



# History preserved at Afghan National Archives

*Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan Public Affairs*

Part of rebuilding Afghanistan includes preserving its past – which is exactly what the staff is doing at the Afghan National Archives.

Housed in a Kabul building built in 1890, treasured documents, books, poems and photos of Afghanistan are preserved for future generations.

“During the Civil War and through the Taliban reign, this building managed to stay in tack and not be looted,” said Dr. Omar Sultan, deputy minister of the Ministry of In-

formation, Culture and Tourism. “The documents here are important to the people of Afghanistan and our history as a country.”

A few of the prized possessions kept in the archives are: The largest printed Koran, the oldest Koran written on cloth that is still legible and one of Mirza Bedel’s poetic interpretation of the holy Koran. Other items include military regulations dating back 150 or more years and various books and poems hand-crafted more than 400 years ago.

“Some of the items are in des-

perate need of repair,” said Sultan.


“The building also needs proper air conditioning, and we are working on both those problems.”

In September

an international university is scheduled to visit the archives to digitalize all the literature and teach how to properly repair old documents.

“I look forward to repairing the treasured documents and to continue watching our collection grow,” said Sultan.

In Afghanistan it is a law for people who possess unique or museum-like artifacts to either offer them or sell them to the archives. If they do not want to do either, they are asked to register the item so the government knows where the items are kept.

Sultan adds that, though the national archives are in dire need of a climate control system, document protectors and pay reform, it is an institution that is working to protect the history of Afghanistan and is working to grow and rebuild along side the country. 



Photos by Senior Airman Ashley DiFalco

**Left: Abdul Rashid Usman, director of the Afghan National Archives, opens the largest holy Koran, which is one meter in length and housed in the archives basement.**

**Above: On display at the National Archives is an interpretation of the holy Koran, as well as many other historical documents, pictures, poems and drawings.**