

Hot dog on wheels? Food trucks drive into Kabul

By Los Angeles Times, adapted by Newsela staff on 01.04.15

Word Count **488**

Level **670L**



A customer collects his order at a food truck run by the company Lazeez in Kabul, Afghanistan. Shashank Bengali/Los Angeles Times/TNS

KABUL, Afghanistan — Most people in Afghanistan have no idea what a hot dog is. So when they see trucks painted like giant hot dogs on the streets, many are puzzled.

The trucks sell fast food, including hot dogs.

Food trucks are popular all over North America. Now, they have made it all the way to Kabul.

Naveed Noori is the man behind the new hot-dog trucks.

Noori lives in Kabul, but his wife and daughter live in Toronto, Canada. While in Toronto, Noori learned how popular food trucks are. Now, he has brought them to Afghanistan.

Hot Dogs On Wheels

In May, Noori and his cousin, Abdullah Karim, started their new company. It is called Lazeez, which means “delicious.”

The new business sells hot dogs, burgers and chicken sandwiches. Food is sold from the back of five small trucks. Inside each truck there are hot plates and deep-fryers.

On a cool fall morning, Noori visited one of his trucks. It was parked on a busy street in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan.

The hot-dog-on-wheels stood out among all the plain-looking cars and minibuses. Its sides were painted with bright yellow stripes that looked like mustard. Its roof was meant to be a sesame-seed bun.

Several cars came to a halt on seeing the strange truck. Their drivers had puzzled expressions. The Lazeez truck driver is also the cook. He had put on a hair net and gloves and was grilling burgers.

“People don’t know what exactly this is,” Noori said.

A Happy New Customer

As Noori stood by the Lazeez truck, a black car carrying five young men screeched to a stop. One of the men stepped out and studied the menu. He said his name was Mohammed Idris.

Idris ordered five chicken sandwiches. Together, they cost only \$7.

When Idris bit into his sandwich he seemed impressed.

“It’s my first time here,” he said. “I didn’t know what a food truck was.”

Hot dogs are not well known in Afghanistan. The chicken hot dogs Lazeez uses are shipped in from Pakistan. The rest of the food is cooked at the company's offices. Each week, thousands of chicken patties are prepared there.

The cousins have plans to buy five more trucks. They also want to launch a home delivery service. For now, they sell about \$450 worth of food every day, Noori said.

Burger Challenge

Rohit Shuja is one of Lazeez's drivers. He had never cooked before he began working for the company. Now, he grills chicken and works the fryer like a pro.

Shuja said his biggest challenge is dealing with police officers. They sometimes ask why he is parked where he is.

“We have to explain to them every day what we are doing,” Shuja said.

There is a simple way to get rid of nosy police officers, though.

“We give them a burger or two,” Noori said, “and they go away.”

Quiz

- 1 Which sentence from the introduction [paragraphs 1-5] shows that food trucks are new in Kabul?
- (A) So when they see trucks painted like giant hot dogs on the streets, many are puzzled.
 - (B) While in Toronto, Noori learned how popular food trucks are.
 - (C) Food trucks are popular all over North America.
 - (D) The trucks sell fast food, including hot dogs.
- 2 Select the paragraph from the section "Hot Dogs On Wheels" that suggests the strange-looking trucks might help attract customers.
- 3 Which option BEST describes the structure of the section "A Happy New Customer"?
- (A) a comparison
 - (B) a story
 - (C) cause and effect
 - (D) problem and solution
- 4 Which option BEST describes the structure of the section "Burger Challenge"?
- (A) a story
 - (B) a comparison
 - (C) cause and effect
 - (D) problem and solution