepare for Pakistan.

Jenny is joining the KMT team in September 2008 to help with the Trust's work as a volunteer Programme Officer based in Islamabad. She will join the teaching staff at the school at the start of the new academic year in March 2009.

Between her two degrees, Jenny obtained CELTA qualification, and in 2006 accepted a

Explaining her motivation to volunteer for KMT, Jenny wrote "I have always been aware of the importance of education in the pursuit of durable international development. I believe that the crucial period for these activities is in the years after a natural disaster, when international attention has shifted and the region's children are left without suitable means to achieve educational success. This is why I am interested in this position within the Kagan Memorial Trust".

In her spare time, Jenny likes to run and swim. She is also a member of the Durham Union and often takes part in debates on various issues.



**"the crucial period .. is in the years after a natural disaster, when international attention has shifted and the region's children are left without suitable means to achieve educational success."**





**“By sponsoring a child, you will help directly ensure that your sponsored boy or girl has a real chance at achieving what so many of us take for granted in life.”**

## KMT Looking for Sponsors for its First Batch of Children

The Kaghan Memorial School shall have sixty children on its rolls when classes start in September. These children are all from extremely poor families that barely survive at subsistence levels. Profiles of these children are being prepared and will be available on the KMT website by the end of August.

The Kaghan Memorial Trust is dedicated to providing these children with the best education possible, but to be able to do this we need support from sponsors.

We request all readers to consider sponsoring the educational expenses of one or more child or children. The cost of sponsoring one child is US\$500 per academic year. For each annual pledge of US\$500 that is received by KMT for this purpose, one child will be assigned to the sponsor. The sponsor will receive the child's profile,

followed by half yearly progress reports. By sponsoring a child, you will help directly ensure that your sponsored boy or girl receives a good education and has a chance of attaining economic security later on in life. Having access to such opportunities was nothing but a dream for these children until now.



**Children being interviewed during student selection**

Sponsors are welcome and encouraged to visit the school at any point in time to meet their sponsored child and his or her family. Such meetings can be arranged by KMT during school term, given 15 days notice.

We would like to clarify that the actual cost of educating a child for the first few years will be significantly higher than US\$500. For the first full year, this cost is estimated at US\$ 1,000 per head. Costs per child will gradually decline to the US\$500 level over the years as more students enter the school and as the overheads and operational costs are divided over a larger number of children. For the initial years, therefore, KMT will be subsidizing the cost of each child's education over and above the sponsored amount of US\$500.

For more information on KMT's "Sponsor A Child" programme, and for online pledge forms, please visit our website at [www.kmt.org.pk](http://www.kmt.org.pk). Alternatively, interested individuals and organizations may also contact the KMT Trustees at the contact details given at the end of this newsletter.

## Major Donors

KMT would like to thank all individuals and organizations who have, over the past two years, donated much needed funds to our school project. It is because of these donations that we are able to start the school in September. Every donation, irrespective of its value, is highly appreciated, and whereas we would like to individually introduce all who have helped us, the lack of space limits us to naming the following major contributors:

- **The Australian Direct Aid Programme**
- **Sui Southern Gas Company Limited**
- **Askari Bank**
- **Pakistan State Oil**
- **Cashmere for Kashmir, USA**
- **Khurram Khan (Trustee)**
- **The Mueenuddin Fund**
- **Bank Alfalah**
- **Government of the North West Frontier Province**
- **The competing cyclists of The Tour of The Himalayas 2007**

The KMT Trustees would like to extend a special big **THANK YOU** to **Mr. Munawar B. Ahmed**, former Managing Director of Sui Southern Gas Company Limited (SSGC), who has always taken a sincere interest in our school, and who has personally helped secure assistance for us from many quarters.

## The Tour of the Himalayas Mountain Bike Race – Kaghan Valley

In September 2007, 38 cyclists flew in from 9 countries to compete alongside 6 Pakistanis in the Tour of the Himalayas mountain bike race, the third international cycle race organized by KMT in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Tourism to raise funds for the school and to highlight the tourism potential in Pakistan and specifically in the Kaghan Valley.

Organized in the imposing and beautiful mountain setting of the Kaghan Valley, this three stage race spread over three days was one of the toughest challenges that these cyclists had ever faced. Chris Reid of Canada summed it up by writing later: "It would be hard to imagine a more spec-



tacular backdrop for a race than the mountains of Pakistan...the Tour of the Himalayas featured some truly epic racing."

It was not just the mountains that made this race special, however; the quality of competition was also top notch. The Tour of The Himalayas 2007 consisted of a very strong field of both men and women, including two recent world champions (Marg Fedyndyna of Canada, the World 24 Hour Mountain Bike Champion in 2005, and Alec Petro, The World Masters Champion in 2006) and several national champions, past and present, from Europe, North America and Australia / New Zealand.

For several of these cyclists, this was their third trip to Pakistan in a year, and many oth-



ers were here for their second race. This is despite the fact that the races organized by KMT do not offer any prize money to participants, and equally significantly, that none of these races count on the world circuit in terms of have any effect on the rankings of the players. The cyclists tell us that what brings them back to Pakistan repeatedly to compete in our races is the high standard of competition and the extreme endurance required in the races, coupled with their commitment and belief in the cause of KMT and the School.

The Tour of The Himalayas 2007 was made possible through generous sponsor-

Contd. on page 8

**"It would be hard to imagine a more spectacular backdrop for a race than the mountains of Pakistan"**

## Chukkurs for Charity Polo Mach – Lahore

March 2008 saw the hugely successful Bank Alfalah 'Chukkurs for Charity' exhibition charity polo match and lunch in Lahore, in aid of The Kaghan Memorial School.

Following a garden lunch and musical concert by the Mikhaal Hasan Band for about 300 guests who had purchased tables to contribute funds to

the school, two men's teams, the Muslim Commercial Bank (MCB) and the Associated Group, competed against each other in a friendly match.



Players on both teams consisted of top professionals who played this match for free. The final score in the hard fought game—a draw at 5 all!

The main match was preceded by a juniors' match between up and coming young boys and girls of the Lahore Polo Club, and also an exhibition



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# Contact Us

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## About the Trust

The Kaghan Memorial Trust (KMT) is a non-profit Charitable Trust registered in Islamabad in January 2006 in the aftermath of the 2005 earthquake in northern Pakistan. The sole immediate objective of the Trust is to establish a school in the Kaghan Valley of Northern Pakistan that will offer a first-class education to children of this severely hit region. Through the provision of quality education, KMT contributes towards sustainable long-term development in the Kaghan Valley.

## About the School

The Kaghan Memorial School is the first of its kind in Pakistan, in that the highest quality of education is being made freely available to some of the poorest children in the country. The resources and facilities being provided and developed in this school will rival those at the best institutions in Pakistan. The Kaghan Memorial School is dedicated to the memory of the thousands of children who lost their lives to the earthquake.

[www.kmt.org.pk](http://www.kmt.org.pk)

## Upcoming Fundraising Events

- July 30, 2008:  
"Run for a Life" Charity run in aid of The Kaghan Memorial School,  
**Munich, Germany**
- October 2008:  
Polo Match, **Lahore**
- October 2008:  
Autumn Ball, **Islamabad**
- November 2008:  
Rugby Match, **Islamabad**
- February 2009:  
Tour of Islamabad Cycle Race, **Islamabad**
- September 2009:  
The Two Ranges Tour, Mountain Bike Race,  
**Northern Areas**

## The Tour of the Himalayas..

**Continued from page 7**

ships and support from Sui Southern Gas Company Limited (SSGC), Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation, ABN Amro Bank, Pakistan State Oil, LMKR Resources, Lucky Cement and the Pakistan Red Crescent Society. The participating cyclists also

very generously donated a US\$10,400 to the school at the final awards ceremony. The KMT Trustees thank all of these supporters and, of course, the volunteers who put in a lot of hard work to successfully stage this hugely entertaining race.

## Chukkurs for Charity..

**Continued from page 7**

Tent Pegging Competition.

This all made for a fun filled and exciting afternoon that helped raise almost US\$65,000 for the school!!!

KMT would like to thank the Lahore Polo Club, Bank Alfa-

lah, Associated Group, Muslim Commercial Bank, Techno Engineering Services, companies and individuals who purchased tables, and of course the polo players, tent peggers, referees and volunteers, all of whom made this wonderful event possible.

## KMT Board of Trustees

**Khurram Khan**  
Pakistan

**Syed Junaid Qasim**  
Pakistan

**Kashif Khwaja**  
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