

I, Muhammad Aref, son of Bahman Ali, was born in the year 1376 in Afghanistan, in the province of Ghor, in Lal Sarjangal district, into a small and impoverished family belonging to the Hazara ethnic group and Shia faith. When I was four years old, my family migrated from Ghor province to Herat province. We resided in Herat city, Jabrielle, Independence Alley 17, House No. 8. At the age of six (in 1384), I began my schooling in a local school in Herat.

When I reached the fourth grade, a dangerous incident occurred which caused me to fall behind in my studies for a year. However, following this incident, I resumed my education with even greater determination, as I harbored a genuine passion for learning, particularly in areas of innovation and new technologies such as inventions and computers. My sole aspiration and goal were to achieve proficiency in these fields so that I could contribute to my community.

My profound interest in these areas and my relentless efforts bore fruit in 1396, precisely when I was in the eleventh grade. Through relentless day-and-night endeavor and extensive research, I successfully constructed a drone or quadcopter. This quadcopter was capable of flying up to 50 meters and was controlled by a board (Arduino Uno), four brushless motors, four speed controllers, a lithium battery, a flight controller, a receiver and transmitter module, among other components. I accomplished this feat through painstaking efforts. Below is a link to a video showcasing my drone

https://drive.google.com/file/d/10dwmkukuSpCWwut6aMOaL1m-anQR6T6M/view?usp=drive_link

Once again, in the year 1397, during my twelfth grade, despite facing numerous challenges, I undertook the ambitious task of constructing a humanoid robot. I successfully built and showcased this robot, which stood at a height of 190 centimeters and was powered by 20 motors embedded within its structure. The robot's functions were controlled by two Arduino boards, onto which all the necessary codes were uploaded, and it was governed by a single controller. This humanoid robot was capable of speech and could mimic human actions, such as moving its hands, neck, knees, waist, fingers, and so forth. Videos demonstrating its capabilities were circulated online. Here is one of the links to a video showcasing the robot: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-pJVS6-rIB1uGX3VoJDR-Je0LC7rJQP3/view?usp=drive_link

Furthermore, I was invited to participate in several robotics exhibitions and competitions, particularly the Ariana Robotics Exhibition and Competition, held in Herat, where I competed in the category of open robots. I showcased my creations in this event. Here is a link to a video broadcasted by the Global Tolo Network, Ariana Network, and Ariana Robotics House Afghanistan:

Tolo network <https://youtu.be/5SAiVoFaByk?si=yRS2mcmtxLtOig63>

Aryana Network <https://youtu.be/JilmDyaf80Q?si=wszP12U51Kg7qykv>

Ariana Robotics Exhibition

https://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=https%3A%2F%2Flookaside.fbsbx.com%2Flookaside%2Fcrawler%2Fmedia%2F%3Fmedia_id%3D298520427638926%26get_thumbnail%3D1&tbnid=G9r7Co0mkzv_zM&vet=1&imgrefurl=https%3A%2F%2Fm.facebook.com%2Fwatch%2F2129969090354462%2F&docid=5NvFh3OrHEhPvM&w=360&h=640&source=sh%2F%2Fim%2Fm1%2F2&kgs=91296986ef8f0af6&shem=trie

At the exhibition in Herat, I was promised a scholarship to study in this field and serve my community. Unfortunately, this promise turned out to be false. Disheartened, I left this field for a period of time. After a year, I resumed working in this field, but only in a theoretical capacity, focusing solely on programming intelligent robots. I conducted research and watched online tutorials. I had a strong interest in computer science. However, in 1399, I took the university entrance exam (Konkur) and with my efforts, I obtained a score of 269, leading me to enroll in the Public Administration department at Herat State University. I studied in this field for one year but then decided to leave it as it was not my preferred area of study.

Unfortunately, in the year 1400, the government fell into the hands of the Taliban. Fear gripped me entirely, especially since my videos had been circulated online, particularly those featuring my humanoid

robot. According to the Taliban, creating new things and inventions, especially humanoid robots, was considered innovation and forbidden in their religion, carrying severe consequences. Out of fear, I decided to head towards Iran, but lacking a passport and having only applied for it without receiving an appointment, I resorted to attempting an illegal border crossing. However, my attempt was unsuccessful, leaving me disheartened upon my return.

Days passed by in great hardship. I eventually resolved to resume my studies in these difficult circumstances, particularly in my preferred field of computer science. In early 1401, I enrolled at Khwaja Abdullah Ansari University for a fresh start. I studied in this field for half a year. However, with the Taliban gaining more power day by day, they were primarily preoccupied with forming their own government, paying less attention to other sectors. After six months, their strictness intensified, especially towards the Hazara and Shia communities.

One day, we heard that the Taliban were conducting house searches. Fear consumed me once again as my robots were inside my house. Out of fear, I disposed of some of my robots in an old scrap metal center to avoid detection. However, they did not accept my humanoid robot. They stated that they wouldn't risk their lives and endanger themselves. Compelled by necessity, I returned it home, but soon Taliban reached our alley, sealing off both ends with their vehicles, preventing anyone from entering or leaving.

When they reached our house, I was inside. My humanoid robot was on the balcony, covered to avoid detection. They used metal detectors inside the houses to ensure no one was hiding weapons. When they started searching our house, I accompanied them, and they began rummaging through our belongings, throwing things around. I stood there helpless, unable to say anything, as they would immediately hit me. When three Taliban members reached the balcony, fear overwhelmed me. I desperately tried to hide my device behind a wall, but it emitted a noise, drawing their attention. They struck it with a bat until it fell, leaving them astonished. They went downstairs and immediately reported to their superiors. Moments later, their commanders arrived at our balcony. When they descended, one of them hit me with a stick without asking any questions. He accused me of being an infidel, a spy, and engaging in forbidden acts. I trembled in fear, simply stating that it was a robot. They claimed that I was an infidel and had committed a forbidden act. They beat me until my arms went numb from the force. They bound my hands with a cloth and dragged me out of the house, hitting me with sticks and accusing me of being an infidel, an American spy, and more.

I vividly remember all the neighbors gathering outside, watching as they threw me into a vehicle and took me to a security area. There, they continued to beat me relentlessly. Each Taliban commander who came asked what my crime was. One claimed I was an American spy and had committed religious innovation. Each time they heard these accusations, they hit me harder. I couldn't say anything, just repeated that I was a student. However, they didn't listen. I spent two days and nights in the open-air prison. They interrogated me extensively, asking many questions about my ethnicity, my activities during the previous government, and accusing me of being a spy for various countries. I had no lawyer or anyone to support me. Later, they released me from custody, but threatened me, warning that if I repeated my actions, I would end up in prison again. After that, my contact numbers and social media accounts were under Taliban control.

The Taliban dismantled and confiscated my humanoid robot, threatening me that I no longer had the right to attend university. Disheartened, I remained at home without any hope of pursuing education. However, I still decided to continue my robotics work. Despite the challenges, I managed to clandestinely construct another drone that could fly up to one kilometer. I faced significant difficulties in testing this drone due to

my precarious circumstances. I had to travel many kilometers outside the city to ensure the Taliban wouldn't notice the drone's flight.

On one occasion, the Taliban became aware of the drone's flight, but fortunately, I managed to escape and return home safely. However, I lost the courage to continue testing the drone and ceased further development, abandoning this endeavor until today. Here is the link to the video of my drone:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ov_r4w3OmLFFhBPwyMLSGTEODJIBHy65/view?usp=drive_link

After that, I decided to continue learning programming and web development, and I began studying programming. Fortunately, I became acquainted with a group of individuals who were also beginners in the field of website and mobile application development. Together, we started working in this area. I spent evenings learning from online tutorials and half of the day working. My job involved teaching computer skills in the ICDL (International Computer Driving License) program.

Later, I collaborated with my colleagues to create websites and practiced coding. Here is the link to my github account - <https://github.com/Aref-Ebrahimi>

Afterward, I decided to pursue programming, website, and application development. I began learning programming and had the fortune of joining a group of like-minded individuals, all beginners in the field of website and mobile application development. There were ten of us in our group, consisting of six girls and four boys. Due to Taliban restrictions on mixed-gender gatherings for work or education, we operated covertly.

One day, while we were gathered for a meeting, the Taliban suddenly appeared. I immediately fled through another exit and sought refuge at my aunt's house. The Taliban captured my colleagues and obtained my home address from them. Consequently, I remained away from home for two weeks, even receiving threats from the Taliban over the phone. Fearing for my safety, I deleted all my accounts, turned off my phone, and lived in constant dread, as I was previously pursued by the Taliban, and they likely tracked me down again.

Subsequently, the Taliban repeatedly visited my house, harassed my family, and even brought a detention order from the intelligence agency. The ordeal pushed me to flee. I managed to obtain a visa for my passport with great difficulty and left Afghanistan. Now, I reside in Yazd, Iran, engaged in labor in a building, far from education and freedom. I cannot return to Afghanistan, as it has become perilous for me. My future there is uncertain—whether I can continue my education or work remains unknown.

Therefore, I seek migration for a better life, away from the shackles of religious, ideological, and violent oppression, away from the perils of war. This is just a fragment of my life, encapsulated in this letter.

Respectfully, Mohammad Aref Ebrahimi