

American

NEWS & VIEWS

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Proclamation on National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day 2010

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
December 7, 2010

NATIONAL PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE DAY,
2010

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA
A PROCLAMATION

Nearly 70 years ago, on December 7, 1941, our service members and civilians awoke on a quiet Sunday to a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor by Japanese forces. Employing whatever weapons were at hand, those who defended Hawaii that fateful morning stand as examples of the selfless heroism that has always characterized the Armed Forces of the United States. More than 3,500 Americans were killed or wounded, and the images of burning battleships and the grief for lives lost were forever seared into our national memory.

The deadly attack on Pearl Harbor did not accomplish its mission of breaking the American spirit. Instead, it reinforced our resolve. Americans responded with unity and courage to a tragedy that President Franklin D. Roosevelt called "a date which will live in infamy." In the aftermath of Pearl Harbor, thousands of resolute individuals immediately volunteered their service to a grieving Nation. Sixteen million of America's sons and daughters served during World War II, and more than 400,000 paid the ultimate sacrifice in defense of life and liberty. Countless other patriots served on the home front, aiding the war effort by working in manufacturing plants, participating in rationing programs, or planting Victory gardens. In the face of great loss, America once again showed the resilience and strength that have always characterized our great country.

The Allied Forces battled the scourge of tyranny and ultimately spread the transformative march of freedom. As we recognize the 65th anniversary of the end of World War II this year, we honor not only those who gave their lives that December day, but also all those in uniform who travelled to distant theaters of war to halt the progression of totalitarianism and hate. In honor of all who have borne the cost of battle throughout America's history, let us pledge to meet our debt of honor and uphold the ideals they fought to preserve.

The Congress, by Public Law 103-308, as amended, has designated December 7 of each year as "National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim December 7, 2010, as National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. I encourage all Americans to observe this solemn day of remembrance and to honor our military, past and present, with appropriate ceremonies and activities. I urge all Federal agencies and interested organizations, groups, and individuals to fly the flag of the United States at half-staff this December 7 in honor of those American patriots who died as a result of their service at Pearl Harbor.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventh day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

BARACK OBAMA

U.S. Hopes Talks with Iran Have Started a "Serious Process"

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — The Obama administration hopes that December 6-7 meetings in Geneva between representatives of Iran, China, Russia, France, the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany mark the beginning of "a serious process" to address the global concerns over Iran's nuclear activities.

State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley said the United States is encouraged by European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton's announcement that the talks between Iran and the other countries, collectively known as the P5+1, will continue in late January 2011 in Istanbul, Turkey.

The Geneva talks were led by Ashton; the United States was represented by Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs William Burns. The United States has said it supports Iran's access to nuclear power if Iran can prove that its nuclear activities are solely for peaceful purposes and it lives up to its responsibilities under international law and to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Crowley said about 75 percent of two days of meetings was devoted to the nuclear issue. He said Iran's Tehran research reactor was discussed, adding, "We'll continue to explore this as we go forward."

Iran and the P5+1 last met in Geneva in October 2009, and the P5+1 proposed a deal that would have provided the Tehran reactor with enriched uranium fuel and would have required that the enrichment be done in another country to ensure that uranium would not be enriched to

a level that could be used for nuclear weapons.

Iran ultimately rejected the offer and has declared that it is now enriching its own uranium fuel supplies.

In a December 7 statement issued on behalf of the P5+1, Ashton said the two days of talks had been “detailed [and] substantive,” with a focus on Iran’s nuclear program and Iran’s need to comply with international obligations.

“The countries I represent are united in seeking a resolution of the international community’s concerns regarding Iran’s nuclear program – which is the central purpose of these talks. We recognize Iran’s rights, but insist that it fulfills its obligations,” Ashton said.

She added that the P5+1 is “ready to address and to seek common ground also on other issues of mutual interest.” Ashton said the January talks in Istanbul will focus on “practical ideas and ways of cooperating towards a resolution of our core concerns.”

From Asia to America for a New Perspective on Journalism

By Jeff Baron
Staff Writer

New York – Krita Raut had a wish as she finished three weeks in the United States and headed home to Nepal: “I go back a more enthusiastic journalist, I know that, and I hope I can do better.”

Raut and a dozen other journalists from India, Bangladesh, Tajikistan and elsewhere in South and Central Asia, part of a group of 150 journalists from all over the world, spent those three weeks talking about their craft, learning from experts and exploring the United States as part of the U.S. State Department’s annual Edward R. Murrow Program in Journalism. The program chooses rising stars in the field from more than 100 countries. They heard from such celebrated colleagues as Bob Woodward of the *Washington Post*, watched the U.S. midterm elections unfold, discussed freedom of the press and traded stories of their own experiences.

The group from South and Central Asia, which traveled together to four cities, spanning 7,200 kilometers along the way, also “had good times,” Raut said, “bonding with these people, my group people, and having fun after the meetings.”

“We all started as strangers, 12 of us, but then ended as friends. This program gave us an opportunity to know each other,” said Mubasshir Mushtaq, a freelance writer for the *Inquilab Urdu* daily newspaper based in Malegaon,

India.

The Murrow program brings 150 journalists together for a few days of briefings in Washington, scatters them in small groups at a number of university journalism schools for specially prepared seminars, moves them to other cities to meet with civic leaders and American journalists, and then reunites the groups for a few more days in New York.

Between Washington and New York, the South and Central Asian group went first to the desert Southwest for Arizona State University’s Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication in Phoenix, and then to the Gulf Coast to explore New Orleans, Louisiana, and learn about its recovery from a devastating hurricane five years ago.

“The Murrow program really was very interesting and very useful for me,” said Firuz Barotov, a reporter for the Tajik Service of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and its website. Barotov said it gave him a better understanding of the U.S. government and “how important the role of mass media is in democratic societies.”

Election Day came while the group was in Arizona, which had a particularly contentious race for governor as well as elections for one senator and all of its members of the U.S. House of Representatives. “We saw the election process and how elections really happen in democratic countries,” Barotov said. “We also learned about the role of mass media during elections, and also social networks.”

Raut, a reporter and subeditor at the *Himalayan Times*, said the experience was particularly valuable for her because the restoration of democracy and press freedom in Nepal are so recent that the media have had little chance to cover an election. “I got to know the potential of media in terms of election coverage out here,” she said.

Barotov noted that Republican students who spoke with the group had no hesitation in severely criticizing President Obama and his Democratic Party’s policies. “It’s very interesting to me because they’re not afraid to tell their opinion,” he said.

Kazi Kanchan Siddiqui, a senior staff correspondent for the *Statesman Limited* in Durgapur, India, said he was amazed by the relative calm of a U.S. election. “You cannot find any neutral in India. Either he is Congress, or he is BJP, he is CP-Marxist,” Siddiqui said. “But here I see, at the time of voting, they have their own choice, but after that, no: no campaigns, no rallies. It’s fascinating. I asked one of your election officials in Arizona, ‘How many of your booths, polling stations, are sensitive [because of the danger of violence]? How many are sensitive, hypersensitive, super-sensitive?’ ... In our country,

thousands of polling stations are sensitive, either hyper- or super-sensitive, because of tension. It's rioting, violence. Here, I was amazed. How could a country hold an election and no violence, no tension? People were shopping. In our country, during the election, all shops are closed."

Barotov also noted a difference in style between journalism in the United States and in Tajikistan and other former Soviet republics. "Journalists in the USA try to be more objective," he said. "In writing reports, journalists' role is more like moderators, they moderate articles. In Soviet Union countries, it's Soviet Union style: Journalists during writing articles try to be more active than interviewers. They usually add their own opinion in articles."

Mushtaq and others also were struck by the informal and collegial style of teaching in the United States. "The time we spent at Walter Cronkite School of Journalism was amazing, I mean, one of the most memorable parts of my journalistic career," Mushtaq said. "Professors are so open; I mean, we were having an open lunch, and at the same time, we were having a serious discussion. That is something unimaginable in a journalism classroom back in India."

He was critical of American newspapers for one thing: their tradition of using their opinion pages to endorse candidates for office, which he said casts doubt on the objectivity of their news coverage. "Back in India, we don't have the same thing unless [the newspaper is] a party organ or a mouthpiece," he said.

Siddiqui objected to another staple of U.S. journalism: off-the-record briefings by public officials. The Murrow journalists met with several officials in Washington, "the highest power corridor in the world," he said, and that was "a great opportunity." On the other hand, he said, "many of the discussions should have been on the record. Since we are journalists, we would have had opportunities to file stories, because during our discussions, many things came out which were very much newsworthy, but we couldn't send it."

Nonetheless, Siddiqui was productive for his newspaper, filing four stories during his U.S. trip.

Kamran Reza Chowdhury, a reporter for bdnews24.com, an online newspaper in Bangladesh, said even the off-the-record sessions will be helpful to him. "The briefings by the State Department officials helped me understand the priorities of the American foreign policy issues, which have huge impact on the lives of billions of people around the globe," he said.

What's more, he said, the personal contacts he made with

some U.S. officials are "a big professional boost."

The journalists' closest contacts, though, were with one another. "We get an opportunity to meet journalists from more than 100 countries all over the world," Barotov said. "Now on my Facebook, you can see new friends from New Zealand, from Egypt, from Central Asia countries, from South Asia countries. ... They are my professional friends, and we can share new ideas."

Entrepreneurship Builds Business Momentum in Africa

By Charles W. Corey
Staff Writer

New York — Business momentum is building across Africa and the rest of the world is starting to notice, says professor and entrepreneurship expert Murray B. Low.

Low directs the Eugene Lang Entrepreneurship Center at Columbia University's Columbia Business School, where he also serves as an adjunct professor of management and teaches a course called "Entrepreneurship and Private Equity in Africa."

Low said the course grew from an earlier course on "Private Equity and Entrepreneurship in Emerging Markets." For its first five years, Low says, "the course was a whirlwind trip around the globe. ... Then about four or five years ago, due to increased interest in Africa from the business community, development community, our students and the increased activity of those engaged in private equity in Africa, we began to focus more on Africa."

Low reflected on that change during a recent interview with America.gov on the campus of Columbia University in New York, saying, "Ten years ago it would not have been possible to teach a course on private equity and entrepreneurship in Africa."

"As we speak, there are now six or seven new equity funds that are in formation that are targeting Africa, as well as half a dozen existing players of significant size."

Low said being in New York is an advantage, because he can bring in principals from many private equity firms that are doing business in Africa. He has traveled across the African continent, identifying successful entrepreneurs. "We are looking for real role models ... people who have built growing, sustainable businesses of the sort that would be attractive to professional investors."

Low's students have written half a dozen case studies — analyses of particular business operations — and in so

doing have contributed expertise to help entrepreneurs in those operations enhance and expand their businesses.

In one such case study, Low said, his students traveled to Nigeria to work with a “real entrepreneurial hero,” Austin Okere, the chief executive officer of Computer Warehouse. Low said Okere started his information technology (IT) business about 15 years ago and secured a license to resell Dell computers.

“From that very modest beginning, he has had a series of steppingstones where one thing has led to another. Now Austin’s company has revenues in excess of \$100 million. He is the leading IT company in West Africa and is expanding to other parts of the continent” with leading telecom, banking and oil companies as his clients.

“What is remarkable about Austin is how he has built his business ... in very difficult political circumstances, and he has done so by emphasizing good governance, transparency,” Low said.

Low cited another example where his students provided timely business advice to Banana Investments Ltd., a \$5 million business in Tanzania that manufactures and distributes banana wine. “We wrote a case study on the company, a well-known brand in Africa.” The company, he said, took a basic process from a cottage industry and converted it to an industrial scale and now produces millions of bottles annually.

Low said his students are working with Equity Bank of Kenya to explore new business ventures. Fifteen years ago, he said, Equity Bank was a bankrupt savings and loan organization. Chief executive officer James Mwangi transformed the company to where it now holds 55 percent of all Kenyan bank accounts.

Equity Bank was able to do this, Low said, by “providing services to part of the population which was previously considered unbankable, and they have done this through a very impressive development of branches and mobile phone technology.”

Entrepreneurs are the very “essence” of business development, Low said. “Businesses don’t arise because there is some need in the abstract. They arise because someone sees that need, sees the opportunity to satisfy that need, and has the wherewithal to secure the resources and deliver a product and collect payment for it and then start the whole cycle again.”

“I think there are many things needed for economic development, but clearly one essential component is entrepreneurship. When I talk about entrepreneurship, it is not just the lone individual who comes up with an idea and starts a business; it is also the same sort of

entrepreneurial spirit that drives existing businesses to new and better performance.”

“In Africa,” Low said, “there is a great need for entrepreneurship and greater leadership and managerial ability in the private sector as well as in the nongovernmental organization space.”

“As a person who has dedicated his life to researching, teaching and studying entrepreneurship, [visiting Africa] has been a very humbling experience for me,” Low said, “because I have learned a lot about what it takes to be a successful entrepreneur by studying these very successful African entrepreneurs and seeing how under extremely difficult circumstances, where you are dealing with political instability, massive currency fluctuations, where you are dealing with corruption and poor infrastructure – even under these conditions, entrepreneurs can and do thrive and build wonderful, impressive businesses.”

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