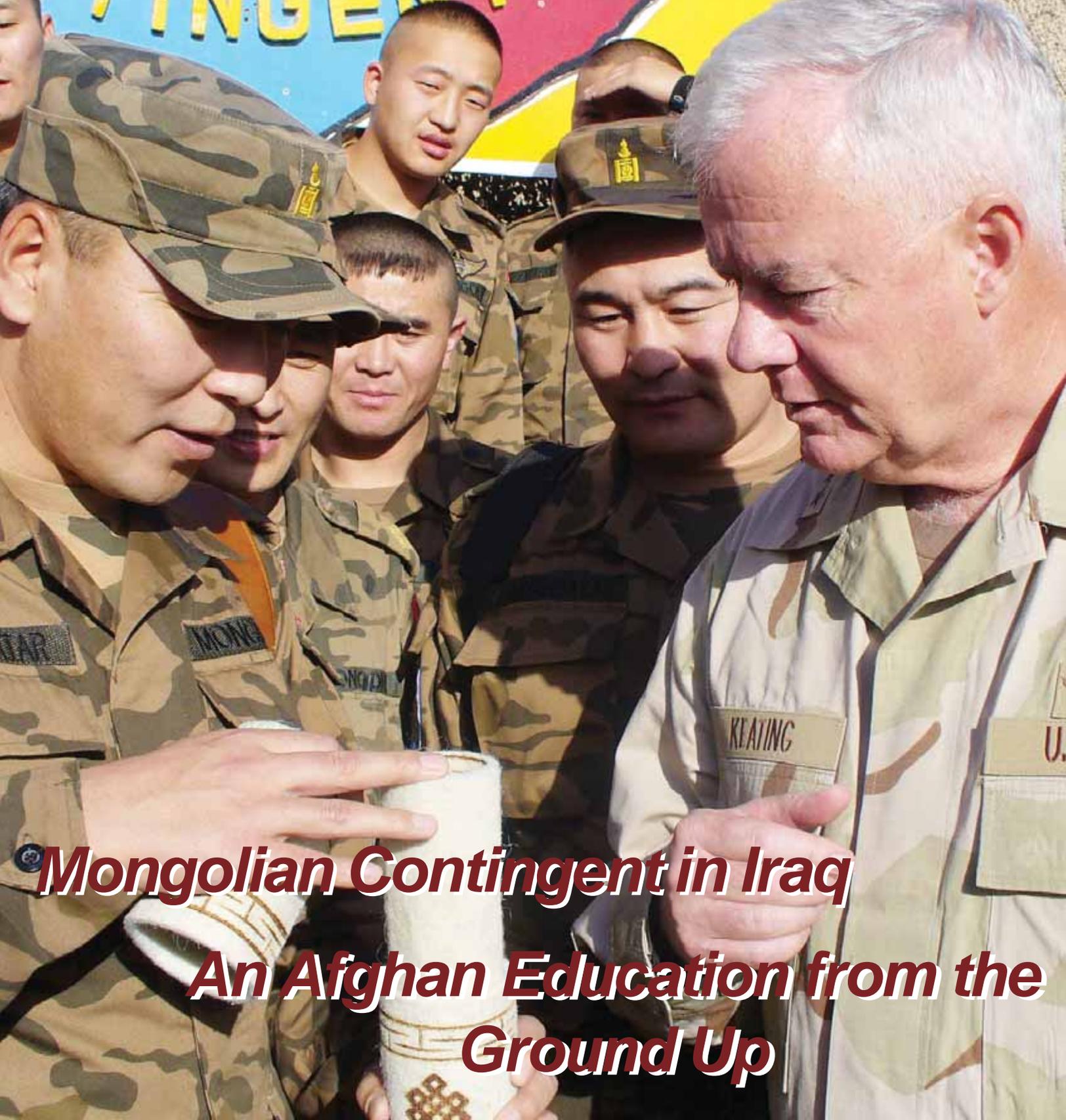


Coalition Bulletin

A publication of the Coalition fighting the Global War on Terrorism

Volume #48 December, 2007-January, 2008



Mongolian Contingent in Iraq

***An Afghan Education from the
Ground Up***



Chairman

Pakistan  **Brig. Gen. Changez Dil Khan**

Committee

Canada  **Sgt Stepharnoff Linda**
France  **Lt. Col. Xavier Harispe**
Germany  **Cmdr. Gerhard Beirer**
Italy  **Cmdr. Esposto Enrico**
Korea  **Lt. Col. Chuolhwam Kim**
New Zealand  **Wing Cmdr. Leslie Matthews**
Romania  **Lt. Col. Gabriel-Mihail Negrea**
Pakistan  **Col. Bilal Saeed Ullah Khan**
USA  **Maj. John Tongret**

Chief of Coalition Public Affairs Team

Pakistan  **Lt. Col. Muhammed Arif**

COALITION BULLETIN STAFF:

Senior Editor

Ukraine  **1st Lt. Andrii Kovalenko**

Editorial Staff

Romania  **Maj. Constantin Spinu**
Dominican Rep.  **Capt. Manuel Matos**
Qatar  **1st Lt. Hamad Al-Kuwari**
USA  **SFC Jamie Brown**

Editor's Note

By the generous permission of our NATO partners, the *Coalition Bulletin* is pleased to bring you stories covering the activities of the International Security Assistance Force. As ISAF and the Coalition are separate entities, ISAF stories will be denoted by the NATO logo at the top of each page when they appear.

Cover photo: Mongolian Contingent Commander presents gift to Admiral Timothy J. Keating, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command.

The views expressed in the Coalition Bulletin cannot be attributed to any one nation. They are items considered newsworthy by the volunteers from various nations that make up the Public Awareness Working Group (PAWG). Contributions from all Coalition countries are encouraged. All contributors to the Coalition Bulletin are responsible for adhering to PAWG policy pertaining to the accuracy and copyright laws in the content they provide.

For questions concerning PAWG policy, contact the Coalition Bulletin editor at +1 (813) 827-1716, or write to us at oeffpublicaffairs@yahoo.com. For an electronic copy of the Coalition Bulletin, visit: www.centcom.mil/Operations/Coalition/joint.htm

IN THIS ISSUE:



A Bit of Force Protection... 3



An Afghan Education from the Ground Up... 4



American and French Sailors Team up to Train... 6



Mongolian Contingent in Iraq... 9

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

As for what we do today and in the near future, overall I agree with President Bush that everything must be done so that the Iraqi authorities are able to deal with security issues on their own. What we differ over is that the U.S. believes it is impossible to impose time frames for the withdrawal. In my view, that would prompt the Iraqi authorities to be more proactive.

Vladimir Putin,
President of Russian Federation
(Time Magazine interview)

Editorial

With this edition of the Coalition Bulletin, the year 2007 comes to an end and we start the New Year with a hope for peace in the conflict zones, better understanding of each other's perspective, and continuation of peaceful competition. The year 2008 would be devoted to resolution of both ongoing and internal conflicts which are still in the developing stage. In this pursuit, assistance to the local governments will bear fruit compared to imposing an outside solution that may aggravate the crises.

The year 2008 will also be a 'year of change'. Domestic situations around the globe will change politically and militarily. We should be prepared to re-orientate our policies to face the changing environment which at times may be a difficult choice. Situations in some areas will improve and at other places it will either remain the same or deteriorate while new challenges will also emerge. However, a clear vision of the end state will help in choosing the correct strategy and allow devotion of all resources for its attainment. Coalition energy must be utilised and contributed in attainment of that single goal. Unity of effort for the Coalition of this magnitude is essential for success as failure will be disastrous.

This issue covers the ongoing development activities in Afghanistan and Iraq and also some social events that took place at CENTCOM HQ. Most importantly 'Coalition International Night' in which all nations participated wholeheartedly. It was the most well organised and attended activity under one roof, giving a true look of the partners in the war on terror. It gave us an opportunity not only to taste each others food but also developing better understanding of different cultures.

I would like to take this opportunity to bid farewell to Major General Gerald P. Minetti and Colonel David J. Greco and welcome Major General Michael J. Diamond and Air Commodore John M. Samulski. The outgoing officers are not only bidding farewell to us but also to the profession of arms where they have devoted all their energies and major portion of their life. Both officers were very compassionate in resolving administrative problems being faced by the coalition officers. They have represented their country well. We wish them and their families best in the future.

Changez Dil Khan
Brigadier-General, Pakistan SNR to U.S. CENTCOM



Coalition News in Brief

ESTONIA - Estonian lawmakers Wednesday extended for a year the mission of the Baltic country's three-dozen-strong military contingent in Iraq, which was due to expire at the end of this month.

Fifty-three members of Estonia's 101-seat parliament approved a government bill to prolong the mission, 29 voted against, and the remainder did not take part.

IRAQ - The Polish Civil-Military Coordination group, in cooperation with Iraqi Soldiers from the 8th Division and Polish Soldiers from Task Force Lynx, delivered four trucks full of humanitarian aid supplies to 110 families in Diwaniyah.

Polish Soldiers distributed family packages, which contained food, an electric generator and bedding, were able to speak to residents.

SALVADOR - El Salvador will maintain its current troop levels in Iraq, Salvadoran President Tony Saca said Monday, after top officials traveled to Iraq to analyze the Central American country's future involvement.

Saca told a news conference that if he receives the necessary congressional approval, he will send El Salvador's 10th contingent of 280 soldiers to help with humanitarian and reconstruction efforts.

AFGHANISTAN - Every three months Jordan do rotation of the personnel in Zabor hospital. In December 2007 the 24th rotation took place since December 2001, the first deployment for that hospital which is previously located in Mazar-Esharif and Qailat, Afghanistan.

More than 751826 patients have been treated through 9 December 2007.

AFGHANISTAN - An \$8 million contract between ISAF's Laghman Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) and the Mashriq Engineering and Construction Company was recently signed to build the first phase of a new major road. The PRT holds weekly meetings with provincial leadership to discuss development of the province. The projects that gain the most interest are those, like the Alishang Road, that increase security and stability, explained Lt. Col. Robert Ricci, Laghman PRT commander.

AFGHANISTAN - Kapisa Provincial Government representatives and members from the Bagram Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) recently opened a school and health clinic in Mahmood Raqi District, Kapisa Province. Capt. Jordan Berry, ISAF's Bagram PRT Kapisa Civil Affairs team leader, and Hatan, Afghan Ministry of Education representative, sliced the ribbon on the eight-room, \$122,000 school.



Kandahar City Teachers Meet Yassin and Kaka Rawoof



*Story by Zulmai Ali, Public Affairs Officer
Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team*

CAMP NATHAN SMITH, Kandahar City – A KPRT “train the trainer” workshop on December 3 attracted 16

the Constitution of Afghanistan. On Saturday, 8 December, the Director of Education had 45,000 copies of the comic books delivered to representatives of all the schools in Kandahar City. Each pupil in grades 1, 2 and 3 will receive

one comic each Monday from 10 December 2007 to 20 January 2008. At the same time, a radio and television campaign featuring Yassin and Kaka Rawoof will be conducted, including cartoons airing at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. At the end of the workshop, KPRT Legal Officer Major April Inglis presented each participant with a certificate. She also had gifts for the workshop facilitator, a representative of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, and the Cultural Director of the Ministry of Education to thank them for their hard work in developing the program.

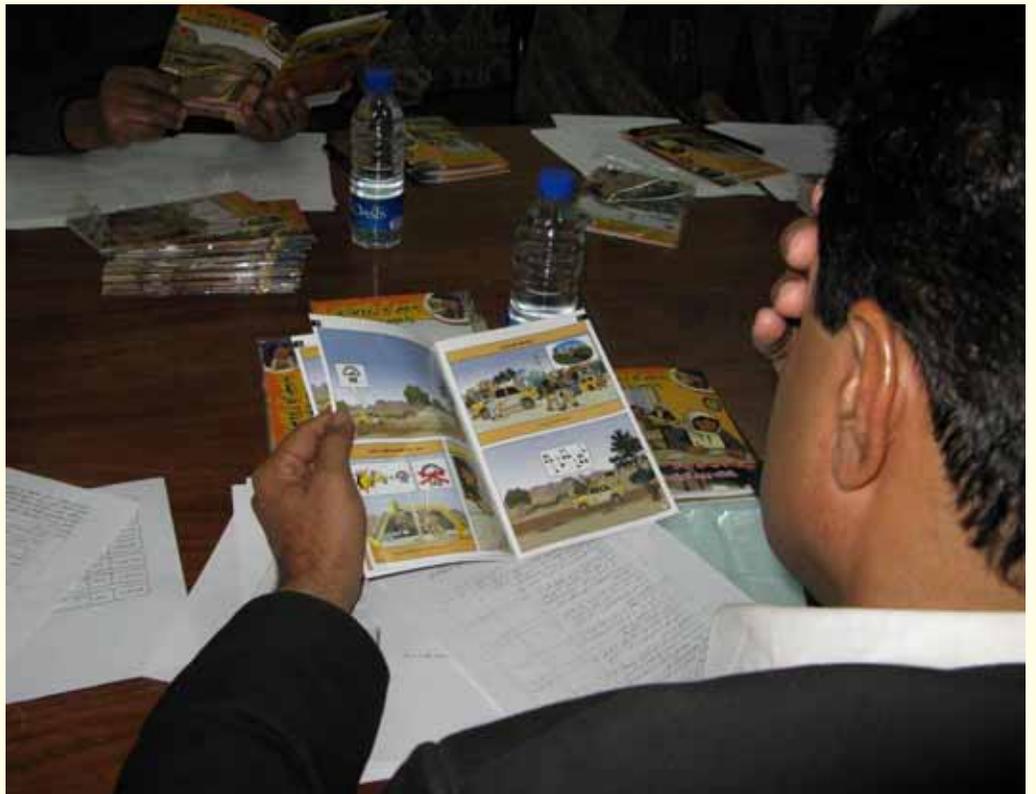


Sixteen teachers peruse new classroom materials they will introduce to their colleagues at schools across Kandahar City. (DND photo)

local teachers, both men and women, to learn about a set of six comic books designed to teach children about their rights and duties as citizens of Afghanistan. Distribution of the comics in Kandahar City schools began on December 10, and the 16 teachers at the workshop had to get ready to show some 800 of their colleagues how to use them in class.

“These comic books are very valuable for the young generation of Afghanistan and will help them out to know how to seek their cultural rights,” said one of the participants.

A donation of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the comic books use the characters Yassin and Kaka Rawoof to introduce the basic concepts of



A Kandahar teacher takes a close look at Yassin and Kaka Rawoof. (DND photo)



A Bit of Force Protection



*Story and photos by Klaus Geier
Germany*

After almost six years, major changes are coming to German civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) operations in the Afghan capital city of Kabul. With the rotation of the 14th German Afghanistan Contingent, the four-person CIMIC team will be disbanded. Major Peter Georg S., CIMIC staff officer normally assigned to the Northrhine-Westphalian State Command, has been in charge of German efforts during the past four months. Those efforts did not only involve major projects, like those begun in earlier years. “We advised the commander regarding his choice of operational measures in the area of force protection. We also had many conversations with Afghan opinion leaders and, during the early phases of the projects, we mediated between, cooperated with and coordinated the various aid and government organizations”, the Major said.

In Kabul, CIMIC has proved what can be accomplished in Afghanistan with, as would seem at first glance, little financial effort; like the emergency relief provided during a resettlement program for Afghan refugees returning from Pakistan and Iran. The German maneuver company’s area of responsibility is in the middle of the no-man’s land in the Afghan desert between Kabul and Bagram, where

temperatures reach 40 C. (104 F.) in the shade and where more than 1000 families are housed in tents without water, food or sanitary infrastructure; This number is expected to grow to 12 thousand during the coming months. CIMIC



Popular with children – The German Soldiers.

delivered several thousand liters of water for drinking and other purposes over several days, liaised with humanitarian aid organizations and with the district chief and even with the responsible ministry to draw attention to the catastrophic conditions there – with success. For Kuchi nomads, CIMIC delivered tents and brought the humanitarian organization “Shelter Now” on board to provide additional assistance.



Right in the middle – CIMIC Staff member with the elder.

The commander of the German support unit has additional funds available for improving infrastructure in the German maneuver company’s AOR, including the delivery of supplies for teaching art at the Durani school for girls in Kabul, with this the CIMIC team marked the successful completion of its work in Kabul prior to its disbandment.

As Major S. sums it up: “Our stubbornness at our round table talks in Camp Warehouse with Afghan authorities and also with the representatives of a whole range of organizations has paid off. A good basis of trust has emerged that has had a positive impact on the civilian situation – and as such it has been a bit of force protection for us all.”



An Afghan Education from the Ground Up



*By Petty Officer 2nd Class Brian P. Seymour
CSTC-A Public Affairs*

MAZAR-e-SHARIF, Afghanistan – Coalition mentors stationed in northern Afghanistan continue to take interest in the country’s future by investing time and money in the “younger generation.”

An embedded training team assigned to Afghan Regional Security Integration Command - North has partnered with members of the Afghan National Army’s 209th Corps, 1st Battalion, 5th Kandak to provide a better education for local children from the Balkh District.

In a construction project that supports procedures outlined in the Afghan National Development Strategy, the coalition and Afghan partnership erected a 10-room school from the ground up in the nearby village of Deh-i-Qazi.

The project, which broke ground last summer by the hands of the Jama Balkh Construction & Road Rehabilitation Company, took less than four months to complete. It was known formally as the “Deh-i-Qazi School and Bridge Project” by the coalition mentors who received, processed and implemented the town’s request.

Originally, village elders and the principal of the school’s previous location – on a mosque floor, or outdoors – came together and asked the ANA for a

better equipped and more centralized location for a children’s secondary school. The ANA then sent the request to ARSIC-N, who formally requested the project be approved by the Balkh Provincial Ministry of Education. The ARSIC-N Civil Military Operations Officer, Air Force Capt. Todd McDowell, requested funding from the Commander’s Emergency Response Program; a program designed to enable local commanders to respond to urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction needs.

“We were eager to help the residents of Deh-i-Qazi,” McDowell said. “Once we initially visited the village last

spring, we witnessed their conditions first hand. They were sitting on carpets in the shade under a tree. It was obvious that the kids were enthusiastic about attending school and they definitely needed a permanent structure to call their own.”

It is unclear precisely how many children will eventually become students at this new site, which opened Dec. 3 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. It is estimated some 1,200



U.S. Army Sgt. Maj. David Stevens, non-commissioned officer in charge of the 5th Kandak embedded training team to the Afghan National Army’s 209th Corps Commander, Maj. Gen. Murad Ali, which commemorated the grand opening of a new secondary school for children of the village Deh-i-Qazi in Balkh province. The 4-month construction effort is part of the Commander’s Emergency Response Program, which is designed to enable local commanders to respond to urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction needs.

children reside in as many as four villages surrounding the new facility.

Optimistic about this recently completed venture is the project manager himself, Army Sgt. Maj. David Stevens, non-commissioned officer in charge of the 5th Kandak ETT to the ANA’s 209th Corps.

“Being able to actually learn inside a classroom verses outside with no desks, chairs or blackboards, and temperatures exceeding 100 degrees, is a tremendous step forward,” Stevens said. “Also, with the new school, it is expected more children will attend school.”



Little Fixing, Bigger Effects



Stories by Markus Malila, Finnish Armed Forces
Photos by Rolf Hellsten, Finnish Armed Forces

On the Northern Afghanistan steppe, in the village of Sayad, clean drinking water is available to the 20 000 inhabitants, as the spring providing the water is working again. The well that had deteriorated through hard use, failed due to a shortage of money for maintaining it; new taps and new casting were needed.

During the same week the clinic, in the village of Darzab, got replacement doors in time for the winter, together with new equipment for disinfection and in Kohistanat, the building of a bridge was started, which will enable the delivery of large food supplies to poorer areas.

The Finnish military observation group Mobile Observation Team Zulu (MOT Z) is carrying out a significant task in the Northern Afghanistan areas, an area that the Finns are leading the operations. It acts as the eyes and ears of PRT Mazar-e-Sharif in surveying the reconstruction needs, as well as the hands and arms that deliver help where it is needed. Similar work is also carried out by other mobile observation groups, but MOT Z is a specialist in this role.

MOT Z patrolled around the areas and, on the basis of their discussions with the villagers, they discovered the need for the projects mentioned above. Proposals for the projects were addressed to PRT Mazar-e-Sharif staff officers, who found the required money and the projects were launched.



Around 20 000 people get clean water from the spring of the village of Sayad.

“We purposely started with smaller, 500-1000-dollar projects, it is easier to start small and then move on to bigger projects,” says Lieutenant-Commander Henri Kummala, the MOT Z leader.

Bush Telegraph Singing the Song of Zulu

MOT Z, which started work in August 2007, possesses skilled knowledge in the fields of construction, health care and legal affairs, among others. Kummala says that this wide skill base is a big advantage in co-ordinating and planning projects. “For example, we can carry out instant assessment of the projects on location, which speeds up our action.”

MOT Z works under Mazar-e-Sharif G9 office. The G9 area of responsibility is to organize various developmental and reconstruction projects in the area of PRT responsibility. Thus MOT Z transits around the whole area of PRT, so there are long distances to travel, but it is rewarding work which brings you close to the people in need of help. Sometimes you can see how grateful they are. “When we visited the surrounding area of the village of Sayad, local people asked us if we were going to mend the spring, this is the kind of bush telegraph that we need to start the projects,” Kummala concludes.



In the countryside there is a lot of unemployment. So local labour force is used in small aid projects. The carpenter in the picture is building new doors for the clinic in Darzab.



American and French Sailors Team up to Train



**Story and photos by Air Force SSG. Jennifer Redente
CJTF-HOA Public Affairs**

DJIBOUTI – Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 464 assisted Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal technicians and French naval special forces during a Helicopter Rope Suspension Training session on a flightline at a French camp in Djibouti.

The purpose of the HRST session, also known as fastrope, was to train side-by-side and evaluate each of the services’ capabilities.

Being deployed to Camp Lemonier has given HMH-464 the opportunity to train with the French prior to this fastrope exercise. The combined operation also serves as a measuring stick to how well they know their own mission requirements.

“Anytime you can conduct training with a new unit, especially of another country, you can find out how well you know your own training because you must be able to explain it to them,” said Marine Capt. Patrick A. Wasden, HMH-464 operations officer. “The fastrope training that was conducted is something we do on a regular basis with Marine units, but rarely with other countries.

“It has taken a lot of coordination through the French liaison on staff here to make this type of training possible,” said Wasden. “The eagerness of both sides is what makes it work so well.”

Wasden feels training with the French has had a positive effect on French and U.S. servicemembers.

“The combined, joint environment that we work in is good for all involved because it lets you compare your own capabilities and experience with that of other service branches and countries,” said Wasden.

This particular training session was developed to give the French an experience of fastrope off of a CH-53.

“The Ch-53 has a lot of wind compared to the French helicopters,” said French navy Cmdr. Alban Lapointe, Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa exercise planner

and French liaison officer. “Fastrope is a difficult skill, much more so with high winds. It was important for French navy special forces to get hands-on training with this type of aircraft.”

French and U.S. forces don’t train together often, but one EOD technician has experienced working with French naval forces on more than one occasion.



Members from Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa Explosive Ordnance Disposal technicians train with French naval special forces practicing a scenario using a Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron Ch-53E to fastrope into a simulated hostile situation at a French camp in Djibouti. As members slide down heights ranging from 30 to 50 feet, troops set up a defensive posture to protect the remaining members who descend from the helicopter.

“I’ve worked with the French on several occasions throughout my time in EOD,” said Navy Chief Petty Officer Melissa A. Tackitt, Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa EOD Mobile Unit 8 Detachment 20 master technician. “I have yet to run into the same Frenchman twice. Each and every time, it’s a new group of guys. It’s funny to talk to them about what I do in EOD because they have no women in French diving or EOD, so they find it interesting that I do the same things only certain men are able to do on their teams.”

For another CJTF-HOA EOD technician, it was a first-time experience.

“At first sight, they looked a bit motley since their uniforms and grooming standards were nothing I was used too, but after a day of working with them, I had gained full confidence in their capabilities,” said Petty Officer 1st Class Demetrius S. O’Halloran, CJTF-HOA EOD MU8 Det. 20 technician.



Afghan Soldiers Developing Customs, Courtesies



Story and photos by Marine SSG Luis P. Valdespino Jr. CSTC-Afghanistan Public Affairs

KHOWST, Afghanistan – American military services take pride in traditions, customs and courtesies embedded training team mentors at the Afghan National Army training grounds at Camp Clark are learning that the ANA does as well.



Afghan National Army soldiers line the streets to renders respects as a deceased soldier is escorted to a helicopter to be returned to his family.

Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan ETTs assigned to mentor the 1st Brigade, 203rd ANA Corps, recently saw how the professional military customs are being developed by the young brigade’s soldiers.

The ETTs witnessed the ANA platoon and company leaders hold a formation that displayed drill and ceremonial skills. Afterward they saw an honor guard and a company’s ceremonial send-off of a fallen comrade. The day concluded with leaders making a hospital visit to show care for their troops.

Taking the lead and setting a military example for his soldiers, Col. Mohammad Asrar Aqdas, the 1st Brigade commander, held a weekly formation where he marched on the grounds to speak to the men. He reminded them of the significance of their obligation to Afghanistan and to the ANA.

Aqdas spoke of the sacrifices soldiers make and reminded them that they accepted the potential sacrifices when they swore their oath of enlistment. He reminded them that coalition soldiers also make sacrifices.

Aqdas expressed sympathy as he spoke of a soldier killed the day before. Regrettably, he said, it is unfortunate but inevitable that “we have these kinds of days.” He also spoke of the pride he has for his soldiers.

The 3rd Kandak soldier whom the brigade commander was referring to had been killed by a remote-controlled improvised explosive device at a vehicle checkpoint in the Bak District of Khowst Province.

After the brigade formation, soldiers prepared to render honors to the fallen soldier, Mahkam Khan. They lined the streets to salute as his body was transported across the post to the ANA helicopter in which he was transported to his family.

Kahn was 23 years old and joined the Kandak after graduating Basic Warrior Training at the Kabul Military Training Center about six months earlier. He was a “good soldier,” said ANA Capt. Muhammad Azziz, commander of 1st Company, 3rd Kandak, to which Khan was assigned. He added that Khan was very disciplined and did a good job.



An Afghan National Army soldier stands guard next to a helicopter that will carry a deceased soldier to be returned to his family.

Shortly after respects were paid to Kahn, Lt. Col. Shams, the 3rd Kandak commander, made it a point to visit Obaidullah, a soldier injured in the same IED attack who was being treated at the Camp Salerno Hospital in Khowst.



Clinic Built by Italian Soldiers Inaugurated



*Story and photos
Courtesy of Italian MoD*



Official ribbon-cutting ceremony.

On December 16th, the Medical Clinic, built for the Valley of Musahi community by the Italian Contingent based in Kabul, was inaugurated during an official ceremony.

The project, equal to around 200,000 Euros, is part of the civil military cooperation activities that have improved the sanitary system in the south areas of Kabul.

The completion of the structure - achieved in eight months - will provide a suitable center for the medical and paramedical personnel of the Afghan Department of Health that offers care for the population of the villages of the valley of Musahi.

In addition to the improvement of the living conditions of one of the weakest populations, the project also achieves

consolidated the relationships established by the Italian soldiers with the local communities.

Colonel Alfredo De Fonzo, commander of the Italian Contingent, was joined for the ribbon-cutting ceremony by the District Governor, the head of the Shura (the local authority) and the religious heads of the different communities of the valley of Musahi.

The local authorities, through words of deep gratitude toward the Italian soldiers, have unanimously appreciated the accomplishment of works like wells, roads, scholastic buildings and bridges, that have strongly contributed to repopulating a valley that - before the Italian presence - had gradually been abandoned.



Colonel Alfredo De Fonzo, Commander of the Italian Contingent presents new clinic to the public.



“The Governor” Receives Award



*Story and photo courtesy of
Coalition CC*

With sincere appreciation South Tampa chamber of Commerce congratulated Lt Colonel Harrison in recognition of his five years of service to the Central Command and the Coalition Forces in Tampa.

Roger’s commitment in establishing the foundation for, and sustaining, the Coalition Forces with his southern kindness and hospitality has earned him the friendship of officers and enlisted personnel serving from around the world. Upon the request of Coalition partners, he left retirement and returned to Tampa in 2006 to serve an additional year. Lt Colonel Harrison has shown the world what America is really about.



Lt COL Roger Harrison receives award from South Tampa chamber of Commerce representatives.



Mongolian Contingent in Iraq



Story by MAJ Shambaljamts Amarbayasgalan
Photos by: Mongolian Infantry Company in Iraq

The mission of the Mongolian Armed Forces' Contingent in Iraq began in mid-August 2003 with the first phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom, when Mongolian Armed Forces

deployed an Infantry Company, Military Engineers together with medical teams. Mongolian military assets during the first rotation included 170 soldiers and 15 military vehicles, this contribution was much appreciated because of the quality of the forces committed. The Global War on Terrorism justified sending Mongolian troops to support the postwar coalition effort in Iraq on a continuous basis.

Mongolian troops have been in Iraq for more than 4 years and were initially tasked with preserving security at logistic base "Charlie", which is located in Al Hillah city in the southern part of Iraq. After the 5th rotation completed its mission of providing the base security, the Mongolian infantry company was moved to Camp Echo, which is under Polish command.

Currently, the 8th rotation of Mongolian Infantry Company 'Desert Lions', which includes 100 infantrymen executes tasks to provide security to Camp Echo, patrol the base perimeter and man the Tactical Operation's Center of Division HQ of the Multinational Division Center South. Their contribution was described by one of the coalition officers as "man-for-man a value-added partner"

On 22 November 2007, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, Admiral Timothy J. Keating visited the Mongolian Infantry Company soldiers to show his appreciation for their contribution to the Operation Iraqi Freedom. This was the first official visit of the Commander of US PACOM to forces



Mongolian sniper took his position.

representing the countries from Asia Pacific region. He thanked soldiers for their effort and dedication during their service in Iraq.

During Admiral Keating's short term visit to the Desert Lions, Mongolian Contingent Commander, LTC Dorjgotov Enkhbaatar, briefed him on the Contingent's military objectives and activities of the troops. Polish Army Maj Gen



Medal award ceremony.

Tadeusz Buk has stated that the Mongolian troops have demonstrated distinguished qualities during their service in Camp Echo and have successfully completed every mission assigned.

On 26 November 2007, the "Multinational Division Central-South Commemorative Medal" was awarded, by the order of Commander of the MND-CS in Iraq, to members of the 8th rotation of Mongolian Infantry Company, whose soldiers have served in Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from 29 June, 2007 to date; the completion 90 days of service in the operational zone.



NAVCENT Hosts Coalition Boarding Conference



*Story and photos by
Petty Officer 2nd Class Seth Clarke*

COMBINED MARITIME FORCES HEADQUARTERS, Bahrain – Naval representatives from 11 coalition countries attended a Combined Maritime Forces boarding conference at U.S. Naval Forces Central Command headquarters, Nov. 27 and 28.

Countries participating in the conference included Canada, Netherlands, Pakistan, Denmark, New Zealand, UK, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, Australia, Bahrain and the U.S.

Boarding operations enable CMF countries to protect their common interests by preventing human trafficking and the smuggling of energy products, arms and illegal drugs.

The semiannual conference presented participants the opportunity to exchange ideas about vessel boarding techniques and procedures with coalition partners from several nations. The sharing of knowledge and expertise helps ensure the continued success of boarding teams working to help maintain the conditions of security and stability in the region.

CMF Senior National Representative for Netherlands Navy, Cmdr. Wilco A. Kramer, said the overall aim of the

Representatives from the Danish and Pakistani navies shared their own procedures and approaches to Maritime Security Operations and vessel boarding operations. Pakistan is currently in command of Combined Task Force 150, which conducts MSO in the Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea, Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. Denmark is slated to assume command of CTF 150 at the conclusion of Pakistan’s command.

In addition to learning what other forces had to say about tactics and procedures, the conference attendees visited the U.S. Coast Guard Middle East Training Team facility at the Mina Salman Port in Manama, Bahrain. METT members



Cmdr. Wilco A. Kramer, Combined Maritime Forces Senior National Representative for Netherlands Navy, welcomes Danish Navy Cmdr. Clemens Vest Hansen to the CMF boarding conference at U.S. Naval Forces Central Command headquarters. The conference presented participants the opportunity to exchange ideas about vessel boarding techniques and procedures with coalition partners from several nations.

conference was to share their best practices, ideas and experiences.

“It’s like a family barbecue,” Kramer said. “Everyone brings their own favorite dish. Then, at the end of the barbecue, everyone exchanges recipes so that all future barbecues will be that much better.”



Petty Officer 2nd Class Brendan Dunn, a member of the U.S. Coast Guard Middle East Training Team, demonstrates techniques used by Coast Guard boarding teams on patrol in the 5th Fleet area of responsibility to participants in the Combined Maritime Forces boarding conference. The conference presented participants the opportunity to exchange ideas about vessel boarding techniques and procedures with coalition partners from several nations.

demonstrated a number of various techniques used by Coast Guard boarding teams on patrol in the 5th Fleet area of responsibility.

“Boarding teams are the primary weapons system of Maritime Security Operations,” Kramer said. “By the nature of the maritime environment, the only time you can meet people on commercial ships—to talk to other mariners face-to-face—is during a boarding, approach or visit. Because boardings are such an important tool, it is critical that our coalition forces learn from each other on a regular basis.”

Coalition forces conduct MSO under international maritime conventions to ensure security and safety in international waters so that all commercial shipping can operate freely while transiting the region.



Coalition International Night 62 Countries in One Evening



Story by Sgt. Sandra D. Lucas
Photos by CPAT and CENTCOM PAO

Imagine visiting 62 countries in one evening, tasting foods and sipping drinks from exotic far away lands. Have coffee in Ethiopia, learn how to wear a kimono in Japan and share family recipes in Ukraine. This became a reality when the United States Central Command, Coalition representatives hosted the Fifth Annual Coalition International Night, December 17, 2008, in hangar one, here, at MacDill Air Force Base.

Greeting the evening attendees at the door were sounds of music and fragrances from around the world. Circling the hangar were tables decorated with native cloths, pictures and dishes. Standing at each table, Coalition partners dressed



Friendly cup of coffee knows no language barriers.

in native attire, awaited the opportunity to share the rich history of their country.

How do 62 countries overcome the obvious language barriers? Ethiopia might suggest the universal cup of coffee. Elizabeth Abraham demonstrated the Ethiopian coffee service, explaining women, may partake twice a day in the ritual, do not sit and drink coffee. “We are working, drinking and eating. We feed the children, weave, making cloth and

use the spin wheel.” She explained the first coffee plants came from the Horn of Africa. At the Ethiopian table you



Santa Claus needed no introduction for children from all around the world.

could sample injera, bread served with sauces and native drinks tej, made with honey; tela, made with barley.

At Ukraine table Dena Lenvengood and two other friends were taste testing horilka z pertsem a honey, pepper vodka, which she found to be “really good!” Taste testing exquisite foods was one reason Lenvengood and her friends attended Coalition International Night.

“[We] love the exchange of cultures, the diversity of the people and learning more about other countries,” said Lenvengood. “I think every country has something wonderful to offer. I wish everybody could be here, I think the whole community should turn out for this.”

Attending his third Coalition International Night, Major General Gerald P. Minetti, Director for Coalition Coordination found this event “by far better than the previous two. One, the support of the Wing, using this hangar, has provided more space. More importantly, the bigger picture, we have 350 to 400 citizens from the local community that are friends of many of these Coalition Countries that invited these civilians to partake in this special celebration. I think exposing this much of the community to the Coalition is a good thing.”

It was an evening of learning, relaxing, laughing, dancing and creating new friendships. But there are some tried and true friendships that cross all boundaries, all languages, and all rank. When the big man dressed in red arrived it was clear by the smiles on children’s faces Santa Claus needed no introduction.

“It is good to have children here. What we are doing is for the next generation,” said Brigadier General Arne Skjaerpe, Senior National Representative, Norway.

Coalition International Night



Kazakhstan Country Presentation at Senior School



Qatar National Day



Iraqi Minister of Defence visits U.S. CENTCOM



Kyrgyz Delegation Visits U.S. CENTCOM





Maj. Gen. Murad Ali, Afghan National Army's 20th Corps Commander, addresses Afghan leadership, school faculty and media representatives at the unveiling of a new secondary school for children of the village Deh-i-Qazi in Balkh province. The 4-month construction effort is part of the Commander's Emergency Response Program, which is designed to enable local commanders to respond to urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction needs. U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Brian P. Seymour.