

Afghanistan - Kabul Diaries - Parts 11 & 12. No to trade in Pakistani currency - Afghan women defy Taliban by posting traditional colourful dresses

Tuesday 14 September 2021, by [AFGHAN Yasmeen](#) (Date first published: 15 September 2021).

The *daily Jeddohad* [Struggle], a leftwing online Urdu-language daily in Pakistan is posting reports from Kabul. Filed by Yasmeen Afghan [not the real name], these reports depict picture from inside Kabul and cover what is often ignored in the mainstream. For a wider circulation, these reports are translated to English.

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Part 11

Afghans say no to trade in Pakistani currency

One of the achievements of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan was the value of Afghani. The value of Afghani especially against Pakistani rupees was quite high over the past 20 years and somehow it is considered as a sign of pride for many Afghans. When Taliban were ruling Afghanistan from 1996-2001, 1000 Afghani was 1 Pakistani rupee but after the establishment of the new government the Pakistani rupee fell drastically against Afghani. At the moment, 1000 Pakistani rupees is 499 Afghanis.

Anger flared mounting among Afghans as soon as the news came out that Afghanistan and Pakistan's trade will be done in Pakistani rupees.

Saleem, a Twitter user, wrote stated, "It is our right to use our own currency in the dealings."

A shopkeeper in Kabul, who didn't want his identity to be revealed said to me, "I will only use Afghan currency. If we use Pakistani rupee, then it means that we accept the Pakistani establishment's involvement in Afghanistan?"

Abdul Baqi Wardak, a Facebook user has written, "If this is the decision of Pakistan, then as a doctor, I will not prescribe Pakistani medicine and I will not buy Pakistani products."

Hayatullah Safi stated on Facebook, "A Proud Afghan will never accept Pakistani rupees. We should stand against it."

Another resident of Kabul told me to me, "Pakistan can never impose its currency on us the way they imposed the Taliban, sooner or later, we will get rid of them both." Marzia [not her real name], who is a female doctor told me, "Afghani is the last thing left for Afghans. They took away our democracy, destroyed our security forces, forced women to stay home, there is no freedom of speech, and now they want to replace Afghans with Pakistani rupees. They want to break us. This is painful." Her sister added, who also didn't want to be named, "The new imposed government wants to abolish everything and every achievement that Afghans were proud of."

Some social media users have already started the a trend that Afghani is theirr national identity and want other Afghans to join their cause.

Yasmeen Afghan

Posted: Sept 13, 2021.

Part 12

Afghan women defying Taliban by posting colourful dresses

The online campaign of Afghan women's traditional dress started after the Taliban introduced a strict dress code for female university students.

For centuries, Afghan women in rural areas have worn the traditional Afghan dress with vibrant colors, and each region of Afghanistan has had its style of sewing it. These dresses are in bright colors, in stark contrast to what the Taliban have introduced now, which is a head-to-toe black hijab with black gloves.

Khatol Momand, who is a writer/satirist, has posted a photo of herself in the traditional Afghan dress on Twitter, and wrote, "This is [the] women's outfit in my tribe of Momand. Don't bring home extreme Arabic Hijab."

The photos posted by Afghan women journalists and activists are in beautiful bright colors. Some are wearing the Pashtun traditional dress, some the Hazaragi traditional dress, while others have donned Badakhshi, Balouchi, and Nourstani traditional attires.

Sana Safi, a journalist at BBC, has posted her photo on Twitter and wrote, "So how do Afghan women dress then? They ask. This is how. If I was in Afghanistan, then I would have the scarf on my head. This is as conservative and traditional as I/you can get."

Peymana Assad posted on her Twitter, "This is Afghan culture. My traditional dress. Our cultural attire is not the dementor outfits the Taliban have women wearing."

Spozhmay Maseed, a human rights activist, posted from her Twitter, "This is our Afghan authentic dress. Afghan women wear such colorful and modest attires. The black burqa has never been a part of Afghan culture."

Homira, a civil and human rights activist, has posted her photo along with a caption, " This is Hazaragi traditional clothes. The colorful Hazaragi dresses are from my culture. The long black hijab

does not represent all women of Afghanistan.”

Maryam Stankazai has also posted a photo of herself on Twitter in a red and green traditional dress, “No one can reduce my existence to one color. Not today, not tomorrow.”

Many women inside Afghanistan have reacted to the imposing of the black hijab.

Shazia (not real name), a resident of Khairkhana told me, “Our traditional dresses are bright and beautiful and represent the beauty of Afghanistan.”

Huma (not real name) another resident of Khaira says, “The previous Afghan government didn’t force women to dress in a particular way. We have dressed according to our traditional society. I have always covered my head with a scarf but some women in my family were wearing the blue burqa.”

Waheeda (not real name) added, “Nobody can impose the black hijab on Afghan women. The Taliban want to suffocate Afghan women with their strict dress codes. They want to dehumanize us, but we will not give in but rise like phoenix.”

Over the years, I have heard from my grandmother and others in the family that women in rural areas have always gone out and worked in the fields with only headscarves, while the traditional Afghan dress was reserved for special occasions such as weddings, Independence days and so on.

This campaign was started by Bahar Jalali, who is a historian. She was the first to post her photos in the traditional Afghan dress.

Yasmeen Afghan

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