

HA mission aids in building community

Story and photo by
Sgt. Johnny A. Thompson
4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Ensuring a better quality of life for the people of Afghanistan is a main purpose of U.S. and coalition forces stationed here. Whether it is by killing, capturing and denying sanctuary to al Qaeda and Taliban militants, or by providing philanthropical gestures, the desired outcome is to one day see a nation stand on its on feet.

However, until that day coalition forces are steadfast in being Afghanistan’s support system and a humanitarian aid delivery to villages in the Kohi Safi region of the Parwan Province Saturday iterated



Lt. Col. Carl Ellis, commander of the Defense Contract Management Agency in Afghanistan, hands out crayons and paper to a group of young Afghan boys Saturday as part of a humanitarian aid mission.

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USAR CSM visits Bagram



Photo by Spc. Kelly Hunt

Command Sgt. Maj. Michele S. Jones, command sergeant major of the Army Reserves, conducted a meeting with other Army Reservist leaders during breakfast at Dragon Dining Facility to discuss the future of the reserves and to address any questions or concerns from the leaders.

Weaponer trains troops for live-fire

Story and photo by Spc. Kelly Hunt
4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Troops looking for a firing challenge without the hassle of a live-fire exercise have found their match. This range is always open to troops wanting to practice their techniques and have a little fun, but for this exercise, leave your ammo behind.

The Weaponer Simulation Training Center, located behind Building 430, on base offers Bagram personnel an opportunity to perfect their targeting skills without ever shooting a bullet. With more than 48 Basic Rifle Marksmanship exercises and nearly 500 collective exercises, it’s not hard to please everyone.

“It’s a good place to come and make mistakes,” said Mark Puckett, electronic technician for Pulau Electronics and the behind-the-scenes

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World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



Iraqi and U.S. forces investigate the site of a suicide attack on the Red Cross Baghdad offices Monday.



Anti-Taliban fighters in Afghanistan.

Dozens killed in car bombs

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Four suicide bombings rocked Baghdad Monday, killing an estimated 30 people, including two American soldiers, and wounding more than 200 others, U.S.-led coalition and Iraqi hospital officials said.

The bombings targeted the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross in central Baghdad and three Iraqi police stations.

Iraqi Deputy Interior Minister Ahmed Ibrahim said 34 people were killed, 26 of them civilians and the other eight Iraqi policemen. He said 65 police officers and 159 civilians were wounded.

At least 12 people were killed and more than 20 wounded in the attack at ICRC headquarters, authorities and hospital officials said.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan called the attack on the ICRC “a crime against humanity” and said that all terrorist attacks were “morally repugnant and indefensible.”

In Washington, President Bush and L. Paul Bremer, the U.S. civilian administrator in Iraq, condemned the bombings and said the coalition will not be intimidated.

“There are terrorists in Iraq who are willing to kill anybody in order to stop our progress,” Bush said. “The more success we have on the ground, the more these killers will react — and our job is to find them and bring them to justice.”

Bremer said, “We’ll have rough days, such as we’ve had in the last couple of days. But the overall thrust is in the right direction, and the good days outnumber the bad days.”

U.S. civilians die in Afghan battle

WASHINGTON – Pentagon sources say two American civilians — identified as U.S. State Department contract workers — were killed in a raid against suspected Taliban and al Qaeda forces Saturday southwest of the Afghan border town of Shkin.

The sources said Monday that the two were State Department contract workers, but a State Department official said it had no information on any of its contractors being killed, and none would have been involved in this type of operation.

In the raid, 10 suspected enemy fighters were killed by Afghan army troops backed up by U.S. helicopters and war planes, the Pentagon sources said Monday.

But in the firefight two U.S. civilians were killed, according to Pentagon officials. The officials said the two were working with the Afghan army troops. One Pentagon official said the two apparently were hit by “armor piercing rounds.”

While some sources indicated to *CNN* the dead Americans may have been working for the Central Intelligence Agency, the CIA referred all inquiries to the State Department.

“They are listed as State Department contract security officers,” a U.S. official told *CNN*.

But the State Department official disputed that. “None of our guys got hit,” the official said. “We don’t know who these guys are.”

State Department employees taking part on Provincial Reconstruction Teams, which travel the country in convoys seeking out areas that need reconstruction assistance, travel only with U.S. civilian military officers and do not engage in active combat, the official said.

The rocky border area — along the border with Pakistan — has been the scene of a num-

ber of fierce battles recently in which U.S. military forces and their Afghan allies have mounted attacks against resurgent Taliban and al Qaeda guerrillas.



Flames threaten two homes in Bear Valley, Calif., Monday.

California wildfires wreak havoc

DEVORE, Calif. – Wildfires engulfing huge swaths of Southern California have killed at least 14 people and sent tens of thousands seeking refuge.

The state’s deadliest blazes in more than a decade raged through areas as far north as Simi Valley in Ventura County, east to San Bernardino County and south to San Diego County — scorching more than 300,000 acres of earth.

Weather forecasts indicate more hot and dry conditions that will mix with the Santa Ana winds and could fan the flames that have reached 100 feet tall in places.

President Bush declared four Southern California counties major disaster areas Monday, opening the way for federal dollars for governments, businesses and people affected by the fires.

The president’s order covers Los Angeles, San Bernardino, San Diego and Ventura counties, according to *The Associated Press*.

California Gov. Gray Davis, who has declared states of emergency in those counties, activated the National Guard to help with disaster relief.

More than 8,000 firefighters were trying to contain at least 10 fires in the region early Monday. But Dallas Jones, director of the Governor’s Office for Emergency Services, said most of the fires were less than 20 percent contained, and some weren’t contained at all.

The fires have destroyed more than 800 homes and left tens of thousands in houses without electricity.

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those sentiments.

“[Today] we are here to distribute supplies and continue the aid [Bagram Air Base has established] with the community,” said Lt. Col. Carl Ellis, commander of the Defense Contract Management Agency for Afghanistan.

The aid delivery was part of the DCMA’s commitment to issuing thousand of pounds of supplies to communities surrounding Bagram. Saturday’s delivery was by two sport utility vehicles loaded with school supplies and an Army light medium tactical vehicle filled with food, kitchen supplies, blankets and construction supplies.

“The communities are thankful for the supplies and are grateful for the [coalition forces’] help,” said Gul Zamon, a representative for the Kohi Safi region.

The supplies donated will be dispersed to the 65 villages of the Kohi Safi region, which has had a difficult time getting access to the urban provinces of Afghanistan due to recent rainstorms, according to Zamon because the storms washed out the road making it impossible for travel-

ing. Several citizens in the Kohi Safi region died recently due to severe illness and lack of essential supplies.

However, Saturday ushered in a new day.

“Our mission is to help the [communities] by trying to provide whatever [necessary] supplies they need,” said Ellis. “As for the children, every time we visit a community, the kids want pens and want something to write on, so today we want to make sure every child has a pencil, pen or cartoon and paper to write on,” he said.

Ellis noted that DCMA has more than 5,000 pounds of additional aid that will distribute at a later date.

Prior to distributing the supplies Army officials and Zamon met and discussed issues that could help strength the relationship between the coalition and the Afghan community. Topics discussed were the need for Bagram bazaar badges and various quality of life issues.

In the discussions Zamon said vendors are not using the money they receive from the bazaar to help the communities.

According to Maj. David Long, officer in charge for Bagram’s Base Operations Civil Affairs office, communities issue their badges to vendors to sell their goods and

in exchange a portion of their profit is supposed to go to communities. Zamon said such exchanges haven’t been occurring.

Schools and jobs were other chief concerns for the villages in Kohi Safi said Zamon. He stated that the Kohi Safi doesn’t have any established schools and children are being taught out of families’ homes. Zamon also stated the communities were in desperate need of jobs stating, “It is simple to win the hearts and minds of the people of this village – help them.”

To Zamon’s words, Long offered that Bagram Air Base has 150 surrounding communities it’s responsible for helping, adding “it’s frustrating when Bagram can’t help everyone because of limited supplies,” but the base tries to administer supplies out evenly and to those communities who need it the most.

Closing their discussion, Army officials and Zamon agreed that someday they’d hope to see Afghanistan have the same prosperity South Korea has, noting that the has come a long ways with the last few decades.

“It’s not going to happen overnight, but America is committed to helping Afghanistan become [a self-sufficient country],” said Long.

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technician at the training site. “Better to make mistakes here than go out to the range and do it.”

The simulator is already a regular element used for training in Fort Benning, Fort Knox and several other posts, said Puckett. Soldiers train on the simulators before they ever see a live-fire range.

“Their scores have improved quite a bit,” said Puckett about those who have trained on the simulator. “It just helps train for the range.”

Aside from the benefits of practicing, the simulator offers trainers various programs designed to help those who need to improve their techniques through troubleshooting.

“There’s a lot this machine can do,” said Puckett. “You can check the cant of the weapon, watch their breathing, watch the impact of the rounds; instructors have a lot of tools available to them.”

Nearly 100 troops a week use the simulator to sharpen their skills and, according to Puckett, they seem to enjoy it.

“It’s like a video game,” said Spc. Joseph London, 441st Ordnance Battalion (Explosive Ordnance Disposal).

It offers “all the principles that they teach you in basic (training, but) without the expense of going to a range and without the instructor being stressed out because they might get shot by mistake.

“It makes everyone like they’re playing a video game and they’re learning,” said London. “It gives you the opportunity to put rounds down

range, practice before you go out to the range and see your faults to correct them.”

Even though the simulator is packed with challenging “defend yourself” routines that will give anyone a run for their money, for some troops it’s nice just to master the basics.

“My favorite part of all the scenarios was the actual zeroing,” said London. “It gave me the opportunity to correct my shooting.”

To include your troops in the weaponeer simulation training, contact Sgt. 1st Class Mark Doty to schedule an appointment at 318-231-4536.



Spc. Joseph London, 441st Ordnance Battalion (EOD), takes aim during a “defend yourself” exercise at the weaponeer simulation training center on base.

Careful process used to determine Guard, Reserve mobilizations

Story by Spc. Bill Putnam
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — “A very, very detailed” look at units will be done before an undetermined number of them are told to pack their bags for a year-long deployment in Iraq, said Marine Gen. Peter Pace, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

“Somewhere within the next two to three weeks we should be able to come forward to (Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld) with our recommendations on what units fulfill the capabilities that the commanders on the ground want,” Pace said at a Pentagon press conference Oct. 21.

Pentagon leaders and the Joint Chiefs of Staff are currently poring over a list of units that Gen. John Abizaid, the Central Command commander, needs for the next rotation of troops into Iraq.

The capabilities of both active duty and reserve component units will be given an equal look during that evaluation, Pace said. And because of the current deployment tempo for active-duty units, the Army Reserve and National Guard are getting a close look to replace active duty units in Iraq, Pace said.

New equipment tailored toward peacekeeping will also be used during the next rotation in Iraq, he said.

For example, more Humvees and other lighter vehicles, and fewer tanks will be used, Pace said.

“That also lightens up the amount of logistic support needed, and mechanics needed, and the like, to keep the heavy equipment moving,” he said.

The bulk of the units being mobilized are logistical units to support the combat units in country, Pace said.

Pentagon planners are also working to make sure units aren’t called up needlessly, Pace said.

“We don’t want to call up a tank repair platoon if, in fact, we’re not going to have tanks,” he said. “So we want to make sure that we don’t just mindlessly replace one unit with another.”

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

“Bad Company”

1530Z at the MWR building:

When a Harvard-educated CIA agent is killed during an operation, the secret agency recruits his twin brother.

Tomorrow’s movie: “Gorillas in the Mist”



Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	Today	Wednesday
Bagram:	Haze H: 79F L: 45F	Partly cloudy H: 75F L: 43F
Kandahar:	Mostly Clear H: 84F L: 46F	Clear H: 84F L: 48F
Kabul:	Haze H: 79F L: 45F	Haze H: 79F L: 46F
Uzbekistan:	Mostly Clear H: 84F L: 57F	Partly Cloudy H: 88F L: 59F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from ESPN.com)



Rufus Brown and Florida State have already clinched a tie for the ACC title.

Florida State is top one-loss team

NEW YORK – Florida State moved to the top of the one-loss crowd.

The Seminoles were third in the Bowl Championship Series standings released Monday, trailing only undefeated Oklahoma and Miami in the race to play for the national championship.

The Sooners, the top team in the polls all season, have been in first place in the first two BCS standings. Oklahoma will have to keep winning to guarantee itself a spot in the Sugar Bowl on Jan. 4, starting with a showdown against Oklahoma State on Saturday.

The Cowboys, 14th in the AP poll and the BCS standings, have beaten the Sooners the past two years.

“It’s another very important game this week,” Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops said Monday. “The more you win, the more important they get. We’ve got to be on top of our game to stay undefeated and stay after the championships that we’re after.”

The BCS standings are used to determine which teams play in a national title game. The teams that finish 1-2 in the final BCS standings on Dec. 7, will play for the title in New Orleans on Jan. 4.

The formula uses the AP media and coaches’ polls, seven computer rankings, strength of schedule, losses and a bonus-point system for quality wins.

The Sooners (8-0) have a 1.0 for poll average, 1.17 for computer-rank average, 0.28 for strength of schedule and zero for losses for a 2.45 total. Oklahoma is ranked first in five of the computers with Miami the top team in the other two. The Hurricanes (7-0), who play at Virginia Tech on Saturday, are second with 3.87 points, ahead of four tightly packed one-loss teams.

The Seminoles are at the top of that group with 10.34 points based on their strong computer rankings. Florida State, which moved up one spot this week, is third in three computers and fourth in three others.

Gordon wins Bass Pro Shops MBNA 500



Jeff Gordon led 55 laps in the win.

HAMPTON, Ga. – With the season championship all but out of reach, Jeff Gordon knew his best hope was to build momentum for a title run in 2004.

A victory on Monday in the rain-interrupted NASCAR Winston Cup race at Atlanta Motor Speedway was his second in a row, giving his Hendrick Motorsports team the boost the four-time Winston Cup champion was looking for.

“Number one, we always want to win and we fight to win every race,” Gordon said. “The thing I love about our race team is when we go through tough times, and we’ve been through them before, it just makes us dig deeper and get stronger.

“This reminds us a little bit of 2000, where we ended the season on a real positive note. And this is better because I don’t remember us winning a couple of races toward the end of the season.”

Gordon bounced back from finishing ninth in the points that year to win the title in 2001.

New judge in Bryant case is hard-driving, polarizing figure

DENVER – The judge who will handle Kobe Bryant’s sexual assault trial is a workaholic who enjoys watching his daughters play soccer and going on hunting trips with his buddies. He lends his beat-up sport utility vehicle to a local ski team, and he likes the music of John Mellencamp.

But for the next several months, state District Judge Terry Ruckriegle will be at the center of public attention as prosecutors try to convict the Los Angeles Lakers’ guard.

Ruckriegle, chief judge in a four-county district, has a no-nonsense approach and expects lawyers in his courtroom to be as prepared as he is. People who know him say he won’t tolerate the public bickering that has gone on between attorneys in the Bryant case.

“If the attorneys start acting up like you saw at the preliminary hearing, I think he’ll bring the old dog kennel into court and tell the first lawyer who [crosses the line] to kennel up in the doghouse,” said David Lugert, an Eagle attorney and former prosecutor who worked with Ruckriegle.

Lawyers in his district say he is sometimes abrasive, but fair and impartial.

Afghanistan Hot Topics



(Compiled by CJTF-180 Public Affairs)

U.S.-led forces kill 20 al Qaeda and Taliban

KABUL (*Reuters*) – U.S.-led forces and their Afghan allies have killed at least 20 members of the al Qaeda network and remnants of the ousted Taliban regime in a clash in southeastern Afghanistan, a top police official said on Monday.

At least three Afghan government soldiers were also killed in the fighting in Gomal district, Paktika province, which took place on Friday, Dawlat Khan, police chief of the province, told *Reuters*.

“Gomal’s authorities a while back told me that there were Arab, Chechen and Taliban fighters among the 20 dead,” Khan said, adding that U.S. helicopter gunships were involved in the action.

At least four Taliban fighters were also arrested in the remote district near the Pakistan border, according to Khan, who said he had no further details.

He said he was not aware of any casualties among U.S.-led forces, and the U.S.-led military in Afghanistan was not immediately available for comment.

More than 350 people, including civilians, government soldiers, aid workers, U.S. soldiers and many Taliban fighters, have been killed since August in various parts of Afghanistan.

The violence is the worst since U.S.-led forces overthrew the radical Islamic Taliban militia from power in 2001 for harboring Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda network.

The U.S. military in Afghanistan leads a force of some 11,500 troops in the hunt for remnants of the Taliban and al Qaeda. The fate of bin Laden and Taliban supreme leader Mullah Omar remains unknown.

Karzai moves to control northern region

(*Bloomberg*) – Afghanistan’s President Hamid Karzai appointed new local government officials in the north to try to end factional fighting and bring the region under control of the administration in the capital, Kabul, *The Associated Press* said.

Interior Minister Ali Ahmad Jalali, visiting the region yesterday, appointed a new governor in Balkh province and a new mayor and police chief for its main city Mazar-e-Sharif, *AP* reported.

The changes are aimed at “finding a solution to some of the security problems” in the north, *AP* cited Jawid Luddin, a presidential spokesman, as saying yesterday.

Control of areas in the north has long been disputed by the ethnic Uzbek militia led by Abdul Rashid

Dostum and ethnic Tajik forces led by Atta Mohammed. More than 60 people were said to have been killed in fighting earlier this month between the militias, *AP* said.

The Afghan government, backed by the United Nations, last week began a program aimed at demobilizing 100,000 militiamen as part of a three-year effort to disarm warlords and create a multiethnic national army.

Karzai’s government has been unable to assert its control outside Kabul since it replaced the Taliban regime that was ousted in the U.S.-led war on terrorism that began after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States.

Afghan leader rejects UN security concerns

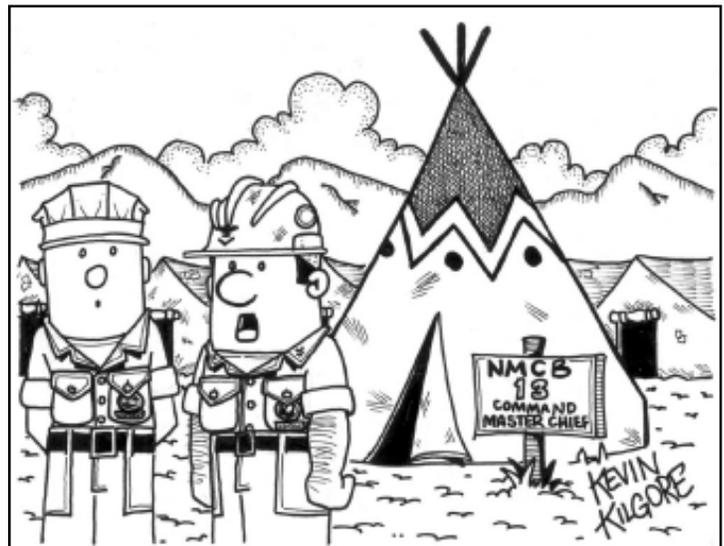
(*ABC Radio Australia*) - Afghanistan’s president, Hamid Karzai, has hit out at a United Nations official over his criticism of security in the country.

The UN’s top peacekeeping official, Jean-Marie Guehenno, has claimed the Taliban has effectively retaken control of parts of Afghanistan.

Mr. Guehenno says many fundamental, structural causes of insecurity remain unresolved in Afghanistan, two years after the Taliban was ousted.

President Karzai says the UN official is essentially mistaken and has exaggerated the impact of a Taliban resurgence.

“The master chief takes his rank seriously, huh.”



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By Kevin Kilgore

Laugh Support